STUDY UNDERGRADUATE

BIOLOGY AT OXFORD

Department of BIOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

MBIOL BIOLOGY
C100

MBIOL BIOLOGY

Biology is the science of the 21st century and affects everyone. Many of the challenges we currently face are biological — such as antibiotic resistance, pandemics, and the biodiversity crisis. You will learn more about the fundamental science that underpins these and other challenges, while learning transferable skills that will equip you for a range of career paths.

All students join the MBiol; at the end of Year 3, you can choose to leave with a BA or continue to Year 4 subject to satisfactory academic performance in the first three years. In Year 4 you pursue an independent research project, which gives you the opportunity to join a research group at the forefront of the field of your interest.

Image: Nasir Hamid

LEARNING AT OXFORD

Image: Nasir Hamid

Biology is taught through lectures, skills training (including lab sessions, computer sessions and field courses), and tutorials. Lectures are designed to tell you about the important issues, theories, and research in biology, while skills training gives you the tools you need to become a modern biologist and prepares you to conduct your own research in the fourth year. We encourage extra reading, and you will find this applies more as the course progresses and you become more familiar with how to approach reading scientific papers.

A tutorial usually consists of a one-hour meeting, once a week, between the tutor and two or three students. They help you develop key transferable skills, particularly evidence-based communication, critical thinking, and problem solving; these are crucial regardless of the career path you choose.

> *This course has extended my knowledge of the natural world beyond what I could have imagined at A-Level. There are so many opportunities to learn more in Oxford, widen my interests in biology, and develop myself both educationally and recreationally. Throughout this course you will have the opportunity to learn from leading researchers, but also hear about the diversity of career directions this subject can take you.*
>
> **First year student**

MBIOL

FOURTH YEAR

ORIENTATION

LECTURES AND PRACTICALS

COMPUTING SKILLS

RESIDENTIAL FIELDCOURSE

You will receive an introduction to themes that recur throughout the course, along with scientific methods and essential research skills.

Lectures, practicals, and discussion sessions come from three interwoven themes:

- Diversity of Life
- Building a Phenotype
- Evolution and Ecology

LECTURES AND PRACTICALS

STATISTICS

EXTENDED SKILLS TRAINING COURSE

POSTER PRESENTATION

You will choose at least three out of four themes:

- Cell and Developmental Biology
- Ecology and Evolution
- Genomics and Host-microbe Interactions
- Organisms – Behaviour and Physiology

SPECIALIST MODULES

JOURNAL CLUB

ORAL PRESENTATION

COMPUTING SKILLS

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

You will choose at least four from eight specialist modules. A full list of the current options is available on the Biology website.

bit.ly/oxfordmbiol

OPTIONAL MBIOL YEAR

RESEARCH PROJECT

SPECIALIST SKILLS TRAINING

An optional fourth year, which includes an in-depth research project, supported by advanced research skills training.

Progression to the fourth year is contingent on satisfactory academic performance in the first three years.

ABOUT THE COURSE

The course covers diverse areas of biology from molecules to ecosystems, including both fundamental science and its real-world applications. We strongly emphasise research skills, and offer opportunities to hone and extend them through intensive courses, which can involve fieldwork or immersive lab practice.

You will typically attend eight hours of lectures per week plus additional research skills training, such as lab practicals, computing, and discussion sessions. On average, you will have one tutorial per week in addition to the departmental teaching.

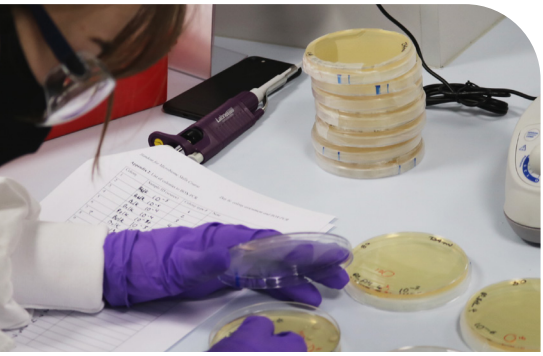
Image: Dave Wilson

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Biology is a great foundation for many professions which benefit from observation, communication, critical thinking, and intellectual skills.

Some of our students continue to postgraduate research at Oxford or further afield. Others use their skills and knowledge to establish careers in a variety of sectors, which may or may not have direct connections to biological topics. These include: charity and not-for-profit, law, energy and the environment, financial services, consultancy, medicine or health and social care, government and public services, and media, marketing, and publishing.

ADMISSIONS



> *Applying is one of the best decisions I have ever made, the range of opportunities is vast and I wouldn't change it for anything!*
>
> **Second year student**

QUALIFICATIONS

The standard offer for successful candidates is:

- A-Levels: A*AA
- Advanced Highers: AA/AAB
- IB: 39 points including core points, with 7 at Higher level in Mathematics or a science.

SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

All successful candidates must have Biology and either Chemistry, Physics or Mathematics to A-level, Advanced Higher, Higher Level in the IB or another equivalent.

Our full admissions requirements are detailed on the University website and these include:

- Subjects in which an A* grade at A-level is accepted
- Other equivalent UK qualifications
- Equivalent international qualifications

Images: Aym Maidment & Mollie Footitt

YOUR APPLICATION

We are looking for students from any background who we think will thrive on our course, particularly those who:

- Share our passion for biology
- Can describe and discuss a biological topic
- Can engage in problem solving
- Can present a reasoned argument
- Demonstrate academic potential

There is no perfect structure for your personal statement; focus on communicating your interest in the subject and what you have done to pursue or develop that interest further. There is no admissions test. Admissions tutors look carefully at all applications and make recommendations to colleges about which applicants should be interviewed, taking into account academic and contextual information provided on UCAS.

INTERVIEW

All applicants who are invited to interview will have two interviews, one with their application college or an allocated college and one with a second allocated college. You can see example Biology interviews on our website and YouTube channel.

MBiol Admissions Requirements

bit.ly/mbioladmissions

Image: Caitlin Hamilton

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www.biology.ox.ac.uk

Front Image: Leejiah Dorward

Back Image: Kristiina Visakorpi