

Higher

GCSE

Combined Science B Twenty First Century Science

J260/05: Biology (Higher Tier)

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING

RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training*; *OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor.
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 50% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone, email or via the RM Assessor messaging system.

5. **Crossed Out Responses**

Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple Choice Question Responses

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate). *When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.*

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only **one mark per response**)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth **two or more marks**)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space.)

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there then add a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.
7. There is a NR (No Response) option. Award NR (No Response)
 - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g. 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g. a dash, a question mark) which isn't an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your Team Leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**

If you have any questions or comments for your Team Leader, use the phone, the RM Assessor messaging system, or email.

9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.

10. For answers marked by levels of response:

Read through the whole answer from start to finish, using the Level descriptors to help you decide whether it is a strong or weak answer. The indicative scientific content in the Guidance column indicates the expected parameters for candidates' answers, but be prepared to recognise and credit unexpected approaches where they show relevance. Using a 'best-fit' approach based on the skills and science content evidenced within the answer, first decide which set of level descriptors, Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3, best describes the overall quality of the answer.

Once the level is located, award the higher or lower mark:

The higher mark should be awarded where the level descriptor has been evidenced and all aspects of the communication statement (in italics) have been met.

The lower mark should be awarded where the level descriptor has been evidenced but aspects of the communication statement (in italics) are missing.

In summary:

The skills and science content determines the level.

The communication statement determines the mark within a level.

Level of response question on this paper is **7(c)**.

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11. Annotations available in RM Assessor

Annotation	Meaning
	Correct response
	Incorrect response
	Omission mark
	Benefit of doubt given
	Contradiction
	Rounding error
	Error in number of significant figures
	Error carried forward
	Level 1
	Level 2
	Level 3
	Benefit of doubt not given
	Noted but no credit given
	Ignore

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12. Abbreviations, annotations and conventions used in the detailed Mark Scheme (to include abbreviations and subject-specific conventions).

Annotation	Meaning
/	alternative and acceptable answers for the same marking point
✓	Separates marking points
DO NOT ALLOW	Answers which are not worthy of credit
IGNORE	Statements which are irrelevant
ALLOW	Answers that can be accepted
()	Words which are not essential to gain credit
—	Underlined words must be present in answer to score a mark
ECF	Error carried forward
AW	Alternative wording
ORA	Or reverse argument

13. Subject-specific Marking Instructions

INTRODUCTION

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. This material includes:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper
- the mark scheme.

You should ensure that you have copies of these materials.

You should ensure also that you are familiar with the administrative procedures related to the marking process. These are set out in the OCR booklet **Instructions for Examiners**. If you are examining for the first time, please read carefully **Appendix 5 Introduction to Script Marking: Notes for New Examiners**.

Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

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The breakdown of Assessment Objectives for GCSE (9-1) in Combined Science B:

	Assessment Objective
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific techniques and procedures.
AO1.1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas.
AO1.2	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific techniques and procedures.
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.
AO2.1	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas.
AO2.2	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.
AO3	Analyse information and ideas to interpret and evaluate, make judgements and draw conclusions and develop and improve experimental procedures.
AO3.1	Analyse information and ideas to interpret and evaluate.
AO3.1a	Analyse information and ideas to interpret.
AO3.1b	Analyse information and ideas to evaluate.
AO3.2	Analyse information and ideas to make judgements and draw conclusions.
AO3.2a	Analyse information and ideas to make judgements.
AO3.2b	Analyse information and ideas to draw conclusions.
AO3.3	Analyse information and ideas to develop and improve experimental procedures.
AO3.3a	Analyse information and ideas to develop experimental procedures.
AO3.3b	Analyse information and ideas to improve experimental procedures.

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Question			Answer					Marks	AO element	Guidance																									
1	(a)		<table><tr><th>Statement</th><th>Both</th><th>Meiosis</th><th>Mitosis</th><th>Neither</th></tr><tr><td>It involves two divisions to produce four new cells.</td><td></td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>It makes new cells for growth and repair of tissues in adults.</td><td></td><td></td><td>✓</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>It produces cells with half the number of chromosomes.</td><td></td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>It produces gametes.</td><td></td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> ✓✓✓✓					Statement	Both	Meiosis	Mitosis	Neither	It involves two divisions to produce four new cells.		✓			It makes new cells for growth and repair of tissues in adults.			✓		It produces cells with half the number of chromosomes.		✓			It produces gametes.		✓			4	1.1	DO NOT ALLOW more than 1 tick in each row
Statement	Both	Meiosis	Mitosis	Neither																															
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It produces gametes.		✓																																	
	(b)	(i)	DNA ✓					1	1.1	DO NOT ALLOW more than one box ticked																									
		(ii)	Any two from: uncontrolled cell division / divides many times ✓ by mitosis ✓ idea that this produces a lump/mass/ball (of cells) ✓					2	1.1	ALLOW divide faster/multiply faster IGNORE cells reproduce/grow/spread IGNORE cells mutate IGNORE produces a tumour																									

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
2	(a)		C before D ✓ D before E ✓ E before B ✓	3	2.2	(A)CDEB
	(b)	(i)	Any one from: starting mass/weight ✓ size/surface area/length of cylinders/potatoes ✓ cylinder taken from same potato/type of potato ✓ no potato skin ✓ temperature ✓ volume of sugar solution ✓ make sure cylinders/potatoes are fully covered ✓ drying technique ✓	1	2.2	IGNORE time left in sugar solution IGNORE shape of potato IGNORE amount of sugar solution
		(ii)	idea of valid comparison / so sugar solution on the potato cylinder is not included in final mass ✓	1	3.3a	ALLOW water/liquid/solution affects/increases the mass / to remove excess water/liquid/solution ALLOW weight for mass IGNORE water affects measurements
	(c)	(i)	B = +0.12 D = -0.10/-0.1 ✓	1	1.2	
		(ii)	starting masses were different ✓	1	3.2a	ALLOW have different starting weights
		(iii)	Any two from: calculate percentage change ✓ repeat and get a mean ✓ make sure the starting masses/weight are the same/similar ✓ same size/surface area/length of cylinders/potatoes ✓ cylinder taken from same potato/type of potato ✓ no potato skin ✓ same temperature ✓ same volume of sugar solution ✓ make sure cylinders/potatoes are fully covered ✓ use same drying technique ✓	2	3.3b	IGNORE time ALLOW repeat and remove anomalies/outliers IGNORE same shape of potato

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Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
	(d)	(i)	water has moved out of potato / potato/cells lost water ✓ water has moved from an area of low concentration to high concentration/high water concentration to low water concentration/ down the water concentration gradient ✓	2	2.1	DO NOT ALLOW sugar/solution has moved out of the potato ALLOW AW water has moved to a higher concentration / water has moved to the lower water concentration / water has moved from an area less concentrated
		(ii)	idea that concentration inside the potato cells is the same as the concentration of the sugar solution ✓	1	2.1	ALLOW at equilibrium ALLOW no water is lost or gained

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
3	(a)	(i)	Antigens ✓ Antibodies ✓ White blood cells ✓	3	1.1	
		(ii)	Amino acids ✓	1	1.1	DO NOT ALLOW more than one box ticked
		(iii)	Biuret solution ✓	1	1.2	DO NOT ALLOW more than one box ticked
	(b)		Any three from: vaccination contains dead/inactive/safe/weakened form of pathogen ✓ causes immune response / recognised by white blood cells/produce antibodies ✓ some white blood cells stay in the body / ref. to memory cells ✓ (memory cells produce) faster/larger response upon reinfection (with the pathogen) ✓	3	1.1	
	(c)	(i)	virus ✓	1	1.1	
		(ii)	not enough/weakened white blood cells so cannot destroy the influenza virus/pathogen ✓	1	1.1	ALLOW immunodeficient/immunosuppressed/immunocompromised/weakened immune system.

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
4	(a)	(i)	Any one from: observed similarities/differences ✓ physical characteristics/features ✓	1	1.1	ALLOW anatomical, behavioural, similar embryos
		(ii)	DNA / genome (analysis/sequencing) ✓	1	1.1	ALLOW protein sequencing
	(b)	(i)	Any two from: destruction of habitat hunting/poaching of tigers hunting/poaching/killing of their prey deforestation pollution climate change/global warming ✓	1	2.1	DO NOT ALLOW new disease / introduction of a predator, as these are not human activities
		(ii)	First check answer on answer line If answer = (-)98.173 (%) award 2 marks $\frac{98173}{100\,000} \times 100 \quad \checkmark$ $= 98.173 \text{ (\%)} \quad \checkmark$	2	2.2	ALLOW ECF from substitution calculation if correct formula is used. ALLOW 98, 98.2, 98.17
		(iii)	Any one from: difficult to count every individual tiger ✓ ideas that tigers move around (within their habitat) ✓ remote area / hard to access / large habitat ✓ births/deaths/migration ✓ difficult to mark/tag/identify individual tigers ✓	1	3.2a	

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	(c)	Any one benefit with explanation for two marks Any one challenge with explanation for two marks E.g. Ecotourism because taxes could be charged to visit areas with tigers that could be used for further conservation projects Or people need forest resources but this causes habitat loss for the tigers Benefit: maintains/increases biodiversity ✓ avoids disrupting food chains ✓ (eco)tourism ✓ ethical/moral argument ✓ Challenge: people need forest resources (but this causes habitat loss for the tigers) ✓ conservation requires money ✓ lack of understanding/support/importance surrounding conservation ✓ tiger conservation requires large areas of land ✓ difficult to protect from poachers and hunters ✓ tiger parts used in medicines ✓ tigers threaten humans and live stock ✓	4	2.1	DO NOT ALLOW prevents extinction e.g. different variety of tigers can increase biodiversity in the area e.g. taxes charged on national parks e.g. tigers have the right to exist / it's our duty to protect them if we caused them to be endangered ALLOW lack of education IGNORE difficult to count / keep track of the tigers
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Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance									
5	(a)	(i)	only expressed in the absence of a dominant allele/ when homozygous/when two recessive alleles are inherited ✓	1	1.1	ALLOW genes are hidden									
		(ii)	both correct parent genotypes ✓ correct offspring genotypes ✓	2	2.1	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td>T✓</td><td>t</td></tr><tr><td>T✓</td><td>TT</td><td>Tt</td></tr><tr><td>t</td><td>Tt</td><td>tt✓</td></tr></table> ALLOW tT for parents DO NOT ALLOW any other letters ALLOW ECF from incorrect parents genotype/incorrect letters		T✓	t	T✓	TT	Tt	t	Tt	tt✓
	T✓	t													
T✓	TT	Tt													
t	Tt	tt✓													
		(iii)	ring around tt offspring ✓	1	2.1										
		(iv)	3:1 ✓	1	2.2	ECF from Punnett square if correct ratio is given for affected.									
	(b)		enzyme ✓	1	1.1										
	(c)	(i)	Adult: divide/specialise into a narrow range of types of cells/tissues ✓ Embryonic: divide/specialise into any type of cell/tissue ✓	2	1.1	ALLOW multipotent ALLOW pluripotent / totipotent									
		(ii)	stem cells are taken from an embryo which is a potential future life ✓	1	3.1b										
		(iii)	destroying a potential life relates to morals/right or wrong ✓	1	3.1b	ALLOW embryo cannot consent.									
		(iv)	Blind: patient does not know (if they are receiving the drug) ✓ Double blind: neither doctor nor patient know (if they are receiving the drug) ✓	2	1.1										

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
6	(a)		First check answer on answer line If answer = 6.7×10^5 award 5 marks $(85\text{m} \times 130\text{m}) + (123\text{m} \times 80\text{m}) = 20890 \text{ (m}^2\text{)} \checkmark$ $(20890 \div 0.25) \times 8 \checkmark$ $= 668480 \text{ (daisies)} \checkmark$ $= 670000 \text{ (daisies to 2sf)} \checkmark$ $= 6.7 \times 10^5 \text{ (daisies in SF)} \checkmark$	5	2.2 x 3 1.2 x 2	ALLOW ECF for each marking point ALLOW ECF if answer to 2 sf ALLOW ECF if answer to 2sf is in SF
	(b)		Any two from: place the quadrat at random $\checkmark$ place it using use (random) number generator / grid co-ordinates $\checkmark$ use larger quadrat / more quadrats / sample a bigger area of the lawn $\checkmark$	2	2.2	
	(c)	(i)	(Water –) osmosis $\checkmark$ (Mineral Ions –) active transport $\checkmark$	2	1.1	
		(ii)	Any one from (xylem): dead cells (for water transport) $\checkmark$ strengthen by lignin/thickened cell wall $\checkmark$ forms a (hollow) tube $\checkmark$ no cytoplasm (to allow water to flow through) $\checkmark$ idea that its joins roots to leaves $\checkmark$ Any one from (phloem): sieve end plates/pores with perforations / sieve end plates have holes to allow substances to move through) $\checkmark$ living cells (use active transport to) move sugars in and out $\checkmark$ companion cells provide energy/ATP for active transport $\checkmark$ idea that it joins source to sink $\checkmark$	2	1.1	

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
7	(a)		Gas exchange system transports carbon dioxide to and oxygen from lungs/alveoli in blood ✓ Digestive system digested/broken down/small soluble molecules carried to cells ✓	2	1.1	
	(b)		prevent the backflow of blood / stops blood flowing into the atria (when the heart/ventricles contract) ✓	1	1.1	Allow blood can only flow in one direction.

	(c)*	Please refer to the marking instructions on page 4 of this mark scheme for guidance on how to mark this question. Level 3 (5–6 marks) Detailed explanation of why patient is at high risk of CVD AND Detailed evaluation of ways to reduce their risk <i>There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and substantiated.</i> Level 2 (3–4 marks) Clear explanation of why patient is at high risk of CVD AND Clear evaluation of ways to reduce their risk <i>There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is relevant and supported by some evidence.</i> Level 1 (1–2 marks) Limited explanation of why the patient is at high risk of CVD OR Attempt to evaluate ways to reduce their risk <i>There is an attempt at a logical structure with a line of reasoning. The information is in the most part relevant.</i> 0 marks <i>No response or no response worthy of credit.</i>	6	2 x 3.1b 4 x 2.1	AO2.1 Applies knowledge and understanding to explain factors that increase risk of CVD - fatty deposits / cholesterol / atheromas / plaques in artery increases risk (high blood pressure) damages walls of blood vessels so they're more likely to form plaques/atheroma's/fatty deposits - Plaques/fatty deposits restrict blood flow to heart muscle/tissue/cells - Less blood to heart muscle means less oxygen/glucose for aerobic respiration - Less aerobic respiration/energy release means heart muscle cannot contract which will cause heart attack AO3.1b Evaluates ways to reduce their risk - Lifestyle change such as reduce cholesterol/fats/saturated fats in diet - Other lifestyle changes to reduce blood pressure such as more exercise, not smoking, reduce salt in diet, less stress - Have a stent/angioplasty/surgery/bypass - Reduce blood cholesterol/pressure using medicines/statins - Lifestyle changes are easier, cheaper and safer - Surgery and medicines are more expensive, require specialist medical care, and have risks of side-effects Aspects of the communication statement might typically have been met when/might typically be missing when: - Irrelevant information is provided - Information presented is incoherent - Information presented is contradictory - Information presented does not have a logical structure - Use of correct terminology is not secure/present within answer
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Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
8	(a)	(i)	(light/sensory) receptor(s) / retina / rod(s) / cone(s) ✓ relay ✓ muscle(s) / effector(s) ✓	3	2.1	DO NOT ALLOW eye in first box
		(ii)	brain ✓	1	1.1	
	(b)		Any one from: maintain a constant/stable internal environment ✓ to maintain constant/stable temperature/pH/water balance/blood sugar to enable cells/organs/enzymes/reactions to function normally ✓ regulation of internal conditions of a cell/organism to maintain optimum conditions to function ✓	1	1.1	
	(c)		Stimulus – stress/fear/nervous/scared/danger/threat ✓ Liver – breakdown carbohydrate into glucose ✓ Muscles – muscle contraction/increased blood flow ✓	3	1.1	ALLOW flight or fight

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	(d)		Hormone Name Action A FSH Causes a follicle containing an egg to develop and produce oestrogen. B LH Causes ovulation (the release of a mature egg). C Oestrogen Causes uterus wall to thicken. D Progesterone Prepares the lining of the uterus for implantation. ✓✓✓✓✓	5	2.1	7 correct lines = 5 marks 6 or 5 correct lines = 4 marks 4 correct lines = 3 marks 3 correct lines = 2 marks 2 correct lines = 1 mark DO NOT ALLOW more than one line from each box
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Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
9	(a)		A = water B = oxygen C = hydrogen D = carbon dioxide E = glucose ✓✓✓	3	1.1	5 correct answers = 3 marks 3 or 4 correct answers = 2 marks 1 or 2 correct answers = 1 mark
	(b)	(i)	First check answer on answer line / table If answer = 12.5 award 3 marks Distance = $\sqrt{1 / \text{light intensity}}$ ✓ = $\sqrt{1 / 0.0064}$ ✓ = 12.5 ✓	3	2.2	ALLOW $1/0.0064 = 1$ mark ALLOW $\sqrt{156.25} = 2$ marks ALLOW ECF from MP2 ALLOW 13
		(ii)	idea as the distance doubles the light intensity is quartered ✓	1	3.2b	
		(iii)	use a gas syringe / displace water to measure volume of gas ✓ volume of gas is more accurate measurement / less human error than counting bubbles ✓	2	3.1a 3.3a	Allow the bubbles could be different sizes
	(c)		increasing light intensity up to the maximum rate/point X, light in the limiting factor ✓ after the maximum rate of photosynthesis B line, temperature is the limiting factor temperature ✓	2	3.1a	

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