Transitioning to A-level Chemistry

Making use of this document

Welcome to A-level Chemistry, we congratulate you for choosing to continue your study of Chemistry at a higher level. The knowledge and skills that you acquire over the next two years will be of immense value to you, regardless of the career path that you choose to pursue.

Much of this document is guidance and a series of transition activities recommended by the exam board. But the first two pages provide some information specific to studying Chemistry at Lawnswood, that we think would be of benefit.

We recommend you read the full document first. Then work through the 16 activities at your own pace, the aim is to refresh the GCSE Chemistry knowledge and skills that you will make regular use of during the course.

After that it is a good idea to start looking at our recommendations, outlined below. The more familiar you are with these now, the easier it will be to make use of them as needed whilst studying.

Contact details of the A-level Chemistry team are also included below. We welcome any questions, requests for help with the activities (or the answers when you are ready) or feedback.

The A-level Chemistry team

If you are studying at Lawnswood you will be taught by two teachers, though we often switch up the teaching pairing between Y12 and Y13.

Feel free to contact any of us with any of your questions.

The team is –

Matty Dunn - matthew.dunn@elawnswood.co.uk

Mona Rehman - mona.rehman@elawnswood.co.uk

Nick Lees - nicholas.lees@elawnswood.co.uk

Nathan Russell - nathan.russell@elawnswood.co.uk

Our recommendations beyond the AQA transition guide

There is an awful lot of choice out there now, this specification is a popular one and has been running for several years so a number of books and websites all target their support towards AQA A-level Chemistry.

Textbook

The book that we recommend as your main text book is:

CGP - New A-Level Chemistry for AQA: Year 1 & 2 Student Book with Online Edition

Product code: **CATB72** ISBN: **9781789080476**

But if you do want to get this early, contact us as we get a significant discount if we order through school. We can get it for £18, Amazon are currently charging £28 and the RRP is £38.

Websites

1. http://www.a-levelchemistry.co.uk/aqa-a-level-chemistry.html

   We cannot stress enough how important this website is. It contains notes, worked examples, practise exam questions and the mark schemes for the full A-level. Bookmark this website, it will help you when you're struggling and if you're not struggling, get on it anyway and print some of the harder questions out! As part of transition, you should look at any/all of the first three topics as they will be familiar from GCSE (atomic structure, bonding & amount of substance)

   Note: This first website does offer videos but they are not free and having seen a few of them, they are not worth paying for.

2. http://www.mrerintoul.co.uk/

   This website is similar to the first, except it offers free videos of a reasonable quality, but the other written materials are maybe not as good. It is important to use both websites in conjunction with each other.

Seneca

If you filter the Seneca learning website type of course to 'summer accelerator'. They have produced a course which is specifically designed to refresh the important parts of GCSE and give you a taste of how it will link the A level.

Reading around the subject

You don't take challenging courses like A Level sciences unless you have developed some interest (either in school or due to never ending process of scientific discovery, advancement and revision that is occurring in many fields every single day). The chemical applications of theories are seen every day, from the pharmacological routes to developing a vaccine during the pandemic, to a tech billionaire successfully launching a manned rocket heading for the ISS using liquid fuels developed by chemists.

There is so much out there to read related to chemistry, but the following are suggestions as a good place to start. They don't require lots of googling of works or a degree in Chemistry to try and figure out what is being said!

1. Periodic Tales: The Curious Lives of the Elements by Hugh Aldersley-Williams (ISBN-10: 0141041455)
2. The Disappearing Spoon by Sam Kean (ISBN-10: 0316388270)
3. A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson (ISBN-10: 9781784161859)
4. The Periodic Table by Primo Levi (ISBN-10: 0141185147)

Videos/TV Programs

1. Chemistry: A Volatile History – found on BBC iPlayer
2. The Modern Alchemist – A Royal Institution Christmas Lecture - https://www.rigb.org/christmas-lectures/watch/2012/the-modern-alchemist
3. Subscribe to 'Machemguy' on youtube who has created a 'Prep for A-level Chemistry' playlist

Finally – The specification is linked in the AQA document attached. But for ease of access you can find it, and a number of other resources, on the AQA A level Chemistry page - https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/as-and-a-level/chemistry-7404-7405