Wollaston School Sixth Form

'Dare to know seek to understand'

Course Information

A Level Chemistry

What is A Level Chemistry?
Atoms and molecules are the building blocks of the material world. This course provides a gateway to understanding the interactions between particles, their characteristics and how to analyse them. This course builds upon the information learned at GCSE and looks to stretch students in what is often ranked as one of the most challenging and rewarding A Levels.

What does the course involve?
This AQA course combines theory and relevant practical work, which are developed at different levels throughout the course. You will need to be able to communicate effectively, research solutions to problems and think critically about chemical problems. The course is suitable for you if you are interested in and enjoy Chemistry; enjoy carrying out investigations by using imaginative, logical and critical thinking; want to use Chemistry to support other qualifications or go on to further studies.

What themes are studied?
- Physical Chemistry (atomic structure, stoichiometry, bonding, energetics, kinetics, equilibria, electrochemistry and acids and bases.
- Inorganic chemistry (periodicity, group 2&7, properties of period 3, transition metals, reactions of solutions)
- Organic Chemistry (alkanes, halogenoalkanes, alkenes, alcohols, carbonyls, carboxylic acids, aromatics, polymers, isomerism, organic synthesis and analysis)

How is it assessed?
At Wollaston we follow the AQA specification. I n both AS and A Level Chemistry students are asked to display their understanding in three different ways. The first looks at students' knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures. The second looks at students' ability to apply this knowledge and the third looks at students' ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence.

There will be no formal external examination of the AS year. However, an internal exam will be taken to help judge suitability to progress to A2 Chemistry. The examinations at the end of Year 13 will assess knowledge learnt over both years.

Assessment in A Level Chemistry will consist of three exams taken at the end of the course. Exam 1&2 are equally weighted and Exam 3 is weighted about 15% lower. The A Level grade will depend on the performance in these exams only. A separate endorsement of practical skills will be taken alongside.

Extra Information
As in all A Level subjects students are expected to work hard and complete approximately four hours of self-study per week. Successful candidates will look to support their learning inside of class by carrying out wider research/reading. Learning objectives are provided for each topic, together with detailed notes and exercises to test your understanding as the course progresses. Students are provided with a textbook specific to this course and a revision guide. A written test is used to assess each topic and marked to AS or A2 standard.

What next?
Careers include, but are not limited to; chemical engineering, chemistry research, medicine, pharmacy, sports science, environmental science, beauty therapy, engineering, agriculture, animal management, countryside management, equine management, horticulture and biotechnology.

For more information about the course, your suitability for it, and possible career paths for students with science A Levels, see the science faculty area and talk to Dr McAleese, Mr Lowe or Mr Davis. You can also visit the AQA website and search for A Level Chemistry for teaching from September 2016 onwards.