AQA GCSE Physics | 8463

SPECIFICATION POINT 4.4.2.3

Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Mark schemes and examiner comments

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**54**
Available paper years	**2003–2025**

Using this booklet

1. Booklet answer numbers match the question booklet.
2. Use the original question number within marking tables.
3. Examiner comments are included where available.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Where a precise marking extract is unavailable, the full source document is included in an appendix. Any missing mark scheme is explicitly identified.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 01 · Mark scheme June 2003 | 3451H | Original Q14 | Legacy

The full source mark scheme begins on page 46. Follow original question 14 in that document.

Answer 02 · Mark scheme June 2003 | 3462H3 | Original Q12 | Legacy

The full source mark scheme begins on page 68. Follow original question 12 in that document.

Answer 03 · Mark scheme June 2005 | 3451 | Original Q15 | Legacy

The full source mark scheme begins on page 85. Follow original question 15 in that document.

Answer 04 · Mark scheme June 2005 | 3462 | Original Q11 | Legacy

The full source mark scheme begins on page 103. Follow original question 11 in that document.

Answer 05 · Mark scheme November 2006 | PHY1B | Original Q5 | Legacy

Five	**A**	a distant galaxy	**3**
	B	a satellite	**1**
	C	the Earth	**2**
	D	the Universe	**4**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 06 · Mark scheme January 2007 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

No matching mark scheme was available in the supplied archive for this question.

Answer 07 · Mark scheme March 2007 | PHY1B | Original Q6 | Legacy

Six	**A**	conclusion	**3**
	B	confidentiality	**4**
	C	control	**1**
	D	evidence	**2**

	A	B	C	D

Answer 08 · Mark scheme June 2007 | PHY1B | Original Q4 | Legacy

Four	**3**	**1**	**1**	**1**

Answer 09 · Mark scheme June 2007 | PHY1B | Original Q8 | Legacy

Eight	**3**	**4**	**4**	**4**

Answer 10 · Mark scheme November 2007 | PHY1B | Original Q6 | Legacy

Six	**4**	**4**	**1**	**4**

Answer 11 · Mark scheme November 2007 | PHY1B | Original Q7 | Legacy

Seven	**1**	**2**	**2**	**4**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 12 · Mark scheme January 2008 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

Question 4

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	beta and gamma	both answers required accept correct symbols	1
(ii)	alpha and beta	both answers required accept correct symbols	1
(iii)	gamma	accept correct symbol	1
(b)	nothing *(*you do to a radioactive substance / source*)* changes the count rate / activity / rate of decay / radiation (emitted) **or** *(*reducing*)* the temperature does not change the activity / count rate / rate of decay / radiation (emitted)	accept it = radiation emitted	1
(c)(i)	has <u>one</u> more neutron	correct answer only	1
(ii)	14 days	no tolerance allow **1** mark for showing a correct method on the graph	2

Question 4 continues on the next page

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

PHY1H

Question 4 continued

question	answers	extra information	mark
(iii)	any **two** from: • beta particles / radiation can be detected externally • beta particles / radiation can pass out of / through the plant • long half-life gives time for phosphorus to move through the plant / be detected / get results • phosphorus-32 is chemically identical to phosphorus-31 • phosphorus-32 is used in the same way by a plant as phosphorus-31		2
total			9

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 12 · Mark scheme January 2008 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

PHY1H

Answer 13 · Mark scheme March 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q5 | Legacy

Five	**1**	**1**	**4**	**1**

Answer 14 · Mark scheme March 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q8 | Legacy

Eight	**2**	**2**	**3**	**2**

Answer 15 · Mark scheme June 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q4 | Legacy

Four	**4**	**3**	**4**	**3**

Answer 16 · Mark scheme June 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q6 | Legacy

Six	**1**	**1**	**1**	**4**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 17 · Mark scheme June 2008 | PHY1H | Original Q6 | Legacy

Question 6

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	3 fewer neutrons	accept fewer neutrons accept different number of neutrons do **not** accept different number of electrons	1
(a)(ii)	electron from the nucleus	both points needed	1
(a)(iii)	32 (days)	allow **1** mark for clearly obtaining 4 half-lives	2
(a)(iv)	has a **<u>much</u>** longer half-life little decay happened / still in the atmosphere	accept converse answers in terms of iodine-131 accept it has not reached one half-life yet accept it is still decaying	1 1
(b)	any **two** from: • some children developed TC before 1986 • some children (after 1986) that developed TC did not live in highly contaminated areas • the (large) increase can (only) be explained by (a large increase in) radiation as caused by Chernobyl • all areas would be contaminated (and raise the risk of TC) • no evidence (of effect) of other variables	marks are for reasons	2
(c)	People not exposed (to the radiation but who were otherwise similar)	accept people not affected (by the radiation)	1

Question 6 continues on the next page

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

PHY1H

Question 6 continued

question	answers	extra information	mark
(d)	any **two** from: • produce no pollutant / harmful gases • produces a lot of energy for a small mass (of fuel) **or** is a concentrated energy source • it is reliable **or** it can generate all of the time • produces only a small volume of (solid) waste	answers should be in terms of nuclear power and **not** why we should not use other fuels accept named gas or greenhouse gases do **not** accept no pollution accept amount for mass accept high energy density accept amount for volume	2
total			11

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 18 · Mark scheme

November 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q2 | Legacy

Two	**A** 4.5	**2**		
	B 8	**3**		
	C 24	**4**		
	D 400	**1**		
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**

Answer 19 · Mark scheme

November 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q4 | Legacy

Four	**3**	**4**	**2**	**3**

Answer 20 · Mark scheme

November 2008 | PHY1BP | Original Q7 | Legacy

Seven	**1**	**3**	**3**	**1**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 21 · Mark scheme January 2009 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

Question 4

question	answers	extra information	mark
4(a)(i)	(atoms / elements with) the same number of protons but different numbers of neutrons	accept (atoms / elements with) different mass number but same atomic number	1
4(a)(ii)	substances that give out radiation	accept alpha, beta or gamma for radiation accept an unstable nucleus that decays radioactive decay takes place is insufficient	1
4(b)	85 years	± 2 years allow **1** mark for showing correct method on the graph	2
4(c)(i)	a helium nucleus	accept 2 neutrons and 2 protons accept $_2{}^4He$ do **not** accept helium atom	1
4(c)(ii)	the rate of decay (of plutonium) decreases less heat produced	accept fewer (plutonium) nuclei (to decay) accept radioactivity decreases do **not** accept energy for heat	1 1

Question 4 continues on the next page

PHY1H

Question 4 continued

question	answers	extra information	mark
4(d)(i)	(outside the body) alpha (particles) cannot penetrate into the body (inside the body) (heat produced from decay) damages / kills cells / tissues	 accept causes cancer for damages / kills cells / tissues accept **highly** toxic	 1 1
4(d)(ii)	any **one** from: • worried same could happen again • an accident may cause radiation to be spread around the Earth / atmosphere • idea of soil contamination resulting from accident / release of radioactive material • idea of negative effect on health resulting from accident / release of radioactive material	 accept any sensible suggestion	1
Total			**10**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 21 · Mark scheme January 2009 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

PHY1H

Answer 22 · Mark scheme March 2009 | PHY1BP | Original Q1 | Legacy

Question	Key		
One	**A**	3	**4**
	B	10	**1**
	C	12	**2**
	D	60	**3**

Answer 23 · Mark scheme March 2009 | PHY1BP | Original Q6 | Legacy

Six	**3**	**4**	**4**	**3**

Answer 24 · Mark scheme June 2009 | PHY1BP | Original Q5 | Legacy

Five	**2**	**3**	**4**	**3**

Answer 25 · Mark scheme June 2009 | PHY1BP | Original Q9 | Legacy

Nine	**2**	**3**	**3**	**4**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 26 · Mark scheme June 2009 | PHY1H | Original Q6 | Legacy

Question 6

question	answers	extra information	mark
6(a)(i)	gamma hardly ionises the air	accept does not ionise accept gamma radiation is not charged do **not** accept answers in terms of danger of gamma or other properties	1
6(a)(ii)	half-life (too) short	accept need frequent replacement 'it' refers to curium-242	1
6(a)(iii)	(two) fewer neutrons	accept different numbers of neutrons if a number is specified it must be correct do **not** accept more neutrons unless curium-244 is specified	1
6(b)(i)	gamma	accept correct symbol	1
6(b)(ii)	both absorbed by the metal / steel / weld	only scores if (b)(i) is correct accept cannot pass through the metal / steel / weld	1
6(c)(i)	put source into water at **one** point on bank see if radiation is detected in polluted area	accept the idea of testing different parts of the river bank at different times accept idea of tracing	1 1
6(c)(ii)	2.7 (days)	allow **1** mark for showing correct use of the graph	2
Total			**9**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 27 · Mark scheme

November 2009 | PHY1BP | Original Q4 | Legacy

Four	**2**	**1**	**2**	**3**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 28 · Mark scheme January 2010 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

Question 4

question	answers	extra information	mark
4(a)(i)	alpha (particle)		1
4(a)(ii)	(unstable) nucleus	accept (unstable) nuclei do **not** accept middle do **not** accept helium nucleus	1
4(a)(iii)	same number of protons	accept same number of electrons accept same atomic / proton number accept they both have 92 protons same number of neutrons negates answer	1
4(b)(i)	4500 million years	do **not** accept 4500 years	1
4(b)(ii)	curve starting at 100 000 with a correct general shape passing through (4500, 50 000) and (9000, 25 000)	 allow **1** mark for points plotted **or** line passing through (4500, 50 000) and (9000, 25 000)	1 1
Total			**6**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 28 · Mark scheme January 2010 | PHY1H | Original Q4 | Legacy

PHY1H

Answer 29 · Mark scheme March 2010 | PHY1BP | Original Q1 | Legacy

Question	Key		
One	**A**	50	**3**
	B	100	**4**
	C	400	**2**
	D	800	**1**

Answer 30 · Mark scheme March 2010 | PHY1BP | Original Q3 | Legacy

Three	**3**	**3**	**3**	**2**

Answer 31 · Mark scheme March 2010 | PHY1BP | Original Q6 | Legacy

Six	**2**	**2**	**3**	**2**

Answer 32 · Mark scheme June 2010 | PHY1BP | Original Q4 | Legacy

Four	4	2	2	2

Answer 33 · Mark scheme June 2010 | PHY1BP | Original Q5 | Legacy

Five	1	3	4	2

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 34 · Mark scheme

June 2019 | PHY1H | Original Q2 | Legacy

Question 2

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(a)	gamma will pass through the body **or** alpha will not pass through the body	it refers to gamma answers must relate to the body accept skin for body	1
	gamma is only slightly ionising **or** alpha is heavily ionising	accept gamma causes less damage to cells / tissue do **not** accept gamma causes no damage to cells less harmful is insufficient	1
2(b)(i)	(both graphs show an initial) increase in count-rate	accept both show an increase	1
2(b)(ii)	only the right kidney is working correctly		1
	any **two** from: • count-rate / level / line for right kidney decreases (rapidly) • count-rate / level / line for <u>left</u> kidney does not change • radiation is being passed out / into urine - if referring to right kidney • radiation is not being passed out - if referring to the left kidney	if incorrect box chosen maximum of **1** mark can be awarded reference to named kidney can be inferred from the tick box it decreases is insufficient it does not change is insufficient	2

Question 2 continues on the next page . . .

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

PHY1H

Question 2 continued . . .

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(c)(i)	time taken for number of nuclei to halve **or** time taken for the count-rate to halve		1
2(c)(ii)	short half-life - the level of radiation (in the body) decreases rapidly to a safe / very small level **or** a long half-life - the radiation remains in the body / for a long time level of radiation remains high	it refers to short life isotope answers in terms of damage eg cancer are insufficient	1 1
Total			**9**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 34 · Mark scheme June 2010 | PHY1H | Original Q2 | Legacy

PHY1H

Answer 35 · Mark scheme November 2010 | PHY1BP | Original Q4 | Legacy

Four	**2**	**1**	**3**	**3**

Answer 36 · Mark scheme March 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q2 | Legacy

Two	**A**	infra red	**3**
	B	microwaves	**2**
	C	visible light	**1**
	D	X-rays	**4**

Answer 37 · Mark scheme March 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q8 | Legacy

Eight	**1**	**3**	**2**	**1**

Answer 38 · Mark scheme June 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q2 | Legacy

Two	**A**	16	**3**
	B	25	**2**
	C	150	**4**
	D	600	**1**

	A	**B**	**C**	**D**

Answer 39 · Mark scheme June 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q3 | Legacy

Three	**3**	**1**	**2**	**4**

Answer 40 · Mark scheme June 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q7 | Legacy

Seven	**2**	**2**	**1**	**3**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 41 · Mark scheme

June 2011 | PHY1H | Original Q2 | Legacy

Question 2

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(a)(i)	decommissioning		1
2(a)(ii)	level of radiation **or** radiation dose (to workers) decreased	accept the isotope / cobalt(-60) has decayed (a lot) accept the isotope / cobalt(-60) has decayed in 2 half lives accept exposed to less radiation do **not** accept no radiation left	1
	less hazardous / dangerous (to workers health)	accept safer do **not** accept there is no hazard accept allows reactor to cool (down) an answer of radiation levels decrease by 75 % or drops to 25 % gains **2** marks	1
2(b)(i)	more in favour **or** fewer against	quoting figures alone is insufficient do **not** accept it increases ignore any reasons given	1

Question 2 continues on the next page

PHY1H

Question 2 continued

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(b)(ii)	any **one** from: • sample too small • do not know how many (people) were asked • different people asked (in different years) • sample not representative (of population) • people did not understand the questions • do not know who carried out the surveys • do not know if surveys asked same questions	do **not** accept they are biased unless acceptable reason for bias given	1

Question 2 continues on the next page

PHY1H

Question 2 continued

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(b)(iii)	any **one** from: • no / less pollutant gases produced • reliable source (of energy / electricity) • running out of fossil fuels • conserve fossil fuels • meet increasing demand • less reliance on imported fossil fuels / electricity • concentrated energy source(s) • lower transportation costs for fuel • to replace old <u>nuclear</u> power stations	accept a named gas accept does not contribute to global warming accept a named fossil fuel accept fossil fuels won't have to be used accept named fossil fuel ignore references to efficiency / job creation / local economy / selling electricity	1
2(c)	economic issues		1
Total			**7**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 41 · Mark scheme June 2011 | PHY1H | Original Q2 | Legacy

PHY1H

Answer 42 · Mark scheme November 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q5 | Legacy

Five	**2**	**3**	**2**	**4**

Answer 43 · Mark scheme November 2011 | PHY1BP | Original Q7 | Legacy

Seven	**3**	**2**	**3**	**4**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 44 · Mark scheme

January 2013 | PH2HP | Original Q2 | Legacy

Question 2

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(a)(i)	any **one** from: • nuclear power (stations) • nuclear weapons (testing) • nuclear accidents	accept nuclear waste accept coal power stations accept nuclear bombs / fallout accept named accident, eg Chernobyl or Fukushima accept named medical procedure which involves a radioactive source accept radiotherapy accept X-rays accept specific industrial examples that involve a radioactive source nuclear activity / radiation is insufficient smoke detectors is insufficient	1
2(a)(ii)	(radioactive decay) is a random process	accept an answer in terms of background / radiation varies (from one point in time to another)	1
2(b)	any **one** from: • (maybe) other factors involved • evidence may not be valid • may not have (a complete) understanding of the process (involved)	accept a named 'sensible' factor, eg smoking accept not enough data	1

Question 2 continues on the next page . . .

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 44 · Mark scheme

PH2HP

Question 2 continued . . .

question	answers	extra information	mark
2(c)(i)	2 2		1 1
2(c)(ii)	218 84	correct order only	1 1
2(d)	3.8 (days)	allow **1** mark for showing correct method using the graph provided no subsequent steps correct answers obtained using numbers other than 800 and 400 gain **2** marks provided the method is shown	2
Total			**9**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 44 · Mark scheme

January 2013 | PH2HP | Original Q2 | Legacy

PH2HP

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 45 · Mark scheme

June 2013 | PH2HP | Original Q5 | Legacy

Question 5

question	answers	extra information	mark
5(a)	78		1
5(b)	atomic		1
5(c)(i)	131 54	correct order only	1 1
5(c)(ii)	32 (days)	allow **1** mark for showing 4 half-lives provided no subsequent step	2
5(c)(iii)	limits amount of iodine-131 / radioactive iodine that can be absorbed so reducing risk of cancer (of the thyroid)	accept increases level of non-radioactive iodine in thyroid do **not** accept cancels out iodine-131 accept stops risk of cancer (of the thyroid)	1 1
Total			**8**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 45 · Mark scheme

June 2013 | PH2HP | Original Q5 | Legacy

PH2HP

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 46 · Mark scheme

June 2014 | PH2HP | Original Q6 | Legacy

6(a)	(same) number of protons	same atomic number is insufficient	1	AO1 2.5.1e
6(b)(i)	nuclei split	do **not** accept atom for nuclei / nucleus	1	AO1 2.6.1b
6(b)(ii)	(nuclear) reactor		1	AO1 2.6.1a
6(c)	beta any **one** from: • atomic / proton number increases (by 1) • number of neutrons decreases / changes by 1 • mass number does not change • a neutron becomes a proton	 accept atomic / proton number changes by 1 (total) number of protons and neutrons does not change	1 1	AO2 2.5.2d
6(d)	(average) time taken for number of nuclei to halve **or** (average) time taken for count-rate / activity to halve		1	AO1 2.5.2h

Question 6 continues on the next page . . .

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 46 · Mark scheme

Question 6 continued . . .

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO spec ref
6(e)(i)	6.2 (days)	Accept 6.2 to 6.3 inclusive allow **1** mark for correctly calculating number remaining as 20 000 **or** allow **1** mark for number of 80 000 plus correct use of the graph (gives an answer of 0.8 days)	2	AO2 2.5.2h
6(e)(ii)	radiation causes ionisation that may then harm / kill healthy cells	allow radiation can be ionising accept specific examples of harm, eg alter DNA / cause cancer	1 1	AO3 2.5.2g
6(e)(iii)	benefit (of diagnosis / treatment) greater than risk (of radiation)	accept may be the only procedure available	1	AO3 2.5.2g
Total			**11**	

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 46 · Mark scheme

June 2014 | PH2HP | Original Q6 | Legacy

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO spec ref

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 47 · Mark scheme

June 2015 | PH2HP | Original Q3 | Legacy

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. ref.	ID
3(a)(i)	splitting of a(n atomic) nucleus	do not accept splitting an atom	1	AO1 2.6.1b	**E**
3(a)(ii)	Neutron		1	AO1 2.6.1c	**E**
3(b)(i)	nuclei have the same charge **or** nuclei are positive	accept protons have the same charge	1	AO1 2.3.1d	**E**
3(b)(ii)	(main sequence) star	accept Sun or any correctly named star accept red (super) giant	1	AO1 2.6.2b	**E**
3(c)(i)	any **two** from: • easy to obtain / extract • available in (very) large amounts • releases more energy (per kg) • produces little/no radioactive waste	do **not** accept figures *only* naturally occurring is insufficient seawater is renewable is insufficient less cost is insufficient	2	AO2/3 2.6	**E**
3(c)(ii)	any **one** from: • makes another source of energy available • increases supply of electricity • able to meet global demand • less environmental damage • reduces amount of other fuels used	accept any sensible suggestion accept a specific example accept a specific example	1	AO3 2.6	**E**
3(d)	12	allow **1** mark for obtaining 3 half-lives	2	AO2 2.5.2h	**E**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

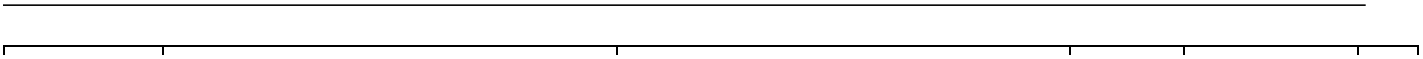
Answer 47 · Mark scheme

Total			**9**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 47 · Mark scheme

June 2015 | PH2HP | Original Q3 | Legacy



4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 48 · Mark scheme June 2018 | 8463/1H | Original Q6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO/ Spec. Ref
06.1	smoke absorbs / stops alpha radiation	allow alpha particles for alpha radiation alpha radiation does not reach the detector is insufficient	1	AO2 4.4.2.1
06.2	alpha radiation is not very penetrating **or** alpha radiation does not penetrate skin	allow alpha particles for alpha radiation allow alpha radiation does not travel very far (in air)	1	AO1 4.4.2.1
06.3	beta and gamma radiation will penetrate smoke no change (in the count rate) would be detected	allow beta and gamma radiation will not be stopped by smoke allow the change detected (in the count rate) would be too small	1 1	AO2 4.4.2.1
06.4	(a long half-life means) the count rate is (approximately) constant **or** a short half-life means the count rate decreases quickly until 1.3 half-lives the count rate is above 80 per second **or** until 1.3 half-lives the count rate is above the threshold for the smoke alarm to be activated **or** after 1.3 half-lives the smoke alarm will be activated all the time	allow activity of source is (approximately) constant allow after 1.3 half-lives the count rate is below 80 per second so don't have to replace source or smoke detector is insufficient	1 1	AO3 4.4.2.3

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 48 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8463/1H | Original Q6

Question	Answers	Mark	AO/ Spec. Ref
06.5	**Level 2:** Relevant points (reasons / causes) are identified, given in detail and logically linked to form a clear account.	3–4	AO2 4.4.3.3
	Level 1: Relevant points (reasons / causes) are identified, and there are attempts at logically linking. The resulting account is not fully clear.	1–2	AO1 4.4.3.3
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative content • short half-life or half-life of a few hours • (short half-life means) less damage to cells / tissues / organs / body • low ionising power • (low ionising power means) less damage to cells / tissues / organs / body • highly penetrating • (highly penetrating means) it can be detected outside the body • emits gamma radiation		
Total			**10**

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 49 · Mark scheme

June 2019 | 8463/1H | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
5.1	$^{206}_{82}Pb$		1 1	4.4.2.2 AO1
5.2	alpha radiation is highly ionising causing an increased risk of cancer **or** organ failure **or** radiation sickness / poisoning **or** mutation of genes / DNA **or** damage to cells / tissues / organs until the radioactive material is removed / excreted **or** activity of radioactive material reaches / approaches background radiation levels	 allow kill cells allow all the alpha radiation is absorbed by the body ignore references to half-life	1 1 1	4.4.2.4 AO1
5.3	$\frac{414}{138} = 3$ (half-lives) $1.45 \times 10^{-4} \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ $= 1.16 \times 10^{-3}$ (g) **or** = 0.00116 (g)	an answer of 1.16×10^{-3} (g) scores **3** marks	1 1 1	4.4.2.3 AO2
Total			**8**	

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 50 · Mark scheme

November 2020 | 8463/1H | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	Any **one** from: • (medical) x-rays • radiotherapy • nuclear weapons (testing) • named nuclear disaster eg Chernobyl / Fukushima / Three Mile Island.	allow CT scans allow nuclear fallout ignore radioactive / nuclear waste	1	AO1 4.4.3.1
05.2	uranium / plutonium	ignore any number given allow thorium	1	AO1 4.4.4.1
05.3	neutron absorbed by a uranium nucleus nucleus splits into two parts and (2 / 3) neutrons (are released) and gamma rays (are emitted)	 allow an atom splits into two parts if 1st marking point doesn't score 	1 1 1 1	AO1 4.4.4.1
05.4	lighter nuclei join to form heavier nuclei some of the mass (of the nuclei) is converted to energy (of radiation)	allow specific examples	1 1	AO1 4.4.4.2
05.5	activity decreases quickly risk of harm decreases quickly	allow nuclei / waste will decay at a greater rate ignore waste is radioactive for less time allow burial site doesn't need to be monitored for as long **or** doesn't need to be buried underground for as long **or** may not need to be buried underground	1 1	AO3 4.4.2.3
Total			**10**	

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 51 · Mark scheme

November 2021 | 8463/1H | Original Q6

Question 6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.1	148		1	AO1 4.4.1.2
06.2	D and E		1	AO1 4.4.1.2
06.3	line between B and 86 protons same line between B and 222 mass number		1 1	AO2 4.4.2.2
06.4	can't predict which nucleus will decay next **or** can't predict when a (particular) nucleus will decay		1	AO1 4.4.2.3
06.5	one alpha decay would decrease proton number by 2 two beta decays would increase proton number by 2 so the proton / atomic number of the final nucleus is the same as the proton / atomic number of the original nucleus	 this mark is dependent on scoring the first two marks	1 1 1	AO1 4.4.2.2
Total			**8**	

Answer 52 · Mark scheme

June 2023 | 8463/1H | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	Similarities: • same number of protons **or** same atomic number • same number of electrons Difference: • different number of neutrons **or** different mass number	 allow both atoms / nuclei contain 6 protons allow carbon-12 has 6 neutrons **and** carbon-14 has 8 neutrons	 1 1 1	AO1 4.4.1.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.2	the time it takes for the number of nuclei (in a radioactive sample) to halve (is 5700 years) **or** the time it takes for the activity (of a radioactive sample) to halve (is 5700 years) **or** the time it takes for the radiation emitted (by a radioactive sample) to halve (is 5700 years) **or** the time it takes for the count rate (of a radioactive sample) to halve (is 5700 years) **or** the time it takes for the mass of carbon-14 (in a sample) to halve (is 5700 years)	allow atoms for nuclei ignore radioactivity	1	AO1 4.4.2.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.3	2 half-lives 128.74 (s)	 allow 129 (s)	1 1	AO2 4.4.2.3

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 52 · Mark scheme

June 2023 | 8463/1H | Original Q5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.4	nitrogen-18		1	AO3 4.4.2.1
	greatest activity	MP2 and MP3 dependent on scoring MP1 allow emits most radiation per second allow emits most radiation in a given time period ignore shortest half-life	1	4.4.3.3
	(so) greatest dose of radiation absorbed (per second)		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.5	irradiation is the exposure of an object / person to radiation	allow 'absorption of radiation' for 'exposure' allow specific examples of ionising radiation	1	AO1 4.4.2.4
	(while) contamination is the (unwanted) presence of radioactive material / atoms on an object / person	allow 'inside a person' for 'on an object / person'	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.6	any **one** from: • cancer / tumours • DNA / genetic mutation • damages / kills cells • radiation poisoning / sickness / burns	ignore mutates cells ignore death	1	AO3 4.4.3.3

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 52 · Mark scheme June 2023 | 8463/1H | Original Q5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.7	some radioactive materials emit alpha radiation which has a (very) short range (in air)	 MP2 dependent on scoring MP1 allow weakly penetrating for short range (in air)	1 1	AO3 4.4.2.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.8	pilot's dose in 24 hours = 0.072 (mSv) number of days = $\frac{0.072}{0.00050}$ number of days = 144 OR nuclear power worker hourly dose = 0.0000208… (mSv) (1) number of days = $\frac{0.0030}{0.0000208}$ (1) number of days = 144 (1) OR $\frac{\text{hourly dose}}{\text{daily dose}} = \frac{0.0030}{0.00050} = 6$ (1) number of days = 6 × 24 (1) number of days = 144 (1)		1 1 1	AO2 4.4.3.1

Total Question 5	17

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 53 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8463/1H | Original Q2

Question 2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.1	nuclei neutrons gamma (rays)	this order only	1 1 1	AO1 4.4.4.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.2	energy = power × time **or** $E = P \times t$		1	AO1 4.2.4.2 4.1.1.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.3	P = 500 000 000 (W)		1	AO2 4.2.4.2 4.1.1.4
	E = 500 000 000 × 3600	allow a correct substitution of an incorrectly / not converted value of P	1	
	E = 1 800 000 000 000 (J) **or** $E = 1.8 \times 10^{12}$ (J)	allow an answer consistent with an incorrectly / not converted value of P	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.4	any **one** from: • bury the radioactive waste • put the radioactive waste in cooling ponds • transport the radioactive waste in secure vessels • store the radioactive waste in metal containers • cover the radioactive waste in concrete	allow store it for (at least) one half-life ignore references to high / medium / low level waste ignore label the waste as hazardous	1	AO3 4.4.2.4

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 53 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8463/1H | Original Q2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.5	number of days = $\frac{92}{100} \times 365$		1	AO2 4.1.3
	number of days = 335.8	allow answers of 335 and 336 days allow an answer of 29.2 (days) for 1 mark	1	

Total Question 2	10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 54 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8463/1H | Original Q7

Question 7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.1	new evidence is discovered that existing models cannot explain		1	AO1 4.4.1.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.2	irradiation is the exposure to radiation (radioactive) contamination is the (unwanted) presence of radioactive material on / inside a person	 allow an object for a person	1 1	AO1 4.4.2.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.3	(Po) 84 (Pb) 206		1 1	AO1 4.4.2.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.4	number of half-lives = 4 time = 4 × 138 time = 552 (days)		1 1 1	AO2 4.4.2.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.5	polonium-209 has a lower <u>activity</u> than polonium-210 (because polonium-209) has a longer half-life	ignore description of rate of decay MP2 dependent on MP1	1 1	AO3 4.4.2.1

Total Question 7	10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

ASSESSMENT and QUALIFICATIONS ALLIANCE

Mark scheme June 2003

GCSE

Physics

3451

Foundation

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Kathleen Tattersall: *Director General*

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

INFORMATION FOR EXAMINERS

1. General

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the marks available for each part of the question;
- the total marks available for the question;
- the typical answer or answers which are expected;
- extra information to help the Examiner make his or her judgement and help to delineate what is acceptable or not worthy of credit or, in discursive answers, to give an overview of the area in which a mark or marks may be awarded.

The extra information is aligned to the appropriate answer in the left-hand part of the mark scheme and should only be applied to that item in the mark scheme.

At the beginning of a part of a question a reminder may be given, for example:
where consequential marking needs to be considered in a calculation;
or the answer may be on the diagram or at a different place on the script.

In general the right hand side of the mark scheme is there to provide those extra details which confuse the main part of the mark scheme yet may be helpful in ensuring that marking is straightforward and consistent.

2. Emboldening

2.1 In a list of acceptable answers where more than one mark is available 'any **two** from' is used, with the number of marks emboldened. Each of the following lines is a potential mark.

2.2 A bold **and** is used to indicate that both parts of the answer are required to award the mark.

2.3 Alternative answers acceptable for a mark are indicated by the use of **or**. (Different terms in the mark scheme are shown by a / ; e.g. allow smooth / free movement.)

3. Marking points

3.1 Marking of Quality of Written Communication

Examiners are reminded of the need to assess QoWC by the following statement appearing in the appropriate parts of the mark scheme:

The answer to this question requires ideas in good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.

The maximum marks available to a candidate whose answer is not well expressed will be (the number of marks available –1).

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3.2 Marking of lists

This applies to questions requiring a set number of responses, but for which candidates have provided extra responses. The general principle to be followed in such a situation is that 'right + wrong = wrong'.

Each error/contradiction negates each correct response. So, if the number of error/contradictions equals or exceeds the number of marks available for the question, no marks can be awarded.

However, responses considered to be neutral (indicated as * in example 1) are not penalised.

Example 1: What is the pH of an acidic solution? (1 mark)

Candidate	Response	Marks awarded
1	4,8	0
2	green, 5	0
3	red*, 5	1
4	red*, 8	0

Example 2: Name two planets in the solar system. (2 marks)

Candidate	Response	Marks awarded
1	Pluto, Mars, Moon	1
2	Pluto, Sun, Mars, Moon	0

3.3 Use of chemical symbols/formulae

If a candidate writes a chemical symbol/formula instead of a required chemical name, full credit can be given if the symbol/formula is correct and if, in the context of the question, such action is appropriate.

3.4 The marking of quantitative relationships

Full credit can be given for a correct quantitative relationship expressed in:

- named units;
- physical quantities;
- standard symbols;
- a combination of physical quantities and units.

No credit can be given for any quantitative relationship expressed in terms of:

- a combination of physical quantities, units and symbols;
- a diagram, e.g. the ohm's law triangle, unless the rest of the answer shows clearly that the candidate understands the relationships involved.

3.5 Marking procedure for calculations

3.5.1 Full marks can be given for a correct numerical answer, as shown in the column 'answers', without any working shown. However, if the answer is incorrect, mark(s) can be gained by correct substitution/working and this is shown in the 'extra information' column.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3.5.2 Where calculations are based on incorrectly recalled relationships, neither the incorrectly recalled relationship, nor the resulting calculation based on the incorrect relationship, will be credited.

3.6 Interpretation of 'it'

Answers using the word 'it' should be given credit only if it is clear that the 'it' refers to the correct subject.

3.7 Errors carried forward

There should be no error carried forward from a previous answer which has been based on wrong science. Any error in the answers to a structured question should be penalised once only.

Examples

(a) A candidate who calculates average speed using speed = time/distance **and** then proceeds to use this incorrect answer to calculate an acceleration based on the correct quantitative relationship should be given credit for the use of the correct acceleration relationship but none for either numerical answer.

(b) A candidate who incorrectly calculates average speed using speed = distance/time and then proceeds to use this incorrect value to calculate an acceleration based on the correct quantitative relationship, should be given credit for the use of both correct quantitative relationships **and** for the correct substitution and use of the incorrect value in the calculation of the rate of acceleration.

Papers should be constructed in such a way that the number of times errors can be carried forward are kept to a minimum. Allowances for errors carried forward are most likely to be restricted to calculation questions and should be shown by the abbreviation e.c.f. in the marking scheme.

3.8 Phonetic spelling

The phonetic spelling of correct scientific terminology should be credited **unless** there is a possible confusion with another technical term.

3.9 Brackets

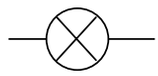
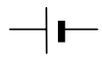
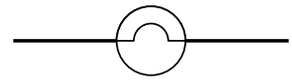
(…..) is used to indicate information which is not essential for the mark to be awarded but is included to help the examiner identify the sense of the answer required.

3.10 Unexpected Correct Answers not in the Mark Scheme

The Examiner should use professional judgement to award credit where a candidate has given an unexpected correct answer which is not covered by the mark scheme. The Examiner should consult with the Team Leader to confirm the judgement. The Team Leader should pass this answer on to the Principal Examiner with a view to informing all examiners.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q1

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	circuit symbol for a lamp correct   circuit symbol for a cell correct	accept  accept any standard of drawing providing circuit would work	1 1
	2 lamps drawn in parallel with 3 cells	polarity of cells must be correct (+ to –) but cells may be either way around	1
(b)	4.5		1
(c)	the same as	accept any clear indication of the correct answer	1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q2

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	gas		1
(b)	fuel burning stations produce electricity at any time / all the time wind generator can only produce when the wind is strong enough	accept fuel available all the time accept it's not always windy	1 1
(c)	no fuel is burnt **or** no fuel is used **or** uses only energy from wind **or** does not emit harmful gases / soot / smoke	do **not** accept wind is natural / environmentally friendly / renewable answer must be in terms of wind, **not** negative of fuel burning specific examples of gases CO_2, SO_2, acid rain and greenhouse gases can be accepted ozone negates credit	1
total			4

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q3

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	microwaves		1
(ii)	infra red		1
(iii)	ultrasonic		1
(b)(i)	B		1
(ii)	A		1
(c)	disturbance / vibration / movement direction	accept motion / force do **not** accept energy	1 1
(d)	sound wave	accept any clear indication of the correct answer	1
total			8

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q4

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	heat		1
(ii)	temperature increases **or** (cause) convection (currents)	accept gets warmer accept gets hotter	1
(iii)	60% **or** 0.6	60 without % scores **1** mark 0.6 with a unit scores **1** mark 60 with incorrect unit scores **1** mark **or** correct substitution $\frac{120}{200}$ for **1** mark	2
(b)	street more (energy transferred as) light **or** less (energy transferred as) heat **or** useful energy output the highest	 can only score this mark if first mark scored all efficiencies calculated correctly score 2nd mark point	1 1
total			6

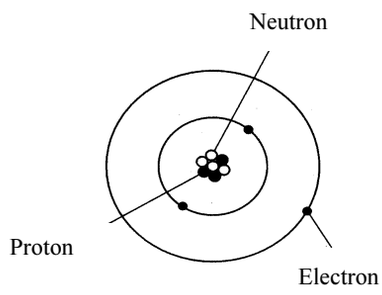
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q5

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	MN	accept 5.8, 8 seconds must include unit	1
(b)	LM	accept 0.8, 5.8 seconds must include unit	1
(c)(i)	0.8		1
(ii)	drinking alcohol		1
(d)	straight (by eye) line starting at 0.8 seconds line drawn steeper than LM starting before L	 ignore lines going beyond 2 seconds but line must exceed 2.5 metres per second before terminating	1 1
total			6

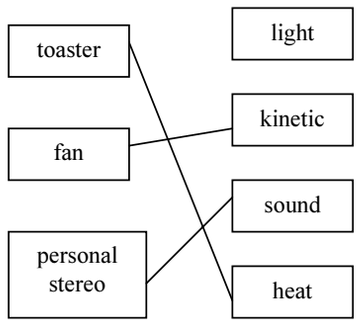
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q6

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	each correct label scores 1 mark  		3
(ii)	neutron		1
(iii)	7 number of protons and neutrons **or** number of nucleons **or** number of particles in the nucleus	 accept number of particles in the centre only if first answer = 7	1 1
(b)(i)	50 ± 5		1
(ii)	50 ± 5	accept their (b)(i)	1
(iii)	less	accept any way of indicating the correct answer	1
total			9

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q7

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	each correct line scores 1 mark  	if more than 3 lines are drawn mark incorrect ones first, to a maximum of 3 lines	3
(b)	toaster	accept 1.2 kW	1
(c)(i)	400		1
(ii)	£24 **or** 2400p	full credit for their (c)(i) × 6p for full credit the correct numerical answer must have the correct unit an answer of 24 or 2400 with no unit or the incorrect unit scores **1** mark (c)(i) × 6 incorrectly evaluated scores **1** mark	2
(d)	6	allow 6000 for **1** mark allow 3 × 2 for **1** mark	2
total			9

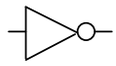
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q8

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	point where the rays cross	do not credit if ambiguous	1
(ii)	converging (lens)	do **not** accept convex	1
(b)(i)	point where the rays appear to diverge from	this should appear to be within 10mm in front of the back of the arrows on the approximate centre line need not be accurately constructed using a ruler	1
(ii)	diverging (lens)	do **not** accept concave	1
(c)	converging film smaller than nearer to	accept any clear indication of the correct response e.g. ticking, ringing, writing in after a mistake	1 1 1 1
(d)(i)	(image) bigger than object / enlarge	accept just 'made bigger'	1
(ii)	it / real image can be put on a screen **or** real image on the opposite side of the lens to the object	accept 'not an imaginary or virtual image' assume 'it' refers to a real image do **not** credit 'it can be seen'	1
(e)	**either** (the converging lens is) thick in the middle thin(ner) at the edge **or** (both) sides bend outwards (1) in the middle (1) **or** one side bends in the middle (1) more than the other side bends inwards (in the middle) (1)	thickest in the middle gains **2** marks convex gains **2** marks suitable diagrams gains **2** marks	1 1
total			12

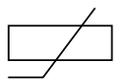
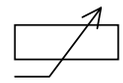
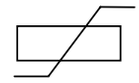
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q9

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	off off on	all correct	1
(ii)	AND (gate)	accept and (gate)	1
(iii)	on on on	all correct	1
(iv)	OR (gate)	accept or (gate)	1
(b)(i)	1 0 **or** 0 1 0 1 1 0	do **not** credit on / off responses	1
(ii)		accept mirror image accept  accept with either or both parts shaded accept line through as shading	1
(c)		accept off for 0 and on for 1 throughout	
	0 0	both correct	1
	0 1	both correct	1
	1 1	both correct	1
	1 1	both correct	1

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q9 continued

(d)(i)		accept mirror image **or** inverted do **not** credit  **or**  or similar	1
(ii)	resistance decreases / increases / changes current (through it) increases / decreases / changes **or** temperature changes / increases / decreases (1) resistance changes / decreases / increases (1) (NTC thermistor) both marks independent but must be compatible to score **2** marks	accept 'voltage across it decreases' for **2** marks but only if it is made clear that this refers to a thermistor in series	1 1
total			13

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q10

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	friction	accept any way of indicating the correct answer	1
(ii)	gravity	accept any way of indicating the correct answer	1
(b)(i)	accelerates **or** speed / velocity increases	accept faster and faster (**1** mark) do **not** accept faster pace / falls faster or suggestions of a greater but constant speed	1
	downwards / falls	accept towards the Earth / ground this may score in part (b)(ii) if it does not score here and there is no contradiction between the two parts	1
(ii)	constant speed / velocity **or** terminal velocity / speed **or** zero acceleration	stays in the same place negates credit	1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q11

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	X – mantle		1
	Y – inner core	do **not** accept solid core	1
(ii)	different to the crust **or** contains a lot of (heavy) metals	accept iron and nickel for metals	1
	higher (average) density **or** denser	density higher than 5500 (kg/m^3) gets **2** marks	1
(b)	animals were able to move from one continent to the other		1
	(when bridge broke) animals evolved differently	accept animals adapted differently	1
(c)(i)	earthquakes occur at the boundary between plates **or** earthquakes occur where plates push against each other		1
	there are no plate boundaries running through Britain	accept Britain is not near the edge of a plate	1
(ii)	convection currents (in the mantle) **or** heat released by (natural) radioactive processes		1
total			9

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q12

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	outside the Earth **or** not from the Earth	accept alien accept life from / on another planet / space accept our planet for Earth	1
(ii)	radio telescope(s)	do **not** accept telescopes do **not** accept satellite dishes do **not** accept radio receivers **or** transmitters	1
(b)(i)	galaxies	do **not** accept stars	1
(ii)	any **one** from: the pulses were regular pulses from space are usually random (scientists) thought technology had been used to produce the pulses neutron stars were unknown signals from a single point	 accept signals / beats for pulses accept noise for random pulses idea of regular but not continuous	1
(iii)	neutron star is (the matter / mass) left behind after a star / red giant explodes (as a super nova)	 accept after a super nova (explosion) neutron star causing super nova gets no credit	1 1
(c)(i)	carried on the balloon / equipment	accept carried by a rocket / aircraft / satellite birds negates credit	1
(ii)	on comets or meteors	accept meteorites / shooting stars accept returning space craft accept solar wind ignore asteroids accept ufo do **not** accept solar flares do **not** accept satellites	1
total			8

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q13

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	silver is a (good) reflector of <u>heat</u> (radiation) **or** silver reflects the heat (radiation)	fact heat = infra red ignore references to light accept shiny for silver good radiator negates the mark ignore references to good conductor do **not** accept bounce back	1
	less heat is lost through the board **or** more heat is retained by the shirt	explanation accept both sides of shirt heated reflects heat back up gets **1** mark only ignore mention of friction	1
(b)	metal soleplate	accept soleplate / bottom / metal do **not** accept outside / case	1
(c)	plastic **or** rubber	accept any named plastic do **not** accept wood	1
	it is a (good) insulator **or** it is a poor conductor	ignore mention of heat if in conjunction with electricity	1
(d)	**Quality of written communication** *The answer to this question requires ideas in good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.*	*Maximum of **2** marks if ideas not well expressed.*	
	pulls iron bolt down **or** attracts the iron bolt **or** moves bolt out of plunger	answers in terms of charges attracting or repelling gain no credit	1
	plunger pushed / moved to the right (by spring) **or** plunger released		1
	push switch opens / goes to off / goes to right	accept circuit is broken for maximum credit the points must follow a logical sequence 3 correct points but incorrect sequence scores **2** marks only ignore reset action	1
total			8

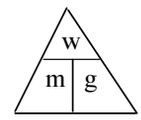
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q14

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	any **one** from: the ground the air radon (gas) building materials buildings rocks / granite food cosmic rays **or** solar rays X-rays nuclear weapons testing nuclear power stations / accidents	 do **not** accept mobile phones accept from outer space accept sun but **not** sunlight accept medical uses	1
(ii)	2	allow $\frac{1200}{60\times10}$ **or** $\frac{1200}{600}$ **or** 120 for **1** mark	2
(b)	 alpha: the count rate is (greatly) reduced by the card **or** the card absorbs alphas but not betas beta: the count rate is (greatly) reduced by the metal **or** the thin metal absorbs alphas and betas **or** the thin metal absorbs all of the radiation (from the source) gamma: would pass through the thin metal but count rate is background **or** no radiation passing through **or** a higher reading would be recorded **or** to reduce the count to 2 would require much more than 3 mm of metal	answers must be comparative accept converse answers throughout accept paper for the card accept aluminium for the metal accept aluminium for the metal accept lead / aluminium for the metal	 1 1 1
total			6

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q15

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	weight = mass × g.f.s.	accept w = m × g accept gravity for gfs accept  provided subsequent use of Δ correct do **not** accept N = kg × N/kg	1
(ii)	675	75 × 9 for **1** mark	2
(iii)	g.(f.s.) is higher (on Earth than Venus)	accept gravity for g.f.s. do **not** accept g.f.s. is lower unless answer states on Venus	1
(iv)	orbit time for Jupiter is <u>longer</u> / longest (than for the other planets)	do **not** give any credit for an answer that includes a comparison of diameter **or** a comparison of g.f.s.	1
(b)	**Quality of written communication** *The answer to this question requires ideas in good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.* any **two** from: dust <u>and</u> gas **or** remnants of a super nova pulled together by (force of) <u>gravity</u> nuclear fusion starts	*Maximum of **1** mark if ideas not well expressed.* accept hydrogen for dust and gas do **not** accept hydrogen burns although candidates may include more detail these points are essential to score the credit	2
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q16

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	upright with the contacts at the bottom and still in place and unbent	no need for labels but incorrect label(s) cancel the mark accept a freehand drawing no need for details such as correct dimensions	1
	one blob of mercury touching <u>both</u> contacts	do **not** award mark if contacts bent to touch	1
(b)(i)	(X is a) battery	do **not** credit cell accept (set of) cells accept power supply do **not** accept power pack	1
	(Y is a) LED	**or** light emitting diode	1
(ii)	longer (time)	do **not** accept 'slower time'	1
(iii)	any **two** from: current less (so) rate of flow of charge less **or** less coulombs per second (so) discharge is slower	 do **not** accept current slower accept capacitor has charge for longer **or** charge lasts longer **or** (so total of) electrons take longer to travel round circuit	2
(c)	4200	translation correct (= 4000) but percentage addition incorrect gains **1** mark translation incorrect but 5% addition is correct gains **1** mark accept 422.1 **or** 42.2 **or** 6.3 for **1** mark	2
	ohms **or** Ω	4.2 kilohms **or** 4.2 kΩ gains all **3** marks	1
total			10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q17

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	point at which its mass (seems to) act **or** point at which gravity (seems to) act	accept …its weight acts accept correct statements if the intent is clear e.g. … if suspended, the centre of gravity will be directly under the point of suspension e.g. … (if the object is symmetrical), the centre of gravity is on the **or** an axis (of symmetry) do **not** credit just 'it is a point'	1
(b)	**Quality of written communication** *The answer to this question requires good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.* any **five** from: clamp (steel) rod (horizontally) hang plastic / sheet by rod through (one) hole hang plumb line from rod mark ends of plumb line on the sheet and use the ruler to draw a straight line repeat with other hole centre of mass is where the lines cross check by balancing at this point	*maximum of **4** marks if ideas not well expressed* **no** marks if method quite unworkable maximum of **3** marks if no 'repeat with other hole'	5
(c)(i)	(turning) effect **or** moment force distance	all three correct accept weight accept length	1
(ii)	17.6 Nm **or** newton metre(s)	allow 44 × 0.4 **or** 0.4 × 44 for **1** mark do **not** accept N/m **or** N/cm 1760 Ncm gains all **3** marks	2 1
total			10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

ASSESSMENT and QUALIFICATIONS ALLIANCE

Mark scheme June 2003

GCSE

Science: Double Award Co-ordinated

3462

Paper 3F

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Kathleen Tattersall: *Director General*

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

INFORMATION FOR EXAMINERS

1. General

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the marks available for each part of the question;
- the total marks available for the question;
- the typical answer or answers which are expected;
- extra information to help the Examiner make his or her judgement and help to delineate what is acceptable or not worthy of credit or, in discursive answers, to give an overview of the area in which a mark or marks may be awarded.

The extra information is aligned to the appropriate answer in the left-hand part of the mark scheme and should only be applied to that item in the mark scheme.

At the beginning of a part of a question a reminder may be given, for example:
where consequential marking needs to be considered in a calculation;
or the answer may be on the diagram or at a different place on the script.

In general the right hand side of the mark scheme is there to provide those extra details which confuse the main part of the mark scheme yet may be helpful in ensuring that marking is straightforward and consistent.

2. Emboldening

2.1 In a list of acceptable answers where more than one mark is available 'any **two** from' is used, with the number of marks emboldened. Each of the following lines is a potential mark.

2.2 A bold **and** is used to indicate that both parts of the answer are required to award the mark.

2.3 Alternative answers acceptable for a mark are indicated by the use of **or**. (Different terms in the mark scheme are shown by a / ; e.g. allow smooth / free movement.)

3. Marking points

3.1 Marking of Quality of Written Communication

Examiners are reminded of the need to assess QoWC by the following statement appearing in the appropriate parts of the mark scheme:

The answer to this question requires ideas in good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.

The maximum marks available to a candidate whose answer is not well expressed will be (the number of marks available –1).

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3.2 Marking of lists

This applies to questions requiring a set number of responses, but for which candidates have provided extra responses. The general principle to be followed in such a situation is that 'right + wrong = wrong'.

Each error/contradiction negates each correct response. So, if the number of error/contradictions equals or exceeds the number of marks available for the question, no marks can be awarded.

However, responses considered to be neutral (indicated as * in example 1) are not penalised.

Example 1: What is the pH of an acidic solution? (1 mark)

Candidate	Response	Marks awarded
1	4,8	0
2	green, 5	0
3	red*, 5	1
4	red*, 8	0

Example 2: Name two planets in the solar system. (2 marks)

Candidate	Response	Marks awarded
1	Pluto, Mars, Moon	1
2	Pluto, Sun, Mars, Moon	0

3.3 Use of chemical symbols/formulae

If a candidate writes a chemical symbol/formula instead of a required chemical name, full credit can be given if the symbol/formula is correct and if, in the context of the question, such action is appropriate.

3.4 The marking of quantitative relationships

Full credit can be given for a correct quantitative relationship expressed in:

- named units;
- physical quantities;
- standard symbols;
- a combination of physical quantities and units.

No credit can be given for any quantitative relationship expressed in terms of:

- a combination of physical quantities, units and symbols;
- a diagram, e.g. the ohm's law triangle, unless the rest of the answer shows clearly that the candidate understands the relationships involved.

3.5 Marking procedure for calculations

3.5.1 Full marks can be given for a correct numerical answer, as shown in the column 'answers', without any working shown. However, if the answer is incorrect, mark(s) can be gained by correct substitution/working and this is shown in the 'extra information' column.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3.5.2 Where calculations are based on incorrectly recalled relationships, neither the incorrectly recalled relationship, nor the resulting calculation based on the incorrect relationship, will be credited.

3.6 Interpretation of 'it'

Answers using the word 'it' should be given credit only if it is clear that the 'it' refers to the correct subject.

3.7 Errors carried forward

There should be no error carried forward from a previous answer which has been based on wrong science. Any error in the answers to a structured question should be penalised once only.

Examples

(a) A candidate who calculates average speed using speed = time/distance **and** then proceeds to use this incorrect answer to calculate an acceleration based on the correct quantitative relationship should be given credit for the use of the correct acceleration relationship but none for either numerical answer.

(b) A candidate who incorrectly calculates average speed using speed = distance/time and then proceeds to use this incorrect value to calculate an acceleration based on the correct quantitative relationship, should be given credit for the use of both correct quantitative relationships **and** for the correct substitution and use of the incorrect value in the calculation of the rate of acceleration.

Papers should be constructed in such a way that the number of times errors can be carried forward are kept to a minimum. Allowances for errors carried forward are most likely to be restricted to calculation questions and should be shown by the abbreviation e.c.f. in the marking scheme.

3.8 Phonetic spelling

The phonetic spelling of correct scientific terminology should be credited **unless** there is a possible confusion with another technical term.

3.9 Brackets

(…..) is used to indicate information which is not essential for the mark to be awarded but is included to help the examiner identify the sense of the answer required.

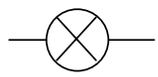
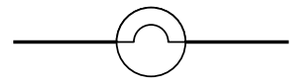
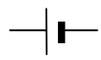
3.10 Unexpected Correct Answers not in the Mark Scheme

The Examiner should use professional judgement to award credit where a candidate has given an unexpected correct answer which is not covered by the mark scheme. The Examiner should consult with the Team Leader to confirm the judgement. The Team Leader should pass this answer on to the Principal Examiner with a view to informing all examiners.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Double Award
Foundation Tier 3462/3F

3462/3F Q1

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	circuit symbol for a lamp correct 	accept  accept any standard of drawing providing circuit would work	1
	circuit symbol for a cell correct 		1
	2 lamps drawn in parallel with 3 cells	polarity of cells must be correct (+ to –) but cells may be either way around	1
(b)	4.5		1
(c)	the same as	accept any clear indication of the correct answer	1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q2

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	gas		1
(b)	fuel burning stations produce electricity at any time / all the time wind generator can only produce when the wind is strong enough	accept fuel available all the time accept it's not always windy	1 1
(c)	no fuel is burnt **or** no fuel is used **or** uses only energy from wind **or** does not emit harmful gases / soot / smoke	do **not** accept wind is natural / environmentally friendly / renewable answer must be in terms of wind, **not** negative of fuel burning specific examples of gases CO_2, SO_2, acid rain and greenhouse gases can be accepted ozone negates credit	1
total			4

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q3

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	microwaves		1
(ii)	infra red		1
(iii)	ultrasonic		1
(b)(i)	B		1
(ii)	A		1
(c)	disturbance / vibration / movement direction	accept motion / force do **not** accept energy	1 1
(d)	sound wave	accept any clear indication of the correct answer	1
total			8

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q4

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	heat		1
(ii)	temperature increases **or** (cause) convection (currents)	accept gets warmer accept gets hotter	1
(iii)	60% **or** 0.6	60 without % scores **1** mark 0.6 with a unit scores **1** mark 60 with incorrect unit scores **1** mark **or** correct substitution $\frac{120}{200}$ for **1** mark	2
(b)	street more (energy transferred as) light **or** less (energy transferred as) heat **or** useful energy output the highest	 can only score this mark if first mark scored all efficiencies calculated correctly score 2nd mark point	1 1
total			6

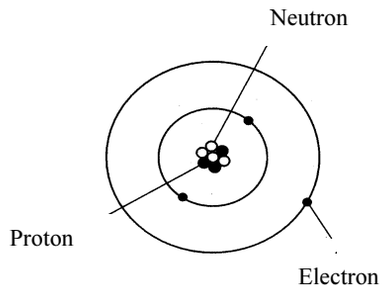
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q5

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	MN	accept 5.8, 8 seconds must include unit	1
(b)	LM	accept 0.8, 5.8 seconds must include unit	1
(c)(i)	0.8		1
(ii)	drinking alcohol		1
(d)	straight (by eye) line starting at 0.8 seconds line drawn steeper than LM starting before L	 ignore lines going beyond 2 seconds but line must exceed 2.5 metres per second before terminating	1 1
total			6

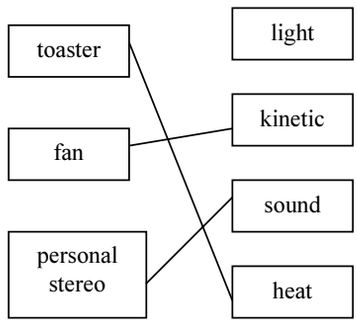
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q6

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	each correct label scores 1 mark  		3
(ii)	neutron		1
(iii)	7 number of protons and neutrons **or** number of nucleons **or** number of particles in the nucleus	 accept number of particles in the centre only if first answer = 7	1 1
(b)(i)	50 ± 5		1
(ii)	50 ± 5	accept their (b)(i)	1
(iii)	less	accept any way of indicating the correct answer	1
total			9

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q7

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	each correct line scores 1 mark  	if more than 3 lines are drawn mark incorrect ones first, to a maximum of 3 lines	3
(b)	toaster	accept 1.2 kW	1
(c)(i)	400		1
(ii)	£24 **or** 2400p	full credit for their (c)(i) × 6p for full credit the correct numerical answer must have the correct unit an answer of 24 or 2400 with no unit or the incorrect unit scores **1** mark (c)(i) × 6 incorrectly evaluated scores **1** mark	2
(d)	6	allow 6000 for **1** mark allow 3 × 2 for **1** mark	2
total			9

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q8

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	friction	accept any way of indicating the correct answer	1
(ii)	gravity	accept any way of indicating the correct answer	1
(b)(i)	accelerates **or** speed / velocity increases	accept faster and faster (**1** mark) do **not** accept faster pace / falls faster or suggestions of a greater but constant speed	1
	downwards / falls	accept towards the Earth / ground this may score in part (b)(ii) if it does not score here and there is no contradiction between the two parts	1
(ii)	constant speed / velocity **or** terminal velocity / speed **or** zero acceleration	stays in the same place negates credit	1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q9

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	X – mantle		1
	Y – inner core	do **not** accept solid core	1
(ii)	different to the crust **or** contains a lot of (heavy) metals	accept iron and nickel for metals	1
	higher (average) density **or** denser	density higher than 5500 (kg/m^3) gets **2** marks	1
(b)	animals were able to move from one continent to the other		1
	(when bridge broke) animals evolved differently	accept animals adapted differently	1
(c)(i)	earthquakes occur at the boundary between plates **or** earthquakes occur where plates push against each other		1
	there are no plate boundaries running through Britain	accept Britain is not near the edge of a plate	1
(ii)	convection currents (in the mantle) **or** heat released by (natural) radioactive processes		1
total			9

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q10

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	outside the Earth **or** not from the Earth	accept alien accept life from / on another planet / space accept our planet for Earth	1
(ii)	radio telescope(s)	do **not** accept telescopes do **not** accept satellite dishes do **not** accept radio receivers **or** transmitters	1
(b)(i)	galaxies	do **not** accept stars	1
(ii)	any **one** from: the pulses were regular pulses from space are usually random (scientists) thought technology had been used to produce the pulses neutron stars were unknown signals from a single point	 accept signals / beats for pulses accept noise for random pulses idea of regular but not continuous	1
(iii)	neutron star is (the matter / mass) left behind after a star / red giant explodes (as a super nova)	 accept after a super nova (explosion) neutron star causing super nova gets no credit	1 1
(c)(i)	carried on the balloon / equipment	accept carried by a rocket / aircraft / satellite birds negates credit	1
(ii)	on comets or meteors	accept meteorites / shooting stars accept returning space craft accept solar wind ignore asteroids accept ufo do **not** accept solar flares do **not** accept satellites	1
total			8

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q11

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	silver is a (good) reflector of <u>heat</u> (radiation) **or** silver reflects the heat (radiation)	fact heat = infra red ignore references to light accept shiny for silver good radiator negates the mark ignore references to good conductor do **not** accept bounce back	1
	less heat is lost through the board **or** more heat is retained by the shirt	explanation accept both sides of shirt heated reflects heat back up gets **1** mark only ignore mention of friction	1
(b)	metal soleplate	accept soleplate / bottom / metal do **not** accept outside / case	1
(c)	plastic **or** rubber	accept any named plastic do **not** accept wood	1
	it is a (good) insulator **or** it is a poor conductor	ignore mention of heat if in conjunction with electricity	1
(d)	**Quality of written communication** *The answer to this question requires ideas in good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.*	*Maximum of **2** marks if ideas not well expressed.*	
	pulls iron bolt down **or** attracts the iron bolt **or** moves bolt out of plunger	answers in terms of charges attracting or repelling gain no credit	1
	plunger pushed / moved to the right (by spring) **or** plunger released		1
	push switch opens / goes to off / goes to right	accept circuit is broken for maximum credit the points must follow a logical sequence 3 correct points but incorrect sequence scores **2** marks only ignore reset action	1
total			8

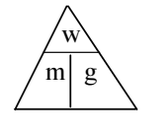
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q12

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	any **one** from:		1
	the ground	do **not** accept mobile phones	
	the air		
	radon (gas)		
	building materials		
	buildings		
	rocks / granite		
	food		
	cosmic rays **or** solar rays	accept from outer space accept sun but **not** sunlight	
	X-rays	accept medical uses	
	nuclear weapons testing		
	nuclear power stations / accidents		
(ii)	2	allow $\frac{1200}{60\times10}$ **or** $\frac{1200}{600}$ **or** 120 for **1** mark	2
(b)		answers must be comparative accept converse answers throughout	
	alpha: the count rate is (greatly) reduced by the card **or** the card absorbs alphas but not betas	accept paper for the card	1
	beta: the count rate is (greatly) reduced by the metal **or** the thin metal absorbs alphas and betas **or** the thin metal absorbs all of the radiation (from the source)	accept aluminium for the metal	1
	gamma: would pass through the thin metal but count rate is background **or** no radiation passing through **or** a higher reading would be recorded **or** to reduce the count to 2 would require much more than 3 mm of metal	accept aluminium for the metal accept lead / aluminium for the metal	1
total			6

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q13

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	weight = mass × g.f.s.	accept w = m × g accept gravity for gfs accept  provided subsequent use of Δ correct do **not** accept N = kg × N/kg	1
(ii)	675	75 × 9 for **1** mark	2
(iii)	g.(f.s.) is higher (on Earth than Venus)	accept gravity for g.f.s. do **not** accept g.f.s. is lower unless answer states on Venus	1
(iv)	orbit time for Jupiter is <u>longer</u> / longest (than for the other planets)	do **not** give any credit for an answer that includes a comparison of diameter **or** a comparison of g.f.s.	1
(b)	**Quality of written communication** *The answer to this question requires ideas in good English in a sensible order with correct use of scientific terms. Quality of written communication should be considered in crediting points in the mark scheme.* any **two** from: dust <u>and</u> gas **or** remnants of a super nova pulled together by (force of) <u>gravity</u> nuclear fusion starts	*Maximum of **1** mark if ideas not well expressed.* accept hydrogen for dust and gas do **not** accept hydrogen burns although candidates may include more detail these points are essential to score the credit	2
total			7

Version 1.0: *27092005*

ASSESSMENT and QUALIFICATIONS ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Physics 3451/F
Specification B

Mark Scheme

2005 examination – June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Physics (Specification B)
Foundation Tier 3451/F

3451/F Q1

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	less than	accept any correct indication	1
(ii)	more than	accept any correct indication	1
(b)	any **two** from: stays above the same place above the equator one orbit takes 24 hours	 do **not** accept stays in the same place do **not** accept goes around equator unless qualified do **not** accept orbit at same speed as Earth do **not** accept orbit at a constant speed accept has same angular speed / velocity as Earth	2
total			4

3451/F Q2

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	comet		1
(b)	large group / number / collection of stars	ignore reference to planets accept millions of stars do **not** accept thousands of stars do **not** accept loads of stars	1
(c)	giant supernova neutron		1 1 1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q3

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	radio		1
(ii)	gamma	accept microwave accept infrared	1
(iii)	ultra violet		1
(iv)	microwaves		1
(b)	the same as		1
(c)	X-rays do not go through lead	references to gamma rays are incorrect accept lead protects them from the X-rays accept not exposed to X-rays	1
	lead stops / reduces risk of X-rays harming / damaging / killing (persons) <u>cells</u>	accept X-rays (may) cause cancer accept organs for cell do **not** accept references to electric shock do **not** accept stops bones of people showing on X-ray answers involving the horse wearing an apron are incorrect	1
	Quality of written communication	award for a sensible sequence of **two** points	1
total			8

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Physics B – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3451/F Q4

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	light electrical		1 1
(b)	15% **or** 0.15	correct substitution gains **1** mark only an answer of 15 with no unit **or** an incorrect unit gains **1** mark an answer of 0.15 given with a unit gains **1** mark	2
(c)	the ticket machine is a long way from other electricity supplies		1
(d)	any figure between 5 and 10 inclusive	unit not required but if given must match numerical answer	1
total			6

3451/F Q5

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	radon (gas)	do **not** accept gas	1
(ii)	background		1
(b)	bigger	accept any word which means bigger	1
(c)	**Z** alpha will not pass through aluminium or lead	if Z is not given, the reason does not score accept alpha cannot go through metals / dense material accept there is nothing to stop the radiation accept alpha will not pass through aluminium do **not** accept alpha will not pass through lead do **not** accept alpha stopped by air	1 1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q6

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	loses negative charge / electrons	do **not** accept positive charge transfers to the comb do **not** accept friction	1
(b)	**A** attract		1
	B repel		1
	C attract		1
(c)	**F A D E**	allow **2** marks for 2 letters in the correct place allow **1** mark for 1 letter in the correct place	3
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Physics B – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3451/F Q7

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	all points correctly plotted	tolerance ± $\frac{1}{2}$ square on y axis only allow **1** mark for 3 correctly plotted points	2
	attempt made to draw a smooth curve	do **not** accept dot-to-dot line	1
(b)(i)	3 days ± 0.2 **or** any value correctly obtained using their graph line	if no line drawn in (a), answer must be exactly 3	1
(ii)	3 days or their (b)(i)		1
(c)	radon-222	accept radon **or** 222 accept alpha or 3.8 correct isotope required for reason to score	1
	has the shortest half-life	accept the others have longer half-lives	1
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q8

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	fossils of Cynognathus are found in Africa and South America		1
	the shapes ……. almost fit together	only two boxes should be ticked deduct **1** mark for each additional box to a minimum mark of **0**	1
(b)	continental		1
	crust		1
	tectonic		1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

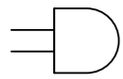
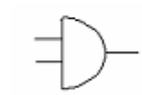
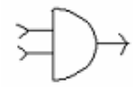
3451/F Q9

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	capacitor	accept condenser	1
	LDR	**or** light dependent resistor accept 'ldr', 'Ldr' etc.	1
	relay (normally open)	do **not** accept 'relay normally closed'	1
(b)(i)	battery	accept '(battery of) cells' do **not** accept 'battery / cell'	1
(ii)	LED	**or** light emitting diode accept 'led' or 'Led' do **not** accept just 'diode'	1
(iii)	B will light (but C will not)	accept '(only) B will work' accept 'one is on the other is off' do **not** accept 'C is on and B is off'	1
(iv)	any **one** from: B is connected the right way round (and C is not) a (light emitting) diode only allows (a significant) current to flow in one direction B's anode is connected to the positive side of the supply B's cathode is connected to the negative terminal	N.B. the candidate's answer to part (b)(iii) may include this mark but do **not** credit if the response to part (b)(iii) is incorrect or there is any other contradiction if (iv) is completely consistent with (iii) which is wrong, allow **1** mark	1
(c)(i)	first input / second input / output 0 / 0 / **0** 1 / 0 / **0** 0 / 1 / **0** 1 / 1 / **1**	**all** correct allow: OFF NO OFF NO OFF NO ON YES	1
(ii)	truth (table)		1

cont…

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q9 cont…

(iii)		a Roman upper case D in any orientation without contacts is acceptable but if contacts are shown do **not** give the mark if there is any ambiguity or contradiction allow  	1
(d)	light sensor	**or** light dependent resistor **or** LDR accept 'ldr', Ldr' etc allow solar cell, photo cell	1
	NOT gate	accept 'Not gate' **or** 'not gate' if both correct but in the wrong order credit with **1** mark	1
total			12

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

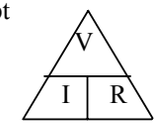
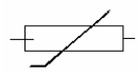
Physics B – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3451/F Q10

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	rays continued to meet on the right hand side of the lens and beyond	must be straight lines from the right hand side of the lens ignore details through the lens allow if no arrows	1
	meet exactly on the axis	negate mark if contradictory arrow(s) added do not need to go beyond the focus for this mark	1
(ii)	(principal) focus	**or** focal (point)	1
(iii)	converging	**or** convex	1
(b)(i)	**A**		1
(ii)	rays seem to come from this point	**or** words to this effect **or** shows this on the diagram	1
(iii)	diverging	**or** concave	1
(c)	film	accept any unambiguous method of showing the correct response	1
	smaller than		1
	further away from		1
(d)	any **three** from: • real image can be put on a screen • virtual image cannot be put on a screen / film • virtual image is imaginary • real image is formed where (real) rays cross / converge • virtual image is where virtual / imaginary rays (seem to) come from • virtual image formed where virtual rays intersect / cross	 allow film allow real image has light travelling through it **or** virtual image is where rays seem to come from	3
total			13

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q11

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	$A_1 = 0.5$ $A_4 = 0.5$	ignore any units allow **1** mark for $A_1 = A_4 \neq 0.5$	1 1
(ii)	the resistance of **P** is more than 20 Ω a smaller current goes through P / A_2 (than 20 Ω)	 dependent on getting 1st mark correct accept converse	1 1
(b)(i)	potential difference = current × resistance	accept pd / voltage for potential difference accept V = I × R, correct symbols and correct case only accept volts = amps × ohms accept  provided subsequent method is correct allow combination of physical quantities and named units allow voltage = I × R	1
(ii)	6	allow **1** mark for correct substitution	2
(iii)	6	accept their (b)(ii)	1
(c)	thermistor or  resistance goes down (as temperature of thermistor goes up)	accept correct circuit symbol allow phonetic spelling do **not** accept changes for goes down do **not** accept an answer in terms of current only answers in terms of other components are incorrect	1 1
total			10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Physics B – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3451/F Q12

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	larger the distance, greater the time	accept 'they are proportional' accept converse	1
(ii)	any value between 6 and 9 years inclusive		1
(b)(i)	carbon dioxide		1
(ii)	(Venus) has high**er** temperature (than Mercury)	accept has the high**est** temperature accept Venus is hotter / hottest do **not** accept has a high / very high temperature	1
	(Venus) further from the Sun than Mercury	accept 'Venus is not the closest planet to the Sun' answer in terms of greenhouse effect only, scores **0** marks	1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q13

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	20		1
(ii)	convection		1
(iii)	fit draughtproof strips	accept lay carpet accept fit curtains accept close doors / windows / curtains accept any reasonable suggestion for reducing a draught 'double glazing' alone is insufficient	1
(b)	air is (a good) insulator **or** air is a poor conductor	accept air cavity / 'it' for air	1
	reducing heat transfer by <u>conduction</u>	accept stops for reduces ignore convection do **not** accept radiation do **not** accept answers in terms of heat being trapped	1
(c)(i)	most cost effective	accept it is cheaper or low<u>est</u> cost accept shortest payback time accept in terms of reducing heat loss by the largest amount do **not** accept it is easier ignore most heat is lost through the roof	1
(ii)	4		1
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q14

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	constant speed	do **not** accept normal speed do **not** accept it is stopped / stationary	1
	in a straight line	accept any appropriate reference to a direction constant velocity gains **2** marks 'not accelerating' gains **2** marks terminal velocity alone gets **1** mark	1
(ii)	goes down owtte	accept motorbike (it) slows down	1
(b)(i)	20 (m/s)	ignore incorrect units	1
(ii)	acceleration = change in velocity / time (taken)	do **not** accept velocity for change in velocity accept change in speed accept $a = \frac{v-u}{t}$ **or** $a = \frac{v_1 - v_2}{t}$ **or** $a = \frac{\Delta v}{t}$ do **not** accept $a = \frac{v}{t}$	1
(iii)	4 **or** their (b)(i) ÷ 5	allow **1** mark for correct substitution	2
	m/s^2	m/s/s **or** ms^{-2} **or** metres per second squared **or** metres per second per second	1
(c)	vehicle may skid / slide	loss of control / brakes lock / wheels lock accept greater stopping distance **or** difficult to stop	1
	due to reduced friction (between tyre(s) and road)	accept due to less grip do **not** accept no friction	1

cont…

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q14 cont…

(d)	any **three** from: • <u>increased</u> speed • <u>reduced</u> braking force • <u>slower</u> (driver) reactions • <u>poor</u> vehicle maintenance • <u>increased</u> mass / weight of vehicle • <u>poor</u> road surface • <u>more</u> streamlined	do **not** accept night time / poor vision N.B. specific answers may **each** gain credit eg tiredness (1), drinking alcohol (1), using drugs (1), driver distracted (1) etc specific examples may **each** gain credit eg worn brakes or worn tyres etc accept large mass / weight of vehicle if candidates give three answers that affect stopping distance but not specific to <u>increase</u> award **1** mark only	3
total			13

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Physics B – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3451/F Q15

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	arrow from centre of the ball **and** at right angles to the string **and** in the correct direction	arrow should point to the student's belt accept free-hand 'straight' line do **not** accept curved line	1
(ii)	increase increase increase	accept 'be stronger / bigger' accept 'be stronger / bigger' accept 'be stronger / bigger'	1 1 1
(b)	speed velocity direction	all **three** correct any two correct for **1** mark otherwise **0** marks	2
(c)(i)	centripetal	accept 'centripedal' and other minor misspellings do **not** accept anything which could be 'centrifugal'	1
(ii)	gravity	accept 'weight' accept 'force of attraction due to mass(es) (of the Moon and the Earth)'	1
(iii)	electron(s)		1
(iv)	electrostatic	accept 'electrical' do **not** accept just 'centripetal'	1
total			10

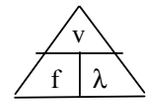
4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q16

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	**X** at the centre of the lifebelt	measuring from the centre of **X**, allow 2 mm tolerance in any direction	1
(ii)	any **two** from: below the point of suspension at the centre (of the lifebelt) (because) the lifebelt / it is symmetrical	if X is on vertical line below the hanger (but not at centre) can gain the first point only accept '(vertically) below **Y**' accept 'in the middle' **or** (because) the mass / weight is evenly distributed	2
(b)	Nm **or** newton metre(s) 750	accept Newton metre(s) do **not** accept any ambiguity in the symbol ie NM, nM or nm (moment) = force × (perpendicular) distance (between line of action and pivot) **or** (moment) = 500 × 1.5 gains **1** mark	1 2
(c)	**Quality of written communication**: any **three** connected points from: low(er) <u>centre of mass / gravity</u> (more) <u>stable</u> less likely to fall over the <u>turning effect / moment</u> (of the weight of case) is less so the pull on her arm is less	for **2** of the underlined terms used in the correct context **or** <u>centre of mass / gravity</u> will be close(r) to the wheels / axle / ground **or** less <u>unstable</u> accept 'less likely to overturn' do **not** accept 'will not fall over' **or** so less effort is needed to hold the case ignore references to pulling the case	1 3
total			10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3451/F Q17

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	any **two** from: • **amplitude** decreasing • **wavelength** increasing • **frequency** decreasing **Quality of written communication**	accept siren / sound getting quieter do **not** accept sound decreases accept pitch decreasing ignore reference to transverse wave ignore reference to speed contradictory statements within each point lose the mark all emboldened terms in candidate's answer used correctly	2 1
(b)(i)	ultrasound **or** ultrasonic		1
(ii)	wave speed = frequency × wavelength	accept speed / velocity for wave speed accept $v = f \times \lambda$ do **not** accept w for λ do **not** accept s for v accept  provided subsequent calculation shows a correct method	1
(iii)	339.2 **or** 340 **or** 339	allow **1** mark for using 212 000 allow **1** mark for correct substitution an answer of 0.3392 **or** 0.34 **or** 0.339 gains **1** mark only award full credit for a correct numerical answer with the unit changed to km/s	3
total			8

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ASSESSMENT and QUALIFICATIONS ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Science: Double Award 3462/3F
Specification B (Co-ordinated)

Mark Scheme

2005 examination - June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

Double Award
Foundation Tier 3462/3F

3462/3F Q1

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	less than	accept any correct indication	1
(ii)	more than	accept any correct indication	1
(b)	any **two** from: stays above the same place above the equator one orbit takes 24 hours	 do **not** accept stays in the same place do **not** accept goes around equator unless qualified do **not** accept orbit at same speed as Earth do **not** accept orbit at a constant speed accept has same angular speed / velocity as Earth	2
total			4

3462/ 3F Q2

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	comet		1
(b)	large group / number / collection of stars	ignore reference to planets accept millions of stars do **not** accept thousands of stars do **not** accept loads of stars	1
(c)	giant supernova neutron		1 1 1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q3

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	radio		1
(ii)	gamma	accept microwave accept infrared	1
(iii)	ultra violet		1
(iv)	microwaves		1
(b)	the same as		1
(c)	**Quality of written communication**	award for a sensible sequence of **two** points	1
	X-rays do not go through lead	accept lead protects them from the X-rays accept not exposed to X-rays	1
	lead stops / reduces risk of X-rays harming / damaging / killing (persons) <u>cells</u>	accept X-rays (may) cause cancer accept organs for cell do **not** accept references to electric shock do **not** accept stops bones of people showing on X-ray answers involving the horse wearing an apron are incorrect references to gamma rays are incorrect	1
total			8

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3462/3F Q4

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	light electrical		1 1
(b)	15% **or** 0.15	correct substitution gains **1** mark only an answer of 15 with no unit **or** an incorrect unit gains **1** mark an answer of 0.15 given with a unit gains **1** mark	2
(c)	the ticket machine is a long way from other electricity supplies		1
(d)	any figure between 5 and 10 inclusive	unit not required but if given must match numerical answer	1
total			6

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q5

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	radon (gas)	do **not** accept gas	1
(ii)	background		1
(b)	bigger	accept any word which means bigger	1
(c)	**Z** alpha will not pass through aluminium or lead	if Z is not given, the reason does not score accept alpha cannot go through metals / dense material accept there is nothing to stop the radiation accept alpha will not pass through aluminium do **not** accept alpha will not pass through lead do **not** accept alpha stopped by air	1 1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3462/3F Q6

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	loses negative charge / electrons	do **not** accept positive charge transfers to the comb do **not** accept friction	1
(b)	**A** attract		1
	B repel		1
	C attract		1
(c)	**F A D E**	allow **2** marks for 2 letters in the correct place allow **1** mark for 1 letter in the correct place	3
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q7

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	all points correctly plotted	tolerance ± $\frac{1}{2}$ square on y axis only allow **1** mark for 3 correctly plotted points	2
	attempt made to draw a smooth curve	do **not** accept dot-to-dot line	1
(b)(i)	3 days ± 0.2 **or** any value correctly obtained using their graph line	if no line drawn in (a), answer must be exactly 3	1
(ii)	3 days or their (b)(i)		1
(c)	radon-222	accept radon **or** 222 accept alpha or 3.8 correct isotope required for reason to score	1
	has the shortest <u>half-life</u>	accept the others have longer <u>half-lives</u>	1
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

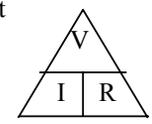
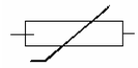
Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3462/3F Q8

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	fossils of Cynognathus are found in Africa and South America		1
	the shapes ……. almost fit together	only two boxes should be ticked deduct **1** mark for each additional box to a minimum mark of **0**	1
(b)	continental		1
	crust		1
	tectonic		1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q9

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	$A_1 = 0.5$	ignore any units	1
	$A_4 = 0.5$	allow **1** mark for $A_1 = A_4 \neq 0.5$	1
(ii)	the resistance of **P** is more than 20 Ω		1
	a smaller current goes through P / A_2 (than 20 Ω)	dependent on getting 1st mark correct accept converse	1
(b)(i)	potential difference = current × resistance	accept pd / voltage for potential difference accept V = I × R, correct symbols and correct case only accept volts = amps × ohms accept  provided subsequent method is correct allow combination of physical quantities and named units allow voltage = I × R	1
(ii)	6	allow **1** mark for correct substitution	2
(iii)	6	accept their (b)(ii)	1
(c)	thermistor or 	accept correct circuit symbol allow phonetic spelling	1
	resistance goes down (as temperature of thermistor goes up)	do **not** accept changes for goes down do **not** accept an answer in terms of current only answers in terms of other components are incorrect	1
total			10

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3462/3F Q10

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	larger the distance, greater the time	accept 'they are proportional' accept converse	1
(ii)	any value between 6 and 9 years inclusive		1
(b)(i)	carbon dioxide		1
(ii)	(Venus) has high**er** temperature (than Mercury)	accept has the high**est** temperature accept Venus is hotter / hottest do **not** accept has a high / very high temperature	1
	(Venus) further from the Sun than Mercury	accept 'Venus is not the closest planet to the Sun' answer in terms of greenhouse effect only, scores **0** marks	1
total			5

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

3462/3F Q11

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	20		1
(ii)	convection		1
(iii)	fit draughtproof strips	accept lay carpet accept fit curtains accept close doors / windows / curtains accept any reasonable suggestion for reducing a draught 'double glazing' alone is insufficient	1
(b)	air is (a good) insulator **or** air is a poor conductor	accept air cavity / 'it' for air	1
	reducing heat transfer by <u>conduction</u>	accept stops for reduces ignore convection do **not** accept radiation do **not** accept answers in terms of heat being trapped	1
(c)(i)	most cost effective	accept it is cheaper or low<u>est</u> cost accept shortest payback time accept in terms of reducing heat loss by the largest amount do **not** accept it is easier ignore most heat is lost through the roof	1
(ii)	4		1
total			7

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3462/3F Q12

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)	constant speed	do **not** accept normal speed do **not** accept it is stopped / stationary	1
	in a straight line	accept any appropriate reference to a direction constant velocity gains **2** marks 'not accelerating' gains **2** marks terminal velocity alone gets **1** mark	1
(ii)	goes down owtte	accept motorbike (it) slows down	1
(b)(i)	20 (m/s)	ignore incorrect units	1
(ii)	acceleration = change in velocity / time (taken)	do **not** accept velocity for change in velocity accept change in speed accept $a = \frac{v-u}{t}$ **or** $a = \frac{v_1 - v_2}{t}$ **or** $a = \frac{\Delta v}{t}$ do **not** accept $a = \frac{v}{t}$	1
(iii)	4 **or** their (b)(i) ÷ 5	allow **1** mark for correct substitution	2
	m/s^2	m/s/s **or** ms^{-2} **or** metres per second squared **or** metres per second per second	1
(c)	vehicle may skid / slide	loss of control / brakes lock / wheels lock accept greater stopping distance **or** difficult to stop	1
	due to reduced friction (between tyre(s) and road)	accept due to less grip do **not** accept no friction	1

cont…

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

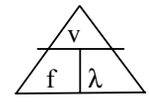
3462/3F Q12 cont…

(d)	any **three** from: • increased speed • reduced braking force • slower (driver) reactions • poor vehicle maintenance • increased mass / weight of vehicle • poor road surface • more streamlined	do **not** accept night time / poor vision NB specific answers may **each** gain credit eg tiredness (1), drinking alcohol (1), using drugs (1), driver distracted (1) etc specific examples may **each** gain credit eg worn brakes or worn tyres etc accept large mass / weight of vehicle if candidates give three answers that affect stopping distance but not specific to increase award **1** mark only	3
total			13

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Science: Double Award (Co-ordinated) – AQA GCSE Mark Scheme, 2005 June series

3462/3F Q13

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)	**Quality of written communication**	all emboldened terms in candidate's answer used correctly	1
	any **two** from: • **amplitude** decreasing • **wavelength** increasing • **frequency** decreasing	accept siren / sound getting quieter do **not** accept sound decreases accept pitch decreasing ignore reference to transverse wave ignore reference to speed contradictory statements within each point lose the mark	2
(b)(i)	ultrasound **or** ultrasonic		1
(ii)	wave speed = frequency × wavelength	accept speed / velocity for wave speed accept $v = f \times \lambda$ do **not** accept w for λ do **not** accept s for v accept  provided subsequent calculation shows a correct method	1
(iii)	339.2 **or** 340 **or** 339	allow **1** mark for using 212 000 allow **1** mark for correct substitution an answer of 0.3392 **or** 0.34 **or** 0.339 gains **1** mark only award full credit for a correct numerical answer with the unit changed to km/s	3
total			8

Question 5 (Standard/High demand)

05.1 40% of student scored a mark on this question. Electronics, microwaves, phones and food and drink were common incorrect responses. Man-made doesn't mean 'made by man' in this context it refers to the radiation source being artificial rather than naturally occurring. Incorrect answers commonly seen included things which are not man-made, eg sunlight, cosmic rays, other types of radiation which do not contribute to background radiation like microwaves or infrared.

05.2 74% of students could name a nuclear fuel. The most popular answer being 'uranium'. Commonly seen incorrect answers included coal, oil, gas and petrol.

05.3 Only 6% of students scored all 4 marks. To score the first marking point, students needed to indicate that the neutron becomes part of the U-235 nucleus, it was insufficient to only say that the neutron collides with the nucleus. Very few students scored the 4th marking point. Many students hadn't revised the process, evidenced by their meandering discussion of different radiation types and gold sheets. Whilst many students had some idea of the nuclear fission process, they often failed to gain marks because their answers lacked detail or were imprecise, eg neutrons being absorbed by 'atoms' rather than 'nuclei', a nucleus 'splitting' without the detail of two daughter nuclei being produced. A number of students went on to describe the chain reaction and / or the process of electricity generation which was unnecessary.

05.4 Only 8% of students scored both marks, with 29% of students scoring 1 mark. Elements fuse or atoms fuse was insufficient. Nuclei fuse was insufficient unless they said to form a larger / heavier nucleus. Very few knew that some of the mass of the nuclei was converted into energy. Some students fell back on their knowledge of chemical reactions and mentioned breaking bonds and exothermic reactions.

05.5 Only 8% of students scored 2 marks, 39% of students scored 1 mark. Very few students linked the short half-life to how the activity of the waste would change with time. Most students who scored the first marking point did so for saying the radioactive waste would decay quicker. Students tended to score the second marking point rather than the first, although vague statements like less harm/damage to the environment were insufficient.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 51 · Examiner comments November 2021 | 8463/1H | Original Q6

Question 6

Questions **06.1** and **06.2** were well answered, but few students scored any marks on the remainder of the question. In question **06.5** students often failed to give sufficient technical accuracy when describing radioactive decays.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 52 · Examiner comments

June 2023 | 8463/1H | Original Q5

Question 5 (Standard/high Demand)

05.1 This question discriminated well with 43 % of students scoring 3 marks, 18 % of students scoring 2 marks and 17 % of students scoring 1 mark. There is evident confusion about the significance of the mass number and the atomic number and what they represent. Lots of students 'shot themselves in the foot' by making statements about incorrect numbers of particles. e.g. 'Number of neutrons in carbon-12 is different from carbon-14, it's 12 in carbon-12 and 14 in carbon-14', would score no marks. Any numbers given as examples had to be correct to score marks.

05.2 'Time for radioactivity to halve' was insufficient to score, which was a commonly seen answer. If a student specified 'the time to halve' they needed to be clear what was halving: mass, number of nuclei, activity, etc. 47% of students scored the mark for this question.

05.3 Students struggled to realise that if ¼ remained two half-lives had passed. Subsequently, any calculation they did scored no marks. 32% of students scored 2 marks. For only 1 mark to score the words '2 half-lives' needed to be seen, it was not sufficient to see the number '2'.

05.4 Most students incorrectly chose Fluorine-18 as causing the biggest risk, believing that its long half-life would cause the most harm. Students who chose nitrogen-18 were often imprecise in their explanation and used 'more radiation emitted' without indicating the time period over which the more radiation was emitted. 'Decays the fastest' was insufficient to score the 2nd marking point. Less than 1% of students scored 3 marks, 7% scored 2 marks and 15% scored 1 mark.

05.5 Students who had learned the definitions as stated in the specification scored well, with 18% of students scoring 2 marks. Many students were unclear of the difference between the two terms and gave vague answers about 'radiation being around you versus in you', which were insufficient to score. It was evident that many students don't appreciate that radioactive materials emit radiation and gave confused answers mixing the terms 'radiation' and 'radioactive'.

05.6 90% of students answered correctly, scoring a mark. The most common correct answer was 'cancer'. 'Death' was ignored as working with nuclear radiation would cause other specific harm before death occurred. 'Damage to tissues / organs' was also creditworthy, as they are made up of cells. As ionisation occurs at an atomic level, this was not sufficient to score a mark. A commonly seen incorrect answer was 'ionises cells'.

05.7 38% of students scored 2 marks on this question, while 3% of students scored 1 mark. Students who didn't mention alpha radiation / particles would not have scored marks. Some students thought that standing close to the radiation detector would help to rule out radiation due to background radiation, which was not creditworthy.

05.8 82% of students scored 3 marks usually for using the first method given in the mark scheme. Some students calculated 144 (days) but thought they had calculated hours so divided by 24 and wrote an answer of 6. They scored 2 marks, as their final answer was treated as a unit error.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Answer 54 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8463/1H | Original Q7

07.1

Nearly all of the students chose the correct reason for why scientists change the model used to describe the structure of an atom.

07.2

Many students were confused about the distinction between irradiation and radioactive contamination. Many thought that it had to do with being exposed to radiation inside or outside the body, or one causing harm the other not causing harm. Exposure to a radioactive source was insufficient to score the irradiation mark. Without using the word 'exposed' students often did not express their ideas clearly enough. 'Absorbing radiation from a source' would have been another way of gaining credit for this idea. Students were more secure explaining what radioactive contamination meant and often gave examples like 'radioactive dust' or radioactive atoms' being present on or in people / objects. Almost a quarter of the students scored 2 marks, while just over 40 % of the students scored 1 mark.

07.3

About 90 % of the students scored 2 marks for this nuclear equation, while about 5 % of the students scored 1 mark.

Answer 54 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8463/1H | Original Q7

07.4

'4 half-lives' needed to be seen to score the first mark, the number '4' was not sufficient by itself for a mark. The most common mistake was to divide 256 000 by 16 000 to give an answer of 16, which scored no marks. Just over 70 % of the students scored 3 marks.

07.5

More / less active was insufficient as was a description of activity in terms of rate of decay.
Just over 20 % of the students scored 2 marks, while a further 12 % of the students scored 1 mark.

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

Questions matter

GCSE

Physics

8463/1H Paper 1 Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

8463
June 2024

Version: 1.0

4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

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4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

General

Grade 4-5 calculation questions ask for students to recall an equation first before using it in a subsequent calculation, however in the 2024 series, students were given a Physics Equations Sheet which had all the equations printed on it. Subsequently, the performance on straightforward calculations has improved compared with years when equations have needed to be recalled from memory.

The grade 8-9 multistep calculations, question **05.5** and **06.2**, were well attempted. Question **05.5** had 18% of students scoring 5 marks, while question **06.2** had 14% of students scoring 6 marks.

Question **03.1** was well attempted and students who had carried out the resistance of a wire required practical would have had a material advantage over those who hadn't. For this question, 44% of students scored 5 or 6 marks and 37% of students scored 3 or 4 marks.

Handwriting continues to be a problem for a number of students, making it very difficult for examiners to read what has been written. An increasing number of students are using computers to word process their answers for extended response questions, which is helpful for examiners in awarding credit for student responses. However, students must use the question number as printed in the question paper eg 4.3 rather than 4(c) to ensure that their work is marked with the corresponding question part.

Levels of demand

Questions are set at three levels of demand for this paper:

- **Standard demand** questions are designed to broadly target grades 4–5.
- **Standard/high demand** questions are designed to broadly target grades 6–7.
- **High demand** questions are designed to broadly target grades 8–9.

A student's final grade, however, is based on their attainment across the qualification as a whole, not just on questions that may have been targeted at the level at which they are working.

Question 1 (Standard Demand)

01.1 98% of students scored this mark, identifying the energy store which increases when water is heated.

01.2 93% of students scored this mark. Some incorrect answers seen were 'method A' or 'method B' students thinking they were linking a method to the energy transfer. Another common answer was 'hydroelectric energy' which didn't score. The word 'potential' was needed for an answer of 'gravitational potential.' As the question was worded it seemed reasonable to credit 'kinetic' since the water moving uphill would have kinetic energy before it reached its destination and stored only gravitational potential energy.

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4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

01.3 55% of students scored 4 marks. Some students failed to realise that the calculations needed were to show the amount of stored energy wasted or the amount of stored energy usefully transferred. Simple subtractions were insufficient to score the calculation marks. To score 4 marks, two comparisons were needed in addition to a comparative calculation. Although the comparative calculation performed by a minority of students involved dividing 33 600 kJ by 490 kJ and getting an answer of 68.6, which is the number of times more energy stored by method A compared to B. This single calculation was enough to score 4 marks with the two simple comparisons. The installation comparison only scored if value was added to the information eg Method A is easier to install or is likely to cost less money.

01.4 To score marks for this question, students needed to say what activity should be stopped (or reduced) and what should be done instead for both transport and electricity generation. At its simplest this could be use electric cars instead of petrol cars and use renewable methods instead of fossil fuels to generate electricity. As well as the examples on the mark scheme other valid methods were also creditworthy: car sharing, for example, or limiting the distance that goods could be shipped across country. 39% of students scored 4 marks, while 35% of students scored 3 marks.

Question 2 (Standard Demand)

02.1 A sentence completion question about nuclear fission which discriminated well between students. 72 % of students scored 3 marks, 21% scored 2 marks and 5% scored 1 mark.

02.2 99.5% of students scored the mark for writing down the correct equation. However, in this exam series all equations were provided for the students on the Physics Equations Sheet.

02.3 A standard demand calculation of energy question. 48% of students scored 3 marks, while 41% of students scored 2 marks. Not converting or incorrectly converting the unit will have allowed many students to only score 2 marks.

02.4 44% of students scored a mark. ‘Wear protective clothing’ or ‘hazmat suits’ were common incorrect answers. Any idea of ‘burying it’ was credited, so ‘bury it in a field’ was ok, as was ‘bury it in landfill,’ which from a student’s perspective is equivalent to burying it underground. ‘Keeping it away from people’ was insufficient.

02.5 96% of students scored 2 marks. The answer of 29.2 days was worth 1 mark as this could only have been calculated by doing the correct calculation and then subtracting the result from 365.

Question 3 (Standard/High Demand)

03.1 Students who had completed the investigation found this question straightforward, especially as the circuit was shown in a photo. It was not necessary for the circuit connections to be described. The mean mark for the question was 4 marks. 44% of students scored 5 or 6 marks, while 37% of students scored 3 or 4 marks.

03.2 83% of students identified the graph showing the relationship between length of wire and resistance.

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03.3 28% of students scored 2 marks, while 50% scored 1 mark. The converse of 'low p.d.' was the bare minimum to score the first mark, so 'not a high p.d.' was taken to mean the p.d. was low. Similarly, 'not enough to give you a shock' and 'not enough to electrocute you' were creditworthy for the second mark.

Question 4 (Standard/High Demand)

04.1 Students answers were generally very confused with this question and statements about transfer of positive electrons or protons or even neutrons were commonly seen. Students struggled to understand that when you are in contact with a charged object you have the same charge as that object. It was common to see statements about the dome being negative so the student (and her hair) are positively charged. If a student said that the student was positively charged they could not score mark points 1 and 2, but they could still score mark point 3 if they said that like / same charges repel. 10% of students scored 3 marks, while 15% scored 2 marks and 32% scored 1 mark.

04.2 Only 8% of students scored a mark on this question. An answer of 'the area / space / region where an electron experiences a force' was creditworthy as were other examples of charged particles or ions. 'The area where other charged particles experience repulsion or attraction' was also creditworthy. Neither of these examples were seen often, however.

04.3 92% scored a mark for this question. A surprisingly large number of students made statements like 'as you get closer to the dome, the field strength increases' answering the question in the opposite way to the way it was set out. They scored a mark but would have saved a lot of time by writing 'it decreases.'

04.4 Some students did not convert, or incorrectly converted, the unit of charge and scored 3 marks.. Some students incorrectly converted the unit for charge and also spuriously converted the energy by multiplying or dividing by a power of ten. These students made two mistakes, so scored a maximum of 2 marks on this question. 36% of students scored all 4 marks, while 56% of students scored 3 marks for this calculation of potential difference.

04.5 80% of students identified the factor that would increase the distance a spark can jump between two objects.

Question 5 (Standard/High Demand)

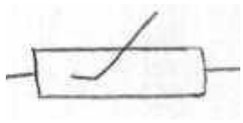
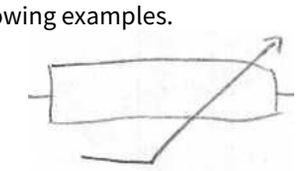
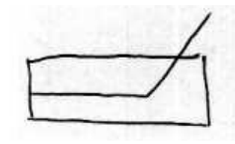
05.1 72% of students scored 2 marks, while 15% of students scored 1 mark. A number of students thought mains p.d. was 240 V. It was officially changed to 230 V in 1987 and this is the value given in the specification. However, it was more common for students to get the p.d. correct and the frequency incorrect.

05.2 A grade 6-7 calculation of resistance, which discriminated well between students. The conversion of milliwatts to watts proved a problem for the vast majority of students. 53% scored all 4 marks, while 36% scored 3 marks.

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05.3 64% of students scored a mark for suggesting why dirty coins are not recognised by the machine. Answers which were insufficient, but ignored, included 'Can't measure resistance' and 'Dirt is an insulator'..

05.4 63% of students scored a mark for drawing the thermistor symbol. Answers that were not acceptable included the following examples.

05.5 This grade 8-9 calculation, worth 5 marks, question discriminated well between students of different abilities. If a student did not calculate the total resistance and then use that value to calculate the current in the circuit, then they didn't score the first 3 marks. If a student calculated the current in the circuit using just the 400 Ω resistor, then they could use that value to score the 4th and 5th marks for the calculation of the p.d. across the thermistor, using $V = IR$.
Answers with a p.d. greater 12 V usually scored zero marks, due to fundamental Physics errors.
18% of students scored 5 marks, while 31% of students scored 2 marks. 46% of students scored 0 marks. In this exam series all equations were provided for the students on the Physics Equations Sheet.

Question 6 (High Demand)

06.1 90% of students scored this mark, for identifying that the elastic potential energy store increases as the bungee cords are stretched.

06.2 A challenging grade 8-9 calculation question. A common incorrect answer was '10' which scored 5 marks because the only mistake the student made was not doubling the elastic potential energy calculated for one bungee cord. Due to the various ways students approached the question it discriminated well between different abilities. 14% of students scored 6 marks, while 34% scored 5 marks and 28% scored 4 marks. As long as a student had used the elastic potential energy equation calculating a value of E_e using a value of k and e^2 they could score the marks for using the E_p equation.

06.3 12% of students scored 2 marks, while 46% of students scored 1 mark, in this question for identifying the ways in which energy was dissipated.

Question 7 (Standard/High Demand)

07.1 52% of students scored this mark. The question states that the student's eye is not in line with the level of the water. The position of the eye is likely to remain in the same (incorrect) position as the water level changes when the ring is inserted. This will cause a random error as both volume measurements will be incorrect, but not by the same amount.

07.2 63% of students scored this mark. Additional mass or absorbing extra water were ignored. The answer needed to make a comparison, rather than just state that 'volume of string affects the measurement of volume.'

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4.4.2.3 Half-lives and the random nature of radioactive decay

07.3 33% of students scored the mark for this question about resolution. Comments on low / high resolution were insufficient to score. Statements needed to refer to the resolution value itself or the number of decimal places the measurement could be read to. As measuring cylinders often have large gaps between markings, a statement that the resolution was 0.1 cm^3 was allowed.

07.4 71% of students scored a mark for this question about zero error. Common incorrect answers said, 'take repeat readings and calculate a mean.'

07.5 A grade 6-7 calculation question, but the unit conversion made this question more difficult than other similar calculations in the exam, with only 33% of students scoring all 4 marks. 57% of students scored 3 marks.

Question 8 (High Demand)

08.1 Questions about the microscopic causes of pressure are difficult for GCSE students and this question was no exception. Many students repeated information given in the question which did not score any marks. A minority of students scored the first mark point, many students simply stating that the volume decreased which was insufficient. Students made a good attempt at explaining that there were more collisions between the particles and the container walls, but failed to score because they didn't refer to a specified time period e.g. per second, or rate or more frequent, etc. Some students stated that the kinetic energy of the particles had increased, which stopped them from scoring the second mark point. Very few students scored the third mark point which was the most demanding of the three. 9% of students scored 2 or 3 marks, while 43% of students scored 1 mark.

08.2 94% of students scored this mark, linking temperature increase to mean kinetic energy of particles.

08.3 A grade 6-7 calculation question which discriminated well between students. Many students failed to convert the specific heat capacity so scored 3 marks instead of 4. Some students tried to convert the energy into kJ but very few did this successfully, usually ending with a 'power of 10' error. 22% of students scored 3 marks while 62% of students scored 4 marks.

Question 9 (High Demand)

09.1 Students needed to refer to the graph, and factual recall about alpha radiation, to score the 1st and 3rd mark points.,. The 2nd mark point was much more unlikely to score, as students often stated the graph went to zero, rather than being just above zero. A number of students confused the graph with a half-life graph, believing the *x*-axis showed time, not distance. 8% of students scored 3 marks, while 45% scored 2 marks and 35% scored 1 mark.

09.2 A lot of students thought it was enough to say 'an absorbing material' without specifying what the absorbing material should be made from. Any suitable absorbing material was creditworthy, a block of wood for example. However, reference to any metal foil was not creditworthy unless students referred to a certain thickness eg 5 mm thick aluminium foil. A 'foil' was taken to be the same thickness as kitchen foil, whereas a 'metal sheet' was taken to be thick enough to absorb

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beta radiation, provided students did not contradict their earlier statements. Paper and cardboard were not creditworthy as suitable absorbing materials. 51% of students scored 2 marks, while 7% of students scored 1 mark.

09.3 65% of students scored this mark by suggesting a suitable safety precaution. Hazmat suits and PPE were insufficient to score.

09.4 64% of students scored this mark by suggesting a suitable precaution to avoid contamination. Hazmat suits and PPE were insufficient to score.

09.5 Students at GCSE find the idea of rate of change to be a difficult one, hence linking the change in the number of atoms to activity was a difficult question in this exam series. 7% of students scored 4 marks, while 12% of students scored 3 marks. If students failed to draw a tangent, they were very unlikely to score any marks except the unit mark. A common incorrect choice of unit for activity for many students was sieverts, Sv. Examiners were looking for becquerel or Bq. Decays per second or decays/second were insufficient to score.

Question 10 (Standard/High Demand)

10.1 72% of students correctly identified the colour of the live wire insulation.

10.2 66% of students scored the mark on this question. Students who made the box for the answer into a fuse symbol did not score the mar nor did a fuse symbol added to any side of the box .

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10.3 A grade 6-7 calculation of current. 57% of students scored all 4 marks. 36% of students scored 3 marks, usually for incorrectly converting, or not converting, the unit.

10.4 A grade 6-7 calculation of mass. 61% of students scored 4 marks. 31% of students scored 3 marks for either incorrectly converting, or not converting, the unit.

10.5 40% of students scored 2 marks on this question recognising that the time would be longer because more energy in total would need to be transferred. An answer of ‘less energy is melting the wire’ was just enough to score the second mark. 15% of students scored zero on this question.

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Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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