

Biology

A level – AQA 2410

Course Leader: Mrs Elliott

What's it all about?

Biology is one of the most popular A-level subjects in the country, attracting students studying a wide range of other subjects. Many of these students enjoy the subject so much they eventually choose a biologically related degree course. Others go on to careers in law, computing, accounting or teaching. So, whatever field you will eventually work in, you will find biology a very rewarding and challenging course which will develop many of the skills essential for a successful career.

What are the entry requirements?

Combined Science trilogy grades 9-9 to 6-6 or GCSE Biology grades 9-6. Including GCSE Maths grade 9-5, but we will consider a grade 9-4 in GCSE Maths.

Biology is a great choice of subject for people who want a career in health and clinical professions, such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, physiotherapy, pharmacy, optometry, nursing, zoology, marine biology or biomedical sciences.

Overall, at least 15% of the marks in assessments for biology will require the use of mathematical skills. These skills will be applied in the context of biology and will be at least the standard of higher tier GCSE mathematics. In some cases a level maths statistics.

What will I learn on this course?

In the first year you'll study four topics:

1. Biological molecules
2. Cells
3. Organism exchange substances with their environment
4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms

In the second year you will study an additional four topics:

1. Energy transfer in and between organisms
2. Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environment
3. Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
4. The control of gene expression

Practical work is at the heart of biology, and we endeavour to provide students with as much experience of practical skills as possible. This enables students to learn the concepts in an exciting way and to develop investigative skills required for further study at university. Scientific investigations will be recorded in a practical folder and will be assessed in written exams. 15% of the marks in the papers will relate to practical work and at the end of the course, a practical endorsement certificate is awarded.

How will I be assessed?

All assessment takes place at the end of this two year course (summer of Year 13).

Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
Any content from topics 1 – 4, including relevant practical skills	Any content from topics 5 – 8, including relevant practical skills	Any content from topics 1 – 8, including relevant practical skills
2 hour written examination.	2 hour written examination.	2 hour written examination.
91 marks	91 marks	78 marks

76 marks – mixture of short and long answer questions. 15 marks – extended response questions 35% of A-Level.	76 marks – mixture of short and long answer questions. 15 marks – comprehension question 35% of A-Level.	38 marks – structured questions, including practical techniques 15 marks – critical analysis of given experimental data 25 Marks: one essay from a choice of two titles 30% of A-Level.
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What do your current students say?

“The constant drilling of knowledge has really helped me remember key concepts.”

“Even though I didn’t like the assignment writing at first I know it really makes me have to re-read my year 12 work.”

“My teachers make me work hard, harder than I thought I could.”

Is there anything else I need to know?

You will be provided with a course textbook and a maths biology book. You will be given the opportunity to purchase recommended revision guides and journal subscription.

We pride ourselves on a strong, open and honest working relationship between teachers and students. Our students are kept informed of their progress via short topic tests and verbal feedback. We give students ample opportunity to practise their examination technique but also encourage interactive ways of learning and assessment.

Who can I contact for further information?

Subject leader for biology, mkelliott@kingcharles1.worcs.sch.uk