

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL  
AQA EXAMINATIONS

# INTERNATIONAL A-LEVEL BIOLOGY

(9610)

Command words used in our International  
AS and A-level exams

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Command words are the words and phrases used in exams and other assessment tasks that tell students how they should answer the question. Questions will, wherever possible, start with a command word, or an everyday word such as “why” or “what” which has got a clear meaning.

Most command words definitions are common to the three sciences at A-level. Where there are subtle differences, these are marked with a \*. This occurs as the skills required for Biology, Chemistry and Physics are slightly different.

## Analyse \*

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Separate information into components and identify their characteristics.

## Annotate

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Add notation or labelling to a graph, diagram or other drawing.

## Apply \*

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Put into effect in a recognised way.

## Argue

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Present a reasoned case.

## Assess

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Make an informed judgement.

## Calculate

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Work out the value of something.

## Comment \*

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Present an informed opinion.

## Compare

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Identify similarities and/ or differences.

## Complete

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Finish a task by adding to given information.

## Consider

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Review and respond to given information.

## Contrast

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Identify differences.

## Criticise

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Assess worth against explicit expectations.

## Debate

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Present different perspectives on an issue.

## Deduce

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Draw conclusions from information provided.

## Define

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Specify meaning.

## Describe \*

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Give an account of.

## Design

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Set out how something will be done.

## Determine

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Use given data or information to obtain an answer.

## Develop

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Take forward or build upon given information.

## Discuss

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Present key points.

## Distinguish

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List the differences between different items.

## Draw

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Produce a diagram.

## Estimate

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Assign an approximate value.

## Evaluate

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Judge from available evidence.

## **Explain**

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Give reasons.

## **Explore**

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Investigate without preconceptions about the outcome.

## **Give**

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Produce an answer from recall or from given information.

## **Identify**

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Name or otherwise characterise.

## **Justify**

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Support a case with evidence.

## **Label**

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Provide appropriate names on a diagram.

## **List**

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List a number of features or points without further elaboration.

## **Name**

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Identify using a recognised technical term.

## **Outline**

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Set out main characteristics.

## **Predict**

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Give a plausible outcome.

## **Relate**

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Give a technical term or its equivalent.

## **Show**

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Provide structured evidence to reach a conclusion.

## **Sketch**

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Draw approximately.

## State

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Express in clear terms.

## Suggest \*

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Present a possible case.