

AQA • GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE: TRILOGY 8464

Biology — Foundation Tier, Paper 2

June 2025 exam series

MARK SCHEME

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GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE: TRILOGY 8464/B/2F

Biology Paper 2F

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

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

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Information to Examiners

1. General

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the marks available for each part of the question
- the total marks available for the question
- the typical answer or answers which are expected
- extra information to help the examiner make their judgement
- the Assessment Objectives and specification content that each question is intended to cover.

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

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

In general the right-hand side of the mark scheme is there to provide those extra details which confuse the main part of the mark scheme yet may be helpful in ensuring that marking is straightforward and consistent (for example, a scientifically correct answer that could not reasonably be expected from a student's knowledge of the specification).

2. Emboldening and underlining

- 2.1** In a list of acceptable answers where more than one mark is available 'any **two** from' is used, with the number of marks emboldened. Each of the following bullet points is a potential mark.
- 2.2** A bold **and** is used to indicate that both parts of the answer are required to award the mark.
- 2.3** Alternative answers acceptable for a mark are indicated by the use of **or**.
Alternative words in the mark scheme are shown by a solidus eg allow smooth / free movement.
- 2.4** Any wording that is underlined is essential for the marking point to be awarded.

3. Marking points

3.1 Marking of lists

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

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

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

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

[1 mark]

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

Example 2: Name **two** magnetic materials.

[2 marks]

Student	Response	Marks awarded
1	iron, steel, tin	1
2	cobalt, nickel, nail*	2

3.2 Use of symbols / formulae

If a student writes a chemical symbol / formula instead of a required chemical name, or uses symbols to denote quantities in a physics equation, full credit can be given if the symbol / formula is correct and if, in the context of the question, such action is appropriate.

3.3 Marking procedure for calculations

Marks should be awarded for each stage of the calculation completed correctly, as students are instructed to show their working. At any point in a calculation students may omit steps from their working. If a subsequent step is given correctly, the relevant marks may be awarded.

Full marks should be awarded for a correct numerical answer, without any working shown. Full marks are **not** awarded for a correct final answer from incorrect working.

3.4 Interpretation of 'it'

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

3.5 Errors carried forward

An error can be carried forward from one question part to the next and is shown by the abbreviation 'ecf'.

Within an individual question part, an incorrect value in one step of a calculation does not prevent all of the subsequent marks being awarded.

3.6 Phonetic spelling

Marks should be awarded if spelling is not correct but the intention is clear, **unless** there is a possible confusion with another technical term.

3.7 Brackets

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

3.8 Allow

In the mark scheme additional information, 'allow' is used to indicate creditworthy alternative answers.

3.9 Ignore

Ignore is used when the information given is irrelevant to the question or not enough to gain the marking point. Any further correct amplification could gain the marking point.

3.10 Do not accept

Do **not** accept means that this is a wrong answer which, even if the correct answer is given as well, will still mean that the mark is not awarded.

3.11 Numbered answer lines

Numbered lines on the question paper are intended to support the student to give the correct number of responses. The answer should still be marked as a whole.

4. Level of response marking instructions

Extended response questions are marked on level of response mark schemes.

- Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor.
- The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level.
- There are two marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer, read through the answer and, if necessary, annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1: Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level.

The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer. Do **not** look to penalise small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level.

Use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 2 with a small amount of level 3 material it would be placed in level 2 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 3 content.

Step 2: Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do **not** have to cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

You should ignore any irrelevant points made. However, full marks can be awarded only if there are no incorrect statements that contradict a correct response.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Question 1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.1	blood glucose concentration increases		1	AO2 4.5.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.2	pancreas		1	AO1 4.5.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.3	liver		1	AO1 4.5.3.1 4.5.3.2
	muscle		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.4	glucose	must be in this order	1	AO1 4.5.3.2
	glycogen		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.5	decrease		1	AO2 4.5.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.6	any two from: - eat less carbohydrate / sugar or a low / controlled carbohydrate / sugar diet - eat less fat - lose (body) mass / weight or maintain healthy weight (more) exercise	if neither mark awarded allow 1 mark for calorie controlled diet or reduced calorie diet ignore references to healthy / balanced diet or diet unqualified allow examples of (increased) exercise allow stop smoking allow named drug treatment eg metformin ignore take medicine / drug / insulin ignore pancreas transplant	2	AO1 4.5.3.2
Total Question 1			9	

Question 2

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.1	Substance How the substance increases crop yield <pre> graph LR F[Fertiliser] --- A1[Adds mineral ions to the soil] F --- A2[Decreases carbon dioxide concentration in the soil] H[Herbicide] --- A3[Increases oxygen concentration in the air] H --- A4[Kills weeds that compete with crops] </pre> do not accept more than one line from a box on the left	1 1	AO1 4.7.1.1 4.7.1.2 4.7.3.2 4.6.2.4 4.7.3.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.2	owls		1	AO2 4.7.2.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.3	insects eat pests on the crop		1	AO2 4.7.1.1
	insects pollinate the crop		1	4.7.2.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.4	any one from: - as a habitat for (beneficial) insects / animals - to keep (larger) animals out or to keep people out (to increase) biodiversity - to reduce wind speed - as a habitat for predators of crop damaging organisms - to prevent / reduce soil erosion	allow as a shelter / space for (beneficial) insects / animals allow to protect (the crop) from (larger) animals allow to protect (the crop) from people ignore keep insects / birds out ignore to protect the crop unqualified ignore to stop pests eating the crop allow to increase the number of insects / plants allow descriptions of increasing biodiversity allow act as wind break ignore to reduce pests unqualified ignore so more (crop) can be grown	1	AO2 4.7.3.6 4.7.3.1 4.7.1.1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.5	water takes more time to drain (through)	allow converse if clearly referring to soil allow there will be more water (in the peat compost) allow water drains / moves slower allow water drains / moves more slowly ignore water drains slow / slowly	1	AO3 4.7.3.3
	(so) water is more likely to be taken up by plants or (so) do not need to water plants (as) frequently or (which is an advantage because) young plants cannot reach water that is deep (in soil / compost)	allow (so) there is more time for plants to take up water allow (so) reduces water use ignore references to cost allow 2 marks for water more likely to be taken up by plants before it drains away	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.6	(A) respiration	answer line takes precedence	1	AO1 4.7.2.2
	(B) photosynthesis		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.7	(burning peat) releases / increases <u>carbon dioxide</u>	allow (burning peat) releases / increases CO ₂ ignore burning releases carbon do not accept peat contains carbon dioxide	1	AO1 4.7.2.2 4.7.3.3 4.7.3.5
	(which) causes / increases global warming	allow (which) is a greenhouse gas allow (which) causes the greenhouse effect ignore (which) causes / increases climate change	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.8	bacteria		1	AO1 4.7.2.2 4.7.3.3
	fungi		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
02.9	farming (cattle / biofuel / crops / animals)	allow examples of farming a crop / animal allow building allow named type of building eg houses / factories allow mining allow landfill allow reforestation / rewilding	1	AO1 4.7.3.4

Total Question 2	15
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Question 3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.1	quadrat		1	AO1 4.7.2.1 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.2	7×4	allow $\frac{7}{25} \times 100$	1	AO3
	28 (%)	allow 1 mark for a correct calculation from an incorrect attempt at counting squares (in the range 5 to 10) covered by buttercups	1	AO2 4.7.2.1 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.3	distance from the tree		1	AO2 4.7.2.1 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.4	percentage cover is affected by number and size of individual plants		1	AO3 4.7.2.1 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.5	$\frac{12+8+4+12+4}{5}$	allow $\frac{40}{5}$	1	AO2 4.7.2.1 RPA7
	8 (%)		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.6	higher percentage cover 10 m from tree	allow ecf from question 03.5 with correct mathematical analysis of difference in incorrectly calculated mean allow converse if clearly referring to 1 m from tree or closer to the tree allow higher percentage cover further from tree allow more cover / buttercups further from tree allow cover is double further from tree allow twice as much / many further from tree	1	AO3 4.7.2.1 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.7	any two from: • light • temperature • water / moisture • type of soil • pH (of soil) • minerals / ions • oxygen in soil • wind (strength / direction) • herbicide • competition from other plants • herbivores / grazers (of buttercups) • (number of) pollinators • time of year • size of tree / roots / canopy • disease / pathogen (of buttercups)	allow shade or less / more light allow (tree) leaves drop and cover buttercups ignore Sun allow rain allow acidity / alkalinity (of soil) allow salts or named examples of ions, such as nitrate allow fertiliser(s) ignore nitrogen / nutrients allow weedkiller allow animals / insects eat / damage buttercups allow season ignore time unqualified ignore (availability of) space ignore carbon dioxide ignore weather / climate if no other mark awarded allow 1 mark for biotic and abiotic	2	AO2 4.7.1.2 4.7.2.1 4.7.1.3 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
03.8	any two from: - repeat at more distances or at another distance (from the tree) - repeat at each distance more (than 5) times - repeat for other trees - measure other (named) factor(s)	allow specific distances, between 0 m and 10 m or beyond 10 m allow repeat (at each distance) more than 5 times allow repeat at 1 m and 10 m more (than 5) times allow repeat the (whole) investigation ignore repeat 5 times	2	AO3 4.7.2.1 RPA7
Total Question 3			12	

Question 4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.1	any one from: • (skin / body / plesiosaur) decays • skin was not fossilised • not enough evidence • no-one has seen one • fossils are (usually) from bones	allow (skin / body / plesiosaur) not preserved allow no evidence allow description such as no DNA or no photographs allow no-one was there (at the time)	1	AO2 4.6.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.2	(limbs / feet / legs / arms / hands are) flat(tened) / streamlined / paddle-like / wide	allow flippers / fins	1	AO2
	for swimming	allow for movement / propulsion / pushing (through water or out of water onto land) allow to hold on to mate allow to kill prey allow to fight / protect / defend	1	AO3 4.7.1.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.3	behavioural		1	AO2 4.7.1.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.4	200 (million years ago)	allow two hundred ignore addition of 'million years ago'	1	AO2 4.6.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.5	130 and 180	allow (one small square is 5 million years, so) 10×5	1	AO2 4.6.3.2
	50 (million years)	ignore addition of 'million years'	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.6	not all plesiosaur fossils have been discovered		1	AO2 4.6.3.2 4.6.3.3
	some plesiosaur fossils will have been destroyed		1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.7	plesiosaur B existed before plesiosaur C		1	AO3 4.6.3.1 4.6.3.2

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.8	any two from: • bacteria have a short life-cycle (so rapid evolution) • bacteria are continuing to evolve • can study the DNA of bacteria • bacteria are more easily available	allow converse if clearly referring to fossils allow evolution in bacteria is fast(er) allow (many) fossilised species are extinct allow not able to study DNA from fossils allow fossils do not contain DNA / chromosomes / genes / alleles allow many / some fossils have been destroyed allow there are gaps in the fossil record	2	AO3 4.6.3.1 4.6.3.2 4.6.3.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
04.9	(people with infections of antibiotic-resistant bacteria) cannot be treated (with those antibiotics)	allow (antibiotic-resistant) bacteria cannot be killed allow antibiotics will not work allow the infection may kill people allow development of new antibiotic(s) is costly / slow	1	AO3 4.6.3.4

Total Question 4	13
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Question 5

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.1	Term Meaning of the term Chromosome A fur colour that is seen Gene A whole strand of DNA found in the nucleus of a rabbit cell Genome Codes for a protein that affects fur colour The complete genetic composition of a rabbit do not accept more than one line from a box on the left	1 1 1	AO1 4.6.1.3 4.6.1.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.									
05.2	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td>b</td><td>b</td></tr><tr><td>B</td><td>Bb</td><td>Bb</td></tr><tr><td>b</td><td>bb</td><td>bb</td></tr></table>		b	b	B	Bb	Bb	b	bb	bb			
		b	b										
	B	Bb	Bb										
	b	bb	bb										
gametes correct	allow in either position in Punnett square	1	AO2										
offspring genotypes correctly derived	allow correct derivation of offspring genotypes from incorrect gametes allow 3 correctly derived offspring genotypes for 1 mark	2	AO2										
any bb offspring identified as having white fur		1	AO2										
0.5		probability must match offspring genotypes if given allow 50% or 1 in 2 or 1:1 or $\frac{1}{2}$ do not accept 1:2	1	AO3 4.6.1.4									

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.3	sperm have one of each chromosome (pair)	allow gamete(s) or sex cells for sperm throughout allow sperm have one set of chromosomes / genes allow sperm (only) have one allele for each gene allow sperm are haploid allow sperm have half the (number / amount of) chromosomes (compared with a body cell) allow sperm have 23 / 22 chromosomes ignore sperm have one allele ignore sperm have half the DNA / genes	1	AO2
	sperm are produced by meiosis or body cells have two of each chromosome	allow body cells have pairs of chromosomes allow body cells are diploid allow body cells have 46 / 44 chromosomes allow B and b are (alleles) on 2 chromosomes (of the same pair)	1	AO1 4.6.1.1 4.6.1.2 4.6.1.4

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.4	44	allow 22 pairs	1	AO2 4.6.1.6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
05.5	has two X (chromosomes)	allow XX allow the rabbit is not XY allow the rabbit does not have a Y (chromosome) allow the rabbit only has X (chromosomes) allow both (X) sex chromosomes are the same size	1	AO1 4.6.1.6
Total Question 5			12	

Question 6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.1	oestrogen	allow phonetic spelling allow other correct named hormone eg progesterone do not accept FSH / LH	1	AO1 4.5.3.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.2	any one from: • (stimulates / causes) sperm production • (stimulates / causes male) secondary sexual characteristics	allow (stimulates / causes) puberty allow (stimulates / causes) named male secondary sexual characteristic(s) eg muscle growth	1	AO1 4.5.3.3

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.3	any one from: • protection / prevention against sexual transmitted diseases(s) • fewer / no side effects • immediate • (may) contain a chemical to kill sperm • (more) easily accessible • described disadvantage of hormonal method(s) eg (contraceptive) pill could be forgotten	allow converse if clearly referring to hormonal methods allow protects / prevents against STD(s) / STI(s) allow protects / prevents against named STD / STI allow do not affect menstrual cycle allow fewer / no named (possible) side effects of hormonal contraceptives eg fewer / no headaches / nausea / acne ignore do not affect hormones ignore safer allow quicker to use ignore temporary allow (may) contain spermicide	1	AO3 4.5.3.4

Question	Answers	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.4	Level 2: Scientifically relevant facts, events or processes are identified and given in detail to form an accurate account.	4–6	AO1 4.5.3.3 4.5.3.4
	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 Method - oral contraceptive or pill Detail of how the contraception is used - taken daily or taken every 21/28 days or taken in a monthly cycle - containing progesterone - containing oestrogen (hormones) absorbed into the blood Method - injection - patch - implant - intrauterine system / device or IUD or IUS or coil Detail of how the contraception is used - last several weeks / months - containing progesterone - slow release of progesterone / hormone - into blood Detail (that can apply to all hormonal contraceptive methods) - to inhibit / reduce / prevent FSH (release) (lack of FSH) so no eggs mature / develop - to inhibit / reduce / prevent LH (release) (lack of LH) so no eggs released (from ovary) or so prevents ovulation (progesterone) thickens (cervical) mucus (mucus) prevents / reduces sperm movement (to uterus) (oestrogen / progesterone) changes the thickness of the uterus lining (uterus lining thickening / thinning) makes implantation less likely For Level 2, answers must give details for the method(s) described.		
Total Question 6		9	