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SPRING 2024

BIOLOGY



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NEW: STEPPING UP TO LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE

CODE 9695

ABOUT THIS COURSE

Aimed at newly appointed Heads of Science and those that aspire to a leadership role within Science, this practical course has been developed to examine the complex tasks faced by leaders of Science and the strategies necessary for success.

These are exciting and challenging times to lead in Secondary Science. Science faculties have the most rewarding subject to teach, and benefit from many developments and resources for teaching on social media. However, Science can be a more difficult subject to lead than others within a secondary school with a complex curriculum offer, shortages of qualified subject specialists, health and safety responsibilities and practical work with large teams and non-teaching staff to lead.

Delegates will take away practical strategies to enable them to hit the ground running, enabling them to keep on top of the day-to-day issues whilst developing their team and a shared strategic vision.

PROGRAMME

	TIME
Getting Started: Analysing the challenges of Science leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main duties and responsibilities as a leader in Science Identifying the challenges your department is facing Get to know your team and build quick relationships 	10.00 – 10.45am
Discussion: coffee break	10.45 – 11.00am
Exploring the behaviours of an effective, inspiring and motivating leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring the different skills needed to be personally excellent as a teacher, effective as a manager and inspirational as a leader Exploring the behaviours of successful leaders Understanding your natural style of leadership Exploring different styles of leadership and understanding when each style is effective and what the pitfalls might be Accountability: Setting the standards for high performance The power of your strategic plan and curriculum Using Assessment: Monitoring & Tracking 	11.00 – 12.00pm
Building your Team and Managing people with confidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to build your team ethos Understanding when to manage and when to lead to get the best out of your team Managing the ways in which we communicate with our team Exploring different styles of leadership – from being brave enough to delegate or have the conviction to simply tell people what to do, and what the middle ground looks like Strategies to build relationships with all those around you to ensure you have support from all levels Getting everyone on board with your vision 	12.00 – 12.40pm
Lunch and informal discussion	12.40 – 1.40pm
Effective Leadership in Teaching and Learning: High Expectations, High Challenge, High Reward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for establishing, maintaining and promoting high quality teaching, learning and assessment in Languages Supporting your team with innovative and engaging teaching The importance of delegating and utilising the strengths of your staff Using data effectively for monitoring and feedback, to lead to outstanding student outcomes Get a “buzz” around Science through enrichment provision 	1.40 – 2.35pm
Discussion: afternoon tea	2.35 – 2.40pm
Dealing with challenging issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring staff performance to ensure outstanding student outcomes across the department Challenging underperformance, sustaining excellence and maintaining standards How to best support staff professional development in line with departmental needs Dealing with difficult conversations 	2.40 – 3.20pm
Selling yourself: How to get the job <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of values Writing your application and letter The interview day What might be involved and asked: exploring your preparation 	3.20 – 3.40pm

LOCATION/DATE

London

Wednesday 13 March 2024

Thursday 20 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Prishilla Narindar is currently Deputy head of Faculty and Science lead at Henry Cort College. With over 10 years' experience in KS3 and KS4 science curriculum delivery in mainstream education and private tuition, she has led the local Science GCSE collaboration development group that partners with 8 schools and colleges. She has also successfully led active learning, cognitive load association and assessment workshops whilst coaching PGCE and ITT students for local partnerships.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Newly appointed Heads of Science
- Aspiring leaders in Science
- Newly appointed subject leaders in Science
- Newly appointed key stage leaders in Science
- TLR holders in Science
- Heads of Science Faculties

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Examine how to set the parameters for a Science department to flourish
- Consider the importance of strategies to align your department with whole-school priorities
- Explore the importance and power of your strategic and curriculum planning
- Discuss and highlight the role of assessment and monitoring of pupil progress
- Introduction to middleleadership in schools, with real examples drawn upon by the course leader
- Discuss the process of applying, interviewing, and securing your place as a Head of Science

LEADERSHIP OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP OF A SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

CODE 9541

ABOUT THIS COURSE

Leading in Science can be both exciting and challenging. However, it's no secret that leading a Science department comes with unique complexities. The curriculum is intricate and there are shortages of qualified subject specialists and you'll bear the responsibility of ensuring health and safety compliance and overseeing practical work involving large teams and non-teaching staff.

In this new and updated course, we'll consider what it takes to achieve excellence in a Science department and the pivotal role of the Head of Science in maintaining this excellence. Delegates will take away practical and actionable strategies on how to tackle day-to-day challenges, develop the team and work towards a shared strategic vision.

Whether you are currently a Head of Science or aspire to hold such a position, this course is designed to cater to your interests and needs, unlocking the tools and insights to lead with confidence and success.

PROGRAMME

Leadership and Vision

TIME
10.00 - 10.30am

Unleashing Leadership Brilliance in Science Departments

- Explore key leadership qualities and skills tailored for a Science Department
- Practical applications and tips to elevate your department's performance
- Decipher the significance of vision and its pivotal role in values, strategy, and execution
- Guided session on crafting a compelling vision for your team, enriched with real-world examples

Effective Techniques to Drive Department Improvement

10.30 - 11.20am

Journey to Outstanding: Navigating School Inspections

- Set your sights on excellence with insights into 'outstanding' practices
- Dive into research-backed, achievable tips for departmental improvement
- Elevate teaching and learning with a focus on top-end students, feedback strategies, higher-order thinking, and more
- Master the art of staff recruitment: asking the right questions, identifying excellence in interviews and lessons

Discussion: coffee break

11.20 - 11.40am

Leading Outstanding Teaching and Learning

11.40 - 12.40pm

Crafting a Legacy of Excellence in Science Education

- Review research on outstanding teaching and learning
- Demystify preconceptions, explore student self-regulation, and balance with explicit instruction
- Delve into memory enhancement techniques: retrieval practice, spaced retrieval, interleaved practice
- Unlock the secrets of effective practical work and scientific vocabulary
- Transform your scheme of work into an outstanding educational roadmap
- Harness the power of assessment data for targeted intervention

Lunch and informal discussion

12.40 - 1.40pm

Staff Development

1.40 - 3.00pm

Nurturing Excellence at Every Level

- Embrace the importance of continuous staff development
- Tailored tips for various staff experience levels, ensuring proactive growth
- Elevate science technicians with practical strategies
- Master the art of effective department communication and meetings
- Structure feedback conversations for positive change
- Create an outstanding department handbook, incorporating safety, ICT, SEND, and teacher consistency

Discussion: afternoon tea

3.00 - 3.10pm

Optimal Time Management

3.10 - 3.30pm

Efficiency Unleashed in Science Departments

- Navigate time effectively using the Eisenhower Matrix
- Embrace the art of delegation even in challenging circumstances

LOCATION/DATE

London

Wednesday 27 March 2024

Tuesday 09 July 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Stephen Belding is an accomplished teacher and Head of Chemistry at Rugby School. He attended St John's College, Oxford University, where he earned a degree in Chemistry (MChem) and a DPhil in Computational Electrochemistry. With a teaching career that commenced in 2012, Stephen has successfully instructed across five distinct exam specifications at three highly regarded schools in the UK. In 2022, he concluded his MEd research focusing on inspection reports and strategies for school improvement.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Current Heads of Science Departments
- Aspiring Heads of Science
- Those wishing to take on a leadership role within a Science Department
- Senior leaders responsible for Science

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Consider what makes a Science department excellent, and the role of the Head of Science in achieving excellence.
- Look at ways in which a Head of Science can develop and improve teaching and learning within the department.
- Enhance your ability to recruit, lead, support and nurture teachers and technicians in the department.
- Reflect on strategies for dealing with the challenges and making the most of the opportunities presented by a Head of Science position.
- Discuss the application of research-based techniques for effective time management and delegation.

NEW: A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: IMPROVING ENGAGEMENT & ACHIEVEMENT IN LARGE, MIXED ABILITY CLASSES

CODE 9648

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This is a new, bespoke course formulated to tackle the demands and challenges of large class sizes of mixed-ability students at A-level, which, given the educational climate are becoming the norm. The course is relevant for both new and experienced teachers and will introduce you to strategies to identify the strengths and weaknesses your learners, as well as practical suggestions on how to best address these.

The course will cover ideas on assessment regimes to identify learners who require additional support and the types of support that would be most effective, as well as approaches to skills development such as independent-flipped learning, extended writing e.g., strategies for successfully tackling the essay on Paper 3 and how to effectively incorporate practical skills into teaching. You will have the opportunity to network with like-minded colleagues and; you will leave with a wide range of ideas that have proven successful on A-level Biology programmes, all whilst considering the workload constraints prevalent in modern teaching.

PROGRAMME

Assessment in A-Level Biology

TIME

10.00 – 10.45am

- Embedding assessment into a programme of study: strategies for integrating assessment methods seamlessly into the curriculum
- Structure of assessments: the formats and types of assessments used in A-Level Biology
- Effective ways to provide feedback to students and how they can use it for improvement
- Methods for tracking and monitoring student progress throughout the course

Discussion: coffee break

10.45 – 11.05am

Types of Support for Different Learners

11.05 – 11.50am

- Strategies to reinforce and consolidate learning
- Effective use of targeted sessions to provide extra help to struggling students
- Independent study with supervision
- Group sessions to address common challenges and topics
- Creating exam question packs to prepare students for exams

Flipped Learning and Metacognition

11.50 – 12.30pm

- Setting the scene: introduction to flipped learning and its benefits
- Encouraging students to self-assess and evaluate their understanding
- Utilising virtual learning environments for flipped learning

Lunch and informal discussion

12.30 – 1.30pm

Skills Development including Essay Skills

1.30 – 2.30pm

- Embedding skills in the curriculum: incorporating essential skills such as mathematics and extended writing using appropriate resources
- Use of VLE resources for skill development and to enhance students' skill sets
- Integrating skill practice within assessments
- Effective strategies to tackle the essay on paper 3: techniques for excelling in the essay component of the course

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.30 – 2.45pm

Practical Skills in the Curriculum

2.45 – 3.30pm

- Understanding the compulsory practical components of the course
- Exploring additional practical activities to enhance learning
- Using past papers to prepare students for practical assessments

LOCATION/DATE

London

Thursday 16 November 2023

COURSE LEADER

Nicola Manning has 33 years' experience of teaching A-level Biology and has attained a Silver Pearson's National Teaching award to recognise her successes. She currently teaches 6 A-level Biology classes, with an average class size of 22. Her cohorts regularly attain above the national averages on all benchmarks, her advice is supported by real-life outcomes. She has attained ALPS grade 2 for 5 consecutive years and been mentioned in ALPS reports. She has completed a research project for the Ipswich Opportunity Fund on the positive impacts of Flipped Learning on developing students' independence and life-long learning skills and is committed to raising the attainment of all learners.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- New & Experienced Teachers of A-Level Biology
- ECTs in Biology
- Heads of Science

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Raising attainment for learners in A-level Biology at all boundaries A*/B, A*-C and A*-E
- Take away strategies of how to promote metacognition and independent learning skills in students.
- Developing a VLE, which effectively supports outcomes.
- Build into your teaching, strategies with proven success to tackle the skills requirements of the A-level Biology syllabus.
- Take away a range of innovative approaches to tackle the extended writing component of the course.
- Foster positive relationships with students and promote self-reflection.
- Address the marking demands of larger groups.

NEW: AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR EXAM SUCCESS IN 2025 AND BEYOND

CODE 9649

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This brand-new course for all teachers of AQA A-Level Biology will explore how you can turn the mistakes made in previous exam series into an opportunity for positive change moving forward, fully preparing your students for success in the year ahead and beyond.

This interactive course will support and challenge teachers in equal measures. You will leave with a thorough overview of the main lessons to be learnt from previous examinations and a wide range of ideas, methods and approaches to prepare students to maximise their potential in the 2025 exams.

Emphasis will be made on the demands of the exams that are not met as well as they could be, and the implications this has for your A-Level teaching and learning.

PROGRAMME

The Exam - Reflections and Approaches

TIME

10.00 - 11.00am

- Feedback from recent exams: what is it essential to be aware of?
- The main factors that affect examination success in all 3 papers and the challenges experienced by candidates
- Deep-diving problem questions from the exam papers
- How to engage students in the content of the course, and how to maximise their focus on what brings the most reward in examinations
- Reflections on recent mark schemes and what this means moving forward
- Starting to make a plan of action- what should we do? How should we do it?

Discussion: coffee break

11.00 - 11.20am

A Focus on Comprehension and Essay Questions

11.20 - 12.20pm

- How do students answer compared to what the exam board want to see
- Strategies to decipher and meet the demands of the questions
- Managing synopticity
- AO3 clinic- ways to fix the AO3 success rate in your school

Lunch and informal discussion

12.20 - 1.20pm

Short Answer Headaches

1.20 - 2.20pm

- Dealing with data in the manner that A-Level Biology expects
- Working with new and innovative methods to prepare students for data demands
- Deciphering where marks are lost
- Working on strategies to minimise the silly mistakes

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.20 - 2.30pm

Moving Forward and Maximising Success in 2025 and Beyond

2.30 - 3.30pm

- Summary of what we have learnt
- Producing a plan of action to maximise student success in 2025
- Specific lessons to be learnt and how to prevent them from happening again
- Ensuring whole department success - managing staff and developing a progressive teaching culture that organically learns and improves

LOCATION/DATE

London

Thursday 27 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses. She has presented many biology courses for teachers, student revision conferences and online web conferences. She is also involved in presenting international IB student revision courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Teachers of AQA A-Level Biology
- Heads of Department
- Academic leads for Biology
- Prospective or new teachers of AQA A-Level Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Understand the main lessons to be learnt from previous examinations
- Gain an informed overview of key areas of concern
- Learn new and innovative ways to deliver areas that target these areas of concern
- Experience and try out novel pedagogy in the classroom
- Produce a strategic approach to maximise student success in 2025 and beyond

NEW: AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING RESULTS IN PAPER 1

CODE 9650

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This excellent new course is designed for AQA A-Level Biology teachers aiming to enhance their expertise in preparing students for success in Paper 1

The course will delve into key strategies for understanding the exam structure, tackling various question types effectively, providing an intense, advanced, focus on deconstructing questions from paper 1 and deciphering example responses.

There will also be a focus on pedagogy for paper 1, but most importantly on preparing students for the exam. This course will provide a focus on raising a grade B to a grade A/A* and how to do this with specific topics from paper 1.

The course will include a section on exam tactics and techniques, with what examiners need to see and how to get your students to do this.

PROGRAMME

	TIME
Examining the Components of Paper 1 and Embedding Effective Pedagogy	10.00 – 10.30am
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining the specific requirements of paper 1 – analysing the assessment objectives and their implications Understanding the weighting and different sections in the exam Identifying the key challenges in this paper and the key skills required for success Reviewing the most recent exam – learning from previous mistakes Developing smart and effective pedagogy that maximises attainment 	
Biological Molecules	10.30 – 11.10am
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing engaging teaching strategies for complex concepts Identifying, addressing and creating specific lesson ideas for challenging content How this is likely to be examined – the question types Past questions to inform your teaching 	
Discussion: coffee break	11.10 – 11.30am
Cells	11.30 – 12.10pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling the problematic areas in Cells Building student confidence in dealing with difficult topics How Cells are likely to be examined Past questions to inform your teaching 	
Lunch and informal discussion	12.10 – 1.10pm
Organisms Exchange Substances with their Environment	1.10 – 1.50pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson ideas – integrating real-life examples for better comprehension Developing teaching strategies for complex concepts How this is likely to be examined – the question types Past questions to inform your teaching 	
Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms	1.50 – 2.30pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective strategies to navigate tricky areas Grappling with complex topics – ensure success with your cohort Understanding the anticipated examination structure for the topic Drawing insights from past examination questions to enhance your teaching methods 	
Ensuring Success in Extended Writing Questions	2.30 – 3.10pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A look at sample responses and why they have been marked, how they have been marked Developing an approach to marking that enables progression of all students Marking task: a short, interactive session which involves marking sample responses Good habits when marking extended writing questions 	
Discussion: afternoon tea	3.10 – 3.15pm
Effective Exam Preparation Strategies	3.15 – 3.45pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing comprehensive revision plans for students Implementing formative assessment strategies throughout the course Exploring resources and tools for effective exam preparation Addressing common pitfalls and challenges in the lead-up to the exam 	

LOCATION/DATE

London

Thursday 21 March 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses. She has presented many biology courses for teachers, student revision conferences and online web conferences. She is also involved in presenting international IB student revision courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Experienced AQA A-Level Biology teachers
- Teachers new to AQA A-Level Biology
- Heads of Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Gain a deep understanding of how to deliver topics from paper 1 with a focus and purpose to improve attainment
- Increase the number of students with potential for the highest grades in this paper
- Explore many topics from paper 1 with suggestions on how to maintain focus on the end attainment
- Develop a teaching philosophy that is informed, targeted and effective, with proven strategies for teaching challenging content
- Enhance your ability to guide students in effective exam preparation
- Gain resources that you can take away for immediate use in the classroom

A-LEVEL **NEW: AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING RESULTS IN PAPER 2**

CODE **9651**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This excellent new course is designed for AQA A-Level Biology teachers aiming to enhance their expertise in preparing students for success in Paper 2

The course will delve into key strategies for understanding the exam structure, tackling various question types effectively, providing an intense, advanced, focus on deconstructing questions from paper 1 and deciphering example responses.

There will also be a focus on pedagogy for paper 2, but most importantly on preparing students for the exam. This course will provide a focus on raising a grade B to a grade A/A* and how to do this with specific topics from paper 2.

The course will include a section on exam tactics and techniques, with what examiners need to see and how to get your students to do this.

PROGRAMME

Examining the Components of Paper 2 and Embedding Effective Pedagogy 10.00 – 10.30am

- Examining the specific requirements of paper 2 – analysing the assessment objectives and their implications
- Understanding the weighting and different sections in the exam
- Identifying the key challenges in this paper and the key skills required for success
- Reviewing the most recent exam – learning from previous mistakes
- Developing smart and effective pedagogy that maximises attainment

Energy Transfers in and between Organisms 10.30 – 11.10am

- Developing engaging teaching strategies for complex concepts
- Identifying, addressing and creating specific lesson ideas for challenging content
- How this is likely to be examined – the question types
- Past questions to inform your teaching

Discussion: coffee break 11.10 – 11.30am

Organisms Respond to Changes in their Internal and External Environments 11.30 – 12.10pm

- Tackling the problematic areas in this topic
- Building student confidence in dealing with difficult topics
- How Cells are likely to be examined
- Past questions to inform your teaching

Lunch and informal discussion 12.10 – 1.10pm

Genetics, Populations, Evolution and Eco-systems 1.10 – 1.50pm

- Lesson ideas – integrating real-life examples for better comprehension
- Developing teaching strategies for complex concepts
- How this is likely to be examined – the question types
- Past questions to inform your teaching

The Control of Gene Expression 1.50 – 2.30pm

- Effective strategies to navigate tricky areas
- Grappling with complex topics – ensure success with your cohort
- Understanding the anticipated examination structure for the topic
- Drawing insights from past examination questions to enhance your teaching methods

Ensuring Success in Extended Writing Questions 2.30 – 3.10pm

- A look at sample responses and why they have been marked, how they have been marked
- Developing an approach to marking that enables progression of all students
- Marking task: a short, interactive session which involves marking sample responses
- Good habits when marking extended writing questions

Discussion: afternoon tea 3.10 – 3.15pm

Effective Exam Preparation Strategies 3.15 – 3.45pm

- Developing comprehensive revision plans for students
- Implementing formative assessment strategies throughout the course
- Exploring resources and tools for effective exam preparation
- Addressing common pitfalls and challenges in the lead-up to the exam

LOCATION/DATE

London

Friday 22 March 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses. She has presented many biology courses for teachers, student revision conferences and online web conferences. She is also involved in presenting international IB student revision courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Experienced AQA A-Level Biology teachers
- Teachers new to AQA A-Level Biology
- Heads of Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Gain a deep understanding of how to deliver topics from paper 2 with a focus and purpose to improve attainment
- Increase the number of students with potential for the highest grades in this paper
- Explore many topics from paper 2 with suggestions on how to maintain focus on the end attainment
- Develop a teaching philosophy that is informed, targeted and effective, with proven strategies for teaching challenging content
- Enhance your ability to guide students in effective exam preparation
- Gain resources that you can take away for immediate use in the classroom

OUTSTANDING ASSESSMENT, MARKING AND FEEDBACK IN AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY

CODE **9544**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This brand-new course focuses on developing a deeper understanding of assessment in AQA A-Level Biology and provides opportunities to explore strategies to enhance exam performance for students of all attainment levels.

The course will enable teachers to develop their understanding and skills needed to assess student responses to the different question types on AQA A-Level Biology exam papers. The course will also emphasise those teaching and learning strategies which will best facilitate improvement in student performance with a focus on the role of assessment for learning.

PROGRAMME

A Focus on the Assessment Model and the Support Available

TIME

10.00 – 10.50am

- Understanding the different requirements and demands of the 3 exam papers
- Explanation of the finer details of mark-schemes to know how marks are gained and lost
- Integrating the use of the Principal Examiner's reports into your teaching to inform students to avoid common errors and follow the advice being offered by AQA
- Appreciating the importance of the 'student learning outcomes' stated in the specification and the implications for teaching and learning

Discussion: coffee break

10.50 – 11.10am

Effective Assessment and Feedback to Students on Paper 1 Topics and Questions

11.10 – 12.00pm

- The most common student misconceptions of the paper 1 topics and how to challenge and eradicate these
- Using the AQA guidance provided in the Paper 1 examiner reports to improve students' performance
- Recommended teaching and learning strategies for the trickiest topics in Paper 1
- Resources and assessment methods that have been found to improve students' understanding and performance in answering questions on the Paper 1 topics

Effective Assessment and Feedback to Students on Paper 2 Topics and Questions

12.00 – 12.50pm

- The most common student misconceptions of the paper 2 topics and how to challenge and eradicate these
- Using the AQA guidance provided in the Paper 2 examiner reports to improve students' performance
- Recommended teaching and learning strategies for the trickiest topics in Paper 2
- Resources and assessment methods that have been found to improve students' understanding and performance in answering questions on the Paper 2 topics

Lunch and informal discussion

12.50 – 1.50pm

Effective assessment and feedback to students on the Paper 3 requirements

1.50 – 2.40pm

- Why students find Section A of Paper 3 the most difficult part of the A-level Biology assessment: where most of the marks are lost
- The AQA guidance on Paper 3, Section A from the reports and how best to implement these
- Recommended teaching and learning strategies for improving students' practical skills and how to improve their data analysis and evaluation ability
- How to decide which essay OPTION is best for your students – the pros and cons of each

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.40 – 2.45pm

Improving students' revision and exam technique

2.45 – 3.30pm

- A range of successful revision methods for students
- Getting the most from AQA past-papers and mark-schemes
- Detailed guidance on students' examination technique and to persuade them to follow these

LOCATION/DATE

London

Friday 08 March 2024

COURSE LEADER

Ellena Gilson is a former Head of Biology at a top grammar school with over 25 years of outstanding teaching experience. She has extensive experience as an A-Level Biology examiner and holds senior positions for two major examination boards.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- All teachers of AQA A-Level Biology
- Curriculum Leaders of Science and Biology
- Teachers who are new to teaching A-level Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Develop a deeper understanding of the assessment demands in AQA A Level Biology
- Discover what examiners are looking for in all exam papers
- Enhance your analytical and guidance skills for student responses of different questions types: the short-answer, longer structured-answer and multiple-choice questions
- Special focus on the requirements of questions that test students' practical skills and their ability to analyse and evaluate experimental data
- Learn valuable techniques to help your students to become more self-sufficient in their own assessment journey
- Take away strategies and approaches to maximise students' marks in the exams

AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: MAXIMISING STUDENT OUTCOMES IN THE EXAM PAPERS

CODE **9592**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

Irrespective of how well staff prepare students for the AQA exam papers in A-Level Biology, each year many marks are lost because of poor exam technique or students misinterpreting what a question is asking for.

This new course will look at the different types of questions featured across the 3 exam papers and how the initial reading and dissecting of a question is key to answering the question in the way that the question setter intended it to be answered.

There will be examples of answers from across a range of topics to illustrate the differences between high scoring answers and mediocre answers, which, when grade boundaries are very 'tight', could mean the loss of one or more grade.

Other common exam technique errors will also be addressed, and strategies introduced to help students monitor improvement in their exam technique.

A methodology for marking, grading and evaluating student work will be introduced.

PROGRAMME

TIME

Exploring the Different Types of Questions Across the Exam Papers

10.00 – 11.00am

- Identifying the range of question types; multiple choice, short structured, longer structured, data analysis, interpretation and evaluation, practical skills, synoptic questions, comprehension and essay
- Deepening the understanding of command words and the impact on an answer and subsequent marks gained when the command word in a question is not accurately addressed
- Developing student's exam skills; scaffolding, fill in gaps, part paragraphs, so-called model answers for high-scoring, mid-scoring and low-scoring responses, essay feedback sheets and developing literacy for concise answers

Discussion: coffee break

11.00 – 11.15am

Introduction to Ways to Prepare Students for Examination

11.15 – 12.30pm

- Overview of good practice in preparation for any exam series; reflection, knowledge and skills audit, action plan, set targets and review them regularly using trackers, long term planning, question matrix per topic/paper, revision aids
- Identifying the common pitfalls that students make at both ends of the ability spectrum and ways to avoid this
- Using historical centre-based information to address issues with the current cohort

Lunch and informal discussion

12.30 – 1.15pm

Extracting the Correct Information from the Question

1.15 – 2.15pm

- A question is more than just a test of subject knowledge – how to ensure that students dissect a question correctly
- Strategies to standardise the dissection of a question across different units, irrespective of the member of staff delivering the area of the specification
- Strategies for selecting appropriate content and utilising effective presentation for both structured questions and synoptic questions

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.15 – 2.30pm

Accurate Staff and Peer Marking

2.30 – 3.30pm

- How to approach teaching A-Level exam skills with confidence
- The use of appropriate and meaningful annotation when marking exam questions to give students the greatest amount of accurate information to help them improve their answers
- How students can monitor their own exam technique in homework and assessment tasks

LOCATION/DATE

London

Friday 22 March 2024

COURSE LEADER

Ellena Gilson is a former Head of Biology at a top grammar school with over 25 years of outstanding teaching experience. She has extensive experience as an A-Level Biology examiner and holds senior positions for two major examination boards.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Heads of Science Departments
- Teachers who deliver any of the units for AQA A-Level Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Identify the range of question types across all three exam papers
- Identify the main areas where students lose marks when answering exam questions
- Focus on how to extract information from a question to allow access to all the marks available
- Analysing how; a lack of examples, repetition of information, failure to focus on key terms, insufficient points and vague comments can impact the final outcome
- Develop strategies for student self-monitoring and evaluation of their exam technique
- Develop an understanding of accurate staff and peer marking

AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: HIGH IMPACT STRATEGIES TO ACCESS TOP MARKS

CODE 9301

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This new in-depth course will explore high impact strategies that raise attainment and support students to access top marks in their AQA A-Level Biology examinations. The course will share ideas and accompanying materials that you can take-away and use immediately in the classroom. You will leave equipped with knowledge of the latest evidence-informed teaching, learning and assessment practice as well as feedback from the most recent exams.

In addition, the course includes access to a range of resources and practical strategies that will enable you to meet the needs of your most able students and ultimately increase A and A* grade attainment. The course will also place the students' learning in the context of the next step with suggestions of how to engage the most able by opening the door on to further studying Biology at degree level.

Although aimed at teachers of AQA A-Level Biology, the course will benefit those following other major exam boards.

PROGRAMME

Key A/A* Skills: Mastery and Metacognition

10.00 – 11.15am

- Strategies to construct outstanding exam responses, looking at example A/A* exam responses
- How to tackle the tough exam questions and gain top marks
- Creating room for success: Training students to 'Mentally Step Back' and to develop 'Head Space' for clearer thinking under pressure
- Strategies to boost efficiency. Some of the most able students often 'overwrite', these strategies will help them 'zone in' to maximise top marks, with minimum effort

Discussion: coffee break

11.15 – 11.30am

Key A/A* Teacher Skills: Feedback and Feedforward

11.30 – 12.30pm

- Scaffolding as a key element of high-quality instruction, even the most able need to have clear structures.
- Providing higher order skills practice and model responses for students. Showing A/A* students what top mark exam responses look like, how to develop their own answers.
- Addressing key impact factors – 'Teacher Credibility' and 'Student Expectations' – research evidence suggests these are vital – top tips on how to address these.

Lunch and informal discussion

12.30 – 1.30pm

Key A/A* Characteristics: Resilience and Wellbeing

1.30 – 2.15pm

- How to support students with high expectations from falling backwards under the pressure – new research on perfectionism and healthy striving
- Strategies to support mental health and motivation
- Strategies to build grit and resilience
- How to use practical mindfulness training to promote awareness and wellbeing, whilst teaching key concepts at the same time: practical session

Key A/A* Exam Skills: Getting top marks in AO2/AO3 questions

2.15 – 2.45pm

- What does an A* AO2/3 response look like?
- Strategies to improve application skills for essays
- What does evaluation in an A/A* essay look like?

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.45 – 3.00pm

Key Curriculum Insights for A/A*: Less is More strategies

3.00 – 3.45pm

- Avoiding misconceptions by re-routing student expression
- Use of 'Threshold concepts' and 'Hinge questions' – a way to challenge top end students and mid/lower end ability simultaneously
- Teaching research methods in context for depth of understanding – preparation for ongoing research at university and into their career
- How to deal with the large content in AQA A-Level Biology – selectivity and re-cycling top tips for overlap key-studies that high end students can re-signpost across topics

LOCATION/DATE

London

Tuesday 27 February 2024

Friday 14 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses. She has presented many biology courses for teachers, student revision conferences and online web conferences. She is also involved in presenting international IB student revision courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Teachers of AQA A-Level Biology
- Heads of Biology departments
- Heads of Humanities departments

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Increase awareness of what success looks like for the most able Biology students
- Gain the latest evidence-informed practice that challenges A/A* students
- Develop greater understanding of what examiners are looking for in Grade A/A* responses
- Challenge your students with problem solving, modelling and questioning to stretch pupils' thinking processes
- Take away a range of innovative teaching ideas and resources to impact your pupils' learning immediately
- Deepen your understanding of assessment criteria and mark schemes
- Bring back concrete strategies and ideas to share with other A-Level Biology teachers
- Explore how to maximise success levels for your students in the examination
- Learn how to develop resilience so that talented Biology students achieve their A/A* potential

AIMING FOR A/A* IN AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY

CODE **9302**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This new course will demonstrate how to guide your best students to achieve Grades A & A* in future AQA A-level Biology examinations. The course will explore the characteristics of A/A* students identified in research and why and how we have to challenge our most able Biology students.

Focused extensively on evidence-based teaching, learning and assessment practice as well as feedback from the most recent exams, you will leave with a vast range of resources and practical strategies that will enable you to meet the needs of your most able students and ultimately increase A and A* grade attainment.

Finally, we will look beyond the course to focus on preparing these students to continue studying Biology at university.

PROGRAMME

Challenging our most able students

TIME

10.00 – 10.45am

- Who are our most able students?
- Why do we have to challenge our most able students?
- How are A/A* Grades achieved?

Discussion: coffee break

10.45 – 11.00am

Focus on assessment demands for A/A* students

11.00 – 12.00pm

- Examine the assessment demands of all components including the use of assessment objectives as a framework for assessment
- Consider the most effective models for delivery of the course to ensure effective assessment
- Feedback and grading analysis from the most recent exam. What is required for A/A*?
- Analysis of mark schemes – which sections/questions differentiated candidates?
- Grades A & A*: what are the differences between these?
- Key attributes of Grade A/A* students in the classroom
- Avoiding potential hazards: what can cost a top student their A/A* grade?

The key challenges for A/A* students in the Papers

12.00 – 1.00pm

- Developing a deep understanding of core Biology concepts
- Supporting students to write top band essays
- Developing a personalised approach to note taking to support recall
- Applying Biological concepts to consistently write top band evaluation
- Activating prior knowledge to improve retention of key topic areas

Lunch and informal discussion

1.00 – 2.00pm

Stretching and Challenging the most able students

2.00 – 3.00pm

- Moving on from GCSE approaches – encouraging students to become sensitive readers
- Using wider reading to prepare for exams
- What makes a strong A-Level response? How can we build up to this?
- Working up to full essay questions, and using them to stretch students
- Planning with and designing support for students aiming for top grades
- Extra-curricular ideas that help get A and A* grades

Discussion: afternoon tea

3.00 – 3.10pm

Tactics for achieving the highest grades

3.10 – 3.40pm

- Develop an action plan for success for students aiming for top grades
- The shorter questions: what are the potential pitfalls?
- Focus on the extended questions and essays: what does a grade A/A* candidate need to do?
- Varying response practice to stretch the most able
- Revision ideas to help students produce high grade essays

LOCATION/DATE

London

Tuesday 12 March 2024

Thursday 04 July 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses. She has presented many biology courses for teachers, student revision conferences and online web conferences. She is also involved in presenting international IB student revision courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Teachers of AQA A-Level Biology
- Heads of Biology/Science
- Aspiring Heads of Biology/Science
- Teachers with responsibility for A-Level Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Increase awareness of what teacher should aim to achieve with the most able Biologists
- Gain the latest evidence-based practice that challenges A/A* students
- Develop greater understanding of what examiners are looking for in Grade A/A* responses
- Take away a range of innovative teaching ideas and electronic resources for your most able students
- Learn how to develop resilience so that talented Biology students achieve their A/A* potential
- Focused on identifying the demands of Grades A & A* and providing materials to help teachers prepare students effectively
- A detailed look at the different demands of questions

A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: INCREASED RESULTS FOR LOWER PERFORMING STUDENTS

CODE **8679**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course is aimed at teachers working with mixed ability and lower attaining students who are looking to maximise their potential in the upcoming A-Level Biology 2023 exams.

The course covers a range of effective teaching and assessment strategies, monitoring, early intervention and exam technique and approaches that improve confidence, effort and achievement. The course provides a comprehensive toolkit that adds value and will help learners excel in their Summer 2023 exam performance.

PROGRAMME

TIME

Effective techniques to embed subject knowledge and get students thinking synoptically

10.00 – 11.35am

- Implementing classroom techniques to ensure that lower ability learners understand key concepts.
- Develop effective techniques to help lower ability learners to retain knowledge, understand concepts and develop skills.
- Exploring Active Learning to develop skills and retain knowledge
- Lesson strategies that address difficult concepts where students experience difficulties such as the kidney.

Discussion: coffee break

11.35 – 11.50am

Monitoring & early intervention strategies that positively impact on student performance

11.50 – 12.30pm

- Techniques to quickly identify underperforming students and implement strategies to effectively support them.
- Using a range of monitoring tools to track performance, recognise underachievement and motivate learners.
- Explore early intervention strategies that engage learners and develop independent learning skills
- Implementing mastery tests to identify students who haven't grasped the fundamental concepts
- Driving student progress through marking and feedback.

Lunch and informal discussion

12.30 – 1.30pm

The Exams: Practical Strategies to raise attainment levels and enhance exam performance

1.30 – 2.15pm

- How to teach challenging topics to lower ability learners
- Embed exam technique into your teaching to enhance the performance of lower ability students
- Explore assessment strategies to help learners identify where they need to improve and how to achieve this.
- How to effectively use feedback.
- Methods to help students understand how the exam are marked and ways to help students use this knowledge
- How to tackle questions set in both a theoretical and practical context.
- Improve your students' confidence in being able to analyse, interpret and evaluate biological information, data and ideas.

Moving lower ability students towards mastery of practical skills

2.15 – 3.00pm

- Strategies to enable students to demonstrate these competencies consistently and routinely
- Developing and assessing the more challenging skills e.g. opportunities for students to select equipment and measurement strategies or to make adjustments when necessary.
- Researching, referencing and reporting – skill-building ideas to develop students' competence in using secondary sources to support planning and conclusion

Discussion: afternoon tea

3.00 – 3.10pm

Exam Success: Preparing students for the Practical assessments

3.10 – 4.00pm

- Using the language of measurement – ideas and activities to embed the key terms
- Strategies to improve exam technique in practical-based questions
- Examples of questions testing different assessment objectives

LOCATION/DATE

London

Wednesday 28 February 2024

Wednesday 26 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Michael Brown was an examiner for 18 years and has worked in post 16 education for 23 years, initially as an A-level Biology Tutor before progressing to Head of Department and finally STEM and Quality Initiatives Manager.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- A-Level Biology teachers
- Heads of Biology
- Heads of Science

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Utilise techniques to quickly identify underperformance and implement effective support strategies for success in the 2023 Exams
- Increased understanding of how to motivate underachieving learners and improve exam performance.
- Take Away fresh approaches to teach challenging topics to lower ability learners
- Techniques for tackling synoptic and data handling questions with confidence.
- Develop effective teaching and learning techniques to help lower ability learners to retain knowledge and better understand concepts
- How to prepare your students for questions in Summer 2023 examining the required practicals

OUTSTANDING AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY TEACHING

CODE 8681

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course, updated for Autumn 2022 is designed for all teachers who wish to ensure all students maximise their potential in A-Level Biology. By providing a range of proven, effective advanced teaching techniques, reinvented approaches, the course aims to help teachers create outstanding teaching, learning and achievement success to raise the overall attainment of their classes.

Emphasis will be placed on the content students often struggle with and strategies to teach this more successfully, how to wrestle with the challenges of the synoptic nature of the courses and skills students need for successful exam performance.

At the heart of Harjit's course is the need for rigorous understanding of the topics covered in order to flexibly apply this knowledge to unfamiliar examination scenarios, and how this can be improved for students from different starting points.

This intensive course will demonstrate how to guide your students to achieve their maximum possible grades in future AQA A-Level Biology examinations. Although the course is designed for teachers of AQA A-Level Biology it would be of benefit to teachers of other exam boards.

PROGRAMME

TIME

Planning for Success: Exploring the core concepts to build an integrated approach 10.00 – 11.00am

- Identifying and highlighting the core concepts to build an integrated approach to teaching biology. What are the 'first principles' in biology that give students a solid foundation for A-Level study?
- Sequencing topic content to embed opportunities for retrieval practice.
- Using core concepts to teach the most challenging areas of the course: the electron transport chain, immunity and action potentials.
- Interleaving taught content to promote student understanding of the inter-related nature of biological study supporting the teaching of more challenging content (e.g. interleaving photosynthesis and productivity, membranes and transport and action potentials)

Discussion: coffee break 11.00 – 11.15am

Strategies and Scaffolding to support students' application of knowledge to Unfamiliar Contexts 11.15 – 12.15pm

- Anticipating misconceptions and strategies to avoid them in meiosis
- Scaffolds to support students in developing fluency with biological terminology.
- Example frameworks that encourage students to develop rich and full responses on selection
- Questions, question types – breaking down the questions, applying appropriate responses.
- Tackling Hardy-Weinberg equations with modelling approaches.
- Interpreting stats tests correctly and building the three-part conclusion.

Raising Performance in Exams 12.15 – 1.00pm

- Building vocabulary and developing high end skills – spotting the key command words
- How to apply the appropriate knowledge to questions covering 'unfamiliar contexts.'
- Integrating practical skills and theoretical content to help students write about their practical work confidently
- How to support students to write coherently using biological terminology correctly.
- Evaluating conclusions made by other scientists – why students don't seem to get it.
- Making links – example responses to the synoptic essay and what examiners are looking for.

Lunch and informal discussion 1.00 – 2.00pm

Outstanding A-Level Biology teaching for A/A* results 2.00 – 2.45pm

- Fresh ideas, approaches and methods that challenge A/A* students and support their further development
- Teaching to the top: strategies for stretching/A* students and challenging complacent high-achievers.
- Supporting non-mathematicians in Biology with multi-part maths problems
- Encouraging self-monitoring and evaluation – when and how to intervene in year 12 and 13
- Develop greater understanding of the precision and detail that examiners are looking for in A/A* students
- Embedding Olympiad questions and stretching the most-able students
- Where to go 'over and above' to maximise outcomes
- Find out more about the barriers to progress and ways to support highly able students to overcome them

Enrichment Programmes to Raise the Profile of A-Level Biology 2.45 – 3.30pm

- Enrichment programmes to raise the profile of A-Level Biology.
- Where can Biology take me? Ideas to boost progression in the biological sciences.
- Beyond fieldwork: trips that bring the course to life.
- What next? Preparation for university and tackling Oxbridge admissions.

Evaluation and Close 3.30 – 3.40pm

LOCATION/DATE

London

Wednesday 06 March 2024

Friday 21 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit K Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Heads of Science
- Heads of Biology
- Teachers of AQA A-level Biology
- ECTs in A-Level Biology would also benefit from this course

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Explore the key concepts in biology that underpin topic content to develop an integrated approach to biological study
- Develop the use of retrieval practice to promote student recall, supporting the teaching of the most challenging A-Level topics
- Strategies and scaffolding to support student's application of knowledge to novel contexts
- New approaches for Biological writing, how to support students to write coherently using biological terminology correctly.
- Take away fresh ideas, approaches and methods that challenge A/A* students and support their further development
- Develop greater understanding of the precision and detail that examiners are looking for in A/A* students
- Find out more about the barriers to progress and ways to support highly able students to overcome them

A-LEVEL AQA A-LEVEL BIOLOGY: A COMPLETE GUIDE FOR NEW TEACHERS

CODE **8680**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course offers an introduction and overview to teaching the AQA A-level Biology programme of study for anyone in their first 3 years of teaching the course, or for anyone lacking confidence in delivering the course effectively. While assessment materials will be drawn from the AQA course, many of the ideas will be applicable to other specifications.

PROGRAMME

Overview of the AQA A-level Biology course including challenges and what to expect from pupils

TIME

10.00 - 10.30am

- Key messages from the Summer 2022 Exams and preparing for 2023
- Recognising which areas will be most challenging for you and how to address these issues
- How to develop a teaching plan that reflects the assessment objective weightings and the areas which require more intense teaching
- Identifying your support network and making the most of it – particularly in a small department
- Ensuring topic areas which create the foundation for success – incorporating them into every lesson

Expectations at A-Level

10.30 - 11.20am

- The transition between GCSE and A-Level
- What do successful A-Level students do?
- What do Grade A/A* responses look like?
- What do Grade D responses look like?
- Synoptic skills and how to use these in your teaching

Discussion: coffee break

11.20 - 11.40am

Approaches to Effectively Teaching the Maths and Practical Skills

11.40 - 12.40pm

- Effective methods and approaches for integrating maths and practical skills into teaching of the course
- How to integrate practical skills and theoretical content to help students write about their practical work confidently
- Practical strategies and approaches in the key challenges in teaching maths and practical skills

Lunch and informal discussion

12.40 - 1.40pm

Key Ideas for teaching the content knowledge from Paper 1

1.40 - 2.40pm

- Pitfalls and easy wins when teaching Biological Molecules, Cells, Organisms, exchange substances and their environment
- Teaching for success; how to support students to remember key concepts and begin to apply them – interleaving and retrieval strategies
- Teaching across the ability range; how to ensure top students are challenged, while not leaving lower ability students behind.
- Lessons from the exam boards and how to implement them in the classroom.

Planning and structuring

2.40 - 3.15pm

- Curriculum issues – Intent, Implementation and assessing Impact
- Milestones for success, what should students have mastered by the end of year 12
- Assessment time tables, when, what and how and how to balance this with whole school assessment schedules
- Time management – how to plan so that you can mark efficiently and effectively; use of peer assessment

The exams – what is expected

3.15 - 3.45pm

- Overview of all three papers by AQA, what are they looking for?
- Teaching towards the 'endgame', what language to use, ensure you are marking 'like the examiner' and secure grading
- Focus on essay structure in exams, how to pick up easy marks, and what top grade responses look like

LOCATION/DATE

London

Thursday 01 February 2024

Friday 05 July 2024

COURSE LEADER

Dr Harjit K Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Applied and Vocational courses.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Those teaching A-Level Biology for the first time
- Teachers lacking in confidence in the qualification
- Heads of Biology
- Heads of Science
- ECTs in Biology

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Provide teachers of A-Level Biology with the material and confidence to teach effectively to all ability ranges
- Obtain quality understanding of the key challenge areas and how to teach them
- Explore how the maths and practical skills can be embedded throughout the course
- Gain insight into the content, the exam structure and the how exams are marked.
- Leave with a set of resources and scheme of work for the full 2 year course
- Understanding of how to differentiate using scaffold and stretch strategies for essay writing

TEACHING A-LEVEL BIOLOGY OCR A FOR THE FIRST TIME

CODE **9575**

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course offers an introduction and overview to teaching the A-level Biology OCR A programme of study for anyone in their first 3 years of teaching the course, or for anyone lacking confidence in delivering the course effectively. While assessment materials will be drawn from the OCR course, many of the ideas will be applicable to other specifications.

PROGRAMME

TIME

Overview of the A-level Biology OCR A Course Specification

10.00 – 10.30am

- Introduction to the learning outcomes and why they are so important for exams
- How to develop your teaching style to reflect the assessment objective weightings and the areas which require more intense teaching
- Overview of all three OCR papers

Embedding Maths and Practical Skills into your Teaching

10.30 – 11.10am

- Understand how Maths is assessed and can be integrated into the general course teaching
- Discuss how practical skills are assessed and are vital to all abilities reaching their potential grade
- An introduction into the language of measurement

Discussion: coffee break

11.10 – 11.25am

Independent Assessment of Practical Skills in Exam Questions

11.25 – 12.25pm

- How to integrate practical skills and theoretical content to help students write about their practical work confidently
- Exemplar material focusing on practical skills questions

Lunch and informal discussion

12.25 – 1.10pm

Course Delivery and Key Challenges

1.10 – 2.10pm

- Discussion of the options for delivering the course
- How to incorporate independent learning to be able to cover the large course content
- The importance of synoptic teaching and learning
- Teaching for success; how to support students to remember key concepts and begin to apply them – interleaving and retrieval strategies

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.10 – 2.20pm

The Most Important Topics and the Most Challenging Topics

2.20 – 2.50pm

- Discussion of the topic areas that create the foundation for success
- Recognising which topic areas will be most challenging and ideas to make them more accessible
- The importance of Y12 AS knowledge and understanding for Y13 topics
- Teaching across the ability range; how to ensure top students are challenged, while not leaving lower ability students behind

Exam Structure, Different Types of Exam Questions and Exam Technique

2.50 – 3.30pm

- An analysis of the different types of exam question and strategies for success
- A specific focus on how to attempt the level of response questions (LoR)
- Teaching towards the 'endgame', what language to use, misconceptions to avoid and general tips for success
- Time management – the use of peer assessment and self-assessment
- Support available from the exam boards – where to find it and how to use it

LOCATION/DATE

London

Friday 01 March 2024

Friday 21 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Ellena Gilson is a former Head of Biology at a top grammar school with over 25 years of outstanding teaching experience. She has extensive experience as an A-Level Biology examiner and holds senior positions for two major examination boards.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ECTs in Biology
- Those teaching A-Level Biology for the first time
- Teachers lacking in confidence in the qualification
- Heads of Biology
- Heads of Science

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- A focus on the specification to be able to incorporate the learning outcomes and assessment objectives into your teaching
- Explore how the maths and practical skills are assessed and can be embedded throughout the course
- Discuss how to deliver the course effectively to all ability ranges
- Obtain quality understanding of the key challenge areas and how to teach them
- Gain insight into the exam structure and the how exams are marked, to be able to guide students in exam technique for the different types of questions
- Understand how to construct an answer for the level of response questions using scaffold and stretch strategies

GCSE TEACHING GCSE BIOLOGY FOR THE FIRST TIME

CODE 9549

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This new course provides teachers new to teaching GCSE Biology, useful information based on examiner reports from the most recent exams, including numerous strategies to create excellent, creative and safe Biology teaching for students of all ability levels.

Offering an introduction and overview of GCSE Biology, providing essential skills and tips in how to effectively deliver content, ensuring maximum student engagement and maximum attainment. The course is suitable for anyone just starting to teach, in their first few years of teaching or lacking confidence in teaching GCSE Biology.

PROGRAMME

Understanding and Structuring GCSE Biology

10.00 - 10.40am

- Key topics, concepts, and learning outcomes for teaching GCSE Biology
- Exploring the progression of topics and building connections between concepts
- Planning your course and establishing your teaching for student success
- Examine the different question types used in Biology exams
- Examiner findings from the 2023 exams and the significance for classroom practice

Innovative Ways to Teach the Complex Elements of GCSE Biology

10.40 - 11.25am

- Strategies and teaching methods to ensure students understand the fundamentals underpinning GCSE Biology
- Sequencing and cascading topics successfully
- Innovative ways to teach the complex elements of GCSE Biology
- Analysis and problem-solving strategies, especially for less able students
- Addressing common misconceptions and challenging topics
- Encouraging student questions and fostering intellectual curiosity in Biology
- How to get students to think at GCSE level and above throughout the course

Discussion: coffee break

11.25 - 11.45am

Outstanding Pedagogy: Absorbing and Interactive Learning to Enhance Student Engagement

11.45 - 12.30pm

- Principles of effective lesson planning: objectives, structure, and differentiation
- Designing engaging and interactive learning activities for different topics
- Integrating real-world applications of Biology to enhance student engagement
- Establishing a positive and inclusive classroom environment
- Strategies for managing behaviour, engaging reluctant learners, and promoting active participation
- Incorporating digital tools, simulations and online resources

Lunch and informal discussion

12.30 - 1.30pm

Practical Work and Laboratory

1.30 - 2.15pm

- Identifying the essential practical experiments and integrating them into lessons effectively
- Adapting experiments to different classroom settings and available resources, ensuring laboratory safety: guidelines, risk assessments, and best practices

Assessment, Marking and Feedback: Getting the Best out of your Students

2.15 - 2.55pm

- Exploring diverse assessment methods: formative, summative and self-assessment
- What are examiners looking for in student responses?
- Practical advice and guidance on making the exam accessible to all students
- Common questions and question types and how to construct your own that align with GCSE Biology specifications
- How to prepare students for answering longer response questions
- Providing constructive feedback to support student progress and development

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.55 - 3.00pm

Preparing for the Exams

3.00 - 3.15pm

- Adaptive teaching methods to stretch and support all students in the run up to the exams
- Revision strategies and methods that really work
- Teaching resilience and grit
- Bullet point an action plan to implement upon returning to school

LOCATION/DATE

London

Wednesday 06 March 2024

Friday 21 June 2024

COURSE LEADER

Prishilla Narindar is currently Deputy head of Faculty and Science lead at Henry Cort College. With over 10 years' experience in KS3 and KS4 science curriculum delivery in mainstream education and private tuition, she has led the local Science GCSE collaboration development group that partners with 8 schools and colleges. She has also successfully led active learning, cognitive load association and assessment workshops whilst coaching PGCE and ITT students for local partnerships.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Newly qualified GCSE Biology Teachers
- Biology teachers teaching outside their specialism

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Develop excellent practices to use with all of your classes especially during practical lessons
- Gain an insight into methods that allows pupils across the ability range to access Biology at GCSE level
- Learn how to differentiate material quickly and easily for excellent teaching
- Explore how to increase the attainment of all your pupils and involve them in the target setting process
- Deepened understanding of GCSE Biology and its key concepts
- Enhanced pedagogical skills for explaining complex Biology topics
- Practical strategies to engage students, manage classrooms, and assess progress effectively

GCSE BIOLOGY: AIMING FOR GRADES 7-9

CODE 9304

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course, designed for all teachers of GCSE Biology is focused on meeting the demands of the higher-level marking bands. It will focus on exploring the characteristics of work produced by students working at the highest levels and examine a range of teaching materials designed to secure the best possible outcomes.

The course will cover what is expected of high ability students and outline ways in order to successfully build on your own teaching practice and embed new methods of working.

Using examples of pupils' work and model answers throughout, the course will look at the common features of top-level work. The course will also demonstrate teaching approaches for the toughest topics, leading up to preparing pupils for the examinations.

PROGRAMME

Focus on assessment demands for Grades 7-9, including feedback

10.00 – 11.00am

- Examine the assessment demands of all components including the use of assessment objectives as a framework for assessment
- Consider the most effective models for delivery of the course to ensure effective assessment practice across 2 years and in both components
- Review characteristics of Grade 7-9 GCSE Biology students in the GCSE
- Lessons learnt from the 2022 examination series – what students need to do to ensure that they achieve the highest grades in 2023

Discussion: coffee break

11.00 – 11.15am

Achieving top grades in Paper 1

11.15 – 12.30pm

- Review example Paper 1 responses at Grades 7-9: what top level students do
- Exploring the content of this paper that will particularly fire the imagination of very able students
- Differentiated teaching approaches for Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics which stretch and challenge the very able students
- Characteristics of the most successful candidates in this component
- Approaches to the open response questions – ways to develop the skills required
- What examiners are looking for in questions on Paper 1
- Examples of outstanding answers
- What moves a student on from a grade 7 – to grades 8 and 9 on the exam

Lunch and informal discussion

12.30 – 1.30pm

Aiming for grades 7-9 in Paper 2

1.30 – 2.30pm

- Teaching to the key characteristics demonstrated by able students which examiners look for
- Identifying and understanding question types on Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; and Ecology
- Examining strong exemplar responses to the focussed extract questions for this section
- What examiners are looking for in questions on Paper 2
- What moves a student from Grade 7 to Grades 8 and 9 on the exam
- How to support students in developing a top grade response

Discussion: afternoon tea

2.30 – 2.40pm

Exams: Tactics for achieving the highest grades

2.40 – 3.15pm

- What are the most common errors made by higher ability pupils?
- Revision ideas to help pupils achieve the highest grades.
- How to maximise the available time in the examination
- Reviewing, marking and feeding back on specimen scripts
- Giving good quality, specific feedback to students

Beyond the classroom: ideas for the most able GCSE Biologist

3.15 – 3.30pm

- Different ideas to keep the pupils interested
- Stretch and challenge without intimidation
- Beyond the classroom and the curriculum: educational visits and trips
- Looking ahead to Biology A-Level

LOCATION/DATE

London

Thursday 14 March 2024

Tuesday 09 July 2024

COURSE LEADER

Prishilla Narindar is currently Deputy head of Faculty and Science lead at Henry Cort College. With over 10 years' experience in KS3 and KS4 science curriculum delivery in mainstream education and private tuition, she has led the local Science GCSE collaboration development group that partners with 8 schools and colleges. She has also successfully led active learning, cognitive load association and assessment workshops whilst coaching PGCE and ITT students for local partnerships.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Heads of Science/Biology
- Teachers of AQA GCSE Biology
- Teachers aiming to boost the higher achievers

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Develop an understanding of the level descriptors and how pupils should apply them
- Discuss sample answers at grade 7 – 9 to identify key characteristics, and the approach of the examiner
- Increase awareness of why top students underachieve
- Provide and discuss different ways of teaching a content-heavy course
- Develop an understanding of the potential hazards students face when studying GCSE Biology

BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Stephen Belding is an accomplished teacher and Head of Chemistry at Rugby School. He attended St John's College, Oxford University, where he earned a degree in Chemistry (MChem) and a DPhil in Computational Electrochemistry. With a teaching career that commenced in 2012, Stephen has successfully instructed across five distinct exam specifications at three highly regarded schools in the UK. In 2022, he concluded his MEd research focusing on inspection reports and strategies for school improvement.

Michael Brown was an examiner for 18 years and has worked in post 16 education for 23 years, initially as an A-level Biology Tutor before progressing to Head of Department and finally STEM and Quality Initiatives Manager. He has had a positive effect on student's aspirations and achievement; his Learner Voice results are always very positive and examination results have been consistently above benchmark for all KPI's with excellent value added. As a Head of Department he completed an 'Exceeding Expectations' management training course and is a strong and effective leader. His Science provision was chosen as part of OFSTED's Good practice survey: Improving Sciences in Colleges. Michael was then seconded to another campus to improve science results and turned around the department within 12 months. During this time his college also reached the finals of the National STEMNET Awards for three consecutive years.

Ellena Gilson is a former Head of Biology at a top grammar school with over 25 years of outstanding teaching experience. She has extensive experience as an A-Level Biology examiner and holds senior positions for two major examination boards. She is closely involved in the production of AS Biology assessment material for one of the boards and sets exam questions for A-Level papers. She also authors A-Level and GCSE resources for several publishers and runs her own tutoring business, improving the exam outcomes for A-Level Biology students.

Nicola Manning has 33 years' experience of teaching A-level Biology and has attained a Silver Pearson's National Teaching award to recognise her successes. She currently teaches 6 A-level Biology classes, with an average class size of 22. Her cohorts regularly attain above the national averages on all benchmarks, her advice is supported by real-life outcomes. She has attained ALPS grade 2 for 5 consecutive years and been mentioned in ALPS reports. She has completed a research project for the Ipswich Opportunity Fund on the positive impacts of Flipped Learning on developing students' independence and life-long learning skills and is committed to raising the attainment of all learners.

Prish Narindar is currently Deputy head of Faculty and Science lead at a school in Hampshire. With over 10 years' experience in KS3 and KS4 science curriculum delivery in mainstream education and private tuition, she has led the local Science GCSE collaboration development group that partners with 8 schools and colleges. Prish has also successfully led active learning, cognitive load association and assessment workshops whilst coaching PGCE and ITT students for local partnerships. She has also successfully piloted the able students programme in collaboration with local secondary schools, and has worked with Hampshire HIAS group to develop and strengthen science curriculum delivery.

Dr Harjit K Singh is an experienced teacher and senior examiner for A-Level Biology. She has taught and examined A-Level Biology for over 25 years, IB Biology for 8 years as well as BTEC Applied Science. She is a published author of the Key Skills and Knowledge Booster Biology and co-author of Key Skills and Knowledge Booster BTEC Science Applied and Vocational courses. She has presented many biology courses for teachers, student revision conferences and online web conferences. She is also involved in presenting international IB student revision courses.

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- **Dedicated team of specialist examiner experts**; these individuals are not only experts in their particular fields but also familiar with delivering to student groups, and understand the need to make the days enriching, stimulating, informative and worthwhile
- **Invaluable, reliable and enriching** source of extra boost for students, and teachers
- Receive **key messages and feedback** from the 2023 June examinations
- Students will take away **first hand guidance** and crucial insight along with great strategies for structuring their answers and techniques to **build strong answers for success in the 2024 examinations**

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