

Biology



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Exam Board

AQA A Level Biology

Why study Biology?

Biology is made of a diverse range of subjects from molecular biology to the study of the biosphere. At A Level, you will develop a deep understanding of living processes and systems. You'll find the more you know about the living world, the more fascinating it becomes. You will be challenged to understand complex life processes and apply your knowledge to other situations. There is an emphasis on practical skills and synoptic essay writing. Biology is a qualification that is highly sought after by universities.

Course Outline

In the first year, students will study:

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

In the second year, students will study:

- 5) Energy transfer in and between organisms
- 6) How organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
- 7) Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- 8) Control of gene expression

Assessment

You will sit 3 written examination papers (worth 35%, 35% and 30% of the final A Level grade), all of which are taken at the end of the A Level course. The papers use a variety of assessment methods including short and long answer questions; extended response questions; a comprehension question; structured questions including practical techniques; critical analysis of experimental data; and an essay.

Practical assessment of skills takes place throughout the year with students gaining a pass or fail that will accompany their A Level grade. All examinations will have questions that test skills that have been acquired while studying the subject. Practical-based questions will form 15% of the total assessment.

10% of exam questions rely on mathematical skills. A student who has grade 7 or above at GCSE in Mathematics should be comfortable with the demand of these questions. They will be a little more challenging for students with a lower GCSE Mathematics grade, but help will be available.

Where are they now?

Recent students of Biology at CRGS have gone on to study:

- Biomedical Sciences (*Newcastle*)
- Dentistry (*Liverpool*)
- Global Health and Social Medicine (*King's College London*)
- Human Biology (*Birmingham*)
- Medicine (*Nottingham*)
- Marine Biology (*Liverpool*)
- Nursing (*Birmingham*)
- Paramedic Practice (*Central Lancashire*)
- Philosophy and Religion (*York*)
- Physical Education & School Sport (*Edge Hill*)
- Psychology (*Leeds*)
- Radiotherapy and Oncology (*Cardiff*)
- Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (*Nottingham*)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is any previous knowledge required to study this subject?

You should have 2 GCSEs in Dual Science at grade 6 or above (i.e. grade 6 or above in both) or grade 6 or above in both GCSE Biology and Chemistry (higher tier). Mathematics is also required at GCSE grade 5 or above.

Students are required to meet the General Entry Requirement of a minimum of 4 GCSEs at grade 6 with at least GCSE grade 4 in English Language.

The course builds on the knowledge and skills you gained at GCSE. You will conduct practical work where you will practice and develop your skills.

Q. What opportunities are there for Extended Learning?

Student run clubs are supported by the department. We offer lunchtime workshops where students can gain extra help with their studies as well as lunchtime revision lessons. Staff are involved with helping students applying for competitive university places by holding discussion groups.

Q. How much practical work do students do?

As well as carrying out all of the AQA required practicals, you'll carry out extra practical work. Our aim is to ensure that you both pass the practical skills assessment and are adept at answering practically-based skills questions in your exams.

Q. What facilities are there?

There are two well-equipped teaching laboratories. Students should note that they will be required to provide their own laboratory coat for all practical sessions.

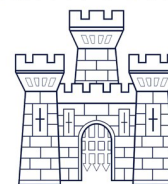
Exam Board Specification

AQA A Level Biology (7402) www.aqa.org.uk

Notes:

www.aqa.org.uk

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