All students embarked upon the study of their GCSEs in Science subjects at the start of Year 9. They have 4 periods in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics per fortnight. The courses are based upon the AQA Specifications, and final assessments will be by means of a series of terminal question papers which contain a variety of question styles. As part of the course, students will perform a number of ‘required practicals’ (in addition to usual practical work); some examination questions will be related to these. There is no coursework component in any Science GCSEs.

**Assessment schedule**

Towards the end of their Year 9, students sat internal ‘mock’ papers in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This is in addition to the shorter Assessment Tests which took place during the year. The Science programme followed by students in Years 10 and 11 depends upon their overall performances in all of these assessments.

**Separate Science route**

Those students who performed well in the Year 9 assessments follow a programme leading to the award of **GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics**. They will sit two 1 hour 45 minute papers in each Science subject, each paper being worth 100 marks and consisting of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open-response questions.

Sets 1-3 are parallel sets made up from the top performing 55% (approximately) of the year group (according to the Year 9 examinations, with Year 8 results taken into consideration for borderline students); sets 4 and 5 are parallel sets made up from the remaining students we feel, currently, are suited for entry into the separate Sciences.

**Combined Science route**

Some students’ performance in Year 9 indicates that it will be in their interests for them to be prepared for entry into **GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy** instead of the separate Sciences. This is a double award qualification; it is worth two GCSEs. Students will sit two 1 hour 15 minute papers in each Science subject, each paper being worth 70 marks and consisting of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open-response questions. These students make up set 6. It should be noted that this route also allows students to embark upon the study of A levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

**NB** We will also have the flexibility to shift students who have embarked upon the separate Sciences to examination entry in GCSE Combined Science at the end of Year 10 if it becomes apparent that they would benefit from this. This shift can also take place in January of Year 11, after the ‘mock’ examinations.

**Support materials**

Students have access to bespoke electronic textbooks for their Science courses on [www.kerboodle.com](http://www.kerboodle.com), together with other resources. Students have had the opportunity to purchase ‘hard’ copies of these textbooks at a discounted rate through the school; they are also available in the shops – look for Oxford separate GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics books, or the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy books. Students can view and download the specification(s) and information about the courses from the website [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk). Specimen and past examination papers are also available on the AQA website.