

Leaving Certificate Biology

What is Biology?

Biology is the study of life. Through the study of biology students employ the processes of science to explore the diversity of life and the inter-relationships between organisms and their environment. They become more aware of the use of living organisms and their products to enhance human health and the environment.

Why Study Biology

- Biology is a popular subject and is the study of life. It requires a lot of memory work so is a good choice for students with attention to detail and excellent memory work.
- Many courses require at least one science subject and some even require two (see third level entry requirements). Therefore, it is a good idea to have at least one science subject to keep your options open.
- Those considering medicine, nursing and related courses will find that this subject will be of huge benefit in their studies.

Topics Covered:

- Life, Scientific Method, Biomolecules and the Cell
- Genetic Inheritance & Natural Selection
- Classification & Microbiology
- Human Biology
- Plant Biology
- Ecology including Fieldwork
- 22 mandatory practical experiments

What type of student would do well in Biology?

Students who

- Have an enquiring mind
- Enjoyed the Biology section of the Junior Cycle Science course
- Enjoy practical work
- Enjoy group work
- Are visual learners

What careers does Biology lend itself to?

- Farming, Horticulture & Forestry
- Biological, Chemical & Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Fashion & Beauty
- Medical & Healthcare
- Tourism & Hospitality
- Leisure, Sport & Fitness
- Maritime, Fishing & Aquaculture
- Animals & Veterinary Science
- Earth & Environment
- Biomedical Technologies & Medtech

Similarities/Differences between Junior Cycle & Senior Cycle

- The Biology course covers mostly the same topics as Junior Cycle “Biological World” but there is a more extended study of each topic
- Ecology fieldwork is common to both Junior & Senior cycle but examined in greater depth
- More emphasis on Cellular Biology, Microbiology and plants
- Particular emphasis is placed on the practical aspects of biology, and there are a number of mandatory activities that each student must carry out for themselves

How is Biology examined at Leaving Certificate?

The examination at Higher and Ordinary level is three hours in duration. The exam paper is divided into three units.

- Section A - Six short questions (answer five) 100 marks.
- Section B - Three questions on practical activities (answer two) 60 marks.
- Section C - Six long questions (answer four) 240 marks.

What other school subjects is Biology linked to at Leaving Certificate?

- Home Economics
- Chemistry
- Geography

What type of skills will it help to develop?

- Laboratory/Practical Skills
- Working as part of a team
- Students working on their own initiative
- Analytical and critical thinking
- Self confidence and motivation
- Responsibility
- Logical thinking & Problem solving

What do students like about Biology?

- Learning about how biological systems in the body work
- Practical work
- Ecology fieldwork
- Diagrams

What may students find difficult about Biology?

- Time commitment required
- Quantity of material to be learned