AQA GCSE Combined Science - Trilogy | 8464

SPECIFICATION POINT 5.9.3.2

Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Mark schemes and examiner comments

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**9**
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.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 01 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.1	condenses		1	AO1 5.7.1.2
01.2	the fractions have different boiling points		1	AO1 5.7.1.2 5.7.1.3
01.3	propane	do **not** accept propene	1	AO2 5.7.1.1
01.4	C_nH_{2n+2}		1	AO1 5.7.1.1
01.5	CH_4 + **2** $O_2 \rightarrow CO_2$ + **2** H_2O	allow multiples	1	AO2 5.1.1.1 5.7.1.3
01.6	bromine water		1	AO1 5.7.1.4
01.7	to assess the environmental impact (of the stages in the life of a product)	allow to see the effect / harm / damage on the Earth / environment / planet ignore references to energy, pollution, carbon footprint, carbon dioxide, sustainability	1	AO1 5.10.2.1

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 01 · Mark scheme

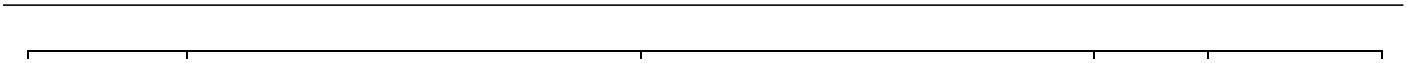
June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.8	**Level 2:** Scientifically relevant features are identified; the ways in which they are similar / different is made clear and the magnitude of the similarity / difference noted.	3–4	AO3
	Level 1: Relevant features are identified and differences noted.	1–2	AO2
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative content • burning 10 000 bags produces 10 kg more of carbon dioxide than landfill • putting 10 000 bags in landfill produces 0.02 kg more of solid residue than burning. • putting 10 000 bags in landfill produces 50% more sulfur dioxide than burning • burning 10 000 bags produces 25 kg of carbon dioxide, but landfill only produces15 kg • putting 10 000 bags in landfill produces 0.07 kg of solid residue but burning only produces 0.05 kg • landfill produces less carbon dioxide than burning • landfill produces more solid residue than burning • burning produces less sulfur dioxide than landfill		5.10.2.1 5.10.2.2 5.9.2.2
Total			**11**

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 01 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1



5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 02 · Mark scheme June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q6

06.1	glowing splint relights		1 1	AO1 5.8.2.2

06.2	equilibrium shifts to right-hand side (because) concentration of SO_3 decreases	allow towards the products allow in favour of the forward reaction this marking point is dependent on first marking point being awarded allow pressure decreases allow to increase the concentration of SO_3 allow to re-establish equilibrium	1 1	AO3 AO2 5.6.2.5 5.6.2.7

06.3	(M_r CaO =) 56 (M_r $CaSO_3$ =) 120 $\frac{7}{56} \times 120$ = 15(.0 g)	an answer of 15(.0 g) scores **4** marks in all approaches allow a correct calculation using an incorrectly calculated M_r **alternative approach A** (M_r CaO =) 56 (1) $\frac{7}{56}$ = 0.125 (moles) (1) (mass $CaSO_3$ =) 0.125 × 120 (1) = 15(.0 g) (1)	1 1 1 1	AO2 5.3.1.2 5.3.2.1 5.3.2.2

		alternative approach B (M_r CaO =) 56 (1) $\frac{56}{7}$ = 8 (factor) (1) (M_r $CaSO_3$ =) 120 (1) $\frac{120}{8}$ = 15(.0 g) (1) **alternative approach C** (M_r CaO =) 56 (1) (M_r $CaSO_3$ =) 120 (1) $\frac{120}{56}$ = 2.14235714 (factor) (1) 2.14235714 × 7 = 15(.0 g) (1)		

Total			**8**

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 03 · Mark scheme June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q7

07.1	heat or vaporise (oil) temperature gradient in column (vapour) condenses (into fractions) depending on boiling point of fraction	maximum of **3** marks if incorrect reference made to cracking ignore fractional distillation ignore fracking allow column is cooler at the top or allow column is hotter at the bottom allow at different levels	1 1 1 1	AO1 5.7.1.2
07.2	different amounts of oxygen available	allow complete combustion **and** incomplete / partial combustion	1	AO2 5.9.3.1
07.3	$2\ C_4H_{10} + 9\ O_2 \rightarrow 8\ CO + 10\ H_2O$	allow correct multiples / halves	1	AO2 5.7.1.3 5.9.3.1 5.1.1.1

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 03 · Mark scheme

June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q7

07.4	short wavelength radiation which enters the atmosphere	because uv / ultra violet radiation which enters the atmosphere	1	AO1.1 5.9.2.1
	is absorbed by materials **and** re-emitted		1	
	as a longer wavelength radiation	as ir / infrared radiation	1	
	(the longer wavelength radiation is trapped by) a greenhouse gas / carbon dioxide / methane which stops radiation escaping (from the atmosphere)	allow so temperature increases	1	

Total			**10**

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Question 4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.1	butane		1	AO2 5.7.1.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.2	(molecule) made up of carbon and hydrogen (atoms) only		1	AO1 5.7.1.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.3	$C_{11}H_{24} \rightarrow C_5H_{10} + 2\,C_2H_4 + C_2H_6$ **OR** $C_{11}H_{24} \rightarrow C_5H_{10} + 2\,C_3H_6 + H_2$ (2) **OR** $C_{11}H_{24} \rightarrow C_5H_{10} + 2\,C_2H_6 + C_2H_2$ (2)	allow **1** mark for $2\,C_2H_4$ allow **1** mark for C_2H_6 allow **1** mark for $2\,C_3H_6$ allow **1** mark for H_2 allow **1** mark for $2\,C_2H_6$ allow **1** mark for C_2H_2	2	AO2 5.1.1.1 5.3.1.1 5.7.1.4

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 04 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.4	C_2H_6 is useful as a fuel	allow smaller molecule so useful as a fuel	1	AO1 5.7.1.3 5.7.1.4
	(because more) flammable (than larger molecules)		1	
	OR			
	C_2H_4 / C_3H_6 / C_5H_{10} is used to make polymers (1)	allow C_2H_4 / C_3H_6 / C_5H_{10} is used to make plastics allow C_2H_4 / C_3H_6 / C_5H_{10} is used to make other chemicals		
	(because more) reactive (than alkanes) (1)			
		if a named product is given, allow **1** mark for a correct use and **1** mark for a correct linked reason		

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 04 · Mark scheme

June 2022 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q4

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.5	**Level 3:** A judgement, strongly linked and logically supported by a sufficient range of correct reasons is given.	5–6	AO3 5.9.2.2 5.10.1.1 5.10.2.1
	Level 2: Some logically linked reasons are given. There may also be a simple judgement.	3–4	
	Level 1: Relevant points are made. They are not logically linked.	1–2	
	No relevant content	0	
	Indicative content • production of plastic uses more hydrocarbons which are from non-renewable crude oil • production of plastic produces more greenhouse gases in the atmosphere which contributes to global warming • production of plastic produces more sulfur dioxide which causes acid rain • production of plastic produces more oxides of nitrogen which cause acid rain and respiratory problems • disposal of plastic produces more waste which increases landfill • burning plastic produces fumes which are toxic so cause respiratory problems • lifetime cost of plastic frames is less • plastic frames have lower costs for maintaining • the total energy consumption for plastic frames is greater than for wooden frames • judgement		

Total Question 4		**12**

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 05 · Mark scheme

June 2023 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

Question 1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.1	$CH_4 + 2\,O_2 \rightarrow CO_2 + 2\,H_2O$		1	AO2 5.7.1.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.2	hydrocarbon molecules in petrol have fewer carbon atoms than those in diesel petrol has a lower boiling point (range) than diesel	allow converse throughout allow petrol is more flammable than diesel allow petrol is less viscous than diesel	1 1	AO3 5.7.1.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.3	oxygen		1	AO1 5.8.1.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.4	air	allow the atmosphere allow from volcanoes	1	AO1 5.9.1.1 5.9.3.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.5	global dimming		1	AO2 5.9.3.1

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 05 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.6	(carbon monoxide is) colourless **or** (carbon monoxide is) odourless	ignore clear	1	AO1 5.9.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.7	(diesel) burns at a high temperature **or** (diesel) burns at a temperature greater than 100 °C		1	AO2
	(which is) above the boiling point of water		1	AO3 5.2.2.1 5.9.3.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.8	sulfur dioxide (is produced when diesel is burnt)		1	AO1 5.9.3.1 5.9.3.2
	(which causes) acid rain		1	
	(which results in) any **one** from: • damage to buildings / statues / bridges • damage to trees / plants • damage to aquatic life • acidification of lakes / rivers / soil • respiratory problems	allow (which affects) asthma	1	

Total Question 1	12

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Question 3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.1	plankton (died)	allow (remains of) ancient biomass	1	AO1 5.7.1.1 5.9.1.4
	and were buried (in mud)	allow and were buried (by sediments)	1	
	and were compressed		1	
	over millions of years		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.2	(some) fuels contain sulfur	allow a named fossil fuel for fuels	1	AO2 5.9.3.1
	(which) reacts with oxygen to produce sulfur dioxide		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.3	acid rain	allow a specific effect of acid rain	1	AO1 5.9.3.2
	respiratory problems (in humans)	allow named respiratory problem eg asthma	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.4	fuels are burnt	allow a named fossil fuel for fuels	1	AO2 5.9.3.1
	in insufficient / limited oxygen	allow (carbon monoxide is) produced by incomplete combustion	1	

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.5	$4\,CO + 2\,NO_2 \rightarrow N_2 + 4\,CO_2$	allow for **1** mark $CO + NO_2 \rightarrow N_2 + CO_2$ with no / incorrect balancing numbers	2	AO2 5.1.1.1 5.9.3.1 5.9.3.2

Total Question 3	**12**

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 07 · Mark scheme

June 2024 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q5

Question 5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	= 198 kJ/mol		1	AO2 5.6.2.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.2	equilibrium position shifts to the right		1	AO2 5.6.2.5

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.3	equilibrium position shifts to the left		1	AO2 5.6.2.7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.4	equilibrium position shifts to the left		1	AO2 5.6.2.6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.5	(effect) (equilibrium position) does not change (reason) increases the rate of the forward reaction and reverse reaction equally		1 1	AO3 5.6.1.4 5.6.2.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.6	210 (s)	allow a value in the range 205 to 210 (s)	1	AO3 5.6.2.3
	lines become level / horizontal		1	
	(because) the rates of the forward reaction and reverse reaction are equal **or** (because) the number of moles (of all three gases) remain constant		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.7	tangent drawn at 60 s		1	AO2 5.6.1.1
	correct values for *y* step **and** *x* step from tangent	allow correct use of an incorrectly drawn tangent allow a tolerance of ± ½ a small square for each coordinate	1	
	(rate =) $\frac{\text{value for } y \text{ step}}{\text{value for } x \text{ step}}$	allow correct use of incorrectly determined value(s) from the tangent for *y* step and/or *x* step	1	
	correct calculation of rate (mol/s)		1	

Total Question 5	13

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · 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

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · 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		

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

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

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · 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

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q4

Question 4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.1	a mixture that has been designed as a useful product		1	AO1 5.8.1.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.2	91 kJ/mol		1	AO2 5.6.2.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.3	Le Chatelier		1	AO1 5.6.2.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.4	the proportion of methanol decreases		1	AO2 5.6.2.4 5.6.2.6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.5	the proportion of methanol stays the same		1	AO3 5.6.1.4 5.6.2.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.6	(increasing the pressure) increases the proportion of methanol		1	AO2 5.6.2.4 5.6.2.7
	(because) there are more molecules / moles of reactant (than product)		1	
	(so) the equilibrium (position) shifts to the side with fewer molecules / moles		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.7	(the catalyst) increases the rate of the reaction		1	AO1 5.6.1.4
	(by) providing an alternative pathway (for the reaction)		1	
	(with) a lower activation energy		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.8	reduces the costs		1	AO2 5.6.1.4 5.9.2.2 5.9.2.4
	(because) less energy is used		1	
	OR			
	less fuels burned (1)			
	(so) less contribution to global warming (1)	allow (so) less carbon dioxide produced		

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.9	$CO_2 + 3\,H_2 \rightarrow CH_3OH + H_2O$	allow multiples allow **1** mark for $CO_2 + H_2 \rightarrow CH_3OH + H_2O$ with no / incorrect balancing numbers	2	AO2 5.3.1.1

Total Question 4	**15**

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 01 · Examiner comments

June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

Question 1 (standard demand)

01.1 83% of students achieved this mark. None of the other three possible answers proved to be dominant.

01.2 79% of students achieved this mark. 'The fractions have different melting points' proved to be dominant wrong answer.

01.3 49% of students gained credit, recognising the alkane to be propane. Most popular incorrect answer was butane. Some students gave a formula even though the question asked for the name of the alkane.

01.4 The correct answer of C_nH_{2n+2} was the most commonly selected response by students (77%) although C_nH_{2n} proved to be the most effective distractor.

01.5 56% of students successfully balanced equation for the combustion of methane. Multiples were regularly seen, and credit accordingly given.

01.6 The correct answer of bromine water was chosen by 67% of students. Anhydrous copper sulfate proved to be the most effective distractor.

01.7 28% of students knew the definition from the specification or were able to give an equivalent statement. A large number of vague incorrect responses were seen encompassing issues such as pollution, sustainability, energy and carbon footprint.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 01 · Examiner comments June 2018 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

01.8 In this 'extended response' question students were asked to compare the two methods for the disposal of biodegradable plastic bags using information given in Table 1.

26% of students gained full marks on this question and a further 38% of students achieved marks at level 2. To access level 2, students were expected to 'note the magnitude' of the differences, as stated in the generic level descriptor in the mark scheme.

17% of students achieved marks in level 1 by giving some comparisons of the gases and residue either in qualitative terms or by quoting values from Table 1.

The least creditworthy responses discussed in general terms the effect on the environment of burning waste plastic or the benefits of burning plastic bags to generate electricity. Students writing these responses made little reference to the information in Table 1 and many of these students ignored the key command word, 'Compare'. However, the higher-attaining students had logically worked their way down the information in Table 1, comparing and calculating differences when constructing their answer.

Answer 02 · Examiner comments June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q6

Question 6 (standard/high demand)

06.1 The correct test and result for oxygen gas was known by about 54% of students. Using a splint (not glowing) or a 'blown-out splint' to test for oxygen were the most frequently seen incorrect answers.

06.2 Less than a quarter of students achieved credit on this question, with around 4% of students achieving both marks. Students were able to suggest a shift in the equilibrium but often in the wrong direction. Few of the students who correctly answered the directional shift were able to explain why. Many students simply suggested 'to counteract the change'. The most common correct response was 'to re-establish equilibrium'.

06.3 Over a quarter of students gained full marks and around 80% of students gained some credit for their calculation. The most common answers that gained either 1 or 2 marks were for correctly calculating the M_r for calcium oxide (56) and/or calcium sulfite (120). The

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 02 · Examiner comments June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q6

highest-attaining students were able, through a variety of approaches, to successfully calculate the mass of $CaSO_3$ produced (15.0g). Using a ratio approach was more popular than using moles as a method to arrive at the answer.

The most common mistake seen was to multiply the mass of CaO by the M_r of $CaSO_3$ (7 × 120 = 840).

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 03 · Examiner comments

June 2019 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q7

Question 7 (high demand)

07.1 This question produced a good spread of marks, with around 83% of students gaining some credit for their answer. A minority of students gained all four marks, whilst just over half of the students gained either 1 or 2 marks. Students most commonly did not include the idea that the fractionating column had a temperature gradient. Some students explained in detail what each of the fractions was used for and a few students incorrectly incorporated 'cracking' into their response.

07.2 Almost 60% students were able to correctly identify 'different amounts of oxygen' or state that 'the first reaction is complete combustion and the second is incomplete combustion'. Some students wrote 'carbon dioxide and water' which did not answer the question that was asked. Several students stated that 'in reaction one the hydrocarbon is an alkane and in the other reaction it is an alkene'.

07.3 Just over 43% of students successfully balanced the equation for the combustion of butane. Multiples were regularly seen, and full credit was available if these were correct.

07.4 Many students were unable to describe in detail the greenhouse effect in terms of long and short wavelength radiation. Responses were confused as to which type of wavelength would pass through the atmosphere; 'reflected' or 'bounced off' were not creditworthy alternatives to 'longer wavelengths being re-emitted'. About 32% of students gained one mark for identifying that the 'temperature increases'.

Approximately 10% of students made no attempt at this question.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

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.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 04 · Examiner comments June 2022 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q4

Question 4

There is only a small section on organic chemistry in this specification. However in responses students do not appear to have consolidated the ideas of organic chemistry.

04.1 Just over half of the students were able to identify butane from the picture.

04.2 There were only 2 in 5 students who were able to correctly quote this definition.

04.3 Students found balancing the cracking equation quite challenging, often making up molecules that fitted rather than working out possible molecules from prior knowledge.

04.4 It was anticipated that students would choose one of their products or identify one as an alkane or an alkene and quote a use. This was very rare, and students were given some leeway in identifying a use. Explanations as to why the molecule was used were even rarer.

04.5 Students found the start of this question very accessible, comparing the data supplied. Direct comparisons only allowed access to level 1, however, and links to the problems caused were required to make further progress. Nearly 10% of students were able to reach level 3. A judgement (which many students gave) and comparisons of both economic and environmental factors was required to do this. On evaluate questions, students need to bring in some of their own knowledge to access the higher levels.

Answer 05 · Examiner comments June 2023 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

Question 1

01.1 Four in five students successfully balanced the equation.

01.2 Just over two in five students gained both marks for comparing petrol and diesel. A further third gained one mark. On this occasion, students needed to interpret what the table headings meant, so many weren't able to gain credit as they referred to the range of numbers of carbons, rather than the number of carbons and similarly, though more infrequent, for the boiling points.

01.3 Nearly nine in ten students identified oxygen as the common element in the compounds released from a car engine.

01.4 Just over a third of students were able to identify that nitrogen came from the air. Much more common suggestions were from the engine or the diesel fuel.

01.5 This question tested a little known part of the specification, with fewer than a quarter identifying global dimming as a consequence of particulates in the atmosphere. By far the most common incorrect response was for global warming.

01.6 Just below three quarters of students answered that carbon monoxide is either colourless or odourless. Many students gave both, despite being asked for one.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 05 · Examiner comments

June 2023 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q1

01.7 Around one in ten gained two marks on this question, with a further quarter gaining one. The question was applying ideas from across the specification. Just a statement that water evaporates was insufficient for credit, as there needed to be a realisation that water is produced as a vapour, rather than turning into a vapour during the process.

01.8 Around half of students gained at least one mark on this question, usually for recognising that sulfur is responsible for acid rain. The consequences of acid rain were known by about a quarter, however, around than one in ten knew that sulfur enters the atmosphere as sulfur dioxide and so gained all marks. Again, global warming was the most common incorrect response here.

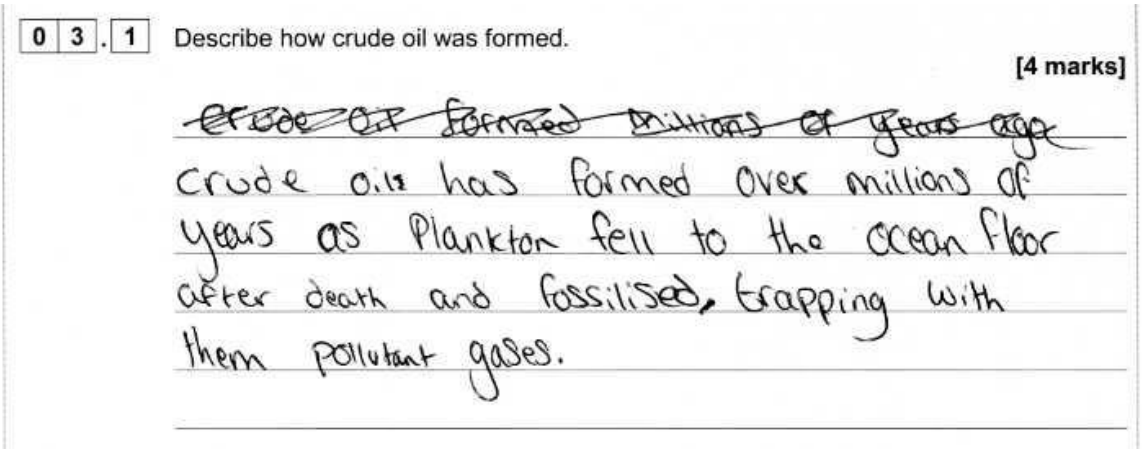
Answer 06 · Examiner comments

June 2024 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q3

Question 3 (standard/high & high demand)

03.1 This question was answered well by most students. There was excellent recall about 'plankton' and the subsequent steps in the formation of crude oil. Some students missed out on full marks as they either omitted the correct time frame or offered a general response such as 'many years' or 'a long time ago'.

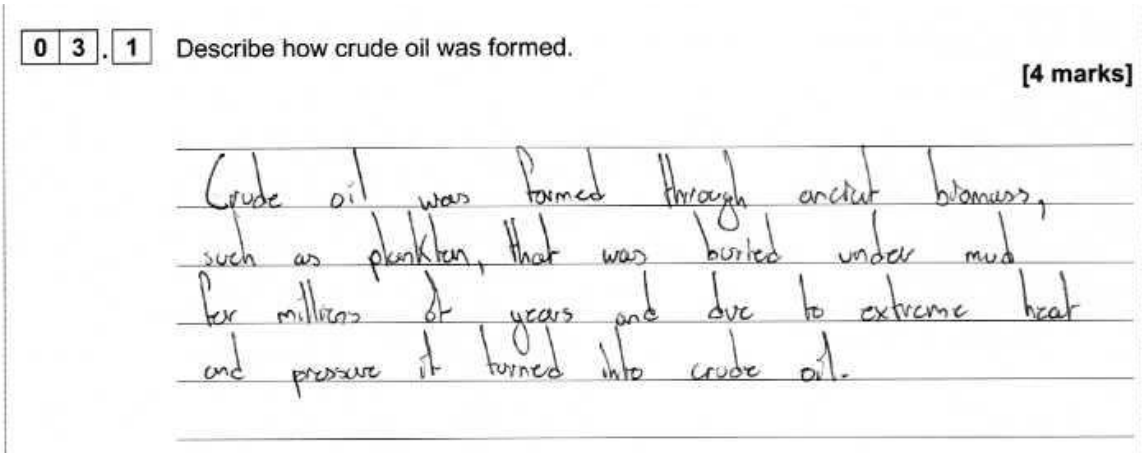
A few students misread the question and described the extraction of and separation of crude oil (part of which had been required for question 01.3).



0 3 . 1 Describe how crude oil was formed.

[4 marks]

~~Crude oil formed Millions of years ago~~
Crude oil has formed over millions of years as Plankton fell to the ocean floor after death and fossilised, trapping with them pollutant gases.



0 3 . 1 Describe how crude oil was formed.

[4 marks]

Crude oil was formed through ancient biomass, such as plankton, that was buried under mud for millions of years and due to extreme heat and pressure it turned into crude oil.

The first student gained 2 marks for the time scale and plankton dying.

The second student has given a very clear, concise response to the question scoring all 4 marks.

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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 06 · Examiner comments June 2024 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q3

03.2 Very few students were able to achieve both marks on this question as the identification of sulfur as an impurity in (fossil) fuels was rarely seen. However, more students were able to successfully describe the oxidation of the sulfur to form sulfur dioxide.

03.3 Most students were able to give one problem. Acid rain was most often given as the initial creditworthy response. Those students that did not achieve the second marking point (for respiratory issues or asthma) often offered generalisations such as 'breathing difficulties', 'lung cancer', which was insufficient to gain credit.

03.4 More than 50% of students gained 1 mark. The link between carbon monoxide and incomplete combustion was regularly seen, although some students had difficulty in describing what exactly was being burnt, with many stating that it was the carbon monoxide in the fuel that was undergoing combustion. There were several excellent descriptions of carbon monoxide, its properties, its dangers and how it affects the human body, but this was not what was asked for in the question and these gained no marks.

03.5 This high-demand AO2 question proved to be the most challenging on the paper, with over 90% not receiving any credit. Many students could not give the formula for nitrogen gas and a significant proportion could not write the formulae of carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide. Students who knew the formulae could generally successfully balance the equation.

Answer 07 · Examiner comments

Question 5 (standard/high & high demand)

05.1 Three-quarters of students correctly responded that the energy change in the backwards reaction was equal to the energy change in the forward reaction.

05.2 Half of students identified the correct equilibrium shift.

05.3 The multiple-choice questions at the beginning of question 5 become progressively harder, testing the students' understanding of Le Châtelier's principle. Fewer than half of all students correctly answered this question on the effect of pressure on the equilibrium.

05.4 Making the link from the stem that energy is released to the reaction being exothermic, and consequently the effect that a temperature change would have made on the position of this equilibrium, made this the most difficult of these multiple-choice questions. Fewer than 40% of students selected the correct answer.

05.5 Fewer than a third of students correctly gave the effect of a catalyst on equilibrium position for 1 mark. This was a high demand question and the small number of students who gained the second mark reflected this.

Many students had the same misconception that a catalyst only speeds up the forwards reaction. There were two common answers following this misconception: either that this meant the equilibrium would shift right as the forwards reaction had been sped up or that the equilibrium would therefore shift to the left to oppose this.

05.6 Most students were able to gain 1 mark, for the correct time. Common incorrect responses were 200 and 82.5 (seconds). If students put 82.5 then they had the misconception that the equilibrium was reached when the lines crossed and so were prevented from getting any further marks. Students often referred to equilibrium being where the moles were equal at 82.5 seconds.

The mark scheme identified where equilibrium was reached, how the graph showed this and what the graph meant in terms of moles of the three gases.

For the second marking point, a clear description of the line flattening out, not just straightening, was required as 'straightening' could be vertical.

The third marking point is for the number of *moles* not changing. Some students stated that the reaction had stopped, meaning that they could not be awarded the third marking point. Equally, if a student stated that the number of moles was equal, the mark could not be given.

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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 07 · Examiner comments June 2024 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q5

0 5 . 6 Determine the time taken for the reaction to reach equilibrium.

Explain your answer.

Use **Figure 5**.

[3 marks]

Time 210 s

Explanation All the lines go straight to show that the ~~mole~~ number of moles is not changing, ~~and the reaction is ready~~ meaning the reaction has reached equilibrium.

0 5 . 6 Determine the time taken for the reaction to reach equilibrium.

Explain your answer.

Use **Figure 5**.

[3 marks]

Time 210 s

Explanation This is where the line flattens out on the graph. The reaction has taken place and reached equilibrium because the number of moles of each gas is not changing, so therefore the reaction is no longer occuring.

In the first response the student gains the mark for the time, but the 'lines go straight' is insufficient for marking point 2. Marking point 3 is given for the number of moles not changing.

The second response gains marking point 1 for a correct time. Marking point 2 is also given for the '… line flattens out …'. The student would have been given the third marking point for '… the number of moles of each gas is not changing …'; however, this mark cannot be awarded as the student goes on to state that the '… reaction is no longer occurring'.

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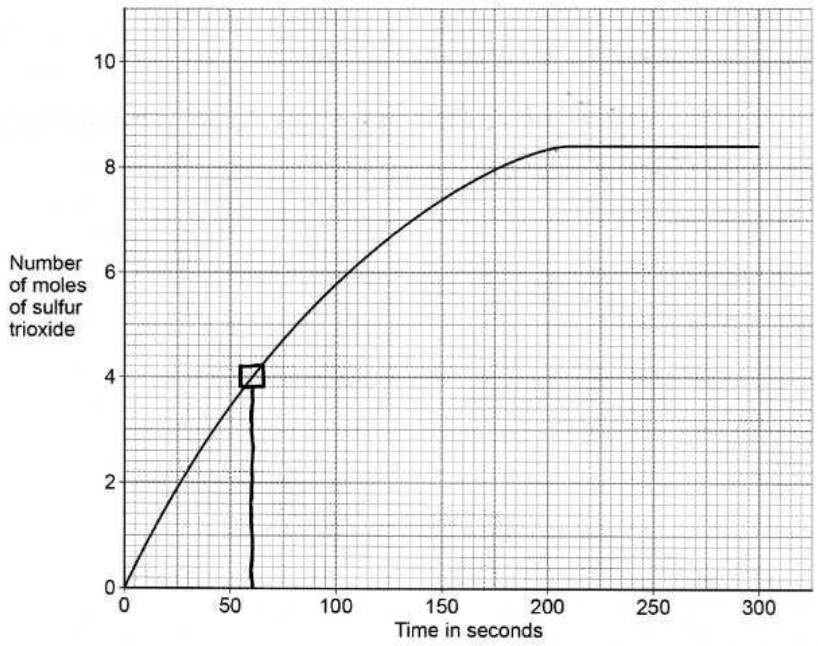
5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 07 · Examiner comments June 2024 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q5

05.7 It is evident that students are becoming more familiar with drawing gradients to calculate rates, with a third of students gaining full marks on this high-demand calculation. It should be noted that students who do not draw a tangent cannot gain any marks since the fundamental chemical idea is not known and understood.

0 5 . 7 **Figure 6** shows the results for sulfur trioxide.

Figure 6



Determine the rate of reaction at 60 seconds.

[4 marks]

$2 \div 50 = 0.04$ mol/s

Rate = 0.04 mol/s

The student needs to first draw a tangent at 60 s in order to be able to calculate the rate. Here, no tangent has been drawn, so no marks are awarded.

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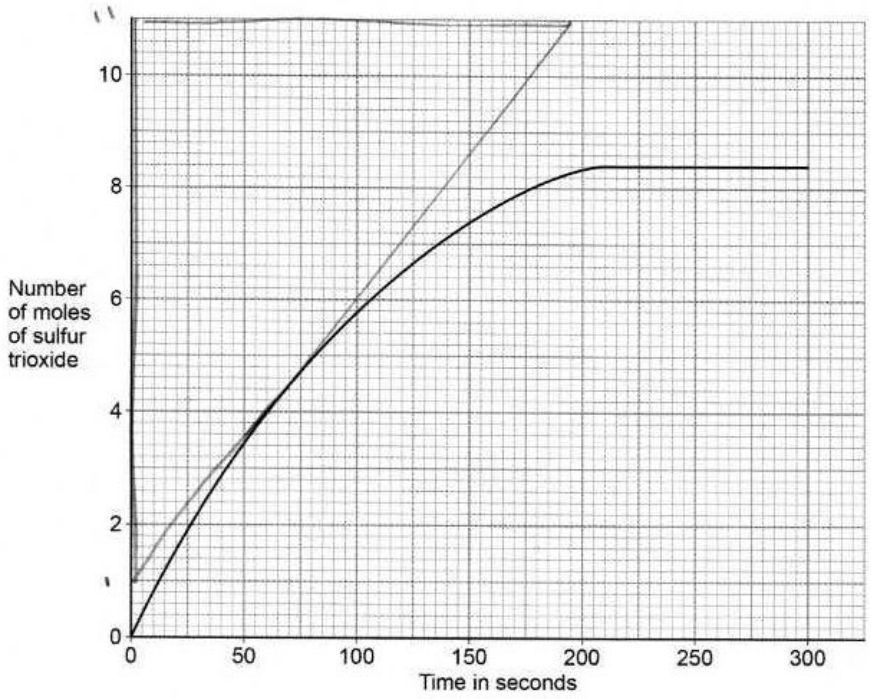
5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

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The most common errors were misreading the *x*-step and/or the *y*-step. Progress could still be made in the calculation if it was clear that the values had come from a tangent and had been used correctly. Substitution into the equation upside down meant that neither marking point 3 nor marking point 4 could be given.

0 5 . 7 **Figure 6** shows the results for sulfur trioxide.

Figure 6



Determine the rate of reaction at 60 seconds.

[4 marks]

11 − 1 = 10 $\frac{10}{195}$ = 0.051282

195 − 0 = 195

Rate = 0.051282 mol/s

This student has made a good attempt at drawing the tangent at 60 s, so marking point 1 can be awarded. They have drawn a triangle on the graph and substituted correct values for the *y*-step and the *x*-step into the expression (10 ÷ 195), which they have then correctly evaluated. The recurring dots can be ignored as there was no significant figures mark for this question. All 4 marks are awarded.

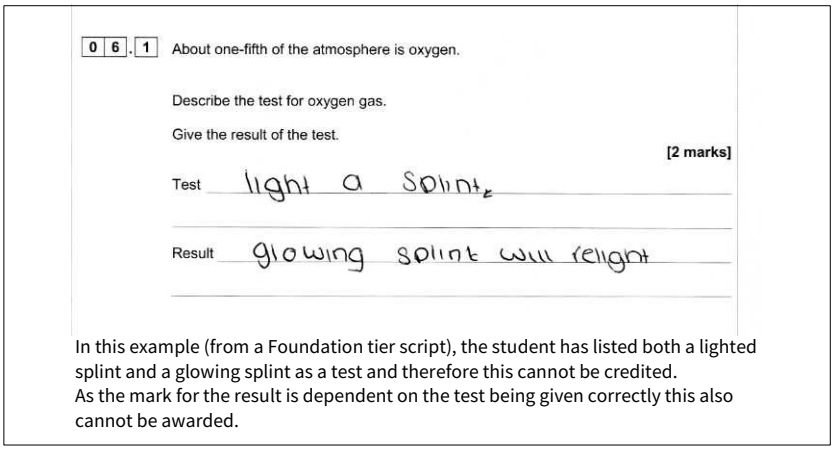
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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · 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.


0 6 . 1 About one-fifth of the atmosphere is oxygen.

Describe the test for oxygen gas.

Give the result of the test.

[2 marks]

Test light a splint

Result glowing splint will relight

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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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · 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 here 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%!

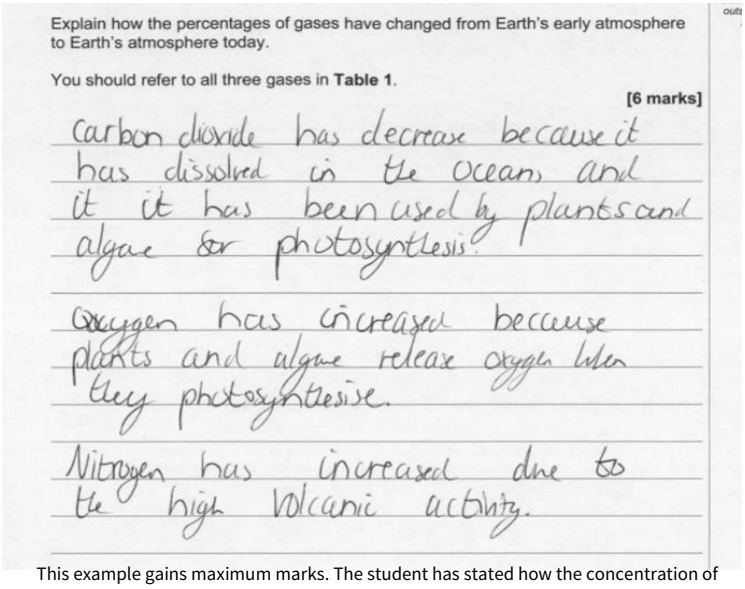
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This was a common response. The student has identified how the concentrations of all 3 gases have changed but has failed to offer any explanation as to why these changes have occurred. 2 marks in Level 1 are awarded.

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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · 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 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

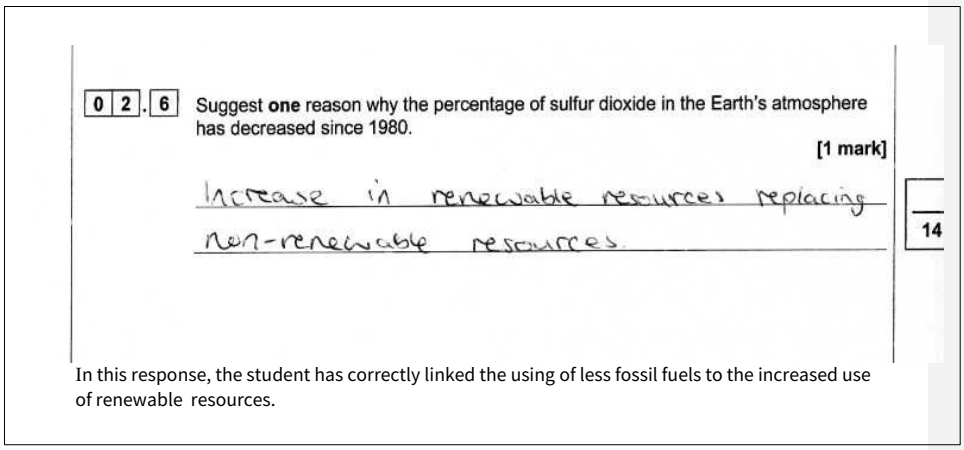
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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 08 · Examiner comments

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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.

5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 09 · Examiner comments

Question 4 (Standard, Standard/High and High demand)

04.1 Although well attempted, only a third of students were able to accurately describe a formulation. Several students knew that it was a mixture but did not expand on this any further to give the reason for the mixture. Several knew that you needed to add a number of substances together for a purpose but did not know that this would then be a mixture.

04.2 Well over half of students were able to select the correct response of 91 kJ/mol.

04.3 Half of all students could identify Le Chatelier as the scientist, although there were a variety of spellings offered.

04.4 Half of all students were able to select the correct response of 'the proportion of methanol decreases'. The most common incorrect answer was the opposite, being the proportion of methanol increases.

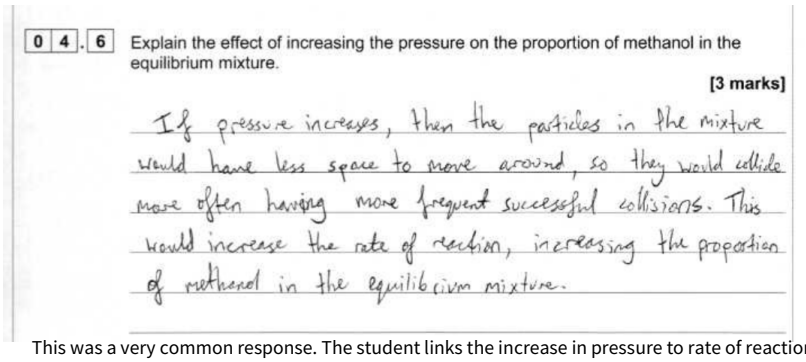
04.5 Again, half of all students were able to select the correct response of the proportion of methanol stays the same. A significant number however selected the proportion of methanol increases.

04.6 Students found equilibrium difficult. A large number of students related the increase in pressure to an increase in energy and number of collisions and hence an increase in the rate of reaction, but did not make any link to the effect on equilibrium.
A common misconception appeared to be that the proportion of methanol in the mixture was equivalent to the yield of methanol. Only a quarter of students gained 1 mark, with very few scoring 2 or 3.

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5.9.3.2 Properties and effects of atmospheric pollutants

Answer 09 · Examiner comments June 2025 | 8464/C/2H | Original Q4



0 4 . 6 Explain the effect of increasing the pressure on the proportion of methanol in the equilibrium mixture.

[3 marks]

If pressure increases, then the particles in the mixture would have less space to move around, so they would collide more often having more frequent successful collisions. This would increase the rate of reaction, increasing the proportion of methanol in the equilibrium mixture.

This was a very common response. The student links the increase in pressure to rate of reaction and hence to increased proportion of methanol. One mark is awarded for the increase in proportion of methanol.

04.7 Most students were able to state that a catalyst will increase the rate of a reaction. Less were able to explain that this is due to a lowered activation energy, and even fewer could link this to an alternative reaction pathway.
There was a common misconception that catalysts increase the rate of a reaction due to there being more frequent collisions, as this is a common explanation for how changing other factors affects the rate of reaction. Some students also incorrectly stated that catalysts cause the particles to gain energy.

04.8 Only half of all students answered this question well. Most of these identified that less energy used would be cheaper, but very few linked the idea of less fuels burning and the reduced contribution to global warming.
Some students gave ideas around the speed of the reaction decreasing at a lower temperature so the reaction could be controlled/monitored/more accurate results, lower temperatures being safer to work with, or lower temperatures resulting in less evaporation of methanol.

04.9 Just under a third of students gained both marks.
A large number of students did not know the formula for hydrogen and 6H was commonly used instead of $3H_2$
A small number of students could not gain marks due to errors in the size of the letter used eg Co_2 rather than CO_2 and $H2o$ rather than H_2O.
Students are expected to use subscript, superscript and size of letters appropriately.