

Chemistry

A - Level AQA

General Course Information

The course is currently taught by an experienced chemistry team. Lessons take place in the laboratories in the yellow hub. You will be taught using a range of methods including:

- group work**, where you will be involved in discussion and activities with your peers.
- practical assignments**, where you will be coached in developing techniques,
- individual work** where you might be expected to work through calculation techniques, or independent study tasks
- presentation work**, where you might be expected to get to grips with a topic so that you can present it to peers,
- model making**, where you might be expected to make models to help you visualise molecules in 3-D,
- extended writing**, where you will be shown how to structure answers in examinations and to write scientific essays,
- problem solving**, where you will be expected to use your analytical problems to solve practical and theoretical chemical problems
- ICT work**, where you will be expected to use IT in practical work and analytically.

Chemistry students are also expected to undertake independent study. Weekly homework tasks and extended projects are set as well as simply preparing for lessons by regularly reading through class notes and the text book. The key to success in this subject is continual revision.

How is the course assessed?

We have been pleased in recent years with results in A level Chemistry but we are always seeking to improve the results every year.

Over the course of the full A-Level there are three examinations. Due to the demands of the course the timetable may require you to attend after school lessons. We may also offer extra lessons at revision times. All examinations will test synoptic knowledge so you will be expected to pass at yr12 with an average grade of at least D to make the required progress in year 13.

Who's it for?

To start A-Level chemistry you should have at least Grade 6,6 in a double Science. Over recent years we have found that students who have at least 6,6,5 in triple science (6 in Chemistry) have been able to access the course more easily since they have covered more Chemistry in Triple Science. iGCSE Chemistry perhaps gives the best preparation for the theoretical aspects of A level Chemistry. The coursework aspects of Double Science or Triple, however, help to evaluate how well you will cope with the most demanding part of the course, the ISAs. It is important you do well at these at GCSE.

In addition to 6,6 at Double Science you need to have achieved at least grade 5 in at least five GCSEs in total. Ideally this should include Mathematics and English at grade 5. In preparation for starting we ask you to attend an induction course after GCSE in Year 11. Students who have done this in recent years have found this very helpful. You need to be an effective independent learner to do well at A level.

The course develops a range of skills, you will be expected to:

- Express complex ideas clearly and concisely.
- Use GCSE and some AS level Maths to solve problems.
- Use a range of media and resources to write essays, make presentations, and take part in debates on moral and ethical issues.
- Use IT skills to produce spreadsheets and charts to analyze data.
- Develop spatial awareness in visualizing 3D models.
- Develop practical and investigative skills.
- Develop life skills – i.e. work as part of a team, show leadership, develop innovative solutions to problems, assess risks and make decisions about them, develop your independent learning skills and practice communication skills using a wide range of technical language appropriately.

Studying A-Level Chemistry is very rewarding. We spend two years studying atoms and molecules in great depth and so a knowledge about what Chemistry involves and an interest in the subject is vital. This interest and a questioning mind will sustain you as you work through problems and meet challenges. You should be willing to work hard and be determined to succeed.

Chemistry is a practical subject as well as a rigorous academic discipline. You must be prepared for this aspect of the course and should enjoy practical work, such as qualitative analysis and titrations.

Progression

Chemistry is a very useful, well respected A-Level. It is recognized as being an A-Level which develops a wide range of skills. The subject is good preparation for study of Chemistry related courses at University and can lead onto a career in the Chemistry industry.

Biological sciences are becoming ever increasingly biochemical and Chemistry AS and A-Level will be vital to anyone studying AS and A-Level Biology and thinking of studying Biology or Biochemistry.

Chemistry is a requirement if you wish to study Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy or Veterinary Science.

Chemistry can be used to start courses such as Law, Maths, Computing, Environmental Science, Management, Business and even Art and Design.

If you choose to study Chemistry the skills you learn will be recognized whatever your choice of career.

