

GLOSSARY OF USEFUL TERMS FOR UNIT 4

Acid	A proton donor
Base	A proton acceptor
Strong/weak acid	A species which fully/partially dissociates in solution to give H^+ ions
Strong/weak base	A species which fully/partially dissociates in solution to give OH^- ions
pH	The negative logarithm to the base 10 of the hydrogen ion concentration
K_w	The product the concentrations of hydrogen and hydroxide ions in a solution
Buffer	A solution which can resist a large pH change on addition of small amounts of acid or alkali
Chiral	An atom attached to four different groups (or a molecule containing an atom attached to four different groups)
Enantiomers	Molecules which are non-superimposable mirror images of each other
Optical Activity	The ability to rotate the plane of plane-polarised light
Racemate	An equimolar mixture of two optical isomers