

# Biology



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Information for  
**students and parents**

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# BIOLOGY

## WHY STUDY BIOLOGY AT THE MAYNARD?

We are all fascinated by the intricate processes and relationships found in living organisms and communities. Who has not been fascinated by David Attenborough describing the perils and hardships of the living world? But the knowledge of biological issues is also central to the way we lead our lives, from understanding health issues to considering the welfare of the planet. Many new and exciting areas of employment have opened up with the development of new biological technologies and knowledge such as the human genome project and stem cell technology.

A-level Biology at The Maynard reflects the excitement and challenge of the new Science. It is based on the Salters' Nuffield Biology Project (SNAB) which teaches basic biological principles in the context of relevant and important issues. Students are taught in small groups with access to a rich variety of resources with a strong emphasis on independent learning and practical activities.

Our students achieve excellent results and go on to study a wide variety of biologically related courses from Medicine, Nursing, Veterinary Science and Dentistry, to Food Science, Psychology, Biology and Biochemistry to name just a few.

## BIOLOGY A-LEVEL: THE CONTENT

A-level Biology is divided into eight topics. Four are taught in Lower 6 and four in Upper 6. The topic titles are:

### Lower 6 year

- Lifestyle, health and risk
- Genes and health
- The voice of the genome
- Biodiversity and natural resources

### Upper 6 year

- On the wild side
- Infection immunity and forensics
- Run for your life
- Grey matter



## ASSESSMENT

### A-level Biology

The A-level course is assessed by three terminal examinations each lasting 2 hours. Papers 1 and 2 cover all the Lower 6 topics and in addition, each examination will cover 2 of the 4 Upper 6 topics. Again, the papers will include questions that target the conceptual and theoretical understanding of experimental methods. Paper 3 is a synoptic paper that will require candidates to apply all their biological knowledge in a variety of contexts. In addition, practical skills will be assessed and reported separately as a Science Practical Endorsement. This will be awarded a 'pass' or 'fail' grade and will not affect the overall A-level grade.

Learning Biology does not just happen in the classroom. An important part of the course is fieldwork and we offer a variety of opportunities to study of habitats through extended outdoor investigations.

We encourage students to build up their knowledge by wider reading and debate. Our school library takes several relevant magazines and we run a Science Reading Group, as part of ESP, where all Science-based Sixth Formers are encouraged to debate the findings of recent scientific articles. The Upper 6 also have the opportunity to take part in the Biology Olympiad, an exciting opportunity to test their knowledge to the full.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The qualification builds on the knowledge, understanding and practical skills that you gained in GCSE Biology or in GCSE Combined Science. You should have at least a grade 7 in GCSE Biology (or 7:7 grades in Combined Science). You should have at least a grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics, as numerical and mathematical skills are important in Biology and form 10% of the assessment, and at least a grade 7 in English Language as you will need to be able to communicate effectively.





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**The Maynard School**

Denmark  
Road Exeter  
Devon  
EX1 1SJ

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**Enquiries**

Tel: +44 (0)1392 355998  
admissions@maynard.co.uk  
www.maynard.co.uk

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