

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Biology

Q 1. What exam board do you study?

EDUQAS. We have worked with EDUQAS for years and always gained very good results well above national average. As a result we are rated as one of the top biology departments in the country. The department has strong links with the exam board and many staff examine for them.

Q 2. What topics do we study?

We study a wide range of topics. These topics are often similar to GCSE topics but we go into much deeper understanding. Some topics include: enzymes, cells, transport in plants & animals, gas exchange, nervous system, immunology, microbiology, inheritance, cell division, populations and reproduction.

Q 3. Will we do many practical experiments?

We undertake a large number of practical experiments alongside teaching. You will be given a separate lab book and we will complete all practical work in this. Some of these experiments include microscope work, dissections, sampling field work and the use of a colorimeter. Practical work will be assessed in your exams and so we will practice practical based exam questions throughout the year. You will also improve your practical skills throughout the year in order to gain a separate practical endorsement pass.

Q 4. Is there support if I am finding biology challenging?

Yes, we have lots of support available. Our booklets contain all of the theory you need to pass the exam plus lots of hints and tips. We work through exam question booklets throughout the year to help you develop your exam question technique. All theory topics have an online quiz for you to complete at the end of each booklet so that you can check you understand the key concepts. We also have narrated PowerPoint presentations, and online activities to help with understanding. Students are continually encouraged to ask staff for help if they finding biology challenging, both inside or



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outside of the classroom. If a class teacher is unavailable there will often be another biology teacher available to help as we are such a large department. In the second year we also run support classes alongside normal classes to recap theory and develop exam technique.

Q 5. Will you be able to challenge me for the best grades?

Yes! We ensure challenge activities are available throughout lessons for those working at a faster pace. All of our theory booklets also contain extension activities at the back to stretch students further. Our exam question booklets focus on challenging application style exam questions to build your skills in this area as well.

Q 6. Can you help me if I want to apply for a competitive course such a medicine or dentistry?

At Loreto we have a MDV (medic, dentist & vet) group. This group has regular meetings which focus on improving the skills needed to apply for these courses at university. This course has been running for a long time and so is very well established. Mock interviews and preparation for UCAT & BMAT exams take place. It's also really nice to be part of a like-minded group of students! The department has been instrumental in Loreto's outstanding success in students gaining MDV places, with 75 students gaining places this year. Former Loreto Biology students are currently studying at some of the best universities in the world, including Oxford and Cambridge.

Q 7. Will I be behind if I didn't study triple science?

No. We teach everything you need to know from scratch. There may be some key terms you haven't heard of before that others have but as long as you go over your theory for revision you will be fine. We are always here to help if something is particularly difficult for you.

Q 8. Do you have online resources to help me succeed?

Yes – lots! We have an online biology area with resources such as theory booklets, exam question booklets, PowerPoint



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presentations, past paper questions and revision activities. We also have narrated PowerPoint slides for students to listen to outside of lesson, quizzes for all topics and animated revision resources for all topics.

Q 9. How big are the classes?

Our classes tend to be between around 20-24 in size. The classes are smaller than many school class sizes, but also large enough to create a positive working atmosphere with a good exchange of ideas.

Q 10. How will I be assessed?

3 exams at the end of your second year, each 2 hours each. Practical work will be assessed within the exams and there is no coursework.

