

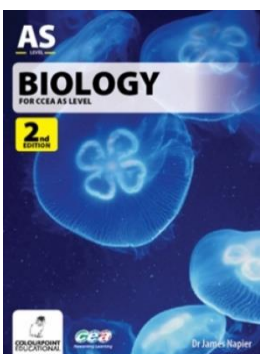


AS Biology

About the Course

AS Biology is a popular subject, however; pupils generally find it a massive step up from GCSE. To aid their transition, it is vitally important that they start their year with the correct attitude and ensure they do enough independent study in the evening as well as making the most of their private study periods in school. Pupils should aim to complete **4 hours** of biology work every week at home independently. This may include homework set by their teacher but should also consist of reviewing and learning their notes and practising past paper questions.

There are two written exams, worth 75% of AS. They are both held in Summer 2025 and are 1.5 hours long. Your child must also complete seven assessed practicals and a third exam paper (1 hour) assessing this practical work, which are worth 25% of the overall AS grade. The marks achieved at AS level count towards 40% of the total A level grade.

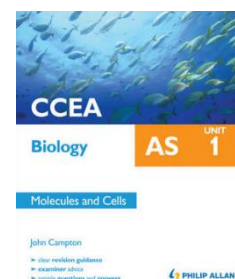
Useful Resources

- [CCEA Text Book \(2nd Ed\)](#)

Your child has access to a copy of this textbook in class but may wish to purchase their own copy (2nd edition). It would be useful for them to read the relevant sections each evening to deepen their understanding of that day's work. If they buy a copy of the textbook, they could sell it to the next year's AS pupils to recoup some of their investment.

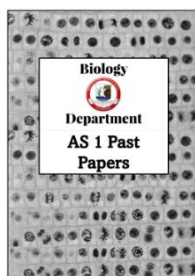
- [CCEA Revision Guide](#) (available from Amazon)

These are useful as they are written by examiners and provide exemplar candidate answers with examiner feedback. There is a separate revision guide for each unit (AS1, AS2 and AS3). If you purchase any of these Revision Guides, please ensure it is the latest version written for the 2016 spec onwards.



- [AS Past Paper Booklets](#)

This is an invaluable resource and should be used by your child most evenings as part of their revision. They may be set questions as a homework by their teacher, but it is essential that your child also uses this independently as part of their revision for each topic. The pupils that perform the best in AS Biology ensure that they are familiar with question styles and practise answering questions that have an unfamiliar context (*see past pupil advice*).



- CCEA website (<https://ccea.org.uk/post-16/gce/subjects/gce-biology-2016>)

On the Biology Microsite, past papers and mark scheme are available to download. If your child is making effective use of their past paper booklets, they could check their answers to questions they are doing beyond homework using the mark schemes. This will give them an insight into the terminology and detail examiners expect from them. If they find any questions difficult or don't understand the mark scheme, they should speak to their teacher at the earliest convenient time to get the problem resolved.

- Carousel Learning. An introduction to Carousel for students: <https://youtu.be/-vX97Z8VKI0?si=m4EOLFHolWfbOIZ2> This YouTube clip will give you an insight into Carousel Learning.

How Can You Help?

- **Quiz your child.**

Using your child's booklet to ask them to recall facts will help them retain this information in their long-term memory. You do not need to know or understand any of this material! If your child cannot recall these basic facts, they need to spend more time learning the content. You can also help quiz your child using the Carousel Study Pack flashcards which your child should be using routinely as part of their independent learning.

- **Enquire about end of topic tests.**

These are completed on a regular basis. Your child may also have completed intermediate tests throughout the topic to gauge their level of knowledge/understanding.

[Grade boundaries are approximately: A 75%; B 65%; C 55%; D 50%; E 45%; U <45%]

- What is your child's MAG?
- What grade did they get in their test?
- Is this the grade they want overall? If not, how can they improve?

- **Encourage quiet study at home.**

- Limited access to the internet/phone is required. Your child will generally hand write any homeworks. The internet is only needed to access mark schemes on the CCEA website or to complete Carousel activities.
- Your child may not have a specific homework every night, but this does not mean they have nothing to do! Essay plans/revision notes/past paper questions can and should always be completed as part of their daily independent study at home.

- **Part time job/extra-curricular balance.**

Please remember that this year is vital to your child's overall A level grade. Many pupils can manage their time to allow for a part time job and/or sports and hobbies, but if your child is falling behind, not completing work on time or their grades are below what they need to achieve, you should seriously consider their balance of time.

Biology Department Expectations:

Our expectations were explained to pupils at the beginning of the year. Some key points:

- Excellent class attendance
- Arrive to class on time
- Make effective use of Private Study – review your notes/complete homeworks/make revision notes etc
- You must go over your class notes every day
- Ensure you complete all homework/revision evidence and bring your notes to class. The consequences of not doing this are:
 1. **First occurrence:** verbal warning with note in planner
 2. **Second occurrence:** parent/carer informed via Parent App with relevant comment
 3. **Third occurrence:** extra work given, and parent/carer informed via Parent App with relevant comment
 4. **Fourth occurrence:** departmental detention (Friday 3.45-4.30pm) and parent/carer informed via Parent App with relevant comment, extra work given
 5. **Fifth occurrence:** school detention (any day 3.45-4.30pm) and parent/carer informed via Parent App with relevant comment
 6. **Further occurrences:** phone call home to discuss issue and to create a bespoke plan, e.g., lunchtime opportunity to complete HW, attendance of STEM BLT lunchtime sessions etc.
- Ensure that Biology is given an equal weighting with all your other subjects – do not neglect Biology over coursework for another subject.
- Failure to attend the departmental detention will result in a whole school detention.
- If you get less than a pass grade in a test or exam you will be given an opportunity to re-sit it or an opportunity to have theory clarified. We expect you to prepare fully for a re-sit which will occur after school on a Friday or on a day decided by your teacher. If you are having difficulty with any aspect of the topic, you should resolve this with your teacher before your re-sit.

Advice from a past pupil:

So basically I think the reason I didn't do as well at AS level is because I didn't do enough past papers! I knew the notes well enough but I didn't really understand some of the questions so for A2 I revised by making notes of everything, and I mean everything that you had given us and then doing the past papers once or twice. When I started doing the past papers I was only getting 60% or around that but by the time I was about to start my A level exams I was getting in the 80s/90s. So past papers are definitely worth doing because there isn't much that comes up that hasn't before. Another thing that I did was revise flat out for every end of topic test that you set and aimed for around 80/90% every test. When you do that you realise how much you haven't picked up on, but it means you stay up to date and don't miss anything that comes up next topic!

Pupil achieved an A overall*

AS Course Structure Outline

Month	Topic(s)	Revision Evidence	Test(s)
September	1.1 Molecules	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	1.1 Molecules
October	1.2 Enzymes 1.3 Viruses	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	1.2 Enzymes/1.3 Viruses (combined)
November	1.4 Cells 1.5 Cell Physiology	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	1.4 Cells 1.5 Cell Physiology
December	1.6 Continuity of Cells 1.7 Tissues & Organs	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	1.6 Continuity of cells
January	Revision/completion of 1.7		January Exam
February	2.4 Biodiversity – Human impact on biodiversity 2.3 Biodiversity – The variety of Life	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	2.4/2.3 Biodiversity
March	2.2 Adaptations of Organisms Fieldtrip 2.1 (d) Circulatory system in mammals	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	2.2 Adaptation 2.1 (d) Circulatory system Mid Module Mock
April	2.1 (c) Transport in plants & Transpiration 2.1 (a) Principles of exchange & transport 2.1 (b) Gaseous exchange	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	2.1 (c) Transport & Transpiration 2.1 (a) & (b) Principles & gas exchange
May	Revision/review	Past Paper Questions Revision Notes	Mock Exams
AS EXAMS AS1: 09/05/25, AS2: 22/05/25, AS3 28/05/25			

Please note that shared classes may be taught in a different order.

Teachers may check for revision evidence at different points through the course and they will have made their expectations clear to their own class.