

Supporting Your Learner

Advanced Higher

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Course Outline

Unit One: Biology: Cells and Proteins

The unit introduces students to a range of contemporary techniques used in cell and molecular biology to investigate DNA and protein structure and diversity. It goes on to examine the importance of proteins in cell function especially proteins' regulatory and signalling functions, their role as enzymes and the processes of signal transduction. The role of proteins in cell division and cell death is also explored in depth leading into the background biology of cancer pathology and treatment.

Unit Two: Biology: Organisms and Evolution

This unit is an exploration in detail of the evolution and ecology of parasites. It begins with a detailed exposition of evolutionary theory based on understandings gained at Higher level. It then examines the pros and cons of sexual reproduction within an evolutionary context, it takes a detour into sexual selection and sociobiology before considering various forms of co-evolution culminating in a deeper examination of parasitism. Throughout students are introduced to the appropriate experimental methodology for study of these processes.

Unit Three: Investigative Biology

This smaller unit provides a good grounding in the philosophy and practice of the scientific method used in biology. It covers hypothesis generation, experimental design, use of controls, health and safety, experimental analysis and subsequent reporting of findings through the scientific literature.

Each unit is assessed internally by a summative test which includes knowledge, applying your knowledge and skills questions. Students must also produce a scientific report based on an experiment they have planned, executed and analysed themselves. In addition students must undertake the course assessment. This assessment is out of 120 marks. 30 of these marks are awarded for a project report, 25 marks are awarded in the multiple choice section of the examination and the remaining 65 marks are awarded in the short answer section of the examination.



Exam Preparation

Pupils will complete a project which assesses scientific inquiry skills and related knowledge and understanding and is worth 30 marks.

Candidates will also undertake a final SQA exam worth 90 marks and is based primarily on knowledge and understanding, applying scientific inquiry, scientific analytical thinking and problem solving skills.

The project and the exam will both be externally assessed.

Useful Websites

The [Scholar](#) website has good summary notes and online tests.

Useful Textbooks

The following websites sell revision and course notes as well as past papers. We have a sample copy in the department of most Biology textbooks and can offer individual advice on what the best option for each pupil may be.

- [Hodder Education](#)
- [Bright Red Publishing](#)

Revision Classes

Speak to your class teacher for more information.



SQA Past Papers

The link below will allow you to access past examination papers as well as specimen papers produced by the SQA. There are also marking schemes on this page.

[SQA Advanced Higher Biology Past Papers](#)

