

Biology

What is the exam board and route?

A Level Biology AQA (7402)

Subject Entry Requirements: Grade 7 at GCSE Biology and GCSE Maths is advised.

Subject outline

The specification provides full detail of the eight topics studied:

1. Biological molecules
2. Cells
3. Organisms exchange substances with their environment
4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms
5. Energy transfers in and between organisms
6. Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
7. Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
8. The control of gene expression

How is the course assessed?

Three two-hour written papers are taken at the end of Year 13.

There is no separate practical assessment; practical competency is continually assessed during regular class practical work and questions assessing practical skills will be included on the written papers.

Why study this subject?

Biology is a dynamic and high-performing department, supported by six specialist teachers and six fully equipped laboratories. This depth of expertise, combined with a strong focus on academic excellence, ensures pupils receive outstanding teaching and expert guidance, giving them the best possible opportunity to achieve exceptional results.

The course is designed not only to secure exam success, but to develop confident, independent thinkers with a genuine understanding of the living world. Pupils are supported throughout with a comprehensive textbook and carefully structured resources that enable them to fulfil their potential.

A standout feature of the course is the summer term fieldwork experience at the beautiful and biodiverse Attenborough Nature Reserve. Here, pupils think and work like field scientists, collecting and analysing ecological data as part of the required practical. This hands-on experience builds independence, precision and confidence beyond the classroom.

Biology also offers a rich programme of enrichment, including trips to leading university departments. These experiences provide valuable insight into cutting-edge research, inspire ambition and help pupils see the exciting pathways that Biology can open.

Choosing Biology means choosing a subject that challenges, inspires and equips you with the skills and confidence to succeed — both in examinations and beyond.

Complementary subjects

Chemistry, Geography, PE, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology.

Possible careers

A Level Biology is a powerful and prestigious qualification that keeps doors firmly open. It underpins applications to a wide range of competitive degrees, from Biochemistry, Genetics and Zoology to medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.

The department has an outstanding track record of preparing pupils for medical careers, with tailored support and rigorous interview preparation. Crucially, Biology is also highly respected beyond the sciences. Pupils have successfully leveraged it to secure places on top courses such as Mathematics, Law and Geography, including at Oxbridge.

In short, Biology is not just an option; it is a launchpad. It equips pupils with the knowledge, intellectual discipline and credibility to pursue ambitious, high-level futures in whatever field they choose.

Subject enrichment available

- Weekly drop-in help surgery
- Examination technique training sessions (Year 13)
- Targeted support sessions (Year 13)
- Biology Society, Beast Club, Bee Keeping Club.
- Leadership roles in Junior Dissections and Biology Masterclasses.
- Visits to university departments
- National and regional essay competitions and Olympiads
- National and International competitions; Isaac Biology Challenge, Homerton Challenge, British Biology Spelling Bee.
- Medic Society to support students applying for medical school together with extensive support during the application process such as interview evenings.
- Weekly enrichment sessions for Oxbridge applicants.