Biology (A Level)

What will the course involve?

Students who enjoy learning about living organisms, how they interact, and why they can only survive in particular habitats will enjoy A-Level Biology. It is a challenging and rewarding field of study with a high practical component. Biology links extremely well with Chemistry, Psychology, PE and Mathematics as well many non-science based A Levels. It is most sensible to combine Biology A Level with either Chemistry or Maths as the courses support each other. It is essential that you have excellent maths skills, and also excellent writing skills as there are many extended response questions at A Level including a 25 mark essay.

This is a two year linear course from which you will build on and extend the work done in the GCSE course gaining a better understanding of the cellular, physiological and environmental processes that affect how any living organism functions. You will make comparisons between similar systems in different organisms

How will I be assessed?

There are three exams at the end of the two years for A-Level, all of which are two hours long. The first paper examines Y12 content. The second paper examines Y13 content and the third paper examines the whole course and includes the essay question. There is no coursework on this course, however at least 15% of the marks for A-Level Biology are based on what has been learned while carrying out practical work.

As well as being assessed on practical skills in all examinations, you will also be given a **practical endorsement** of a **PASS.** A minimum of 12 practicals have to be carried out exhibiting a number of competencies including following written procedure, carrying out research, working safely and recording observations.

What skills will I develop?

As a successful Biology student, you will be able to think, understand abstract ideas, make connections between different areas of biology and solve problems; you will also be able to communicate clearly, both in writing and using maths (in particular, statistical analysis of data). Your ability to research, analyse and evaluate will develop throughout the course. You will gain a very wide skill set, including mathematical analysis skills and extended writing skills - this explains why it is a sought after A-level for admission to a range courses and is a widely valued qualification.

Where can the study of Biology lead?

Students who take Biology often study a wide range of subjects at A level. The qualification will enhance an application to many science or non-science based careers.
It can lead on to many exciting career options including zoologist, botanist, ecologist, environmental scientist, biomedical scientist, biochemist, pharmacologist, medicine, veterinary science, dentistry, nursing, optometry, operating theatre practitioner, lawyer and accountant to name a few.

Where can I get more information?

For further information about studying Biology at Archbishop Blanch Sixth Form contact: Mrs. N Eyres, acting Head of Science on admin@blanch.org.uk