**GCSE BIOLOGY**

**(AQA) (2024-5)**



**Course Guide (8461) for the one-year course at Chesterfield College.**

**\*3 Hours Delivery per Week.**

**\*10 Required Practical Tasks.**

**\*2 Summer Exams (105 minutes each).**

**WELCOME**

Students sit the one-year GCSE Biology course for a variety of reasons. It can act as a top up for university/FE entry, a prerequisite for certain careers (e.g. teaching) or simply a subject students find interesting.

Typically, the course is taught over three years in mainstream Comprehensive education, delivered as a single subject, part of a combined, or at Higher or Foundation level. Your tutor will offer you guidance about which level of exam you should sit, based on assessed work and mock exams. We have quite a bit of content to get through.

**Option A: Foundation Exam (8461F)**

* Reduced content
* Simplified exam approach
* Two papers (total 200 marks)
  + Paper one – units 1 to 4
  + Paper two – units 5 to 7
* Available grades to 1 to 5

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Score** | 11% | 27% | 36% | 59% | 67% |

(2023 Boundaries)

**Option B: Higher Exam (8461F)**

* Full content
* More application and description required. Longer form answers.
* Two papers (total 200 marks)
  + Paper one – units 1 to 4
  + Paper two – units 5 to 7
* Available grades to 3 to 9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| **Score** | 22% | 26% | 35% | 43% | 52% | 59% | 66% |

(2023 Boundaries)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **COURSE CONTENT** | |
| **UNIT 1** | Cell Biology |
| **UNIT 2** | Organisation |
| **UNIT 3** | Infection and Response |
| **UNIT 4** | Bioenergetics |
| **UNIT 5** | Homeostasis and Response |
| **UNIT 6** | Inheritance, Variation and Evolution |
| **UNIT 7** | Ecology |

**REQUIRED PRACTICAL WORK**

Alongside the academic content you will need a solid understanding of 10 ‘required practical tasks’. There is a significant practical component to the course, which will enhance your grasp of many of the major principles in Biology and instil a scientific approach to proposing theories and performing experimental work.

RP1 – Cells and Microscopes

RP2 – Antiseptics and Bacteria growth

RP3 – Osmosis in plant tissue

RP4 – Food Tests (complete)

RP5 – Activity of enzymes (effect of pH)

RP6 – Photosynthesis in pond weed

RP7 – Caffeine effects on reaction time

RP8 – Gravity/Light effects on seedlings

RP9 – Population size estimation in a habitat

RP10 – Temperature mediated decay of milk

Practical work will be written up in an ‘RP folder’ and homework tasks will build your ability to address the practical/application questions in the final exams.

**STRUCTURE**

It is important to note that the course is intense and moves along at pace. Students are expected to attend, complete work to the best of their ability, engage in class tasks and regularly contribute to class discussion.

It is also expected that students ask for help and support whenever they find themselves confused, out of their depth, behind on tasks or stressed and frustrated. Chesterfield College prides itself on the support we offer students and the mature environment we create.

**CLASS WORK**

Lessons will deliver sections of the exam specification, then back track to complete class tasks, private research work, exam style questions and practical work.

**RESOURCES**

The College uses Microsoft TEAMS for all our communications and resource delivery. Outlook is also used, but TEAMS is more useful and immediate that emails alone. On TEAMS you will find:-

* Videos of course sections
* Revision notes
* Exam style practise questions
* Past Exam papers
* RP guidance documents
* Flashcards and definition guides
* Regular class tests/assessments and end of unit mock exam.
* Accurate and honest feedback from all work and activities.

Get yourself an AQA revision guide to support you through the course, we will provide most of the materials you may additionally need.

**BEST WAY TO SUCCEED?**

We will ask for some initial information about you in your first lesson (confidential, of course). After that I will try to guide you towards the result you need for your next step. All I ask is that you try your hardest and ask for support if you need it. If you keep up, you’ll do well.