

# 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**

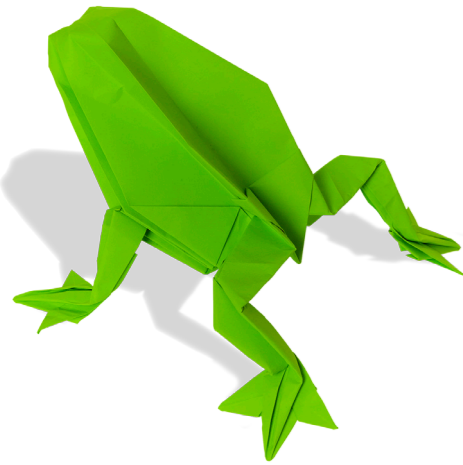
A level:  
Available in summer.  
**First assessment  
summer 2017**

## 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**



1 hour  
and 30  
minutes

**80  
marks**

Covers  
half the AS  
content

[Find out more](#)

#### Paper 2

**50% weighting**



1 hour  
and 30  
minutes

**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.

#### Paper 1

**30% weighting**



1 hour  
and 45  
minutes

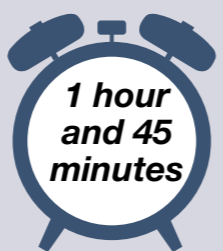
**90  
marks**

Covers half the  
A level topics  
and some AS  
content

[Find out more](#)

#### Paper 2

**30% weighting**



1 hour  
and 45  
minutes

**90  
marks**

Covers half the  
A level topics  
and some AS  
content

[Find out more](#)

#### Paper 3

**40% weighting**



2 hours  
and 30  
minutes

**120  
marks**

Covers all AS  
and A level  
topics

[Find out more](#)

## 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](#)

## Assessing mathematical skills

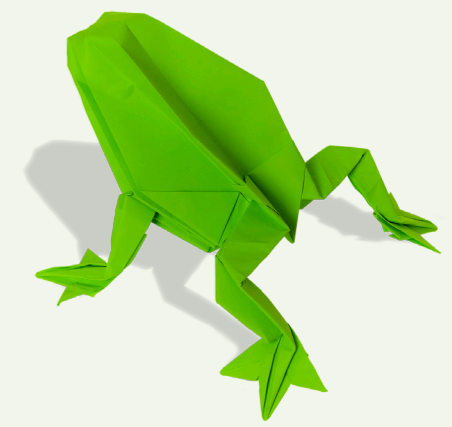


Makes up **10%** of the assessment and AS at A level.



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

# How AS and A level Biology B will be assessed



## 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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