AQA GCSE Combined Science - Trilogy | 8464

SPECIFICATION POINT 5.4.2.3

Soluble salts

Mark schemes and examiner comments

Tier	**Foundation**
Question groups	**11**
Available paper years	**2018–2025**

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.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 01 · Mark scheme June 2018 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07	**Level 3:** Relevant points (reasons / causes) are identified, given in detail and logically linked to form a clear account.	5–6	AO3
	Level 2: Relevant points (reasons / causes) are identified, and there are attempts at logical linking. The resulting account is not fully clear.	3–4	AO3
	Level 1: Points are identified and stated simply, but their relevance is not clear and there is no attempt at logical linking.	1–2	AO1
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative content: • uses sulfuric acid not hydrochloric acid **or** sulfuric acid needed • uses copper carbonate / oxide not calcium carbonate **or** copper carbonate / oxide needed • add solid until solid remains **or** is in excess **or** no more reacts / dissolves so that most / all of the acid reacts • filter to remove excess **or** unreacted carbonate / oxide / solid • heat gently **or** partially evaporate **or** leave until crystals appear **or** to crystallise for **level 3** the correct chemicals must have been selected		5.4.2.3
Total		**6**	

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 02 · Mark scheme June 2019 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q2

02.1	hydrochloric acid		1	AO1 5.4.2.3

02.2	(black) solid remains (after stirring)	allow copper oxide remains allow no more copper oxide reacts	1	AO1 5.4.2.3

02.3	first stage **B** second stage **A** third stage **C** fourth stage **D**	all 4 correct for **2** marks allow **1** mark if either first stage or fourth stage is correct	2	AO1 5.4.2.3

02.4	(negative electrode) copper (positive electrode) chlorine	allow Cu allow Cl_2 / Cl do **not** accept chloride or Cl^- if no other mark awarded allow **1** mark if elements are reversed	1 1	AO2 5.4.3.2

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

02.5	a reading of an increase in mass correct linked reading of the increase in time correct evaluation of gradient	e.g. 4 (mg) in 10 (mins) scores 2 marks e.g. ($\frac{4}{10}$ =) 0.4 (mg per min) allow correct calculation of gradient from incorrectly determined values for mass and/or time	1 1 1	AO2 5.4.3.4

02.6	cryolite oxide	this order only	1 1	AO1 5.4.3.3

Total			**11**

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

June 2019 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 03 · Mark scheme June 2019 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

07.1	(aq)	allow aq ignore aqueous ignore formulae	1	AO1 5.2.2.2
07.2	HNO_3		1	AO1 5.1.1.1 5.4.2.2
07.3	red purple **or** blue	allow orange or yellow do **not** accept green allow shades of purple e.g. violet	1 1	AO1 5.4.2.4
07.4	D		1	AO3 5.4.2.4
07.5	 3 × 16 **or** 48 $\frac{48}{80}$ (×100) 60 (%)	an answer of 60 (%) scores **3** marks an answer of 20 (%) scores **2** marks for: $\frac{16}{80}$ (× 100) (1) = 20 (%) (1)	 1 1 1	AO2 5.3.1.2

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 03 · Mark scheme

June 2019 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Mark	AO/ Spec. Ref
07.6	**Level 3:** The design/plan would lead to the production of a valid outcome. All key steps are identified and logically sequenced.	5–6	AO3 AO2
	Level 2: The design/plan would not necessarily lead to a valid outcome. Most steps are identified, but the plan is not fully logically sequenced.	3–4	5.5.1.1
	Level 1: The design/plan would not lead to a valid outcome. Some relevant steps are identified, but links are not made clear.	1–2	
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative content **Steps** • use a suitable container e.g. test tube • use insulation • add water • measure the initial water temperature (with a thermometer) • add stated mass e.g. 1g **or** 1 spatula • stir (to dissolve the solid) • measure the final (allow lowest or highest) temperature of the solution • calculate the temperature difference **or** determine graphically • repeat with different masses • repeat with the same volume of water to access level 3 there must be an indication of how the temperature change is determined using different masses dissolved in the same quantity of water		
Total			**14**

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

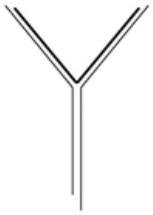
Answer 04 · Mark scheme November 2020 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q1

01.1	1		1	AO1 5.4.2.4
01.2	hydrochloric acid		1	AO1 5.4.2.1 5.4.2.2
01.3	salt		1	AO1 5.4.2.1 5.4.2.2
01.4	sodium hydroxide		1	AO2 5.4.2.2
01.5	CuO		1	AO2 5.1.1.1
01.6	any **one** from: • increase the concentration of the acid • increase the surface area of the copper oxide • warm / heat the mixture	allow use powdered copper oxide ignore increase room temperature allow add catalyst ignore stir	1	AO1 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8
01.7	in excess		1	AO1 5.1.1.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 04 · Mark scheme

November 2020 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q1

01.8			1	AO1 5.1.1.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8
01.9	crystallisation	allow evaporation	1	AO1 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8
Total			**9**	

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 04 · Mark scheme

November 2020 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 05 · Mark scheme November 2021 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.1	green to red		1	AO1 5.4.2.4
07.2	decreases		1	AO1 5.4.2.4
07.3	(aq)	allow aq ignore aqueous ignore HNO_3	1	AO1 5.2.2.2
07.4	any **two** from: • (white) solid disappears • fizzing **or** bubbles (of gas) **or** effervescence • (then) stops fizzing • (white) solid left at the end / bottom	allow a gas is produced ignore colourless solution	2	AO3 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.3
07.5	$Zn(NO_3)_2$		1	AO2 5.1.1.1 5.4.2.2

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.6	**Level 3:** The method would lead to the production of a valid outcome. The key steps are identified and logically sequenced.	5–6	AO1 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8
	Level 2: The method would not necessarily lead to a valid outcome. Most steps are identified, but the method is not fully logically sequenced.	3–4	
	Level 1: The method would not lead to a valid outcome. Some relevant steps are identified, but links are not made clear.	1–2	
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative Content: • react hydrochloric acid • (with) copper oxide • in a suitable container • warm (hydrochloric) acid • add copper oxide • until is in excess **or** until solid remains • stir • filter excess copper oxide • pour solution / filtrate into evaporating basin • use of water bath **or** use of electric heater • to heat gently **or** partially evaporate • leave to cool / crystallise For level 3 the correct chemicals must have been selected.		
Total		**12**	

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

November 2021 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.1	(the symbol) ⇌	allow description of reversible sign	1	AO1 5.6.2.1
01.2	white blue	must be in this order	1 1	AO1 5.6.2.2
01.3	to prevent reaction with water vapour (in the air)	allow to prevent reaction with moisture allow to keep water out	1	AO3 5.6.2.2
01.4	**Substance** / **Description of substance** Sodium chloride solution Water Compound Element Hydrocarbon Mixture do **not** accept more than one line from a box on the left		1 1	AO2 5.1.1.2
01.5	evaporation **or** crystallisation		1	AO1 RPA 13
01.6	(filtering) to remove solids (sterilising) to kill bacteria	 allow to kill microbes	1 1	AO1 5.10.1.2

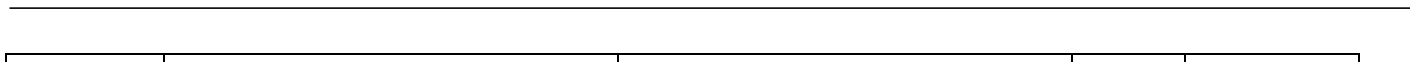
5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

01.7	ground water		1	AO1 5.10.1.3
01.8	screening and removal of grit		1	AO1 5.10.1.3
Total			**11**	

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

November 2021 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q1



5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 07 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	any **three** from: • green solid / powder • colourless solution • blue solution formed • copper carbonate disappears • fizzing / effervescence **or** bubbles (of gas) • stops fizzing • solid / powder left at the end **or** copper carbonate left at the end	 ignore green copper carbonate allow colour (of solution) changes allow solid disappears ignore gas allow fizzing slows down allow (container) gets hot **or** allow temperature increases	3	AO2 AO3 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.2	filtration **or** filter		1	AO1 5.4.2.3 RPA8

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 07 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.3	7		1	AO1 5.4.2.3 5.4.2.4 RPA8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.4	neutralisation	allow exothermic	1	AO1 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.4 RPA8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.5	83 (g at 80 °C)	allow a value in range 82–84 (g at 80 °C)	1	AO2
	32 (g at 20 °C)	allow a value in range 32–33 (g at 20 °C)	1	AO2
	(83–32 =) 51 (g)	allow a correct calculation using incorrectly read values for mass at 80 °C and/or 20 °C	1	AO3 5.4.2.3

Total Question 5		9

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 08 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q7

Question 7

<table>
<tr><th>Question</th><th>Answers</th><th>Mark</th><th>AO / Spec. Ref.</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">07.1</td><td>Level 2: Scientifically relevant features are identified, the way(s) in which they are similar / different is made clear and (where appropriate) the magnitude of the similarity / difference is noted.</td><td>4–6</td><td rowspan="4">AO1
5.10.1.3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Level 1: Relevant features are identified and differences noted.</td><td>1–3</td></tr>
<tr><td>No relevant content</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>Indicative content
<table>
<tr><th>ground water</th><th>waste water</th></tr>
<tr><td>easier to obtain</td><td>more difficult to obtain</td></tr>
<tr><td>fewer processes</td><td>more processes</td></tr>
<tr><td>takes less time</td><td>takes more time</td></tr>
<tr><td>filtered through filter beds

to remove insoluble particles</td><td>screening and grit removal

to remove large particles</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>sedimentation

to produce sewage sludge and effluent</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>aerobic biological treatment of effluent

to reduce solid waste</td></tr>
<tr><td>sterilised

using chlorine, ozone or uv light

to kill bacteria</td><td>and then sterilised

using chlorine, ozone or uv light

to kill bacteria</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>sludge is anaerobically digested

by specific bacteria

to remove organic matter</td></tr>
</table></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 08 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.2	distillation		1	AO1 5.10.1.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.3	(conversion) ($\frac{150}{1000}$ =) 0.15 (dm^3) (concentration =) $\frac{2.40}{0.15}$ = 16 (g/dm^3) **OR** (conversion) $\frac{1000}{150}$ (1) = 6.67 (1) (6.67 × 2.4) = 16 (g/dm^3) (1) **OR** (concentration =) $\frac{2.4}{150}$ (1) = 0.016 (1) (conversion) (0.016 × 1000) = 16 (g/dm^3) (1)	allow correct use of incorrect / no conversion	1 1 1	AO2 5.3.2.5

Total Question 7		10

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	hydrogen		1	AO1 5.4.1.2 5.4.2.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.2	$MgCl_2(l)$		1	AO2 5.1.1.1 5.2.2.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.3	(negative electrode) magnesium (positive electrode) chlorine	allow Mg allow Cl_2 allow **1** mark if both elements are reversed	1 1	AO2 5.4.3.1 5.4.3.2

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.4	(most reactive metal) magnesium (iron) copper (least reactive metal)	 allow Mg allow Fe allow Cu	 1	AO3 5.4.1.2
	any **two** from: • magnesium reacts with both copper chloride solution and iron chloride solution • iron only reacts with copper chloride solution • copper does not react with either magnesium chloride solution or iron chloride solution	 allow magnesium has two / most reactions allow iron has one reaction allow copper does not react	2	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.5	1.6 (g)		1	AO2 5.4.3.1 5.4.3.2

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.6	(conversion 30.0 cm^3 =) 0.030 dm^3		1	AO2 5.3.2.5
	(mass =) 0.030 × 180	allow correct use of incorrect / no conversion of volume	1	
	= 5.4 (g)		1	
	OR			
	1000 cm^3 contains 180 g $MgCl_2$ (1)			
	30 cm^3 contains $\frac{180}{1000}$ × 30 (g) (1)			
	(30 cm^3 contains) 5.4 (g) (1)			
	OR			
	(ratio of volume $\frac{1000}{30}$ =) 33.3 (1)			
	(so ratio of mass) = $\frac{180}{33.3}$ (1)			
	= 5.4 (g) (1)			

Total Question 5	11

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 10 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question 7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.1	H_2SO_4		1	AO2 5.4.2.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.2	so all the acid reacts	allow so all the acid is used up	1	AO1 5.4.2.3 RPA8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.3		ignore references to filtration		AO1 5.1.1.2 5.4.2.3 RPA8
	heat the solution (to remove some of the water)	allow evaporate some of the water / solution	1	
	leave to cool / crystallise		1	

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 10 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.4	all points correctly plotted	allow a tolerance of ± ½ a small square allow **1** mark for 3 or 4 points correctly plotted	2	AO2
	line of best fit		1	AO3 5.3.1.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.5	a gas escapes (from the test tube)	allow carbon dioxide escapes (from the test tube) ignore copper carbonate thermally decomposes	1	AO1 5.3.1.3

Total Question 7	**8**

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 11 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	any **two** from: • measure the volume of the alkali • repeat **and** calculate a mean • stir / swirl the mixture • use universal indicator solution	ignore references to safety allow use a measuring cylinder (to measure the alkali) allow use a burette (to measure the alkali) allow use a pH probe	2	AO3 5.4.2.4

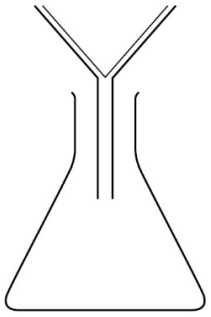
Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.2	7		1	AO1 5.4.2.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.3	neutralisation		1	AO1 5.4.2.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.4	H^+		1	AO1 5.4.2.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.5	nitric (acid)	allow HNO_3	1	AO2 5.4.2.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.6	(**A**) overall energy change		1	AO1 5.5.1.2
	(**B**) progress of reaction		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.7	filter funnel with filter paper inside		1	AO1 5.4.2.3 RPA8
	a container to collect the filtrate		1	
		an answer of  scores **2** marks		

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.8	zinc	allow Zn	1	AO2 5.4.2.1

Total Question 5	**11**

Answer 01 · Examiner comments

June 2018 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question 7 (standard demand)

07 Students found this 'extended response' question, based around Required Practical Activity 8, difficult to answer. Most of the correct responses (33%) were at level 1. Those students that just repeated the stem of the question gained no marks.

The question stated that the method contains several errors and does not produce copper sulfate crystals. Most students missed that the wrong two chemicals were being used in the stem of the question. Common improvements that gained no credit included quoting volume or masses, while some responses just changed the apparatus, expanded the method or included safety issues.

In a few cases students mentioned a correct improvement but failed to explain the reason for the change. For example, students:

- mentioned the need to filter but failed to state that filtering removed the excess solid
- stated add more solid but did not justify that this was to ensure all of the acid reacts.

42% of students gained no credit for an answer, while a further 18% of students did not make an attempt to answer at all.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 05 · Examiner comments

November 2021 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question 7 (standard demand)

07.1 Approximately one quarter of students were able to give the colour change, 'green to red', as the observed change when nitric acid is added to a mixture of universal indicator and water.

07.2 Many students appeared to confuse the increase in acidity when nitric acid is added to water with an increase in pH, which proved to be a strong distractor.

07.3 Very few students were able to give (aq) as the state for a substance dissolved in water.

07.4 The required practical activity of making a soluble salt starts by reacting either an insoluble metal oxide or metal carbonate with an acid. The word equation was provided to help students with this question although many students found difficulty in making links between this and the resulting observations. Since carbon dioxide is produced, initial observations would be fizzing and white solid disappearing. Excess zinc carbonate would result in all the nitric acid reacting; fizzing would stop and excess solid would collect at the bottom. Just under one fifth of students gained a mark.

07.5 Zn_2NO_3 proved a more commonly seen response than $Zn(NO_3)_2$, the correct answer. Just under one quarter of students answered this correctly.

07.6 Students had difficulty in describing the essential steps of the method of making a soluble salt from an insoluble metal oxide and an acid. Most failed to select the correct chemicals, copper oxide and hydrochloric acid, without these the method would not lead to a valid outcome. Just under one third of students gave a level one answer and very few got into level two.

Concluding Remarks

The demand of this paper was similar to those previously set for this specification. Students should note that two-mark questions require two answer points and so on.

15% of marks are based upon the required practical activities; students should question 'what and why' is happening in each step of these procedures. Answers should be chemically accurate, e.g. crystals are produced from salt solutions when the solution is heated (partially evaporated to produce a more concentrated solution) and then left to crystallise, rather than implying that 'all the water was evaporated'.

In chemistry 20% are marks are for questions assessing mathematical skills. In these questions, students should show their working for each step. If an error is made, such as an incorrect evaluation of values in the question, credit can be awarded for each correct step shown. Students should be encouraged to think about their answers; in **01.5** a small number gave percentages in excess of 100. In **01.7** students did not always disregard the anomalous result but were able to get a mark for the correct division of all four values. A few were unable to give the answer to two significant figures. In **02.6** students needed to use all the data provided and to use the ratio of volumes to evaluate the mass. In **04.4** a minority of students multiplied, rather than adding, the relative atomic masses. In **06.5** not all students used all the data provided to evaluate the relative atomic mass, a weighted mean of the mass numbers.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 06 · Examiner comments November 2021 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q1

Question 1 (low and standard demand)

The reversible symbol was well known, but many students did not recognise that the starting point for the reaction was the anhydrous form of copper sulfate, so were unable to identify the colours of the salts. They did not appreciate the link between the reversible reaction and the storage of the anhydrous salt. Most students referred incorrectly to the toxicity of the salt.

The topic of water treatment was not well understood. Credit was given for the idea of filtering removing large insoluble solid material from the water and sterilising removing bacteria and pathogens, but not germs.

Answer 07 · Examiner comments June 2022 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question 5 (Standard demand)

05.1 Students were asked to state observations made when copper carbonate is added to sulfuric acid. Many students appeared to misunderstand what an observation is and instead either wrote instructions on how to carry out the preparation of copper sulfate or stated what to look for such as ‘check the pH level’ or ‘did anything change’. Just over a quarter gave at least one correct observation. The most common responses were ‘colour changes’ or ‘fizzing’.

05.2 More than a third of students knew that filtration is used to separate unreacted copper carbonate after a reaction between sulfuric acid and excess copper carbonate.

05.3 Just over 20% of students knew the pH of the solution after a reaction between sulfuric acid and excess copper carbonate.

05.4 Just over 10% of students knew that the reaction between sulfuric acid and copper carbonate is neutralisation.

05.5 The question required students to read the masses of ammonium nitrate that dissolve at 80 °C and 20 °C from a graph and to then carry out a subtraction to determine the mass of solid that crystallises on cooling. Just over 15% of students were able to gain all 3 marks.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 08 · Examiner comments

June 2022 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q7

Question 7

The topic of water purification was generally not well known.

07.1 Over 60% of students were able to score at least 1 mark comparing the methods of treatment of ground and wastewater to make potable water. This was usually for a simple statement that both waters need to be filtered. Responses were lacking in specific detail in this recall question. The idea that both waters need to be distilled was very commonly seen, mistaking this with sea water.

07.2 About one third of students were able to identify distillation to desalinate sea water. The most common incorrect response was filtration.

07.3 About a quarter of students were able to score two of the three marks on this item, the conversion of cm^3 to dm^3 being the most likely mark missed.

5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 08 · Examiner comments

June 2022 | 8464/C/2F | Original Q7

Use of statistics

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Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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Answer 09 · Examiner comments

June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question 5 (low demand)

05.1 Just over two thirds of students knew that hydrogen gas is produced when a metal reacts with an acid. A quarter of students selected the distractor nitrogen.

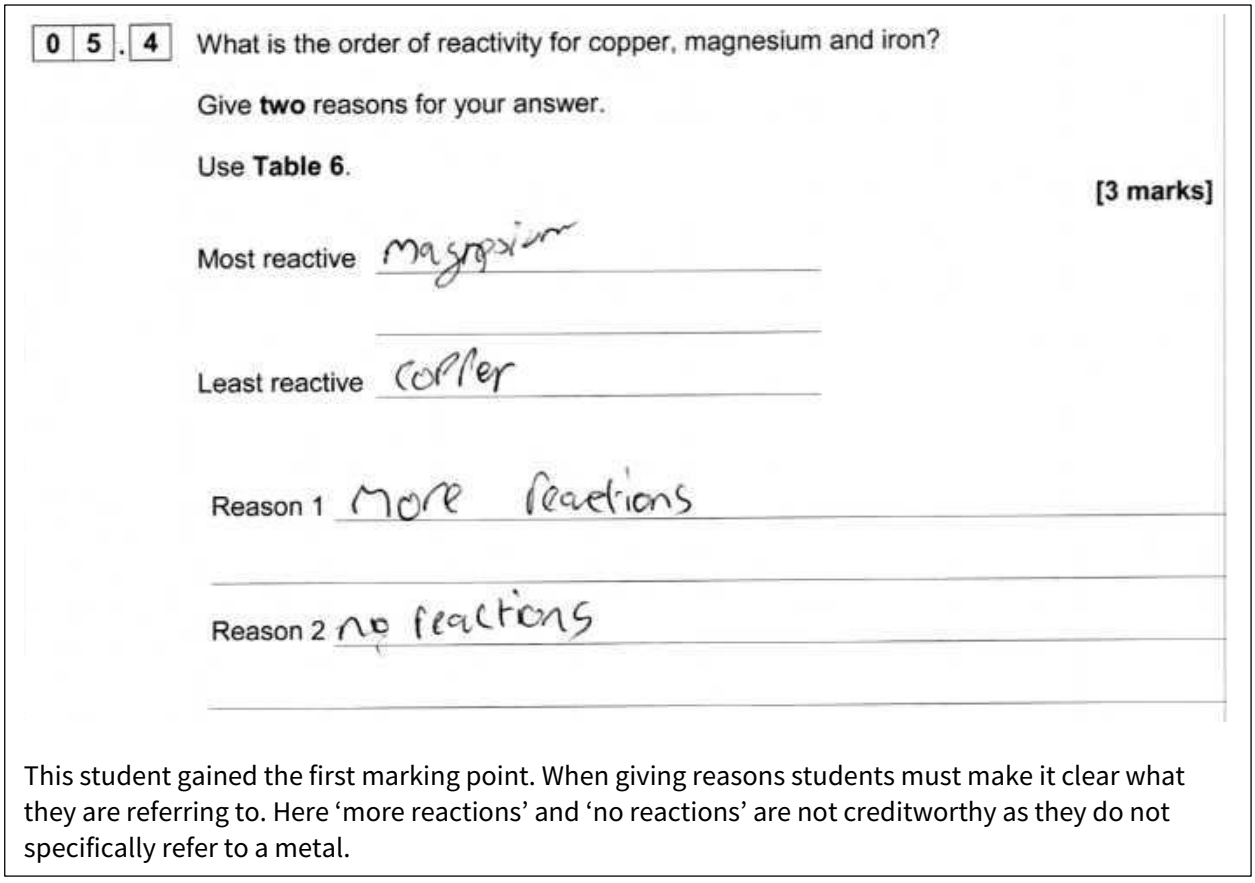
05.2 Nearly two-thirds of students knew molten magnesium chloride is a liquid, which is represented by the state symbol (l). A quarter of students incorrectly selected (g) as the state symbol.

05.3 10% of students gained both marks and students were awarded 1 mark if both elements were correct but reversed. Chlor*ide* is not creditworthy although was a common response.

Many students wrote the formula of the ions that were attracted to the electrodes rather than the element that is discharged. Nearly 20% of students did not attempt this question.

05.4 More than half of students gained 2 or 3 marks for correctly deducing the order of reactivity, with magnesium being the most reactive and copper the least reactive and giving one or two reasons. Students were able to give a reason associated with each metal eg iron only reacts with copper chloride solution or copper does not react.

Common incorrect responses included magnesium reacts with both metals (rather than both metal chloride solutions) or reasons which were not clearly linked to a metal (see example below).



0 5 . 4 What is the order of reactivity for copper, magnesium and iron?

Give **two** reasons for your answer.

Use **Table 6**.

[3 marks]

Most reactive magnesium

Least reactive copper

Reason 1 More reactions

Reason 2 no reactions

This student gained the first marking point. When giving reasons students must make it clear what they are referring to. Here 'more reactions' and 'no reactions' are not creditworthy as they do not specifically refer to a metal.

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5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 09 · Examiner comments June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

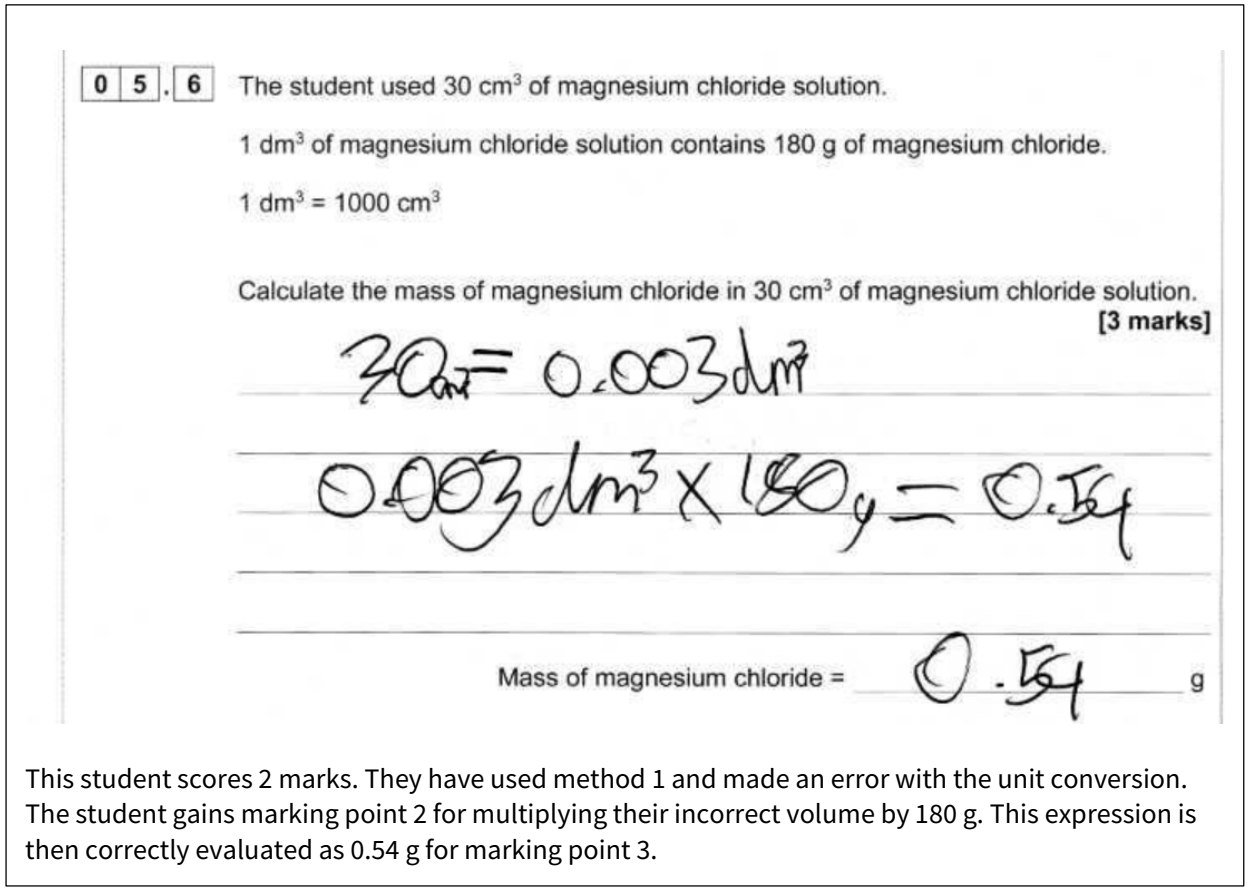
05.5 The law of conservation of mass states that the mass of reactants equals the mass of products. In this question a third of students correctly evaluated that the mass of iron oxide that reacts with 0.72 g of magnesium.

Common incorrect responses were 1.67 (multiplying 0.72 by 2.32) together with 3.2 and 0.31 (evaluated by dividing 2.32 by 0.72 or 0.72 by 2.32 respectively).

05.6 This question required a unit conversion as data is given in dm^3 and needed to be converted to cm^3. This conversion factor was given to lower the demand of the question.

Nearly 30% of students gained all 3 marks. Approximately 10% of students gained 2 marks usually for either not using the conversion factor, for multiplying rather than dividing by 1000 or for using an incorrect factor (eg dividing by 100 rather than 1000). A further 10% of students who gained 1 mark usually calculated the volume correctly in dm^3 but then did not multiply their answer by 180 g or used method 3 in the mark scheme and calculated the ratio of volume as 33.3 but then incorrectly multiplied this by 180 g.

17% of students did not attempt this question.



0 5 . 6 The student used 30 cm^3 of magnesium chloride solution.

1 dm^3 of magnesium chloride solution contains 180 g of magnesium chloride.

1 dm^3 = 1000 cm^3

Calculate the mass of magnesium chloride in 30 cm^3 of magnesium chloride solution.

[3 marks]

30cm³ = 0.003dm³

0.003dm³ x 180g = 0.54

Mass of magnesium chloride = 0.54 g

This student scores 2 marks. They have used method 1 and made an error with the unit conversion. The student gains marking point 2 for multiplying their incorrect volume by 180 g. This expression is then correctly evaluated as 0.54 g for marking point 3.

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Answer 10 · Examiner comments

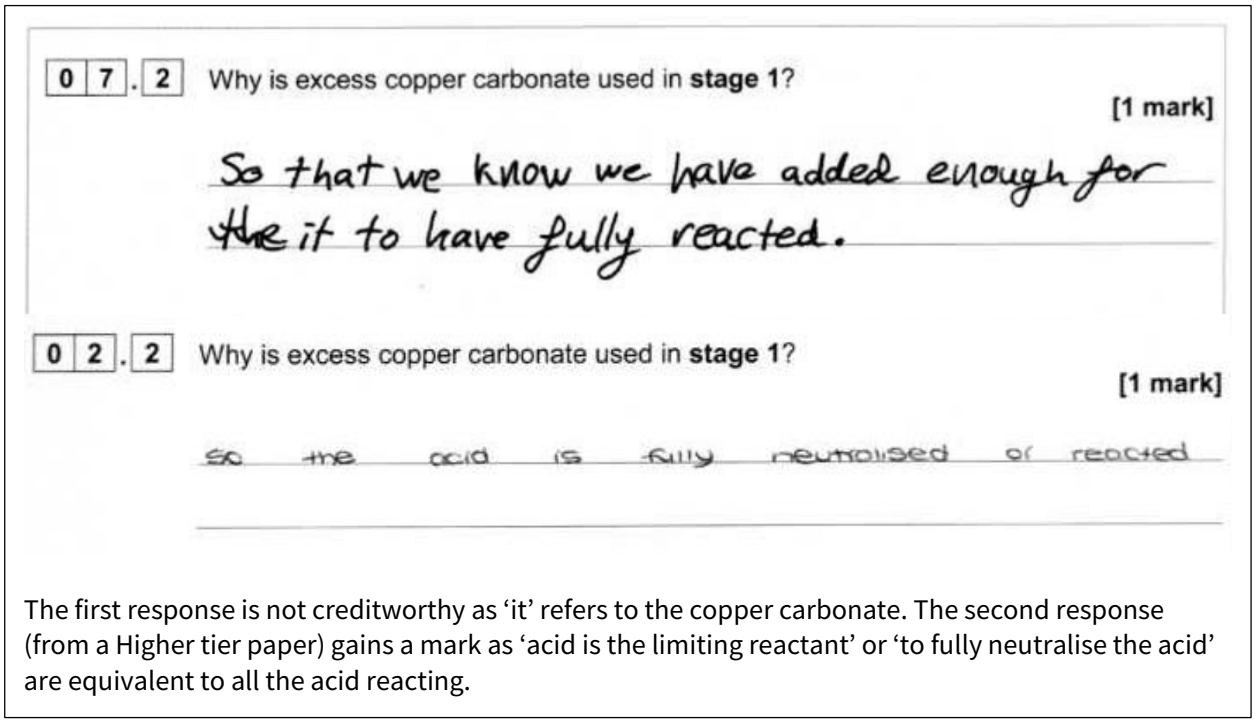
June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

Question 7 (standard demand)

07.1 By selecting H_2SO_4 more than half of students answered correctly. HCl was the most common incorrect response.

07.2 Excess copper carbonate is used to ensure all the acid reacts. Very few students stated this.

Common incorrect responses included that copper carbonate needs to dissolve, to make sure all the copper carbonate reacted (rather than the acid), to get the most product, so everything had reacted or in terms of the rate of reaction. In responses 'it' refers to copper carbonate.



The first response is not creditworthy as 'it' refers to the copper carbonate. The second response (from a Higher tier paper) gains a mark as 'acid is the limiting reactant' or 'to fully neutralise the acid' are equivalent to all the acid reacting.

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5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 10 · Examiner comments June 2024 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q7

07.3 The method would work if filtration was carried out immediately before or after heating so was ignored in any response. Few students gained both marks.

0 7 . 3 Beaker **N** contained copper sulfate solution.

Describe how the student could produce copper sulfate crystals from the copper sulfate solution in beaker **N**.

[2 marks]

The Student could heat it with a bunsen burner ~~and~~ until it boils and then pour it out on a tray

0 2 . 3 Beaker **N** contained copper sulfate solution.

Describe how the student could produce copper sulfate crystals from the copper sulfate solution in beaker **N**.

[2 marks]

By filtering it and then heating the solution up, leaving to cool for 24hours and patting it drycas crystals have formed.

The first response gains the first mark but there is insufficient detail to gain the second mark (leave to cool/crystallise). In the second response (from a Higher tier paper) filtering is ignored and 2 marks are awarded.

07.4 At low demand all points would lie exactly on a 'line of best fit' whereas at standard demand there will be points either side of the line so students need to 'make a decision' when drawing their line. The line of best fit did not need to extend beyond the five points, although extrapolations were allowed and many included the origin (0,0). If students plotted any point(s) incorrectly they could still gain the mark for 'their' line of best fit. A large number of students did not use a ruler and as such were unable to draw an acceptable straight line. Just over a third of students gained all 3 marks and a similar number 2 marks.

07.5 Investigation of mass changes using various apparatus is an opportunity for skill development in the specification, eg thermal decompositions of metal carbonates. This was not well answered on either tier of the paper. Many students incorrectly referred to evaporation or gave answers such as 'some of it escapes', which is insufficient. Some recognised that a gas is made but needed to say that the gas escapes to explain the decrease in mass.

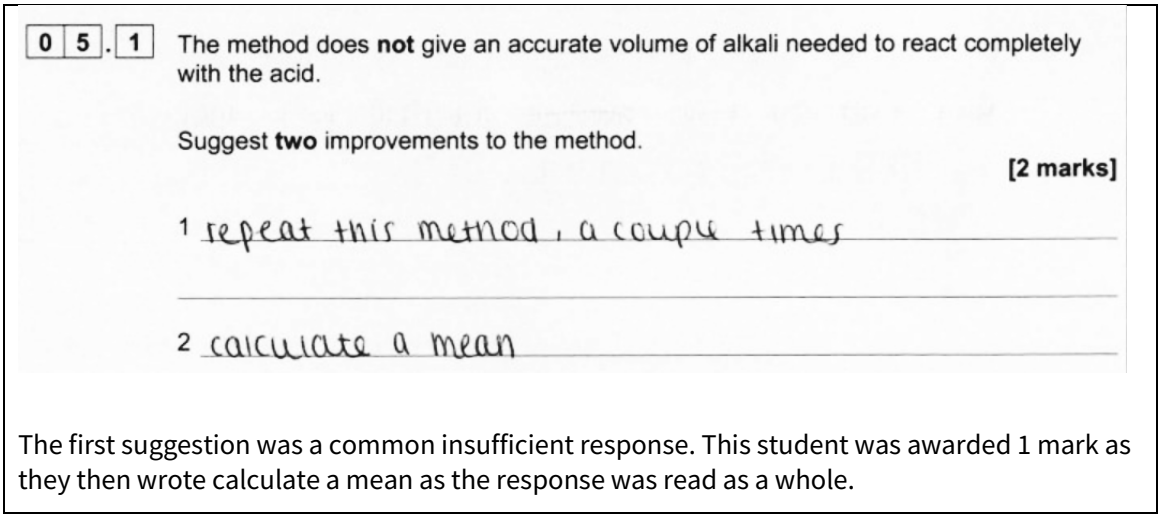
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Answer 11 · Examiner comments

June 2025 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

Question 5 (Low and Standard demand)

05.1 Improvements to methods are assessed as AO3 and are often not well attempted. Answers needed to improve the accuracy of measuring the volume of alkali, so creditworthy responses included measuring the volume of the alkali (e.g. with a measuring cylinder), ensuring that the reagents reacted by stirring the mixture or repeating and calculating a mean. This was not a high scoring question. There were many insufficient responses of 'repeat' without the necessary 'mean' included. Many responses used the inadequate terms 'amount' or 'how much' alkali, and others suggested altering the size or weight of the universal indicator paper rather than using a solution. Other uncreditworthy responses included attempting to control the 'time' or using 'more acid'. Others mentioned the need to use a measuring cylinder but referred to the acid and therefore gained no credit.



0 5 . 1 The method does **not** give an accurate volume of alkali needed to react completely with the acid.

Suggest **two** improvements to the method.

[2 marks]

1 repeat this method a couple times

2 calculate a mean

The first suggestion was a common insufficient response. This student was awarded 1 mark as they then wrote calculate a mean as the response was read as a whole.

05.2 Nearly two thirds of students knew that universal indicator paper turns green when pH = 7. The most popular incorrect distractor was pH = 5.

05.3 Nearly two thirds of students knew that neutralisation is the name of the reaction between an acid and an alkali. Combustion was the most common incorrect response.

05.4 Half of students knew that acids contain H^+ ions. The most popular incorrect distractor was Na^+ ions.

05.5 Nitric acid was the unknown acid that reacted with sodium hydroxide to produce sodium nitrate. This was not well known. Common responses that were not awarded the mark were nitrogen, nitrate (possibly because they had appeared earlier in the paper), hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid and sodium.

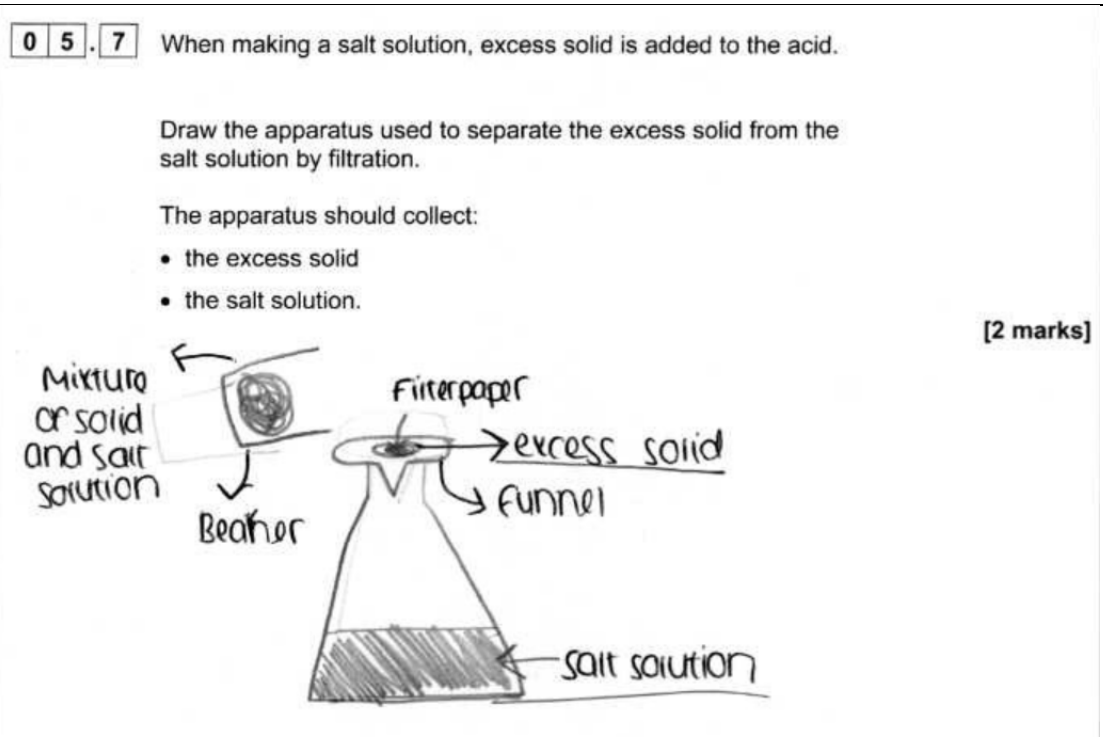
05.6 A third of students were able to select the labels from the box to complete the reaction profile. Reactants and products were common incorrect distractors. Credit was awarded if the student identified the correct answer in the box.

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5.4.2.3 Soluble salts

Answer 11 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/1F | Original Q5

05.7 Students had to draw apparatus used to separate excess solid from salt solution by filtration. Filter paper inside a filter funnel gained the first mark. Many diagrams had either the funnel or paper missing but those students who clarified their diagrammatic response with labels (for the paper and funnel) were awarded credit even if it was not clear that both pieces of equipment were drawn. The second mark was for any container to collect the filtrate although this could only be accessed if there was some evidence of filtration apparatus even if incorrect. Those students who included additional equipment which would affect the filtrate, for example, a Bunsen burner to heat the collection vessel with were not awarded the second mark. More than a quarter of students did not attempt this question.



Both marking points were awarded. It is not clear that there is filter paper inside a filter funnel but this student has clarified their diagram with two labels. A conical flask after filtration is creditworthy.

05.8 Half the students knew that the zinc reacts with hydrochloric acid to produce zinc chloride and hydrogen gas. Phonetic spellings were credited. Chlorine was the main incorrect response, zinc oxide/hydroxide often appeared, and there were a few other metals e.g. iron, infrequently.

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