

Course Title

Biology

Exam Board

OCR

Course Description:

Like other sciences, Biology has been reformed to the new model whereby AS and A level courses are entirely separate qualifications. We will not be offering AS Biology so choosing Biology as an option means two years of study with three examinations in June/July of year 13. If the subject is not continued from Year 12 to 13 no qualification will be awarded.

Six teaching modules thoroughly cover the main foundations of Biology for those wishing to pursue degree courses and careers in the field:

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Biology – with the removal of coursework from reformed A levels this will include practical skills assessed in the written examinations.

Module 2 – Foundations in Biology – including cellular structure and biological molecules.

Module 3 – Exchange and transport – in both plants and animals.

Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease – classification, the variety of life and a focus on disease and the immune system.

Module 5 – Communications, homeostasis and energy – excretion, respiration, photosynthesis, hormonal communication and the nervous system.

Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems – to include biotechnology, inheritance, sustainability and ecosystems.

Assessment:

Examination	% of total
Biological processes (01) 100 marks 2 hours 15 minutes Modules 1,2,3 and 5	37
Biological diversity (02) 100 marks 2 hours 15 minutes Modules 1,2,4 and 6	37
Unified biology (03) 70 marks 1 hour 30 minutes	26
Practical endorsement in biology (04)	Not examined

Admission Criteria:

Grade 7 in GCSE Biology or Grades 7 and 7 in GCSE Combined Science.

Additional Information:

The course offers pupils the opportunity to study a mix of traditional Biology alongside current advances in Gene Technology and Biotechnology. Students will be expected to work hard outside of lessons and to give up free time to develop their understanding in free periods and after school. The course is extremely content heavy meaning that a foundation of factual knowledge is essential to develop conceptual understanding. We take a practical approach to every topic, developing skills from GCSE, encouraging independent thought, analysis of data and the ability to think critically.

The department runs a number of trips during the course including: Natural History Museum, Howlett's Wild Animal Park and Sittingbourne Research Laboratories. The reformed syllabus now gives us the flexibility to also plan a field trip to undertake experimental work in Modules 4 and 6.

Biology is very much an 'all-rounders' subject suitable for students with high levels of both literacy and numeracy.

