

Presenting our new AS and A level Biology B qualifications

The new Pearson Edexcel Biology B specifications are available for AS and A level. These are **linear** qualifications. All examination papers must be taken in the same series.

The specification is divided into **several** topics.

The topics for AS Biology are the same as those for the first year of A level, so that the two specifications are **co-teachable**.

AS:
Available in summer.
First assessment summer 2016



A level:
Available in summer.
First assessment summer 2017



Why offer a new Biology qualification?

As the subject of Biology grows more diverse, we wanted to give you a new Biology specification to complement our context-driven AS and A level Biology A (SNAB) specifications. The **Biology B** specification is a **concept-based** course that combines the teaching of traditional elements and more modern biological ideas.

What you told us you wanted from the new AS and A level Biology:

- 'A wide-ranging specification that builds on prior knowledge learned from GCSE.'
- 'A clear specification with some indication of the level of detail needed.'
- 'A mixture of question types – some extended writing, but not long synoptic essays.'

AS

Both papers include assessment of maths and practical skills.

Paper 1

50% weighting



80 marks

Covers half the AS content

[Find out more](#)

Paper 2

50% weighting



80 marks

Covers half the AS content

[Find out more](#)

Note:

AS is a **stand-alone** qualification.

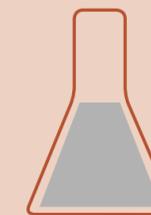
Marks achieved on AS papers do **not** form part of the final A level grade.

New assessment of practical skills

A level is 100% externally assessed (no coursework).



Core practicals appear in the specification content; **practical-based questions** are also in the exams.



Teacher-assessed **practical competency**, based on core practical activities, reported alongside the A level grade.

[Find out more](#)

A level

All papers include assessment of maths.

Paper 3 includes assessment of practical skills.

Paper 1

30% weighting



90 marks

Covers half the A level topics and some AS content

[Find out more](#)

Paper 2

30% weighting



90 marks

Covers half the A level topics and some AS content

[Find out more](#)

Paper 3

40% weighting



120 marks

Covers all AS and A level topics

[Find out more](#)

Assessing mathematical skills



Makes up **10%** of the assessment and AS at A level.



Maths needs to be assessed at **Level 2** (GCSE Higher tier) **or above**.

Our proposed examination model for AS and A level Biology B



AS paper 1*

- Biological molecules
- Cells, viruses and reproduction of living things
- Experimental methods (including questions on core practicals)

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AS paper 2*

- Classification and biodiversity
- Exchange and transport
- Experimental methods (including questions on core practicals)

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A level paper 1*

- Energy for biological processes
- Microbiology and pathogens
- Modern genetics
- Some AS topics

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A level paper 2*

- Origins of genetic variation
- Control systems
- Ecosystems
- Some AS topics

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A level paper 3*

- General paper assessing topics across the AS and A level qualifications
- Experimental methods (including questions on core practicals)

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Practical assessment*

- There are **16 core practicals** that cover all of the **12 techniques** required for the practical competency measure.
- Knowledge of all core practicals can be tested within exam papers.
- Core practicals form part of the practical competency assessment.

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* Note: This is following our proposed AS and A level examination model.