

Cambridge IGCSE™ (9–1)

CO-ORDINATED SCIENCES**0973/31**

Paper 3 Theory (Core)

October/November 2025

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 120

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **17** printed pages.

PUBLISHED**Generic Marking Principles**

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Science-Specific Marking Principles

1 Examiners should consider the context and scientific use of any keywords when awarding marks. Although keywords may be present, marks should not be awarded if the keywords are used incorrectly.

2 The examiner should not choose between contradictory statements given in the same question part, and credit should not be awarded for any correct statement that is contradicted within the same question part. Wrong science that is irrelevant to the question should be ignored.

3 Although spellings do not have to be correct, spellings of syllabus terms must allow for clear and unambiguous separation from other syllabus terms with which they may be confused (e.g. ethane / ethene, glucagon / glycogen, refraction / reflection).

4 The error carried forward (ecf) principle should be applied, where appropriate. If an incorrect answer is subsequently used in a scientifically correct way, the candidate should be awarded these subsequent marking points. Further guidance will be included in the mark scheme where necessary and any exceptions to this general principle will be noted.

5 'List rule' guidance

For questions that require *n* responses (e.g. State **two** reasons ...):

- The response should be read as continuous prose, even when numbered answer spaces are provided.
- Any response marked *ignore* in the mark scheme should not count towards *n*.
- Incorrect responses should not be awarded credit but will still count towards *n*.
- Read the entire response to check for any responses that contradict those that would otherwise be credited. Credit should **not** be awarded for any responses that are contradicted within the rest of the response. Where two responses contradict one another, this should be treated as a single incorrect response.
- Non-contradictory responses after the first *n* responses may be ignored even if they include incorrect science.

6 Calculation specific guidance

Correct answers to calculations should be given full credit even if there is no working or incorrect working, **unless** the question states 'show your working'.

For questions in which the number of significant figures required is not stated, credit should be awarded for correct answers when rounded by the examiner to the number of significant figures given in the mark scheme. This may not apply to measured values.

For answers given in standard form (e.g. $a \times 10^n$) in which the convention of restricting the value of the coefficient (a) to a value between 1 and 10 is not followed, credit may still be awarded if the answer can be converted to the answer given in the mark scheme.

Unless a separate mark is given for a unit, a missing or incorrect unit will normally mean that the final calculation mark is not awarded. Exceptions to this general principle will be noted in the mark scheme.

7 Guidance for chemical equations

Multiples / fractions of coefficients used in chemical equations are acceptable unless stated otherwise in the mark scheme.

State symbols given in an equation should be ignored unless asked for in the question or stated otherwise in the mark scheme.





Annotations guidance for centres


Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

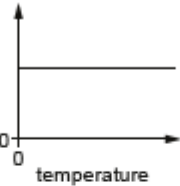
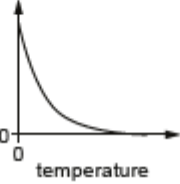
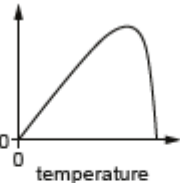
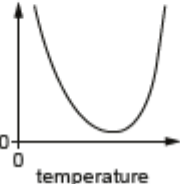
Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	correct point or mark awarded
	incorrect point or mark not awarded
BOD	benefit of the doubt given
FT	follow through
TV	response is too vague or there is insufficient detail in response
ECF	error carried forward applied
	information missing or insufficient for credit
	unclear response
I	incorrect or insufficient point ignored while marking the rest of the response
R	incorrect point or mark not awarded

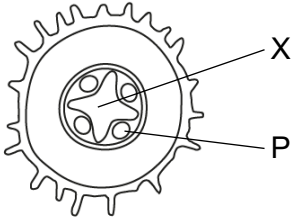
Annotation	Meaning
LNK	two statements are linked
SEEN	point has been noted, but no credit has been given or blank page seen
	key point attempted / working towards marking point / incomplete answer / response seen but not credited / blank page seen
BP	blank page

Question	Answer	Marks									
1(a)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>asexual</td> <td>sexual</td> </tr> <tr> <td>number of parents</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>offspring</td> <td>identical</td> <td>different</td> </tr> </table> <p>1 mark for each correct row</p>		asexual	sexual	number of parents	1	2	offspring	identical	different	2
	asexual	sexual									
number of parents	1	2									
offspring	identical	different									
1(b)	(produces sperm) = C ; (fluid) = B ; (deposits semen) = E ;	3									
1(c)	anther ; stigma ; ovule ;	3									

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)(i)	(protein) = carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen ; (glycogen) = carbon, hydrogen, oxygen ;	2
2(a)(ii)	glycerol ; fatty acids ;	2
2(a)(iii)	test – biuret ; positive result – purple / violet ;	2
2(b)(i)	metabolic ; catalysts ;	2

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)(ii)	<p data-bbox="353 279 504 303">enzyme activity</p>  <p data-bbox="504 375 660 399">temperature</p> <p data-bbox="750 279 795 319"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p data-bbox="353 494 504 518">enzyme activity</p>  <p data-bbox="504 598 660 622">temperature</p> <p data-bbox="750 494 795 534"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p data-bbox="353 710 504 734">enzyme activity</p>  <p data-bbox="504 805 660 829">temperature</p> <p data-bbox="750 702 795 742"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p data-bbox="353 925 504 949">enzyme activity</p>  <p data-bbox="504 1021 660 1045">temperature</p> <p data-bbox="750 909 795 949"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	1

Question	Answer	Marks
3(a)(i)	Q = septum ; R = right atrium ;	2
3(a)(ii)	any two from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • artery has, smaller lumen / ORA ; • artery has, thicker wall / muscle / ORA ; • veins have valves / ORA ; 	2
3(b)(i)	<u>coronary arteries</u> ;	1
3(b)(ii)	any two from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alcohol ; • smoking ; • obesity ; • diabetes ; • <u>high</u> blood pressure ; • diet ; • stress ; • genetic predisposition ; • age ; • sex ; 	2
3(b)(iii)	$\frac{104 - 64}{64} \times 100 = ;$ 63 (%) ;	2

Question	Answer	Marks
3(c)(i)	 <p data-bbox="338 440 725 469">1 mark for each correct label</p>	2
3(c)(ii)	xylem – water and mineral ions ; phloem – sucrose and amino acids ;	2

Question	Answer	Marks
4(a)(i)	<p data-bbox="338 713 539 742">any two from:</p> <ul data-bbox="338 788 954 922" style="list-style-type: none"> • crop production ; • livestock production ; • extraction of natural resources ; • building infrastructure / building factories ; 	2
4(a)(ii)	<p data-bbox="338 959 539 987">any two from:</p> <ul data-bbox="338 1031 1218 1203" style="list-style-type: none"> • method of monitoring species / method of protecting species ; • protecting habitats ; • education ; • captive breeding programmes ; • seed banks ; 	2

Question	Answer	Marks																														
4(b)(i)	grass → grasshopper → frog → snake → hawk OR grass → grasshopper → frog → owl 1 mark for all arrows in correct direction 1 mark for all organisms in correct order including frog	2																														
4(b)(ii)	<table border="1" data-bbox="344 531 1050 762"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>producer</th> <th>herbivore</th> <th>carnivore</th> <th>primary consumer</th> <th>secondary consumer</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>bird</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>grasses</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>grasshopper</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>snake</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1 mark for each correct row</p>		producer	herbivore	carnivore	primary consumer	secondary consumer	bird			✓		✓	grasses	✓					grasshopper		✓		✓		snake			✓			4
	producer	herbivore	carnivore	primary consumer	secondary consumer																											
bird			✓		✓																											
grasses	✓																															
grasshopper		✓		✓																												
snake			✓																													

Question	Answer	Marks
5(a)	proton / atomic ; less ; transition ;	3
5(b)(i)	S or T or V ;	1
5(b)(ii)	P or Q or R ;	1
5(b)(iii)	P or Q or R ;	1
5b(iv)	X or Y or Z ;	1
5(b)(v)	R ;	1
5(b)(vi)	T ;	1

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Question	Answer	Marks
6(a)(i)	methane + oxygen → carbon dioxide + water ;	1
6(a)(ii)	carbon monoxide / carbon ;	1
6(a)(iii)	contains only single bonds ;	1
6(a)(iv)	orange to colourless ;	1
6(b)	16 ;	1
6(c)	one shared pair correct ; all else correct ;	2
6(d)	coal or petroleum;	1
6(e)	(element) only one type of atom ; (compound) two (or more) elements / two (or more) types of atom ;	2

Question	Answer	Marks
7(a)(i)	oxidation is gain of oxygen and reduction is loss of oxygen ; carbon gains oxygen / lead ions lose oxygen ;	2
7(a)(ii)	takes in (thermal) energy (from the surroundings) ;	1
7(b)(i)	diamond ;	1
7(b)(ii)	(J electrode) cathode and (K electrode) anode ;	1
7(b)(iii)	(J product) lead and (K product) bromine ;	1
7(b)(iv)	ions need to be mobile / AW OR solids are not good conductors / solids are poor conductors / ORA	1
7(c)(i)	mixture of a metal and another element ;	1
7(c)(ii)	1.5 (kg) ;	1
7(d)(i)	lead(II) chloride ;	1
7(d)(ii)	lighted splint ; goes pop / AW ;	2

Question	Answer	Marks								
8(a)(i)	20 ;	1								
8(a)(ii)	2 ;	1								
8(b)(i)	calcium sulfate ; water ;	2								
8(b)(ii)	1.5(0) (g)	1								
8(c)	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">decrease the concentration of the dilute sulfuric acid</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 40px;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">use larger pieces of calcium carbonate</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">increase the temperature of the dilute sulfuric acid</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">use a catalyst</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;"> </td> </tr> </table> <p>1 mark for each correct answer</p> <p>3 boxes ticked – 1 incorrect – 1 mark 3 boxes ticked – 2 incorrect – 0 marks 4 boxes ticked – 0 marks</p>	decrease the concentration of the dilute sulfuric acid	✓	use larger pieces of calcium carbonate	✓	increase the temperature of the dilute sulfuric acid		use a catalyst		2
decrease the concentration of the dilute sulfuric acid	✓									
use larger pieces of calcium carbonate	✓									
increase the temperature of the dilute sulfuric acid										
use a catalyst										
8(d)	column completed top to bottom G, G, (G), S, S 2 or 3 correct – 1 mark all correct – 2 marks	2								

Question	Answer	Marks
9(a)(i)	uranium ;	1
9(a)(ii)	(all the metals) have a density greater than water / (all the metals) have a density greater than 1000 (kg / m ³) ;	1
9(b)(i)	melting point is below 20 °C and boiling point is above 20 °C ;	1
9(b)(ii)	irregular / random ; close together / most touching ;	2
9(b)(iii)	(move) more slowly	1
9(c)	92 protons ; 146 neutrons ;	2
9(d)	any two from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if too much current ; • fuse wire melts ; • breaks circuit ; 	2

Question	Answer	Marks
10(a)(i)	Jupiter ;	1
10(a)(ii)	$2 \times 10^{30} \div 2 \times 10^{27}$ shows the Sun is 1000 times (the mass of planet X) ; OR $2 \times 10^{27} \times 100 = 2 \times 10^{29}$ and $(2 \times 10^{29}) \neq 2 \times 10^{30}$ / AW OR $2 \times 10^{30} \div 100 = 2 \times 10^{28}$ and $(2 \times 10^{28}) \neq 2 \times 10^{27}$ / AW	1

Question	Answer	Marks
10(b)(i)	(interstellar clouds of) gas ; dust;	2
10(b)(ii)	red giant and white dwarf (in that order) ;	1
10(c)	time = $1.5 \times 10^{11} / 3.0 \times 10^8$ (= 500 s) ; unit conversion $500 \text{ s} / 60 = 8.3$ (min) ;	2
10(d)	three rays drawn coming to a focus on the dried grass ;	1

Question	Answer	Marks							
11(a)	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">γ-radiation</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">X-rays</td> <td style="width: 40px;"></td> <td style="width: 40px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">infrared</td> <td style="width: 40px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px;">radio waves</td> </tr> </table>	γ -radiation	X-rays			infrared		radio waves	1
γ -radiation	X-rays			infrared		radio waves			
11(b)(i)	scanning (bones) ;	1							
11(b)(ii)	(ultrasound) is less harmful / (ultrasound) causes less mutation / (ultrasound) causes less damage to cells / ORA ;	1							
11(b)(iii)	any figure above 20 (kHz) ; explanation – highest audible frequency for a human is 20 (kHz) ;	2							
11(c)	$v = f \lambda$ (in any form) OR (wavelength =) $3 \times 10^8 / 6 \times 10^{19}$; 5×10^{-12} ; m ;	3							

Question	Answer	Marks
11(d)(i)	(The half-life of a radioactive isotope is the time taken for) <u>half</u> the <u>nuclei</u> of (that isotope in any sample) to <u>decay</u> ; two of the underlined words used correctly – 1 mark all three underlined words used correctly – 2 marks	2
11(d)(ii)	6 half-lives seen ; so 25 atoms remain ;	2

Question	Answer	Marks
12(a)	correct symbols for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motor ; • variable resistor ; 	2
12(b)	advantage – renewable / does not produce CO ₂ ; disadvantage – does not work at night / does not work in poor light / not always available ;	2
12(c)(i)	$P = IV$ (in any form) OR (current =) $2500 / 230$; 11 (A) ;	2
12(c)(ii)	$R = V / I$ (in any form) OR (resistance =) $230 / 3$; 77 (Ω) ;	2
12(c)(iii)	fastest molecules / most energetic molecules ; escape from surface ;	2