AQA GCSE Combined Science - Trilogy | 8464

SPECIFICATION POINT 5.3.1.2

Relative formula mass

Mark schemes and examiner comments

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**13**
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.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 01 · Mark scheme June 2018 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6

<table>
<tr><th>Question</th><th>Answers</th><th>Extra information</th><th>Mark</th><th>AO / Spec. Ref.</th></tr>
<tr><td>06.1</td><td>CaO

CO_2</td><td>either order
ignore names</td><td>1

1</td><td>AO1
5.3.1.3</td></tr>
<tr><td>06.2</td><td>

[12 + (3 × 16)]
or 60

(197 − 60 =) 137

barium or Ba</td><td>an answer of 137 scores the 2 calculation marks

barium or Ba without working scores this mark</td><td>

1

1

1</td><td>AO2
5.3.1.2
5.3.1.3
5.1.1.5</td></tr>
<tr><td>06.3</td><td>

(working) Y increase <u>and</u> X increase measured from graph <u>and</u> substitution into $\frac{\Delta Y}{\Delta X}$

(answer) 167

(units) cm^3/g</td><td>an answer of 160–174 scores the 2 calculation marks

<table><tr><td>y-axis</td><td>80–85</td><td>162–170</td><td>248–252</td><td>330–335</td></tr><tr><td>x-axis</td><td>0.5</td><td>1.0</td><td>1.5</td><td>2.0</td></tr><tr><td>=</td><td>160–170</td><td>162–170</td><td>165–168</td><td>165–168</td></tr></table>
allow answer in range 160–174

allow $cm^3\ g^{-1}$

if no other mark awarded allow 1 mark for the inverse ($\frac{\Delta X}{\Delta Y}$)
or 0.006</td><td>

1

1

1</td><td>AO2
5.3.1.2
5.3.1.3</td></tr>
</table>

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 01 · Mark scheme

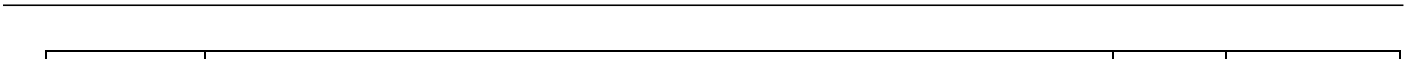
June 2018 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.4		an answer of 140–150 scores **4** marks an answer of 0.14–0.15 scores **3** marks		AO3 5.3.1.2 5.3.1.3
	(from graph) volume to 240 cm^3 mass = 1.45 g	allow answer based on any reading from the graph (eg 250 cm^3 = 1.5 g)	1	
	ratio is $\frac{1}{100}$ (ie $\frac{24\,000}{240}$)	allow ratio from their volume eg $\frac{24\,000}{250}$	1	
	100×1.45	$\left(\frac{24\,000}{250}\right) \times 1.5$	1	
	145	allow range 140–150	1	
	or allow method using answer from question **06.3**			
	$x = \frac{y}{m}$ (1)	(rearrangement of y = mx where m = answer from question **06.3**)		
	24 (dm^3) to 24 000 (cm^3) (1)			
	$\frac{24\,000}{\text{answer from question } \mathbf{06.3}}$ (1)			
	144 (1)	allow range 140–150		
Total			**12**	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 01 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6



5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 02 · Mark scheme June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.1	16(.0)		1	AO2 5.10.1.2
03.2	advantage: more accurate result disadvantage: takes a long(er) time, more energy needed (to heat more water)	do **not** accept reliable ignore expensive	1 1	AO3 5.10.1.2
03.3	pure: no dissolved solids / impurities **or** no (dissolved) chlorine **and** potable: has dissolved solids / impurities **or** has (dissolved) chlorine	a clear comparative statement referring to solutes gains the mark allow only water / H_2O ignore safe to drink ignore safe to drink	 1	AO1 5.8.1.1 5.10.1.2
03.4	groundwater: • filtered • sterilised seawater: • distilled **or** reverse osmosis	 allow acceptable method of filtration allow acceptable method of sterilisation allow desalination ignore salt removed ignore boiling alone ignore filtering do **not** accept fractional distillation	 1 1 1	AO1 5.10.1.2

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

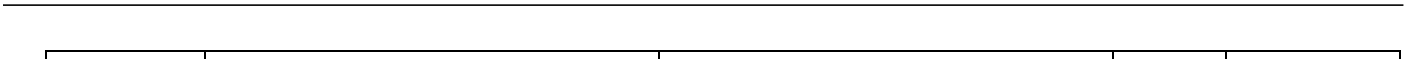
June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.5	$\frac{2.2}{100} \times 6.50$ (=) 0.143 (g)	an answer of 0.143 (g) **or** 0.14 (g) scores **2** marks	1 1	AO2 5.10.1.2
Total			**9**	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q3



5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

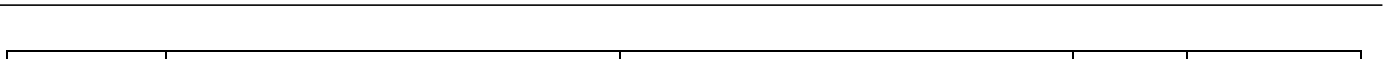
Answer 03 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.1	a mixture designed as a useful product		1	AO1 5.8.1.2
04.2		an answer of 1.8×10^2 (mol) gains **4** marks		AO2 5.8.1.2 5.3.2.1
	mass = 14 520 g		1	
	(=) $\frac{14\ 520}{80\ (mol)}$	allow correct substitution of incorrectly converted mass must use M_r given (80) to gain marks in steps 2 and 3	1	
	(=) 181.5 (mol)		1	
	(=) 1.8×10^2 (mol)	allow answer correctly given in standard form to correct sig figs from an incorrect calculation	1	
04.3		**max 2** marks for incorrect reference to bonding **or** structure **or** particles		AO1 5.2.2.3
	(giant) lattice	allow giant structure	1	
	ionic		1	
	strong bonds **or** strong electrostatic forces	do **not** accept strong intermolecular forces / bonds	1	
	large amounts of energy needed to overcome	ignore heat	1	
Total			**9**	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 03 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q4



5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 04 · Mark scheme June 2019 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

02.1	(aq)	allow aq ignore aqueous ignore formulae	1	AO1 5.2.2.2
02.2	HNO_3		1	AO1 5.1.1.1 5.4.2.2
02.3	red purple **or** blue	allow orange or yellow do **not** accept green allow shades of purple eg violet	1 1	AO1 5.4.2.4
02.4	D		1	AO3 5.4.2.4
02.5	 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

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 04 · Mark scheme

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

Question	Answers	Mark	AO/ Spec. Ref
02.6	**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 eg test tube • use insulation • add water • measure the initial water temperature (with a thermometer) • add stated mass eg 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

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 04 · Mark scheme

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

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

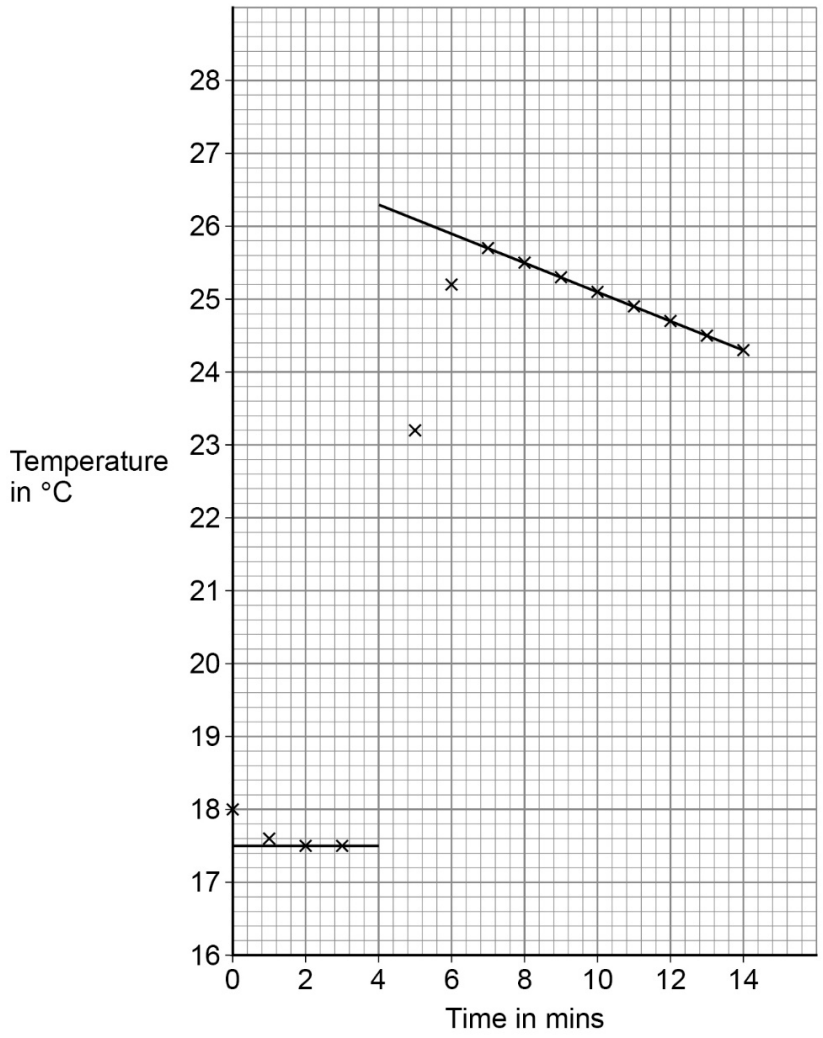
Answer 05 · Mark scheme November 2020 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q5

05.1	temperature (change)		1	AO2 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1 RPA 10

05.2	to reach a constant temperature	allow to reach room temperature	1	AO3 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1 RPA 10

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 05 · Mark scheme

05.3	line of best fit after 7 minutes extends line back to 4 minutes	 ignore extension of line beyond 4 minutes	1 1	AO2 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1 RPA 10
	the diagram below scores **2** marks  			

05.4	(maximum **and** minimum values at 4 minutes) 26.3 (°C) **and** 17.5 (°C) (temperature change at 4 minutes) = 8.8 (°C)	allow ecf from **05.3**	1 1	AO3 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1 RPA 10
05.5	the reaction finished / stopped (so) energy is lost to surroundings / atmosphere **or** (so the) solution cools (back to room temperature)	allow maximum temperature has been reached allow heat for energy	1 1	AO3 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1 RPA 10
05.6	aluminium / zinc / iron / beryllium metal **Q** is less reactive (than magnesium) **or** metal **Q** is lower in reactivity series	allow Al / Zn / Fe / Be do **not** accept copper, silver MP2 dependent on a correct answer to MP1 allow converse	1 1	AO3 AO2 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1 RPA 10

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

05.7	(unit conversion) 30.0 cm^3 = 0.030 dm^3 **or** 0.500 dm^3 = 500 cm^3		1	AO2 5.3.2.1 5.4.1.2 5.5.1.1
	(moles = $\frac{30}{500}$ × 0.1 =) 0.006 **or** (moles = $\frac{0.030}{0.50}$ × 0.1 =) 0.006	allow correct use of incorrect / no unit conversion	1	
	mass = 0.006 × 159.5	allow correct use of incorrect value for number of moles	1	
	= 0.957 (g)	allow 0.96 (g)	1	

Total			**14**

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 05 · Mark scheme

November 2020 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 06 · Mark scheme November 2020 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q6

06.1	**D B C A**		1	AO1 5.9.2.1

06.2	(maximum % =) 96 (%)	allow a value in the range 95 to 97 (%)	1	AO2 5.9.1.1 5.9.1.2 5.9.1.4 5.9.2.2
	(maximum mass =) $\frac{96}{100} \times 5.15 \times 10^{18}$	allow correct use of incorrectly determined percentage	1	
	$= 4.94 \times 10^{18}$ (kg)	allow 4.944×10^{18} (kg)	1	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.3	**Level 2:** Scientifically relevant facts, events or processes are identified and given in detail to form an accurate account.	4–6	AO1 5.9.1.1 5.9.1.2 5.9.1.3 5.9.1.4 5.9.2.2
	Level 1: Facts, events or processes are identified and simply stated but their relevance is not clear.	1–3	
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative content: during the first billion years of the Earth's existence carbon dioxide levels increased due to • intense volcanic activity from 4.4 to 2.7 billion years ago carbon dioxide levels decreased as • water vapour condensed to form oceans • carbon dioxide dissolved in the oceans • carbonates precipitated • sedimentary rocks formed from 2.7 to 1.7 billion years ago carbon dioxide levels decreased as • algae appeared • plants evolved • algae and plants photosynthesised • sedimentary rocks formed • fossil fuels formed over the past 100-200 years carbon dioxide levels increased due to • the industrial revolution • human activity • the burning of fossil fuels		

Total			10

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

November 2020 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 07 · Mark scheme November 2020 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q7

07.1	when a reversible reaction occurs in apparatus which prevents the escape of reactants and products (equilibrium is reached) when the forward and reverse reactions occur at (exactly) the same rate	allow when a reversible reaction occurs in a sealed system	1 1	AO1 5.6.2.3
07.2	(as pressure increases) the equilibrium position shifts to the right hand side (because) there are less moles / molecules (of dinitrogen tetroxide) on right hand side	allow (as pressure increases) the percentage of product / dinitrogen tetroxide / N_2O_4 increases allow (because) there are more moles / molecules (of nitrogen dioxide) on left hand side	1 1	AO2 5.6.2.4, 5.6.2.6 5.6.2.7
07.3	(as temperature increases) equilibrium position shifts to left hand side (because the forward) reaction is exothermic **or** (because) the backward reaction is endothermic (so) the percentage of product / dinitrogen tetroxide / N_2O_4 decreases		1 1 1	AO2 AO2 AO3 5.6.2.4 5.6.2.6 5.6.2.7
Total			**7**	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 08 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q7

Question 7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.1	electrolysis of molten compound (of metal **Y**) **OR** displacement (1) by heating with a more reactive metal **or** by heating with potassium / magnesium (1)	 allow liquid for molten	1 1	AO3 5.4.1.3 5.4.3.2 5.4.3.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.2	4 Na + $TiCl_4$ → 4 NaCl + Ti	allow multiples allow **1** mark for NaCl **and** Ti with incorrect / no balancing	2	AO2 5.1.1.1 5.3.1.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.3	$Na \rightarrow Na^+ + e^-$	ignore state symbols allow multiples allow **1** mark for $Na \rightarrow Na^+ + e^-$ with incorrect balancing	2	AO2 5.4.1.2 5.4.1.4

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 08 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.4	**method 1:** (moles of Al = $\frac{108}{27}$ =) 4		1	AO2 5.3.2.2 5.3.2.4
	(moles $CuCl_2$ = $\frac{1210}{134.5}$ =) 8.996	allow 9	1	
	(identifying limiting reactant) 4 moles Al gives 6 moles Cu 8.996 moles $CuCl_2$ gives 8.996 moles Cu	allow correct use of an incorrectly calculated value(s) for moles of Al and / or $CuCl_2$	1	
	therefore aluminium is the limiting reactant	must follow on from MP3	1	
	(mass of Cu = 2 × 3 × 63.5) = 6 × 63.5		1	
	= 381 (g)		1	

07.4 cont.	**method 2:** $2\,Al + 3\,CuCl_2 \rightarrow 3\,Cu + 2\,AlCl_3$ (2×27) (3×134.5) (3×63.5) 54 (g) 403.5 (g) 190.5 (g) (1) (1) (1) (so) 108 g Al (reacts with 807 g $CuCl_2$) to produce 381 g Cu (1) (so) there is excess $CuCl_2$ **or** 807 g $CuCl_2$ is less than 1210 g $CuCl_2$ (1) therefore aluminium is limiting reactant (1) **method 3:** 134.5 g $CuCl_2$ produces 63.5 g Cu (1) (mass conversion 1.21 kg $CuCl_2$ =) 1210 (g) (1) 1210 g $CuCl_2$ produces ($\frac{63.5}{134.5}$ × 1210 =) 571 g Cu (1) 54 g Al produces 190.5 g Cu (1) 108 g Al produces ($\frac{190.5}{54}$ × 108 =) 381 (g) (1) (therefore) aluminium is the limiting reactant (1)	allow correct use of an incorrect calculation of mass for Al / $CuCl_2$ / Cu must follow on from MP4 / MP5 allow correct use of an incorrect / no conversion of mass of $CuCl_2$ must follow on from MP3 and MP5		

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 08 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.5	delocalised electrons carry (electrical) charge through the metal / sodium	allow free electrons ignore throughout for through ignore current / electricity MP2 is dependent upon MP1	1 1	AO1 5.2.2.8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.6	(conducts electricity) when liquid / molten **or** (conducts electricity) in (aqueous) solution (because) <u>ions</u> (ions) are free to move **or** (ions) allow charge to flow	allow (conducts electricity) when dissolved in water	1 1 1	AO1 5.2.2.3

Total Question 7		17

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

June 2023 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question 2

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

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.2	(M_r =) (1 × 2) + 32 + (4 × 16) = 98		1 1	AO2 5.3.1.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.3	(A_r O × 4 =) 4 × 16 **or** 64 (percentage of oxygen =) $\frac{64}{110} \times 100$ = 58.18 = 58 (%)	 allow correct use of incorrectly determined mass of oxygen allow a correctly calculated answer to 2 significant figures from an incorrect calculation which uses the values in the question	1 1 1 1	AO2 5.3.1.2

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

June 2023 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.4	(unit conversion) (25 cm^3 ÷ 1000) = 0.025 dm^3		1	AO2 5.3.2.5
	(conc =) $\frac{0.30}{0.025}$ (g/dm^3)	allow correct use of incorrect / no unit conversion	1	
	= 12 (g/dm^3)		1	
	alternative approach:			
	$\frac{0.30}{25}$ (g/cm^3) (1)			
	= 0.012 (g/cm^3) (1)			
	(unit conversion) (0.012 × 1000) = 12 (g/dm^3) (1)	allow correct conversion of an incorrect concentration calculation		

Total Question 2	10

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 10 · Mark scheme

June 2023 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6

Question 6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.1	filter (to remove excess magnesium) (then) crystallisation (of magnesium chloride solution)	 allow (then) evaporation (of water from magnesium chloride solution)	1 1	AO1 5.1.1.2 5.4.2.1 5.4.2.3 RPA8

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.2	(magnesium atoms are) oxidised (because the atoms) lose (two) electrons		1 1	AO2 5.4.1.4 5.4.2.1 5.4.2.3 RPA8

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 10 · Mark scheme June 2023 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.3	(moles Mg =) $\frac{0.72}{24}$		1	AO2 5.3.1.1 5.3.2.2 5.4.2.1 5.4.2.3 RPA8
	= 0.03		1	
	(moles Mg = moles $MgCl_2$) (so mass $MgCl_2$ =) 0.03 × 95	allow a correct calculation using an incorrectly calculated value of moles of magnesium allow a correct calculation using an incorrectly calculated value of moles of magnesium chloride	1	
	= 2.85 (g)		1	
	($100.0\ cm^3 = 0.100\ dm^3$ concentration = $\frac{\text{mass}}{\text{volume}}$)			
	= $\frac{2.85}{0.100}$	allow correct use of incorrectly calculated mass of magnesium chloride	1	
	= 28.5 (g/dm^3)		1	

Total Question 6	10

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 11 · Mark scheme

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

Question 7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.1	each calcium atom loses two electrons	allow **1** mark for calcium atoms lose electrons **and** chlorine atoms gain electrons	1	AO2 5.1.2.6 5.2.1.1
	(and) each chlorine atom gains one electron		1	
	(so) one calcium atom reacts with two chlorine atoms		1	
	(to form) Ca^{2+} ions **and** Cl^- ions **or** (to form) calcium ion(s) **and** chloride ion(s)	allow (to form) ions with full outer shells allow energy level for shell	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.2		allow converse for bromine allow energy level for shell		AO1 5.1.2.3 5.1.2.6
	chlorine has fewer shells	allow chlorine is a smaller atom	1	
	(so the) outer shell is closer to the nucleus	allow (so the) outer electrons are closer to the nucleus allow (so there) is less shielding	1	
	(so) stronger attraction between nucleus and electron gained **or** (so) stronger attraction between nucleus and outer shell		1	
	(so) gains the electron more easily		1	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 11 · Mark scheme

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

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
07.3	as the relative formula mass increases the boiling points (of the hydrogen halides) increase		1	AO3 5.1.2.6
	(but) HF has the highest boiling point **or** (but) HF does not follow the trend	allow (but) HF is anomalous	1	

Total Question 7	**10**

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 12 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question 2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.1	(a reaction) which transfers energy to the surroundings	allow heat for energy allow (a reaction) which releases energy (to the surroundings)	1	AO1 5.5.1.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.2	(mass of oxygen = 2 × 16 =) 32		1	AO2 5.3.1.2
	(percentage =) $\frac{32}{74}$ × 100	allow correct use of an incorrectly determined mass of oxygen	1	
	= 43.2 (%)	allow 43.2432 (%) correctly rounded to at least 2 significant figures	1	

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 12 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.3	**Level 3:** The method would lead to the production of a valid outcome. All key steps are identified and logically sequenced.	5–6	AO1 5.5.1.1 RPA10
	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
	• measure volume of water
	  ○ using a measuring cylinder
	  ○ pour into a suitable container eg insulated cup
	• measure initial temperature of water
	  ○ using a thermometer
	• add known mass of calcium oxide
	  ○ measured with a balance
	  ○ stir
	• measure the highest temperature reached by the mixture
	or
	measure temperature reached after set time period
	  ○ determine the temperature change
	• repeat with different masses of calcium oxide
	or
	add successive masses to the same mixture
	• use the same volume of water
	  ○ use the same initial temperature of water
	
	for **Level 3** all key steps should be described and the control variable the same volume of water must be given		

Total Question 2	10

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q2

Question 2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.1	(test) glowing splint (result) relights	do **not** accept burning / lit splint allow glows more brightly MP2 is dependent upon MP1 being awarded	1 1	AO1 5.8.2.2

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.2	**Level 3:** Relevant points (reasons / causes) are identified, given in detail and logically linked to form a clear account.	5–6	AO1
	Level 2: Relevant points (reasons / causes) are identified, and there are attempts at logical linking. The resulting account is not fully clear.	3–4	AO1
	Level 1: Points are identified and stated simply, but their relevance is not clear and there is no attempt at logical linking.	1–2	AO3
	No relevant content	0	5.9.1.1 5.9.1.2 5.9.1.3 5.9.1.4
	Indicative content • **the percentage of carbon dioxide has decreased** ○ (because) carbon dioxide dissolved in the oceans ○ forming sediments ○ (because) algae / plants ○ photosynthesised ○ by the formation of sedimentary rocks ○ by the formation of fossil fuels • **the percentage of nitrogen has increased** ○ (because) volcanic activity produced nitrogen ○ denitrifying bacteria released nitrogen • **the percentage of oxygen has increased** ○ (because) algae / plants ○ photosynthesised for **Level 3** answers must include each of the gases with an explanation for different gases		

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.3	any **two** from: • reduce livestock farming • reduce the number of rice / paddy fields • reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill • use methane from landfill as an energy source • reduce fossil fuel use • reduce the destruction of peat bogs	 allow reduction of specific animals / product allow reduce area of wetlands allow recycle more (so less rubbish to landfill)	2	AO1 5.9.2.2 5.9.2.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.4	fossil fuels (containing sulfur) are burnt sulfur reacts with oxygen (to produce sulfur dioxide)	allow fuels containing sulfur are burnt	1 1	AO1 5.9.3.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.5	any **one** from: • respiratory problems • acid rain	 allow immediate consequence of acid rain	1	AO1 5.9.3.2

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.6	any **one** from: • less use of fossil fuels (containing sulfur) • sulfur is removed from fossil fuels (before burning) • sulfur dioxide is removed from waste gases (after burning) • new legislation / regulations (since 1980)	allow any named fossil fuel allow less use of fuels containing sulfur allow increased use of renewable energy allow increased use of electric vehicles	1	AO3 5.9.3.1

Total Question 2	14

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 01 · Examiner comments

June 2018 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6

Question 6 (standard, standard / high & high demand)

06.1 The question was not answered well, with large numbers of students missing the key word 'formula' in the question stem. As a result, lots of responses included the names of a wide range of chemicals. Quite a few knew the formula for carbon dioxide.

06.2 Those students who were aware that carbonate had a formula of CO_3 usually came up with the correct answer. Many opted for more well-known Group 2 carbonates such as calcium and magnesium, usually with little justification.

06.3 A good number of students could successfully calculate the gradient. Most students knew the method but could not get the correct figures from the graph. Students seemed to make their life very difficult when selecting values from the graph to calculate the gradient.

The easiest methods would have been to:

- use the increase in mass from 0 g to 1 g, with the equivalent volume increase of 167 cm^3, to give a simple calculation of 167 ÷ 1
- increase in mass from 0 g to 0.5 g, or 0 g to 2 g would have also given relatively easy calculations.

There were very few inverted equations but very few correct units, these were invariably inverted as g/cm^3

When determining a gradient students should be encouraged to draw the sides of their triangle as large as possible, as this reduces the error in reading the *x* and *y* values from the graph.

06.4 This question was answered well by only the highest-attaining students with 4% achieving full marks. Their working followed those methods in the mark scheme or routes based upon these, which also achieved full credit. These students could either see the link from the graph, where 240 cm^3 had a mass of 1.45 g, and the subsequent conversion from 240 cm^3 to 24 dm^3 or they divided the volume (in cm^3) by their gradient.

Some students used a volume on the *y*-axis of 24 cm^3, which gave a mass of approximately 0.15 g on the *x*-axis, which scaled up to (a correct answer of) 150. However, because their scale was so small, some got the mass as 0.16 g. As this is within half a small square and scaled up to 160, these students were also awarded full credit.

Students should be aware that when larger values are taken from the *x* and *y*-axes, errors in subsequent calculations are minimised.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 02 · Examiner comments

June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q3

Question 3 (standard & standard / high demand)

03.1 76% of students correctly calculated the mass as 16. Some students incorrectly calculated the mass to be 14.

03.2 56% of students achieved at least one mark; 16% achieved both. Incorrect responses describing the length of time 'for the solids to dissolve' were regularly seen. Marks were awarded more often for students who correctly gave a disadvantage of using a larger volume of water than those who attempted to give an advantaged by creating a list of reasons, for example reliable, accurate and precise.

03.3 27% of students correctly described the difference between pure water and potable water. 'Dissolved' was omitted from the majority of descriptions about potable water having chemicals, minerals or even vitamins and nutrients 'in it'. A number of students answered in terms of the pH of the two waters.

03.4 70% of students achieved at least one on this question. 25% gave responses that gained either all three marks or two marks. Students failed to separate out their answers highlighting the differences in the treatment methods to produce potable water from ground water and seawater. 'The water' was filtered, sterilised and distilled to produce potable water was a common response. The higher-attaining students gave clear, succinct responses using the correct terminology.

03.5 56% of students achieved full marks on this question. The most common mistake was not converting 2.2 into a percentage (0.022 or 2.2 ÷ 100) when multiplying by 6.50 to calculate the mass of dissolved solids.

Answer 03 · Examiner comments

Question 4 (standard, standard / high & high demand)

04.1 22% of students knew the definition from the specification or were able to give an equivalent statement. Often students mentioned only that it was 'a mixture or chemicals mixed together' but omitted the idea of 'to form a useful product'. Some students were able to give examples, but not a definition.

As the question stem mentioned fertilisers, a few students answered the question with phrases such as a substance / something to help plants grow or to enhance plant growth.

04.2 5% of students achieved full marks but many students (63%) gained some credit for their calculation. The most common answers that achieved two marks were 0.18 or 0.1815, (not converting 14.52 kg to g and an omission or incorrect conversion of their calculation into standard form to two significant figures).

An answer of 1.8×10^{-1} achieved three marks, the calculation being correct, but the students had not undertaken the initial conversion of kg into g. Several students had multiplied an answer within their calculation by Avogadro's number.

04.3 51% of students achieved some credit on this question. However, there were many references to intermolecular forces (often strong intermolecular forces), covalent bonds and molecules, all of which limited the response to a maximum of two marks.

Many students described in detail how potassium, being in Group 1 of the periodic table would transfer one electron to chlorine which is in Group 7 to obtain full outer shells meaning that the compound would have a high melting point. 'Ionic bonds' was often seen but normally as part of a lengthy explanation of how and why potassium transfers one electron to chlorine.

1% of students achieved full marks, with 7% of students achieving three marks; the description of a 'lattice' or 'giant structure' was seldom seen.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 04 · Examiner comments — June 2019 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question 2

This question was common with the Foundation paper and included an extended response question based around Required Practical Activity 10. Each item was at standard demand.

02.1 This question was poorly answered where only a quarter of students gained the mark. A wide range of incorrect responses were seen. Many students wrote a chemical formula of ammonium nitrate instead of the state symbol. Students should know that state symbols are lower case only which are written in brackets.

02.2 Around two-thirds of students identified the correct formula of nitric acid. The next most common response was the alkali NH_4OH

02.3 This recall question was generally well answered with more than half the students gaining both marks. Two colours were often listed eg red/orange or blue/purple when only one colour was required. The most common incorrect responses included green, black and colourless.

Answer 04 · Examiner comments — June 2019 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

02.4 Approximately one-third of students identified the correct pH change when nitric acid was added to ammonia solution. The three incorrect responses were selected in approximately equal amounts. A large number of students did not follow the rubric of the question which required them to tick one box only.

02.5 This question discriminated well. Two-thirds of students gained all three marks for an answer of 60%. A very common error was to carry out the calculation for only one oxygen atom, leading to an answer of 20%, which gained two marks. Some students started the calculation correctly by calculating 48 for three oxygen atoms, but then subtracted that from the given relative formula mass to give 32, which was then used in a percentage calculation.

02.6 Most students had a good understanding of the requirements of this question which was based upon Required Practical Activity 10. They could appreciate the need to control variables, although the most common errors were to not mention a constant volume of water when starting each experiment or not taking the temperature of the water before the ammonium nitrate was added. The descriptions were often poorly organised with statements relating to a constant volume of water or measuring the starting temperature appearing at the end of the response. Some students carried out the experiment in one container, adding successive masses to the same beaker in the same way they could have done a heat of neutralisation experiment. This question discriminated well with approximately a fifth of students achieving level 3 and a half achieving level 2.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 08 · Examiner comments

June 2022 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q7

Question 7 (Standard/high and high demand)

07.1 Students had to recognise the relative position of a metal in a reactivity series and to deduce the method and conditions used to extract the metal from a compound of the metal. Over 50% of students gained 1 mark. Electrolysis was the most common answer. However, many students then went on to talk about electrolysis of a solution rather than the molten compound. The displacement route was less common and those who chose this method often only scored 1 mark as they failed to mention 'heating' when talking about potassium or magnesium.

07.2 Students had to complete an equation for the displacement reaction between sodium and titanium chloride. Some students were not able to identify the products. Titanium was usually identified, but sodium chloride was often written as $NaCl_4$. Without the correct formulae balancing was not possible. Generally, element symbols were written well with upper and lower case letters in the appropriate place. Nearly 20% of students gained both marks.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 08 · Examiner comments June 2022 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q7

07.3 Students were asked to write the half equation to show the oxidation of sodium. This proved very challenging. Approximately 5% gained two marks with about a fifth of students not attempting the question. One mark was infrequently scored, since identifying the equation and not the balancing proved to be the problem.

07.4 This reacting mass calculation where students had to identify the limiting reagent proved very challenging. Only a small percentage of students were able to show that aluminium was the limiting factor. Although there were several methods available to students, many attempted to use more than one method to get to the answer. Many students could work out the number of moles of aluminium and copper chloride or the ratio of masses that reacted together, but then were unable to use these numbers further. 30% of students scored 3 marks in this calculation but few scored any further marks..

07.5 Students had to describe how sodium metal conducts electricity. More than 50% of students gained 1 mark for stating that delocalised electrons or free electrons were responsible for electrical conduction in metals. The idea that these delocalised electrons carry the charge through the metal was infrequently given (the second marking point). Many students suggested throughout or around, which did not give direction to their answer.

07.6 Students had to explain how sodium chloride conducts electricity. Many students gave the impression that sodium chloride is a liquid or (to a lesser extent) aqueous solution, rather than conveying that conductivity is restricted to when sodium choride is in these states. Many incorrectly described the electrons as the particles that were able to move. 10% of students gained all 3 marks for stating that sodium chloride needed to be either molten or in aqueous solution in order to conduct electricity and went on to mention ions that are free to move.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

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.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 09 · Examiner comments June 2023 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question 2 (standard demand)

02.1 More than a third of students knew that the reaction was either neutralisation or exothermic. Displacement and endothermic were common incorrect responses.

02.2 Over 80% of students correctly calculated the relative formula mass of sulfuric acid from the given formula.

02.3 This question was a good discriminator. Just under half of students answered this correctly. A further 20% gained 3 marks; either failing to recognise that there are four oxygen atoms in lithium sulphate or for not giving their answer to 2 significant figures.

02.4 This question was a good discriminator. A third of students gained all 3 marks. The most common method was to start by evaluating the mass of 0.30 g divided by the volume of 25 cm^3. A third of students failed to then carry out the unit conversion of cm^3 into dm^3.

Answer 10 · Examiner comments June 2023 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q6

Question 6 (standard/high and high demand)

06.1 Students found difficulty in describing how to obtain magnesium chloride from the reaction solution. Just over one third of students gained at least one mark. A number of students did not filter out the excess magnesium before crystallising the solution and many referred to magnesium displacing hydrogen.

06.2 A common response was that magnesium displaces the hydrogen without any explanation; many students did not appreciate that this is a redox reaction. Students should realise that metals always undergo oxidation which can be related to dot and cross diagrams in ionic bonding. In this question identifying what is oxidised (ie the metal) is easier than identifying what is reduced ie H+ ion (not hydrogen). Magnesium is oxidised during the reaction with hydrochloric acid as magnesium atoms lose two electrons. Students found it challenging to describe what happens to the magnesium atoms with only a quarter gaining more than one mark. Many students who stated that magnesium atoms were oxidised then went on to state it was because they gained oxygen. A common mistake was to say that atoms (not electrons) were lost.

06.3 Students found this calculation challenging but the question proved to be a good discriminator. A third of students gained at least one mark for initially calculating the number of moles of magnesium. About 20% went on to calculate the mass of magnesium chloride produced as 2.85 grams. Only a small percentage of students then went on to determine the concentration of the magnesium chloride solution produced; students struggled with the conversion of 100 cm^3 into dm^3 so a wide variety of answers were seen where a mass of 2.85 grams had been multiplied by ‘some factor of 10’.

Answer 11 · Examiner comments

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

Question 7 (standard/high & high demand)

07.1 This question was a good differentiator between students. Electron transfer from a metal to a non-metal to form an ionic compound is frequently asked.

Most students understood the processes involved in this question, but their weak use of chemical language meant they often did not achieve the marks. Students often referred to calcium and chlorine, rather than calcium atoms and chlorine atoms. There were many incorrect terms such as 'atoms sharing electrons to form ionic bonds', 'metal ions losing electrons' and 'non-metal ions gaining electrons'. Formation of Ca^{+} was a common misconception, rather than recognising that two electrons are lost by one calcium atom and two chlorine atoms each gain one electron. To achieve the final mark students had to use the word 'ion', and this was often missing. A common error was for students to write chlorine ion instead of chloride ion.

0 7 . 1 Calcium reacts with chlorine to produce calcium chloride.

Explain what happens to calcium atoms and to chlorine atoms when calcium reacts with chlorine to produce calcium chloride.

[4 marks]

When calcium reacts with chlorine to produce calcium chloride, the atoms share electrons. Calcium is in group 2 meaning it has 2 electrons on it outer shell and chlorine is in group 7 meaning it has 7 electrons on its outer shell. Two chlorine atoms will be present shared with one calcium atom so that each chlorine atom gets 1 electron to complete its ourer shell.

A number of students did not appreciate that ionic bonding occurs when a metal reacts with a non-metal. The sharing of electrons described here contradicts the transfer of electrons from the metal to the non-metal for the first two marking points. This response gains 1 mark for the correct ratio between calcium atoms and chlorine atoms but does not say that ions are formed.

07.2 This question was also a good differentiator between students. Nearly half of students were able to gain some credit but few gained all 4 marks. Those students who gained 1 or 2 marks invariably described chlorine as having fewer shells, that the outer shell is closer to the nucleus or that chlorine atoms gain an electron more easily (or the converse for bromine). A stronger attraction between the nucleus and the electron gained was rarely seen.

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5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 11 · Examiner comments June 2024 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q7

07.3 Students were given the boiling points of four hydrogen halides and were asked to describe how the boiling points change as the relative formula mass changes. Many students found it challenging to interpret the negative numbers and deduced an incorrect trend whilst others referred to the halogens and not the hydrogen halides. Few gained 2 marks by correctly stating that the boiling points increase as the formula mass increases and that HF was anomalous and does not follow the trend.

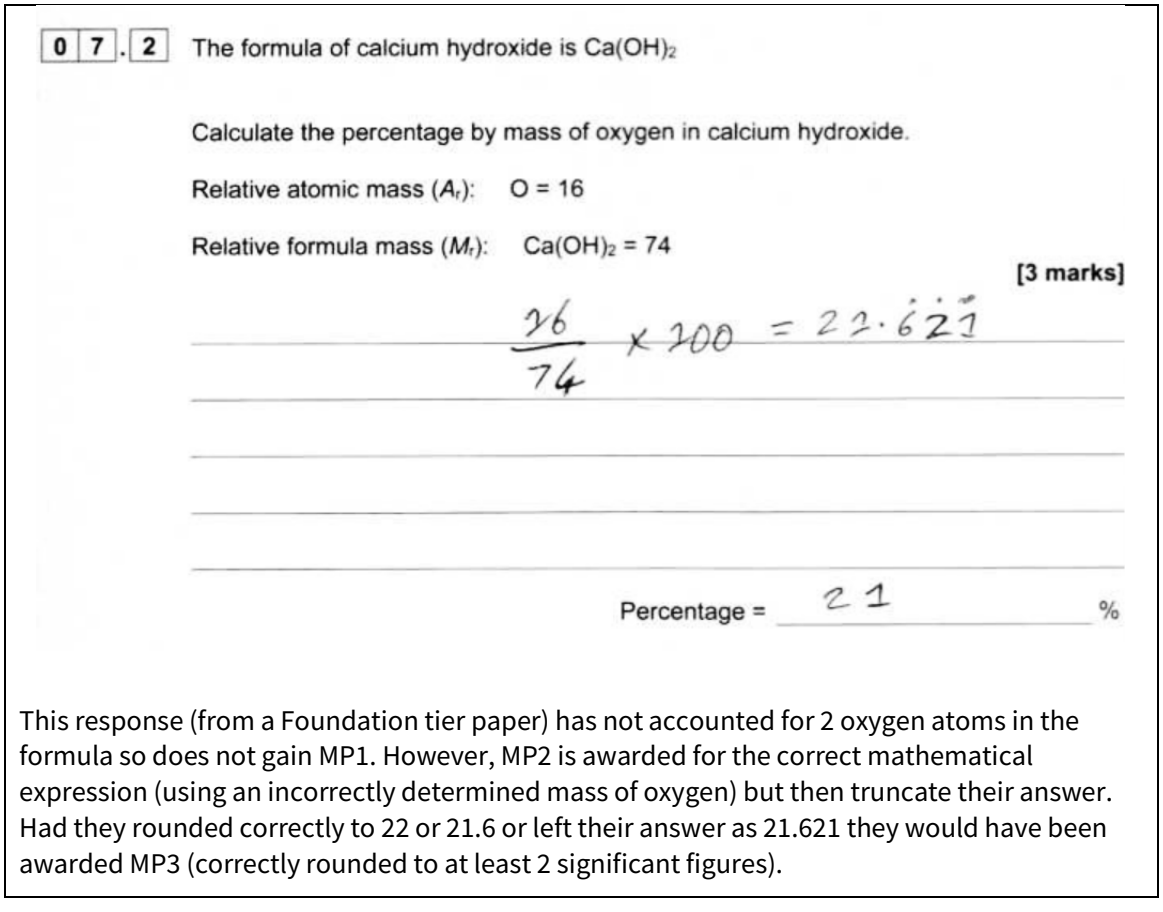
Answer 12 · Examiner comments

June 2025 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Question 2 (Standard demand)

02.1 The specification definition for an 'exothermic' reaction was not well known as students rarely stated that energy or heat was released or transferred '*to the surroundings*'. However, more than three-quarters of students gained this mark. Answers were mostly general explanations, describing how energy or heat were 'given off' or 'released'. Common non-creditworthy responses referred to energy or heat being 'produced', the idea of heat or energy being 'lost' or references to an increase in temperature. Some answers stated that 'oxygen' or 'a gas' was given off by the reaction.

02.2 This question was well answered. The majority of students understood the use of brackets in a formula and used the subscript 2 correctly so evidence of 32 was common. There were some different variations on the use of 16 and 74 such as 74+16, 74-16 or 74÷16.



0 7 . 2 The formula of calcium hydroxide is $Ca(OH)_2$

Calculate the percentage by mass of oxygen in calcium hydroxide.

Relative atomic mass (A_r): O = 16

Relative formula mass (M_r): $Ca(OH)_2$ = 74

[3 marks]

$\frac{16}{74} \times 100 = 22.6\dot{2}\dot{1}$

Percentage = 21 %

This response (from a Foundation tier paper) has not accounted for 2 oxygen atoms in the formula so does not gain MP1. However, MP2 is awarded for the correct mathematical expression (using an incorrectly determined mass of oxygen) but then truncate their answer. Had they rounded correctly to 22 or 21.6 or left their answer as 21.621 they would have been awarded MP3 (correctly rounded to at least 2 significant figures).

02.3 This was an 'extended response' style of question. Such questions are marked holistically. There are overall generic descriptions for the three levels of response at the top of the mark scheme, giving a hierarchy of response. Within each level there are 2 marks.

Students were asked to plan a method to investigate how changing the mass of calcium oxide affects the temperature change of the reaction when calcium oxide is added to water. The indicative content includes 5 key steps and the control variable, along with some additional information.

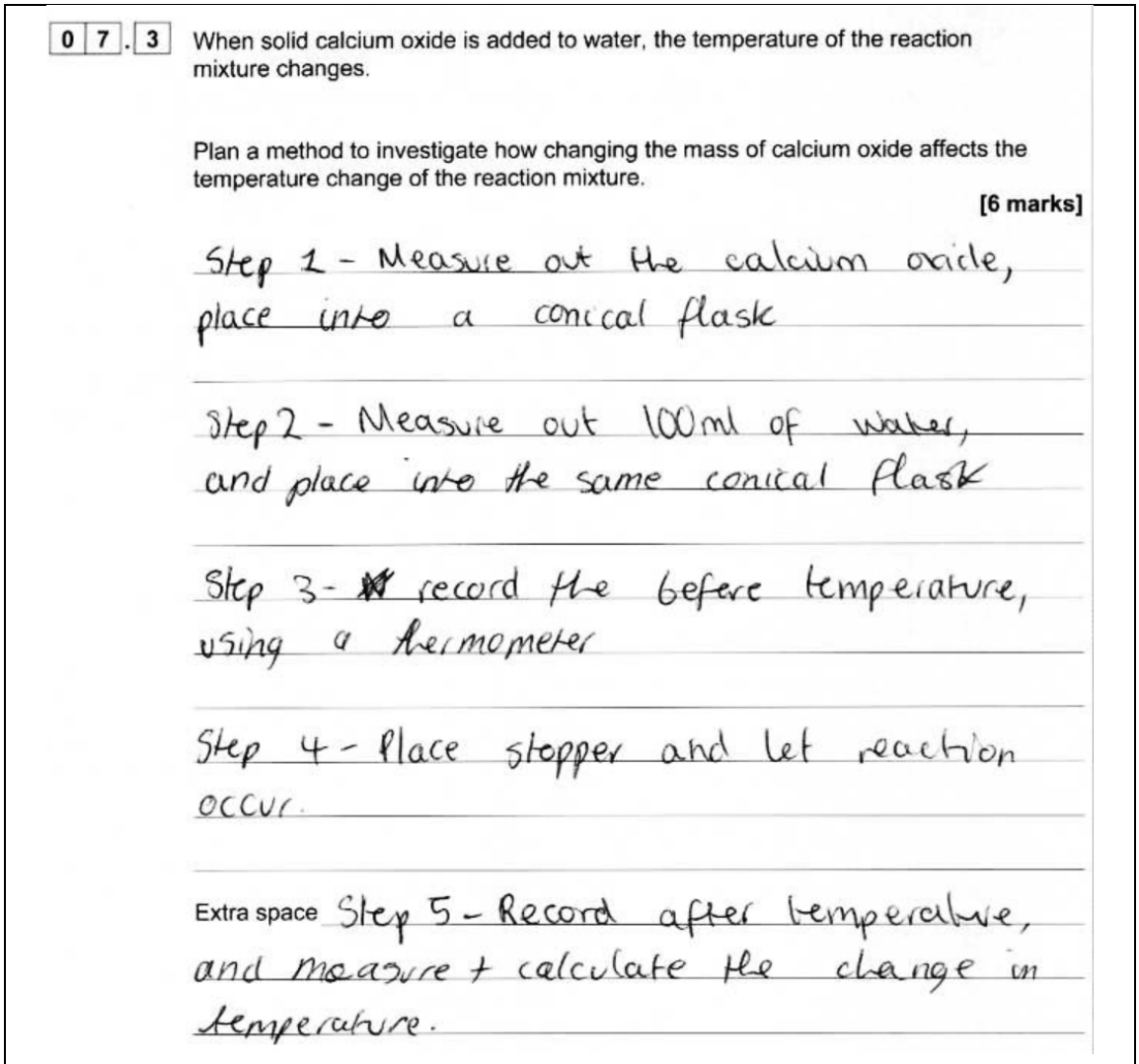
At Level 1, students needed to identify some relevant steps. To enter Level 2, three key steps, or two with the control variable, were required. To achieve marks in Level 3, all 5 key steps and the control variable were needed. Only a minority of students were able to obtain 6 marks.

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5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 12 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

Most students added calcium oxide to water but many omitted either volume (of water) or mass (of solid) although 'amount' was creditworthy for both here. Numerous students then took the 'initial' temperature (but this was often after they had added solid to water). Many were less clear on when and how the subsequent temperature or temperatures were to be taken. Too frequently it was stated that the 'temperature change' was to be measured which is not creditworthy, as this requires a calculation. The need for a control variable, whilst rarely stated as such, was often found in a Level 2 response due to the students realising that the volume of water needed to be fixed along with the experiment being repeated in some way. An indication of how the temperature change was to be determined was rarely seen.



0 7 . 3 When solid calcium oxide is added to water, the temperature of the reaction mixture changes.

Plan a method to investigate how changing the mass of calcium oxide affects the temperature change of the reaction mixture.

[6 marks]

Step 1 - Measure out the calcium oxide, place into a conical flask

Step 2 - Measure out 100ml of water, and place into the same conical flask

Step 3 - record the before temperature, using a thermometer

Step 4 - Place stopper and let reaction occur.

Extra space Step 5 - Record after temperature, and measure + calculate the change in temperature.

In this response (from a Foundation tier paper) the student has stated a valid volume of water but omitted 'mass' of calcium oxide. In step 3 they record the 'before' temperature but this is after both reactants have been added to the conical flask so is not credited with taking the initial temperature. They have not stated when the subsequent temperature is measured nor described how the temperature change is determined. Had the student 'repeated the experiment with different masses of calcium oxide' they would have been credited with the control variable as this would imply fixing the volume stated. The student uses a thermometer which is a valid point in the mark scheme.

Only one key step is stated with some additional information (correct use of a thermometer) so this is a Level 1 response and is awarded 1 mark.

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5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 12 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

0 7 . 3 When solid calcium oxide is added to water, the temperature of the reaction mixture changes.

Plan a method to investigate how changing the mass of calcium oxide affects the temperature change of the reaction mixture.

[6 marks]

- Place water in a polystegrene cup with a thermometer and lid
- ~~Add in~~ measure out different masses of calcium oxide
- add smallest mass to cup, place lid on top and measure maximum temperature and temperature change
- repeat with increasing masses of calcium oxide
- repeat previous steps to make sure investigation is accurate
- ~~measure~~ find the mean temperature of each reaction of increasing calcium oxide mass and water.

Extra space

In this response (from a Foundation tier paper) the student has omitted volume of water but stated mass of calcium oxide. The initial temperature is not recorded but the maximum temperature is. They repeat for accuracy and then repeat with different masses of calcium oxide. They have not stated how the temperature change is determined nor that they need to use the same volume of water when repeating. The student uses a suitable container (an insulated cup) and a thermometer which are valid ideas from the mark scheme.

There are three key steps with some additional information (thermometer and insulated cup) so this is a Level 2 response and is awarded 3 marks.

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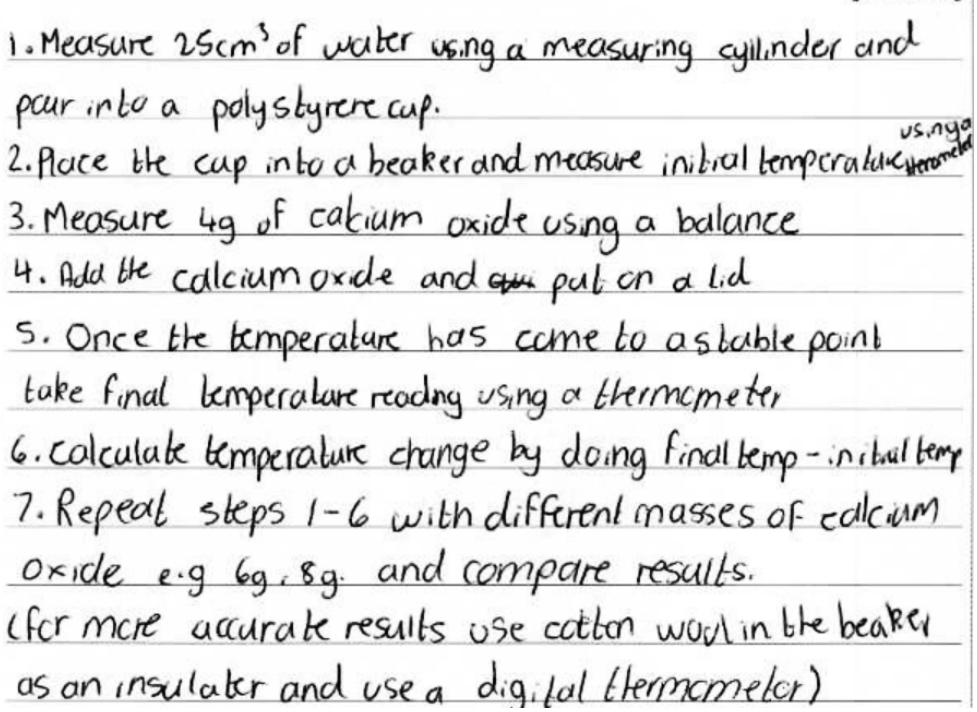
5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 12 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/1H | Original Q2

0 2 . 3 When solid calcium oxide is added to water, the temperature of the reaction mixture changes.

Plan a method to investigate how changing the mass of calcium oxide affects the temperature change of the reaction mixture.

[6 marks]


1. Measure 25cm³ of water using a measuring cylinder and pour into a polystyrene cup.
2. Place the cup into a beaker and measure initial temperature using a thermometer
3. Measure 4g of calcium oxide using a balance
4. Add the calcium oxide and put on a lid
5. Once the temperature has come to a stable point take final temperature reading using a thermometer
6. calculate temperature change by doing final temp - initial temp
7. Repeat steps 1-6 with different masses of calcium oxide e.g 6g, 8g. and compare results.

(for more accurate results use cotton wool in the beaker as an insulator and use a digital thermometer)

In this response, the student has stated a valid volume of water and mass of calcium oxide. The initial temperature (before the solid is added) and final temperature are recorded. They repeat with different masses of calcium oxide and are using the same volume of water so are credited with having a control variable. They have shown how the temperature change is determined. The student uses a measuring cylinder, suitable container (an insulated cup), balance and a thermometer which are additional valid points in the mark scheme.

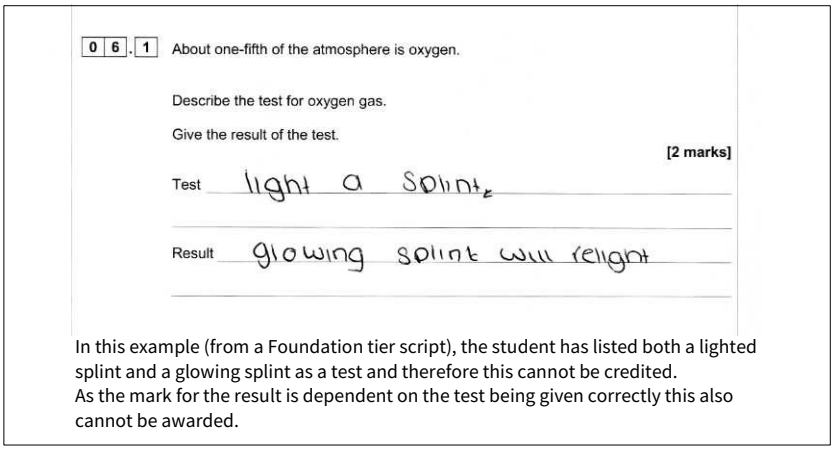
There are all five key steps, a control variable, how the temperature change is determined with lots of additional information, so this is a Level 3 response and is awarded 6 marks.

5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q2

Question 2 (Standard demand)

02.1 There were many responses referring to lit or burning splints, or sometimes both glowing and lit together. Also, a significant number of students referred to smouldering splints, or splints that had been previously lit as opposed to a glowing splint. Students who were awarded marking point 1 were nearly always awarded marking point 2 as well. The most common incorrect response was using the test for hydrogen, with students referencing a lighted splint and a squeaky pop.



In this example (from a Foundation tier script), the student has listed both a lighted splint and a glowing splint as a test and therefore this cannot be credited.
As the mark for the result is dependent on the test being given correctly this also cannot be awarded.

02.2 This was an 'extended response' style of question. Such questions are marked holistically. There are overall generic descriptions for the three levels of response at the top of the mark scheme, giving a hierarchy of response. Within each level there are 2 marks.

Simply quoting the data from the table was not creditworthy. Students who did not use comparative language, such as higher, lower, only or just, to compare percentages failed to gain credit. Quoted figures needed to be correct.

Simple comparative statements limited the student to Level 1.

To access Level 2, the student had to offer at least two comparisons of percentage composition along with some correctly linked explanations, although all three gases did not have to be addressed. A third of all students gained marks at this level.

To access Level 3, students had to correctly identify the change in percentage composition for all three gases from the early atmosphere to the current day, and offer an explanation for at least two of them. Just over a quarter of all students gained 5 or 6 marks.

A decrease in carbon dioxide and an increase in oxygen could both be linked to 'algae / plants' and 'photosynthesis'. For nitrogen, whilst many students recognised that the percentage had increased, very few stated that it was due to volcanic activity or denitrifying bacteria. This was the main reason for a number of students working at Level 3, not being awarded the upper mark.

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5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Examiner comments

Explain how the percentages of gases have changed from Earth's early atmosphere to Earth's atmosphere today.

You should refer to all three gases in **Table 5**.

[6 marks]

- The earth's early atmosphere had 95% carbon dioxide but now here is only 0.04%.
- In the Earth's early atmosphere there was 3% Nitrogen gas but now here is 78%.
- In the earth's early atmosphere there was less than 1% of oxygen whereas now here is 21%.

This is a weak response. The student has basically just written figures from the table. The only weak comparison is carbon dioxide now being 'only' 0.04%. Two relevant statements are needed to access lower Level 1 so 0 marks were awarded.

Explain how the percentages of gases have changed from Earth's early atmosphere to Earth's atmosphere today.

You should refer to all three gases in **Table 1**.

[6 marks]

- in early earth carbon dioxide was 95% where as no it has decreased to 0.04%.
- in early earth Nitrogen had a total of 3% in the atmosphere, whereas now it is 78% of Nitrogen gases this has increased by 75% percent!
- in the early earth oxygen levels were less than 1% of the earths atmosphere. it is now 21% of the earths atmosphere it has increased by just over 20%!

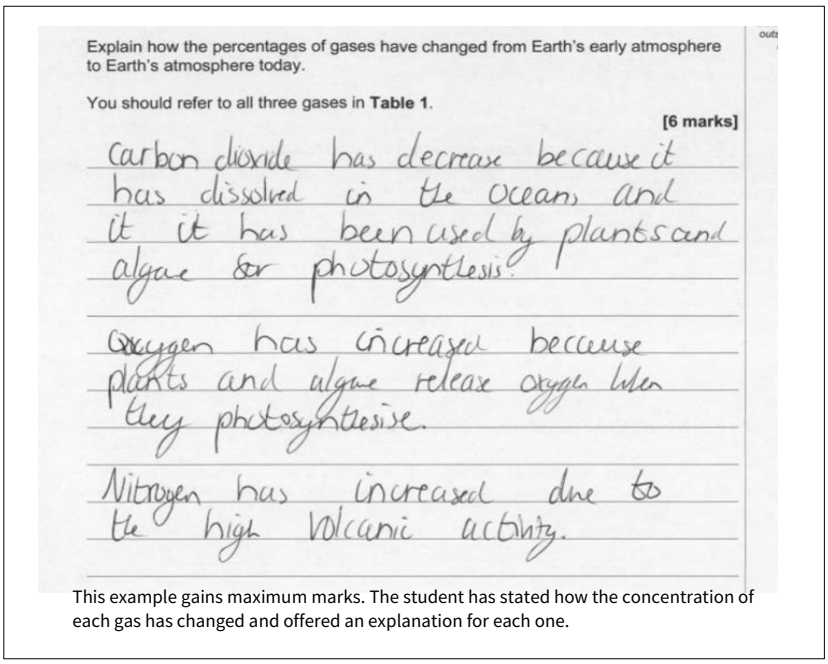
Extra space

This was a common response. The student has identified how the concentrations of all 3 gases have changed but has failed to offer any explanation as to why these changes have occurred. 2 marks in Level 1 are awarded.

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5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

Answer 13 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q2


Explain how the percentages of gases have changed from Earth's early atmosphere to Earth's atmosphere today.

You should refer to all three gases in **Table 1**.

[6 marks]

carbon dioxide has decrease because it has dissolved in the ocean, and it it has been used by plants and algae for photosynthesis.

Oxygen has increased because plants and algae release oxygen when they photosynthesise.

Nitrogen has increased due to the high volcanic activity.

This example gains maximum marks. The student has stated how the concentration of each gas has changed and offered an explanation for each one.

02.3 All of the ideas on the mark scheme were accessed by the students, although the most common responses referred to livestock farming and fossil fuels. However, there were many responses that answered as an absolute, rather than a comparison, which was insufficient for the mark. The question was looking for the idea that '*less* farming of livestock' or '*less* use of fossil fuels' would reduce methane for example, not stopping farming or stopping the use of fossil fuels altogether. This resulted in a third of students who answered the question not gaining credit.

02.4 The most common insufficient response was that 'fuels' were being burnt rather than 'fossil fuels'. Students also often used the incorrect terminology for sulfur reacting with oxygen, with many referring to 'binding' or 'joining'. If bonding was used, it had to be *chemical* bonding for the mark to be awarded. A number of students referred to the sulfur reacting with carbon dioxide. Consequently, over half the students failed to score any marks.

02.5 This question was well answered by the majority of students with over two thirds being able to correctly name a harmful effect of sulfur dioxide. The most common insufficient response was a simple reference to lung damage or breathing issues rather than the correct terminology of respiratory problems.

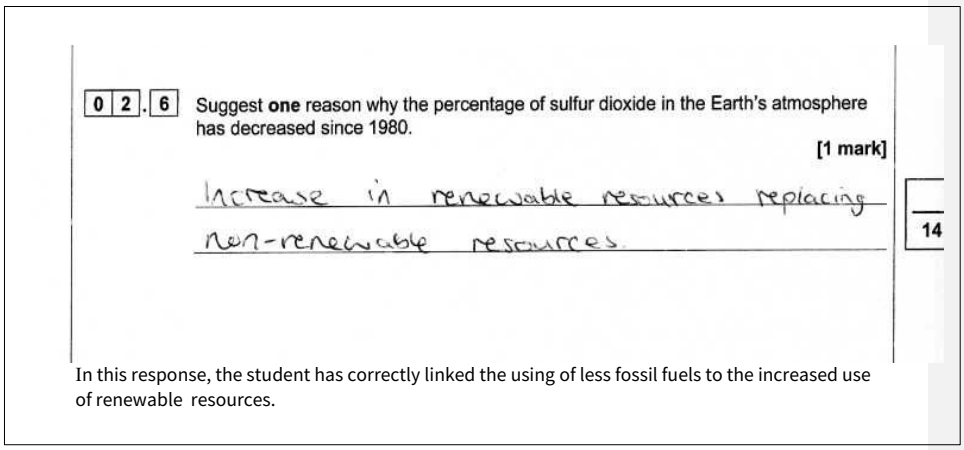
02.6 Students found this question difficult. From all the acceptable responses, the most common by far referred to the use of fossil fuels, with a significant minority listing new laws/legislation. A few students used statements referring to the increased use of renewable energy/resources as an alternative to using less fossil fuels. Students could also link the increased use of electric vehicles to less use of fossil fuels. The common error here was that students had to clearly imply

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5.3.1.2 Relative formula mass

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'increased' use and many did not. A common misconception appeared to be that sulfur dioxide itself is used as a fuel and we now do not use it as much. Less than a third of students gained any credit in this question.



0 2 . 6 Suggest **one** reason why the percentage of sulfur dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere has decreased since 1980.

[1 mark]

Increase in renewable resources replacing non-renewable resources.

14

In this response, the student has correctly linked the using of less fossil fuels to the increased use of renewable resources.