



Aylesbury High School | #AHSWalksTall

Developing uniquely talented young adults, who are independent, strong and confident

Dear Parent/Carer,

As students embark on their Chemistry GCE, we thought it would be useful to share an overview of the course.

Key Stage 5 Chemistry:

The examination board for A Level Chemistry is OCR A.

You can find further information relating to the specification here:

[Chemistry A Level Specification](#)

The OCR course provides a solid foundation on which students can move on to Chemical Sciences, Medical Sciences and Biological Sciences. The PAGs (practical assessment groups) provide students with the practical skills required to move on to studying a Science subject at a higher level and the questioning adopted by OCR encourages students to apply knowledge and to ‘think outside the box’. The reintroduction of Organic, Physical and Inorganic Chemistry topics which have been met in KS4 are built on in Year 12 and again in Year 13 hence the basic understanding at KS4 is vital for the smooth transition from GCSE to A Level. We have a detailed Transition Programme which starts at the end of Year 11 and consists of 14 lessons to help gain the key skills and knowledge to ease the transfer from GCSE to A Level.

Lessons:

Each class has two teachers who cover separate areas of the course. Each topic has a booklet, to guide students through the course and highlight key information and concepts. We encourage students to produce their own detailed notes in their own style, this allows them to develop independence and initiative. Question practice is strongly encouraged as this quickly develops the ability to apply new concepts to problems, in addition to increasing confidence in critical thinking, analytical and evaluative skills.

Revision and assessment:

Revision may be: taught revision sessions, resourced individual study or independent revision. Students have access to textbooks, revision guides and topic booklets, as well as a whole host of online resources that are recommended on the Google Site and in lessons. Each student is encouraged to try multiple revision methods to find the way they learn best. Through regular assessment, students secure learning and skills needed for the A Level Chemistry examinations.

Assessment Overview:

Content is in six modules:

- Module 1 - Development of practical skills in chemistry
- Module 2 - Foundations in chemistry
- Module 3 - Periodic table and energy
- Module 4 - Core organic chemistry
- Module 5 - Physical chemistry and transition elements
- Module 6 - Organic chemistry and analysis

| Component | Marks | Duration | Weighting |
|---|-------|----------------|-----------|
| Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry (01) Assesses content from modules 1, 2, 3 and 5 | 100 | 2 hour 15 mins | 37% |
| Synthesis and analytical techniques (02) Assesses content from modules 1, 2, 4 and 6 | 100 | 2 hour 15 mins | 37% |
| Unified chemistry (03) Assesses content from all modules (1 to 6) | 70 | 1 hour 30 mins | 26% |
| Practical endorsement in chemistry (04) Non-exam assessment | - | - | - |

All components include synoptic assessment.

Students must complete all components (01, 02, 03, and 04) to be awarded the OCR A Level in Chemistry A. We offer a once weekly Chemistry for Maths course for those students who are not studying Maths in the Sixth Form and didn't achieve a grade 8 or above in GCSE Maths.

Homework and feedback:

Homework along with independent study of up to 5 hours per week is expected in Chemistry in order to give the students time to consolidate their understanding of work covered at school and further develop their ideas. Homework may take the form of written questions, consolidation style online questions from Kerboodle. Homework will be marked by teachers, self or peer marked. Feedback is given in line with the school marking policy and exam board assessment criteria.

Revision and assessment:

Revision may be: taught revision lessons, resourced individual study or independent work. Students have access to textbooks and revision guides as well as the extensive online resources we recommend on the Google Site and in lessons. Each student is encouraged to try multiple revision methods to find the way they learn best. Through regular assessment, students secure learning and skills needed for the A Level Chemistry examinations.

Co-curricular Chemistry:

- Our Chemistry Ambassadors are key in helping with the running of our lunchtime Chemistry clinics but will also help our Year 10 and 11 students on a 1 to 1 basis.
- We encourage students to take part in competitions such as the RSC Chemistry Olympiad. Year 12 students can take part in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge and the Chemistry Analyst Competition.
- We invite host speakers in school and online so students can experience Chemistry in a wider context.
- We also provide personalised mock interviews for those applying to universities where interviews play an important role in the application process.

More information can be found on the [Chemistry page](#) of the school's website.

If you have any queries, please contact Mrs Rhian Nicholls Head of Chemistry, at rnicholls@ahs.bucks.sch.uk

Kind regards,

Mrs Rhian Nicholls