

A-LEVEL BIOLOGY

At The Maynard School we offer Salters-Nuffield A-Level Biology (SNAB) from Edexcel. The specification has been designed to show how an understanding of many contemporary issues requires a grasp of fundamental biological ideas.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The qualification builds on the knowledge, understanding and practical skills that you gained in GCSE Science and GCSE Additional Science or GCSE Biology. You should have at least a grade B in these subjects.

You should also have at least a C grade in GCSE Mathematics, as numerical and mathematical skills are important in Biology. You will need to be able to communicate effectively, be able to plan and carry out research and think critically about problems.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Pursuing a career in biology can be immensely rewarding and exciting. Studying biology teaches us to ask questions, make observations, evaluate evidence, and solve problems. Biologists learn how living things work, how they interact with one another, and how they evolve. They may study cells under a microscope, insects in a rainforest, viruses that affect human beings, plants in a greenhouse or lions in the African grasslands. Their work increases our understanding about the natural world in which we live and helps us address issues of personal well being and worldwide concern, such as environmental depletion, threats to human health, and maintaining viable and abundant food supplies. There are many career paths you can follow as a Biologist, including research, health care, environmental management and conservation, education, biotechnology and forensic science.

COURSE CONTENT

Both the AS and the A2 courses are divided into three units. In each case, two of the units are examined by written examination papers and the final units are coursework. The outline of the units is shown below.

AS-level

Unit 1:

Topic 1: Lifestyle, health and risk

Topic 2: Genes and health

Unit 2:

Topic 3: The voice of the genome

Topic 4: Biodiversity and natural resources

Unit 3: Coursework

An issue or visit report based on independent research of a biological issue.

A2-level

Unit 4:

Topic 5: On the wild side

Topic 6: Infection, immunity and forensics

Unit 5:

Topic 7: Run for your life

Topic 8: Grey matter

Unit 6: Coursework

An individual practical investigation

Full details of the specification and course requirements can be found at the exam board website (www.edexcel.org.uk). For more information about the course at The Maynard School, please contact Dr. E. Ouldridge, Head of Science.

