

CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT

TOP TIPS

for becoming a successful Post 16 CHEMISTRY student



- 1 Read around the subject after lessons: use your textbooks to learn definitions, write out chemical equations and explain trends in the periodic table.
- 2 Practice problem-solving skills. A great source of extra exam questions listed topic by topic can be found at physics and maths tutor.com – link is bit.ly/2ELcybS and OCR's exam board resources can be found at: bit.ly/2lzKKEY
- 3 All students are issued with the Isaac chemistry books. The author states that 'if you can complete the entirety of this book we guarantee you should obtain an A* on the physical chemistry paper'. Isaac chemistry's website is: isaacphysics.org/chemistry
- 4 The Royal Society of Chemistry organises Chemistry Olympiads for which we enter many of our most able students. The skills gained in attempting the chemistry Olympiad questions are very useful in the 'synoptic' Unified Chemistry Paper 3 exam. The questions are at: rsc.li/2lBUuoj
- 5 Spend time each week organising folders and important resources. 20% of your exam questions are based upon your practicals, completed over the 2 years. Keeping accurate notes of practical work and collating them is invaluable.
- 6 Summarise work at regular intervals: weekly, monthly, termly. In organic chemistry this is particularly important. For the A2 exam you need to learn 40 reactions and equations. Summarising them helps you establish the links between them and helps you in questions where you have to synthesise new molecules.
- 7 Resilience is a key quality that the very best students demonstrate. Rather than being 'defeated' by a difficult homework problem, they find a way to solve it. This might involve consulting Student Room, or the 'WhatsApp chemistry group' or by simply Googling an answer.
- 8 Read around the subject and investigate the history of chemistry. Try: *The Quantum Story* - Jim Baggot, *The Pleasure of Finding Things Out* - Richard Feynman, *Periodic Tales* - Hugh Aldersey-Williams, *The Disappearing Spoon* - Sam Kean, *Uncle Tungsten* - Oliver Sachs, *The Shocking History of Phosphorus: A Biography of the Devil's Element* - John Emsley.
- 9 Link 'A' level subjects with each other. Electrostatics in physics strongly connects to mechanisms in organic chemistry, for example; biochemistry connects strongly to the chemistry of large carbon molecules.