

Job Title: **Teacher of Biology and BTEC Applied Human Biology**

Department information:

The Biology department is housed together with Chemistry and Environmental science in a purpose-built centre comprising 18 laboratories, 2 large preparation rooms, student workrooms, 3 staff workrooms and a lecture theatre. College-wide issues including pastoral provision are dealt with at the faculty level. Detailed subject development occurs within departments.

There are currently 16 Biology teaching staff delivering GCE Eduqas Biology and BTEC Applied Human Biology. In addition, we prepare students for Biology Olympiad, run extension group activities and contribute to the college delivery of Extended Project. We benefit from the services of four technicians. The Biology Department is managed in a consultative manner, with regular weekly meetings. Teaching is carried out to a common scheme of work, students are issued with support booklets containing centrally produced work sheets and stimulus material. There is an extensive Biology Google site for students, which includes sets of homework questions, to be completed on a weekly basis. Marks from these and centrally produced topic tests are recorded on the college electronic mark-book which is visible to parents and students.

Powerpoints and other resources for all topics are available for staff to adapt to suit their teaching style and there are common practical exercises. The vast majority of students are hard-working, bright and keen to learn. Some teaching staff act as personal tutors and are involved in the College enrichment programme that includes sport and other activities. Teachers are encouraged to take part in INSET activities and to contribute to the development of educational resources within the department.

Facilities are extremely good. The accommodation is relatively new, well-furnished and well maintained. All laboratories have digital whiteboards. A large preparation room houses the apparatus and equipment that is both modern and sufficient for our needs. There is also a student workroom in which workshop support is available to students on all days. An efficient team of technicians prepare materials, construct necessary basic apparatus, ensure that equipment is well maintained and generally do the numerous other things that keep us running smoothly.

Examination results

Year	% pass rate	% grades A*-A	% grades A*-B	Number of students
2023 A level	99.3	37.1	67.7	412
2024 A level	97.7	37.4	57.9	430

Points of interest:

There are approximately 1000 students currently studying Biology at Peter Symonds College. The value-added scores at A level are consistently in the top 10% nationally. We attribute our success in part to the high standards of teaching but also to the systems and resources that the department has adopted. Staff are timetabled consultatively and, wherever possible, have only 2 different course elements to deliver as this allows time for high quality preparation. The average size of a teaching group is approximately 22 students. The department was one of the few subjects selected to receive a "deep dive" in the recent OFSTED inspection which received a grade of Outstanding.

Special requirements:

A degree in Biology or an allied subject is essential, together with team working skills, enthusiasm and an empathy with students. An ability to gain the confidence of students and to stimulate their interest in biology is vital.

Feel free to email us directly if you have any specific question hosbiology@psc.ac.uk
Charlie Barker and Sharon Haly (Heads of Biology) October 2024.