



AS / A2 Science in Society (Level 3)

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

This course is not about science as you know it. It is a great choice to complement any arts, humanities or science based programme. The course provides a broad curriculum for those whose interests lie mainly in the arts and humanities and gives those studying science the opportunity to reflect on their specialist studies in a wider context.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

In unit 1, you will study: the germ theory of disease, infectious diseases and global public health issues; medicines, ethical issues and reproductive choices; lifestyle, transport choices and fuel issues; the planet Earth in the context of the solar system and the universe; and the human race in the context of evolution and society.

In unit 2, you will study: a critical account of scientific reading (a book review of your choice) and a topical scientific issue such as "Does the evidence for global warming outweigh the evidence against it?" or "Is there life on Mars?"

During the A2 course you will study global warming and energy production plus nature and nurture, understanding how the brain works and biodiversity. There is also a case study involving understanding and interpreting science documents from a variety of sources.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

At AS level: 60% Exam (one 2 hour paper), 40% Coursework (two assignments and you choose the topics). At A2 level: the AS contributes 50% of the assessment plus one exam (30%) and one case study (20%).

WHAT SKILLS AND SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED?

This course will help you develop an important range of skills. These include communication skills, critical thinking skills, data analysis and evaluation, the ability to develop argument using effective evidence, and research skills. You will develop and express an informed, personal point of view on issues concerning science and technology. You should normally have a GCSE grade C in English, Maths and Science. More importantly, you should have an interest in, and concern about the role of science in our society.

WHAT CAN I DO NEXT?

The mix of experience, including problem based learning, discussion of ethics and consideration of relevant issues makes the course a good additional qualification for candidates seeking entry to medical and similar professional courses. The programme also provides a sound basis for specific progression into areas such as Science Communication, Science and the Media and Philosophy of Science.

PRIESTLEY EXTRA

Speakers working in science and industry will give presentations and there are trips and lectures throughout the year.