



OCR A: A Level Biology

“Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose” – Richard Dawkins

Subject Information

The course provides a flexible approach to learning. The specification is divided into topics, each covering different key concepts of Biology; including plant and animal biology, as well as key biochemical pathways. Teaching of practical skills is integrated with the theoretical topics and they are assessed through the written papers. For A level only, the Practical Endorsement will also support the development of practical skills.

Career Pathways

Everything around you can be related back to science and A level Biology applies itself to all careers. The transferrable skills acquired in Biology are highly regarded among many employers, including banks and even the government. More conventional career paths following Biology A level include scientific research, medicine, nursing, pharmacology, teaching,

Course Content

Module 1: Development of practical skills in biology

Module 2: Foundations in biology

Module 3: Exchange and transport

Module 4: Biodiversity, evolution and disease

Module 5: Communication, homeostasis and energy

Module 6: Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

Biology is an exam-based course. However, there is also a practical component where key practical skills are assessed and a separate practical endorsement award is presented. The exams follow a mix of formats including multiple choice, short, and longer answer questions. Students will sit 3 exams at the end of year 13 in the following order:

Biological processes (01): 100 marks 2 hour 15 minutes written paper. 37% of total A level.

Biological diversity (02): 100 marks 2 hour 15 minutes written paper. 37% of total A level.

Unified biology (03): 70 marks 1 hour 30 minutes written paper. 26% of total A level.

Practical Endorsement in Biology (04) (non-exam assessment).

Entry Requirements: A Grade 6-6 in Combined Science or 6 in GCSE Biology and Grade 6 in Mathematics.

Complementary subjects: Chemistry, Physics, Physical Education, Geography, Environmental Studies, Sociology, and Psychology.

Excellence in thinking: To explore fascinating current advances in the field of Biology visit www.newscientist.com and www.biologyonline.com.