

Curriculum Information

Biology – A Level



Subject rationale – Why study the subject? What benefits does it bring?

KS5 curriculum overview: Biology

The study of Biology allows us to develop a wider understanding of many of the issues facing the world today, such as global warming, health and disease. Biology will give you an insight to many aspects from the threat of new diseases emerging to conserving endangered species to the development of new exciting technologies. Throughout the course the students will develop their practical skills and apply these to have a greater understanding of the underlying principles being explored and developed.

What will I learn?

Over the two years the course will focus on 6 modules.

Module	Title	Includes
1	Development of practical skills	Explores a range of different investigations, while developing a range of practical investigative skills.
2	Foundations in Biology	Examines cell structure, how they work and divide. You will also learn about cellular organisation and the importance of key biological molecules such as DNA.
3	Exchange and Transport	The importance of exchange surfaces and transport systems in animals and plants.
4	Biodiversity, evolution and disease	The way in which diseases, diet, and smoking affect health and how the immune system can protect the body against disease. You will also examine the importance of biodiversity, classification and evolution.
5	Communications, homeostasis, and energy.	Focuses on how the nervous and endocrine systems work to maintain homeostasis in the body. You will also focus on the importance of respiration and photosynthesis
6	Genetics, evolution and ecosystems.	Examines the importance of genetics and biotechnology to current and new developments in Science. You will also learn how skeletal and muscular systems work. This module also highlights how we can study behaviour and how the brain works.

At Bishop Challoner Catholic College, we have excellent laboratory facilities allowing the development of good practical skills by the pupils.

Exam board: OCR (Code: H020/H420)

Copies of the A Level specification and sample papers can be found using this link:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/biology-a-h020-h420-from-2015/>



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Assessment Overview

End of Year 12

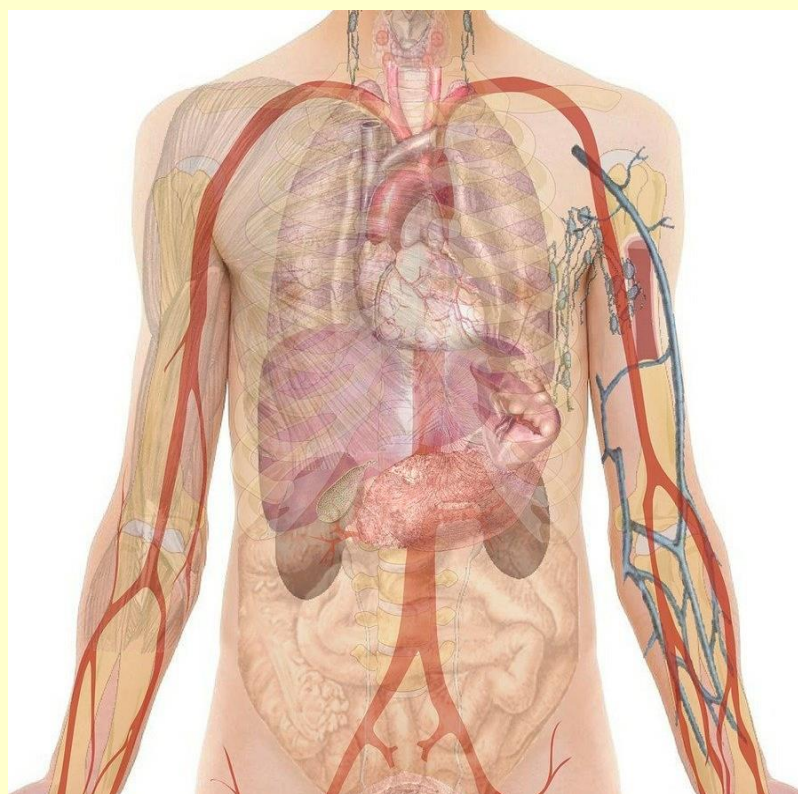
This qualification will be examined by sitting two internal assessments in the following way:

Module and Title	Assessed	Assessment Method	Weighting
Paper 1: Breadth of Biology (covers modules 1 to 4)	Summer Sitting	1 Hour and 30 minute exam	50%
Paper 2: Depth of Biology (covers modules 1 to 4)	Summer Sitting	1 Hour and 30 minute written exam	50%

A Level Biology

This qualification will be examined at the end of Year 13 in the following way:

Module and Title	Assessed	Assessment Method	Weighting
Paper 1: Biological Processes (covers modules 1, 2, 3, and 5)	Summer Sitting	2 Hours and 15 minutes exam	37%
Paper 2: Biological Diversity (covers modules 1, 2, 4 and 6)	Summer Sitting	2 Hours and 15 minutes written exam	37%
Paper 3: Unified Biology (modules 1 to 6)	Summer Sitting	1 hour and 30 minutes	26%



Practical Endorsement for Biology

Students studying the full A Level will also have a Practical Endorsement for Biology. This will appear alongside their A Level grade on their certificate but will not contribute to the overall grade for the qualification. By achieving this endorsement, it will show that practical skills necessary for the study of Biology have been achieved by the student. The skills will be monitored throughout the year during the normal delivery of the course and not examined in a formal way. At Bishop Challoner Catholic College, we have excellent laboratory facilities allowing the development of good practical skills by the pupils.

By attending all lessons and therefore developing the necessary skills naturally over the passage of time, all students would be expected to meet the stated criteria to achieve this endorsement.

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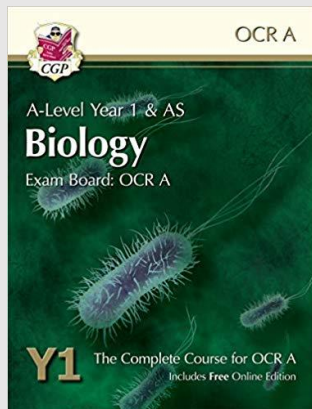
Biology – A Level



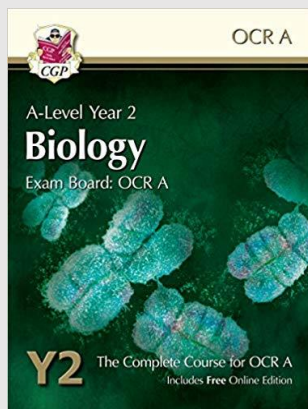
Revision Guidance

For the final exam in May/June of year 13 there are student revision guides that cover the whole course, including a book all about the core practicals. Here is an example of what one of them looks like. The revision guides are available to buy from school.

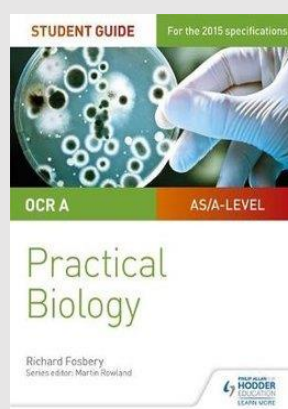
ISBN numbers of the books are



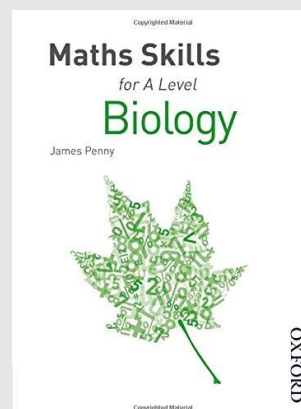
Year 1:
9781782943204



Year 2:
1782943250



Practical Biology
9781471885617



Maths Skills
1408521180

[Amazon link for the above books; click here](#)



Career opportunities

Studying Biology is a key requirement and good stepping stone for many medical-based degree courses such as physiotherapy, dentistry and medicine. Biology can also be very useful in other areas such as Environmental Science, Neuroscience, Sports Science and Sports and Leisure Management. If you have an investigative, scientific mind and are committed to developing your understanding of how Biology can impact on our lives then this is the course for you.

Attachments/links/ further information

[A level Biology OCR home page](#)
[Additional Exam Questions](#)

Further support:
[senecalearning.com](https://www.senecalearning.com)