

Biology

Why study Biology?

There has never been a more important time to gain a fundamental understanding of Biology. Studying Biology at GCSE will help you make more informed decisions about your health, the spread and treatment of diseases and the issues around genetic modification and the effects of pollution. You will be able to learn in a very practical way that will give you plenty of opportunity to experience, question and research these issues.

What does the course involve?

There are five main subject areas:

1. The nature and variety of living organisms.
2. Structures and functions in living organisms.
3. Reproduction and inheritance.
4. Ecology and the environment.
5. The use of biological resources.

For teaching and assessment purposes these are divided into shorter topics e.g. cell structure, respiration and genetics.

Practical investigations are embedded throughout the course and the experimental skills that develop are assessed in the written examinations. There is no coursework or assessment of practical work.

How is the course assessed?

The Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Biology is a linear qualification. Two written examinations are taken at the end of the course of study. Both papers comprise a mixture of different question styles, including multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, calculations and extended open-response questions. The first (2-hour) paper is worth approximately 60% of the overall marks, and the second (1 hour 15 minutes) is worth approximately 40% of the total marks.

What can a GCSE in Biology lead to?

A GCSE qualification in Biology can lead to careers in science, medicine and healthcare, agriculture, sport and fitness and engineering. The IGCSE provides an excellent foundation for further study of Biology at A Level.

What skills does the Biology course develop?

The course is written to help develop well-rounded pupils who are able to think for themselves, so communication, problem-solving and taking the initiative are all incorporated, as well as maths, using IT and practical laboratory skills.

At a Glance

Exam Board

Edexcel

Assessment Type

The course comprises of two exams:

Paper 1: 2-hour exam worth 60%

Paper 2: 1-hour 15-minutes exam worth 40%

Head of Department

Dr Savage