



Woodhouse Grove School

Private Candidate Extra Information: GCE A level Sciences: Biology, Chemistry, Physics

GCE A level Sciences

GCE A-levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics are open to private candidates but it is not an easy or cheap option. As science is a practical subject, Ofqual agreed with all the exam boards that every student taking an A-level in one of the three sciences must have carried out at least 12 required practical activities. Most of these activities require specialised equipment (such as potometers, burettes and oscilloscopes), so are not suitable for undertaking outside a laboratory.

These practicals must also be assessed. This ensures students have covered a specified range of apparatus and techniques. The assessment criteria cover aspects such as applying investigative approaches and working safely with a range of equipment. Any student who has not completed an endorsement (or fails to meet the criteria) is likely to have 'not classified' (NC) recorded on their certificate. AQA reports that most universities require a 'pass' in the endorsement as part of their entry requirements for science related courses.

Within the written question papers, a minimum of 15% of marks will be on practical work and the necessary skills within them. Any private candidate who has not carried out these required practicals will therefore be at a disadvantage.

Any private candidate who wishes to study for GCE A-level Biology, Chemistry or Physics has to find a school or college who are willing to provide the opportunity to carry out the required practicals and to assess them against the endorsement criteria.

There are 12 practicals for each A level each lasting about 2 -3 hours. It demands significant laboratory space and teacher time. Unfortunately, we have not managed to think of an affordable and manageable way to offer this to private candidates at Woodhouse Grove School.

Centres that offer the A level Science Practical Endorsement

Other countrywide centres that do offer this option to private candidates are:
(NB the prices listed are for 2019-2020)

<http://www.englishandmaths.com/examination-centre/science-assessments/>
(Birmingham, £825 inc. papers)

<https://www.tutorsandexams.uk/alevel-exam-centre/>
(London or Birmingham- £1295.00 inc. papers)

<https://www.biograd.co.uk/assessed-practical-courses-biograd.php>
(Liverpool, £ 846.00) **Woodhouse Grove has an established relationship with BioGrad.**

<http://www.aectuition.co.uk/science-practical/>
(Birmingham, £ 850.00 inc papers)

<https://www.macclesfieldtutorialcollege.com/gce-science-practical-requirements/>
(Macclesfield, £1700.00)

<http://www.greenes.org.uk/a-level-science-practicals/fees/>
(Oxford, £1400.00 - £ 1950.00)

<http://www.3at.org.uk/www.3at.org.uk/info.php?p=10>
(Bristol)

<http://www.pembrokeshire.ac.uk/practical-endorsement-workshops/>
(Wales £800.00)

<https://www.londonbrookescollege.co.uk/exams/sciencepracticalexams/>
(London £1600.00 including written papers)

<https://campbellharris.co.uk/courses/aqa-science-practical-endorsement-courses>
(London, £1400)

BioGrad

Woodhouse Grove School is an exam centre partner with a company based in Liverpool called BioGrad. With the support of the 3 main exam boards, AQA, Edexcel, OCR, BioGrad is able to offer residential practical courses for A-Level science students to enable them to complete the science practical endorsements. So, the practical requirement will be completed at BioGrad labs in Liverpool and the written papers at Woodhouse Grove School.

There are 2 packages available for each of the A-Level practical endorsements. Students may select to attend the [basic course](#) that fulfils all criteria for the practical assessments, or the [enhanced course](#) that far exceeds the minimum criteria and offers twice the amount of laboratory training, references and additional evening educational activities.

The basic 5-day package costs £846 per subject.

The Enhanced 2 x 5-day package costs £999 per subject.

For more information including how to book etc, please follow the link below:

<https://www.biograd.co.uk/a-level-assessed-practical-courses-biograd.php>

If you are interested in this opportunity, students should book the practical endorsement via the BioGrad website and the exam entry by completing the application form for Woodhouse Grove School.

Declining the Science Practical Endorsement

It is difficult for centres to accept entries from candidates without offering the science practical endorsement, but it is possible for candidates to decline the opportunity to complete this assessment. This usually involves receiving a confirmation email from your university/college choices stating that the endorsement is not part of their entry requirements for a particular course. The candidate is also required to sign a 'declaration to decline' which may need to be presented to the exam board.

It is a good idea to contact the universities you are interested in and describe your circumstances see if they require the practical endorsement as an entry requirement for your chosen course.

We hope you are able to sort out your A level science entries and science practical endorsements, if necessary, but if you would like any further information, please contact us.

Email: humphreys.a@woodhousegrove.co.uk
or exams@woodhousegrove.co.uk

Woodhouse Grove School
Apperley Bridge
West Yorkshire
BD10 0NR

Exam Centre Number: 37601

Telephone Number Direct line: 0113 2386072

Alison Humphreys | Exams Officer | +44 (0)113 250 2477

Woodhouse Grove School, Apperley Bridge, Bradford, BD10 0NR

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www.woodhousegrove.co.uk