

## Biology

The scientific world of the 21st century is dominated by advances in biology. This specification includes numerous references to these and to the social, economic, environmental, ethical, medical and technological aspects of the subject. The course will not only serve as an excellent grounding for those careers traditionally associated with biology – medicine, veterinary science, biochemistry, genetics, environmental science, etc. – but it will also provide pupils with a greater understanding of the world around them which will serve them well in their future lives.

Prerequisite: Minimum grades 7/A in each of I/GCSE biology, chemistry and mathematics required. Grades 8/9/A\* in each recommended.

The A-level specification is OCR Biology A (H420).

The specification is split into six teaching modules as follows:

- 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

The course will be assessed by three written examinations taken at the end of the U6 year. There will also be a non-examined assessment of practical skills (the Practical Endorsement), which is independent of any grade obtained in the written exams and will be reported separately.

Unit	Content	Duration	Weighting
Biological processes	Modules 1, 2, 3, & 5	2 hours 15 minutes	37%
Biological diversity	Modules 1, 2, 4, & 6	2 hours 15 minutes	37%
Unified biology	All modules	1 hour 30 minutes	26%

Practical skills will be developed throughout the course and assessed both via the written examinations and the independent Practical Endorsement. The practical endorsement will be assessed internally but will be subject to external scrutiny by OCR.

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head of biology