



Helpline Enquiries

Marine Biology/Science without A Level Biology

Enquiry

One of our Year 13 students has decided to apply for Marine Science rather than Law. However, their A Levels are PE, Psychology and Economics. Are you aware of any routes that would be available without Biology A Level?

Our reply

We would be interested to discuss with the student her reasons for changing at this stage. Is she no longer interested in Law? What has caused the change now? Has she already applied for Law? Has she had any relevant Marine Science experience for her personal statement? Has she compared graduate employment between Law and Marine Science?

There are two undergraduate degrees that accept Psychology as a science and don't specifically require A Level Biology

1. University of Exeter

BSc Marine Biology A-level: AAB–ABB; IB: 34–32; BTEC: DDD–DDM

Required subjects

A-levels: grade B in one of the following subjects: Biology/Human Biology, Chemistry, Life and Health Sciences (Double Award only), Marine Science, Physics, Psychology or Maths/Pure Maths/ Further Maths.

We contacted Exeter and they confirmed that they would accept the student's A levels.

2. Edinburgh Napier University

[BSc Marine and Freshwater Biology](#)

Entry Requirements: BCC including one from Biology, Human Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Psychology.

There are also a few **Foundation degrees** that will accept the student

University of Hull

[BSc Marine Biology with a Foundation Year](#)

Entry requirements: CDD or 80 UCAS Tariff points no specific subjects required.

University of Southampton

[Foundation Science year](#) followed by BSc Marine Biology

Entry requirements BBB

University of Essex

[BSc Marine Biology including a foundation year](#)

Entry requirements: 72 UCAS tariff points from at least two full A-levels, or equivalent, including a science subject. Science subjects include Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology, Geography, Sports Science and Applied Science.

University of Plymouth

[BSc Ocean Sciences with Foundation Year](#)

Entry requirements: 32-48 points to include a minimum of 2 A levels, including at least one pass in a relevant science subject: Biology, Human Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, Geology, Geography. Excluding General Studies.

We contacted Plymouth and were told the student needs to email admissions to check if she's eligible to apply.

admissions@plymouth.ac.uk

Points to consider

The student will need to weigh up whether to do a foundation year at the cost of £9,000 pa plus living costs or study A Level Biology in one year in their gap year to open up a wider choice of where she can apply to. However, we would recommend that before making a decision, she should check entry requirements for any universities of interest. Some, such as Southampton require 2 x science A Levels and psychology isn't listed as a science subject

[Southampton University – Marine Biology \(BSc\) 3 years](#)

Entry requirements: ABB including Biology (minimum grade B) and one further science subject (minimum grade B). Acceptable science subjects are Chemistry, Maths, Environmental Studies, Geology, Geography or Physics. A Pass in the practical science assessment is additionally required (Biology, Chemistry Physics only).

Gap Year Work Experience

Finally, the student could also consider taking a year out to gain more relevant marine science experience to be certain she is applying for the right course.

The Marine Biological Association runs a [work experience programme](#) (applications usually to be submitted by January).

The MBA also offers [membership](#) to young aspiring marine biologists, which may be of interest.

Helpline Team
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