

EDUCATION EVOLVED

Biology

What is the difference between A Level Biology and BTEC Human Biology as a subject?

There are lots of differences in the course content which can be seen on the presentation. The main differences are the focus of the content. A Level concentrates on the academic study of biology in a wide perspective taking into account all forms of life whereas Human Biology looks specifically at Humans and how a knowledge of biology and testing can influence human health.

How are the courses assessed?

A Level is 100% exams taken at the end of nearly 2 years of study, BTEC is 42% exams which are taken soon after the content is taught, and 58% coursework assignments. All exams and assignments on the BTEC course have to be passed or the course is failed.

How big are the classes?

Due to the size of the classrooms and health and safety we are limited to 23 students in a class. This is considerably smaller than the usual size of a GCSE class.

What do employers and universities think of the qualifications?

A Levels are well established and Biology as one of the sciences is considered to be a difficult, and therefore well considered, qualification. BTEC Human Biology is quite new and it is worth looking at career pathways to check the course is acceptable for intended next steps. It has to be said though of the universities contacted regarding medical and care pathways all said the course was acceptable. As with all BTEC courses though there are some universities which won't accept them.

What are they worth?

Both courses are considered as being of equal value in terms of UCAS points and the BTEC course we offer is the equivalent of one A Level. (This means that a BTEC D* is given the same points as an A* at A level and a BTEC ME is equivalent to a grade C at A level)

Which A levels do I need to study to do Medicine?

You should study A level Chemistry and A level Biology plus one other A level of your choice. This will allow you to study at any medical school. If you want to check requirements for other courses e.g. dentistry etc then Google 'Russell Group informed choices' this website is very helpful for checking you are choosing the right A levels for your future career/course.

Which A levels should I choose if I want to be a nurse?

You would be best advised to study either BTEC Human Biology or A level Biology plus Health and Social care.