"I was very hesitant at first choosing this subject as many older pupils said it was challenging, but working an extra few hours a week becomes much easier. It's an interesting subject and I really enjoy it."

Ela Evans

Chemistry

Why study Chemistry?

Chemistry A level is a highly respected A level, with its broad variety of tested skills, and it is a good choice for many degrees and careers. Chemistry has been described as the 'central science' and is often combined with either physics or biology. It is a compulsory choice for anyone wishing to pursue medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, as well as chemistry-based degrees, such as pharmacy, pharmacology, and biochemistry.

Chemistry will open the doors to countless careers, both in the lab and out of it, and people who have studied chemistry are employed in many sectors, including medicine research, manufacturing, and education.

Chemical scientists have a higher employment rate than students of other subjects, and they tend to be paid more too – up to 15 per cent higher in some cases. Over 70 per cent of chemistry students will enter a professional or managerial role when they have finished their studies and double the UK average go on to further study.

Entry requirements

GCSE Grade B in Chemistry or GCSE Grades B in both Unit 1 and 2 of Double Award Science, higher tier. A minimum of a B in GCSE maths is also required.

Course details and assessment format

AS UNIT 1: – The language of chemistry, structure of matter and simple reactions [20%]
(Written examination paper - 1½ hours, 80 marks)

AS UNIT 2 – Energy, rate and chemistry of carbon compounds [20%]
(Written examination paper - 1½ hours, 80 marks)

AS UNIT 3 – Physical and Inorganic Chemistry [25%]
(Written examination paper - 1¾ hours, 80 marks)

AS UNIT 4 – Organic Chemistry and analysis [25%]
(Written examination paper - 1¾ hours, 80 marks)

AS UNIT 5 – Practical examination [10%]
Experimental task (30 marks, 3 hours)
Practical methods and analysis task (30 marks, 1 hour)

Skills which are developed and possible progression

You will develop skills such as problem-solving, analytical skills and numerical ability. In addition, practial work will develop key laboratory skills, including using accurate laboratory apparatus, safe laboratory practices, chemical handling and disposal, data analysis, solving qualitative and quantitative problems.

Common career choices for chemistry students are medicine, veterinary science, pharmacy, pharmacology, dentistry, chemical Engineering, biochemistry, forensics, analytical chemist, laboratory technician, medicinal chemist, production chemist, environmental scientist, ecology, teaching, law, food science.