



Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

March 2018

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in Principles of Applied Science

Unit 1: Principles of Science (20460E)

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What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Level 1 fallback). The grade awarded for each unit contributes proportionately to the overall qualification grade and each unit should always be viewed in the context of its impact on the whole qualification.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark should be for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each test we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each test, because then it would not take into account that a test might be slightly easier or more difficult than any other.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link: <u>qualifications.pearson.com/gradeboundaries</u>

Unit 1: Principles of Science (20460E)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 1		Level 2	
		Pass	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Boundary	0	13	22	31	40
Mark					

General comments

It was pleasing to see some good quality responses and evidence that learners have been revising the key ideas of the specification. Learners that did well this series, knew the meanings of key terms and could apply them to their answers to questions posed. They used good scientific language and were able understand what was being asked for in the question and therefore apply their knowledge of the science well for example in the genetics question. The best learners were able to apply scientific knowledge to new situations, write chemical formula and complete symbol equations.

As in previous series, exam technique is still an issue for the weaker learners; Centre's need to fully prepare learners for the exam by practicing exam technique, especially in relation to reading the question carefully and not repeating the stem of the question.

Feedback on specific questions

In question 1 (a)(ii), the majority of learners were able to state one precaution that a scientist should take when using the chlorine gas such as using a fume cupboard, which gained a mark.



Many learners stated that goggles or gloves should be worn whilst dealing with the chlorine, both of which were accepted for the mark.



In some cases learners stated that the gas should not be breathed in or ingested, this was insufficient and did not gain a mark.

(ii) A scientist is using a container of chlorine gas. Hazard symbol Y is shown on the container.	
Hazard symbol Y shows that the chlorine gas is toxic. State one precaution the scientist should take when using the toxic chlorine gas. (1) Not to injest the gas	
In question 1 (b)(ii), learners found this question quite difficult with few being able the formula for the molecule of chlorine.	to give
Few were able to correctly write the formula as in this case to gain the mark.	
(ii) The symbol for an atom of chlorine is Cl. Give the formula for a molecule of chlorine. (1)	
Many changed the formula completely or gave an irrelevant word, showing their launderstanding of this key term.	ack of
(ii) The symbol for an atom of chlorine is Cl.	61
Give the formula for a molecule of chlorine.	(1)
Compound	
(ii) The symbol for an atom of chlorine is Cl.	
Give the formula for a molecule of chlorine.	(1)



Learners should be taught the basic vocabulary for each of the units.

In question 2 part (a)(i), the majority of learners were able to suggest the pH of the hydrochloric acid.

2	(a) Lisa places a drop of dilute hydrochloric acid onto universal indicator paper.	
	The universal indicator paper turns red.	
	(i) Suggest the pH of the hydrochloric acid.	
		(1)
	1	

Some learners gave a small range, this was accepted and gained a mark.

2	(a) Lisa places a drop of dilute hydrochloric acid onto universal indicator paper.	
	The universal indicator paper turns red.	
	(i) Suggest the pH of the hydrochloric acid.	
	(Red = Strong acid) $pH \approx 1-2$	(1)

In some cases, learners gave a larger range, which included acids that would not give a red colour with universal indicator or if they did not read the question carefully and stated acid or a name of the substance that might have this effect on litmus paper, these all gained no credit.

2	(a) Lisa places a drop of dilute hydrochloric acid onto universal indicator paper.	
	The universal indicator paper turns red.	
	(i) Suggest the pH of the hydrochloric acid.	(1)
	diative	
2	(a) Lisa places a drop of dilute hydrochloric acid onto universal indicator paper.	
	The universal indicator paper turns red.	
	(i) Suggest the pH of the hydrochloric acid.	(1)
	acid	

In question 2 (a)(ii), Some learners found this question difficult with a noticeable proportion leaving it blank. Some learners knew that litmus was an alternative indicator.

(ii) Name **one** other indicator that can be used to test if a solution is acidic.

(1)

(1)

(1)

(1)

litmus paper.

There were a fair proportion of learners that did not read the question carefully and gave universal indicator as their answer. As this was the indicator referred to in the stem of the question it did not gain credit.

(ii) Name **one** other indicator that can be used to test if a solution is acidic.

Universal Paper.

Question 2 part (b)(i) was well answered with the majority of learners showing an understanding that magnesium chloride was formed from the reaction of magnesium and hydrochloric acid to gain the mark.

(b) Lisa reacts hydrochloric acid with magnesium to produce a metal salt and a gas.

(i) Name the metal salt produced in this reaction.

magnesium chloride

Where learners did not gain the mark, it was often because they were trying to name a gas that might have been formed instead of the salt.

(b) Lisa reacts hydrochloric acid with magnesium to produce a metal salt and a gas.

(i) Name the metal salt produced in this reaction.

	(*)
Hydrogen	
(b) Lisa reacts hydrochloric acid with magnesium to produce a metal salt and a gas.	
(i) Name the metal salt produced in this reaction.	(7)
	(1)

(card	600	dia	rid	P			
			Sec. 3. 3. 3. 4.	Sec. Sec. S		 	 	

Or for giving the name of another salt that they had come across rather than using the information in the stem of the question. Again, this gained no credit.

(b) Lisa reacts hydrochloric acid with magnesium to produce a metal salt and a gas. (i) Name the metal salt produced in this reaction. (1) Rock Sol H In question 2 (c), it was pleasing to see that learners have become more proficient in writing balanced symbol equations, with the better learners gaining both marks for the correct balanced equation.

(c) Lisa reacts sulfuric acid sodium sulfate, Na ₂ SO	d, H_2SO_4 , with sodium hydroxide, NaOH, to form J_4 , and water.	
Write the balanced eq	uation for this reaction.	(2)
H2 SOL + 2No	$_{1}OH \rightarrow N_{0}SO_{1} + 2H_{2}O$	(2)

In some cases, learners were able to write the formula for all of the compounds successfully to gain one mark, but were not able to balance the equation to gain the second mark.

(c) Lisa reacts sulfuric acid, H₂SO₄, with sodium hydroxide, NaOH, to form sodium sulfate, Na₂SO₄, and water.

Write the balanced equation for this reaction.



Some learners did not appear to know the formula for a molecule of water and therefore produced wrote the word instead. Unfortunately, where a mix of word and symbols were used or all words. No credit could be awarded.

(c) Lisa reacts sulfuric acid, H₂SO₄, with sodium hydroxide, NaOH, to form sodium sulfate, Na₂SO₄, and water.

Write the balanced equation for this reaction.

Hason + 2NOH - Nason + Water

(c) Lisa reacts sulfuric acid, H_2SO_4 , with sodium hydroxide, NaOH, to form sodium sulfate, Na_2SO_4 , and water.

Write the balanced equation for this reaction.

(2)

(2)

Learners should be taught that if a symbol equation is asked for, no credit will be awarded for an equation that includes words.

Learners found question 3b, calculating the relative atomic mass of the sample of thallium difficult, with many simply calculating the mean of 203 and 205 to come to an answer of 204. This gained no marks.

(b) A sample of the element thallium contains two isotopes.

The table shows the relative mass and percentage abundance of each isotope in the sample.

isotope	relative mass	percentage abundance
thallium-203	203	30%
thallium-205	205	70%

Calculate the relative atomic mass of this sample of thallium.

relative atomic mass = 204

(2)

Another very common answer was to simply add the 203 and 205 and give an answer of 408. Again this gained no credit.

(b) A sample of the element thallium contains two isotopes.

The table shows the relative mass and percentage abundance of each isotope in the sample.

isotope	relative mass	percentage abundance		
thallium-203	203	30%		
thallium-205	205	70%		

Calculate the relative atomic mass of this sample of thallium.

(2)

relative atomic mass = 40.8

In some cases learners forgot to divide their answer by 100 and so gained just 1 mark.

(b) A sample of the element thallium contains two isotopes.

The table shows the relative mass and percentage abundance of each isotope in the sample.

isotope	relative mass	percentage abundance
thallium-203	203	30%
thallium-205	205	70%

Calculate the relative atomic mass of this sample of thallium.

$$203 \times 30 = 6'090$$

 $205 \times 70 = 14'350$
 $+$
 $20'440$

relative atomic mass = 20'440

(2)

Only the best learners were able to calculate the atomic mass using the percentage abundance of each isotope of gain full credit.

(b) A sample of the element thallium contains two isotopes.

The table shows the relative mass and percentage abundance of each isotope in the sample.

isotope	relative mass	percentage abundance		
thallium-203	203	30%		
thallium-205	205	70%		

Calculate the relative atomic mass of this sample of thallium.

~

(2)

$$203 \times 30\% = 60.9$$

 $205 \times 70\% = 143.5$ +

It was pleasing to see that most learners were able to score on question 3 (c) with the majority being able to score at least one mark. In some cases, learners did not read the question carefully and explain what group and period phosphorous was in, which whilst correct, was not what was asked for and therefore did not gain any credit.

Better learners were able to give a concise answer that scored all four available marks.

(c) The mass number of an atom of phosphorus is 31.

The atom of phosphorus has 15 electrons.

Describe, using this information, the atomic structure of this phosphorus atom including the electronic configuration.

and 15 potens in its rections in its configuration an

(4)

Other learners were able to score just 1 mark, this was often for knowing the electronic configuration of the atom.

(c) The mass number of an atom of phosphorus is 31.

The atom of phosphorus has 15 electrons.

Describe, using this information, the atomic structure of this phosphorus atom including the electronic configuration.

	. <u>.</u> ,			((4)
The	electronic	configure	ation	For	
Phos	phorus u	Jill be	2,8	, 5,	

In question 4(c)(i), many learners were able to score 1 mark for stating that the infra-red could damage or burn the skin.

(c) Infrared is a part of the e	electromagnet	ic spectrum.		
(i) Give one harmful eff	fect of excessiv	e exposure to infrared.		(4)
Skin bur	(1)			
(c) Infrared is a part of the ele	ectromagnetic	: spectrum.		
(i) Give one harmful effe	(1)			
infroned	Can	domage	SKin	
A significant proportion did not ga cancer.	ain a mark	as they stated the	at the infra-r	ed could cause

(c) Infrared is a part of the electromagnetic spectrum. (i) Give **one** harmful effect of excessive exposure to infrared. (1) de it con cause cancer

In question 5 (a)(i), the majority of learners were able to complete the Sankey diagram correctly to gain both marks.

5	The image shows a laptop computer.				
	(a) The laptop computer has a total input energy of 900 J.				
	The laptop computer has a useful output energy of 720 J.				
	(i) Complete the diagram to show the energy transfers in the laptop computer.				
	(2)				
	total input energy useful output energy				
	900 720				
	Ų				
	wasted energy				
	180				

In some cases, learners divided or added the total input and useful energy rather than subtracting and so gained just 1 mark.

5 The image shows a laptop computer.



(a) The laptop computer has a total input energy of 900 J.

The laptop computer has a useful output energy of 720 J.

(i) Complete the diagram to show the energy transfers in the laptop computer.

(2)



Where learners did not gain the mark, it was often where they had not read the question carefully and given the types of energy rather than the amounts of energy.



Question 5(a)(ii) was well answered, with most learners being able to calculate the efficiency of the laptop computer to gain both marks.

(ii) Calculate the efficiency of the laptop computer.

 $efficiency = \frac{useful energy}{total energy supplied} \times 100\%$

Show your working.

 $\frac{720}{900} = 0.8$ 0.8 × 100 = 80

efficiency = 805

(2)

Where some learners lost marks, it was because they had the useful energy and total energy supplied the wrong way around in their calculation or for forgetting to multiply by 100, in each of these cases just 1 mark was awarded.

(ii) Calculate the efficiency of the laptop computer.

efficiency =
$$\frac{\text{useful energy}}{\text{total energy supplied}} \times 100\%$$

Show your working.

(2)



efficiency = 25

Question 5(b) proved difficult for many learners, with only the better learners scoring both marks.

(b) The cost of electricity is 14 pence per kWh. The laptop computer has a power of 65 W. Calculate the cost of using the laptop computer for 8 hours. Show your working. 4000 W = 1 kW $520 \times 14 = 7280 \text{ Pence}$ $520 \div 1000 = 0.52 \text{ kW}$ $14 \times 0.52 = 7.28$

A common error seen was where the learner had forgotten to convert the watts to kilowatts, or done this incorrectly, therefore making their answer a factor of 10 out. These answers scored 1 mark.

(b) The cost of electricity is 14 pence per kWh. The laptop computer has a power of 65 W. Calculate the cost of using the laptop computer for 8 hours. Show your working. (2) GSRGE 0.65KWX8=5.7KWKS-JX0.14=0.798

cost = 7 2 8 pence

cost = 7280 pence

Question 6 was the first of the two six mark questions with a points based mark scheme. In general, learners found this question difficult with few learners being able to give a full explanation of why the metal pin falls when the metal rod is heated.

However, many learners did show an understanding that it was because the wax had melted that the pin fell off and therefore were able to gain at least one mark.

Many also showed an appreciation that the energy transfer involved was conduction. Learners found taking this any further quite difficult. Some learners did understand that the heat energy made the particles vibrate, but failed to appreciate that the particles would be vibrating anyway and so did not state that they would start to vibrate more, or faster or words to that effect. A small number of these learners did then go on to gain credit for stating that these vibration were passed onto neighboring particles to transfer the energy. A common error was to talk about heat particles moving which shows a lack of understanding and was not given credit.



Explain, in terms of particles and energy transfer, why the metal pin falls off when the metal rod is heated.



In this example, the learner scored 4 marks. The learner has stated that the Bunsen heats the metal rod, but this is already stated in the question and so gained no credit. They have gone on to state that the heat travels through conduction and explained that this causes the particles to vibrate, unfortunately there is no reference to the particles vibrating more or faster and so no credit was awarded for this. However they go on to say that the

vibrations cause the particles near it to vibrate which gained credit. They say that the wax gets heated was deemed sufficient for the heat energy moving to wax and that this causes the wax to melt.

In this example. The learner scored 2 marks, they have stated that the flame from the Bunsen burner has heated up the metal rod and that the wax melts.

6 Olivia investigates energy transfers using the apparatus shown.
She sets up a clamp stand with a metal rod attached.
She attaches a metal pin to the metal rod at point **B**, using wax.
She heats the rod at point **A** with a Bunsen burner.
After a few minutes, the metal pin falls off.



Explain, in terms of particles and energy transfer, why the metal pin falls off when the metal rod is heated.

(6) The flame from the Bunsen the burner is able to heat Up metal rod to high Ω temperature he that wax will not stay and solia, eventually melt 50 it Will the have SUPPOR Kor no the result metal therefore, Pin. is that the metal off due, to the he fall pin will away the wax

6 Olivia investigates energy transfers using the apparatus shown.
She sets up a clamp stand with a metal rod attached.
She attaches a metal pin to the metal rod at point B, using wax.
She heats the rod at point A with a Bunsen burner.
After a few minutes, the metal pin falls off.



Explain, in terms of particles and energy transfer, why the metal pin falls off when the

	n - cho. I	(6)
Olivia puts the	paento pe pin	their in
B rund it holdwine	, up by the	nax
because the	A is the point	t with
the Bunsen Burner	. But when me	tal pin is
On the wlear it	Fells beccui	IS-C
nataan kanalista kanalisi katika tanggun na ginakisi digi bigi mananan nataa saring sanana		

In this final example, the learner scored no marks.

Many learners found question 7(b) straightforward and were able to score at least one if not both of the available marks.

As in this example that gained both marks.

(b) The maintenance of a constant internal environment in the human body is known as homeostasis.
 Give two homeostatic mechanisms that increase body temperature.
 (2)
 1 hair Stick ve
 2 Stivering

This example scored just 1 mark.

(b) The maintenance of a constant internal environment in the human body is known as homeostasis.

Give two homeostatic mechanisms that increase body temperature.

1 Sweating 2 Shivering

(2)

In some cases learners did not read the question carefully and gave ways or ideas about how the body temperature could be increase, such as wearing a coat or standing in the sun. These answers gained no marks.

(b) The maintenance of a constant internal environment in the human body is known as homeostasis.

Give two homeostatic mechanisms that increase body temperature.

(2)

1 Wearing too many layers.. 2 being in direct schlight for too long.

It was pleasing to see that most learners were able to access some marks on question 8(c), with a fair proportion scoring the full 4 marks available.

Many were able to draw the correct Punnett square or showed an understanding that Joe must have a genotype of 'dd' to gain one mark. A common error seen were where the learner tried to use their common knowledge rather than the science that they had been taught. Often learners referred to Joe inheriting the condition from his grandparents as it 'skips a generation'. Other common misconceptions seen were that both genes were inherited from parent or that Elle must have inherited the first allele, D and Joe the second which must have been d or that Joe inherited the alleles from his father, because he was a boy and Elle inherited the alleles from her mother, because she was a girl.

This example scored 4 marks. The correct Punnett square has been drawn. The learners states that both parents are carriers and that the Punnett square shows that there is a 25% chance of a child being affected, they also state that Joe has inherited two recessive alleles and that Elle has inherited one dominant allele, this answer is more than sufficient for the four available marks.



Explain why Joe is affected with the genetic condition but Elle is not. Use the pedigree analysis diagram provided. You may draw Punnett squares to help you.

The to be affected by the disease that nears that his parents must been be arrives. A provet sprace shows that there is a 25% chance of a child being alleted by the thess. The watt 🐲 This mans Het Ø Ele is also a consier. The abarket Ceason Elle isat Alerted but See 5 sbecase Elle has inherebed a demirant allel Whereas Igh Jae has inhareted the acessive allds

This next example scored 2 marks. The learner has stated that Joe has inherited two recessive alleles and that Elle has inherited Dd. The fact that the learner believes that both alleles were inherited from his mother does not detract from the fact that they understand which alleles were inherited and was therefore ignored.

(c) A genetic condition is caused when an individual inherits two recessive alleles, dd.



The diagram shows a family pedigree analysis for this genetic condition.

Explain why Joe is affected with the genetic condition but Elle is not. Use the pedigree analysis diagram provided. You may draw Punnett squares to help you.

(4) Joe has inherited the two recessive alles From his Bet mun When as elle Wa dominant and did not interit the recessive alle dd she got Dd

This last example gained no marks. The learner has discussed how the condition may have skipped a generation, but there is no explanation of how this might have happened and why Joe may have been affected by the condition but Elle did not.

(c) A genetic condition is caused when an individual inherits two recessive alleles, dd. The diagram shows a family pedigree analysis for this genetic condition.



Use the pedigree analysis diagram provided.
You may draw Punnett squares to help you. (4)
The diagrams snows that Joe has
been affected with the generic Condition.
Joes parents don't have the condition.
But his grandfarmer may have had
the condition. Jee would have got it
because It skipped his dod and every
the condition the past on to be
Since it is a genetic condition, only
mais will get the condition file is a
female so she cannot get the condition
only the males in the family could get it.
If Joe has any grandchildren whens
older, the male may inherrit the
genetic condition.

Question 9 is the second of the six mark question, but this with a levels based mark scheme. As in the other six mark question, many learners were able to gain some credit in this question. It discriminated very well, with the weaker learners gaining just 1 or two marks, for giving some adaptations or explaining one adaptation up to the strongest learners who were able to explain, in detail, how the leaves, leaf structure and leaf cell components are adapted for photosynthesis.

Where learners did not score, it was often because they had not read the question carefully and tried to describe photosynthesis and its role, often repeating much of the stem of the question rather than how the leaf is adapted for photosynthesis.

As part of their answers, learners often confused the role of the xylem and the phloem. Many learners were able to recall that leaves had stoma and guard cells, but were often confused about their role.

In this example, the learner has explained the adaptations of the phloem, xylem, stomata and guard cells, this was worthy of full credit and the learner scored level 3 - 6 marks

9 Photosynthesis happens in the leaf of a plant. The equation for photosynthesis is shown.

sunlight carbon dioxide + water ---- \rightarrow alucose + oxygen Explain how the leaves, leaf structure and leaf cell components are adapted for photosynthesis Inside the stem there are the Philoem and Xyiem tubes. The Philpern tubes carry glucose (asgor) up and down the stem and the xylem types corry water and minerals up and down the stem. In underneath the leaves are thy holes called the stomata which let gasses in and act of the Plant for Photosynthesis, outside the stomata are guard cells which chorage shope to open and close but to let games in and out. Transpiration is when a plant Iples water through elaporation and there are three steps to transpiration which are water evaporates from the flont through the stomata then water in goes UP Khrough the papers of xylem tables the types in the stem to the heaves and the water is taken of 8-000 the roots. Photosynthesis thappend helps the plant arow by sending sunlight to the plant to create glucose and oxygen to help the plant survive In this next example, the learner has explained that the leaf has chloroplasts that absorb light from the sun and that the xylem carries water around the plant - this was deemed sufficient for the xylem carrying water to the leaf. These explanations of the adaptations are worthy of 4 marks in level 2.

The equation for photosynthesis is shown. carbon dioxide + water <u>sunlight</u> glucose + oxygen Explain how the leaves, leaf structure and leaf cell components are adapted for photosynthesis. (6) In the process of the phothesis photosynthe the leaf have ere closoplast with absorb the light energy from sun, there and take corbon dioxide and water to make make alwood and water to make
carbon dioxide + water <u>sunlight</u> glucose + oxygen Explain how the leaves, leaf structure and leaf cell components are adapted for photosynthesis. (6) In the process of the phothesis photosynthe the leaf have erec closoplast with absorb the light energy from sun, there is the take corbon dioxide and water to make make photosynthe
Explain how the leaves, leaf structure and leaf cell components are adapted for photosynthesis. In the process of the phothesis photosynthe the leaf have coor closoplast with absorb the light energy from sun, there and take corbon diaxide and water to make make photosynthe
(6) In the process of the phothesis photosynthe the leaf have cree closoplast with absorb the light energy from sun, there and take carbon dioxide and water to make make photoside and water to make
In the process of the phothesis photosynthe the leaf have cree closoplast with absorb the light energy from sun, there and take carbon dioxide and water to make
the light energy from sun, then absorb take corrbon dioxide and water to make
the light energy from sun, then a bad take corbon diaxide and water to make
take corbon diaxide and water to make
male almente bud arman to atte out
mane gibloss aria oxuger 30 give 2000.
The plant takes in water throug roots
and xylem takes nevery part of plants.
which also helps in photosynthesis.
The plants taken in carbondioxide, water
and light and gives out got glucose and
oxyaen.
J.J.

In this next example, the learner has just one adaptation explained, that the leaf has a large surface area to take in plenty of sunlight, this answer gained level 1-2 marks.

Photosynthesis happens in the leaf of a plant.The equation for photosynthesis is shown.
carbon dioxide + water $\xrightarrow{\text{sunlight}}$ glucose + oxygen
Explain how the leaves, leaf structure and leaf cell components are adapted for photosynthesis.
The leaves have a large surface area to take in picnty of sunlight. The leaves contain cells which absorb carbon cloxicle within the air. The stem of the leaf takes in water. Photosynthesis
is able to occur efficiently and effectively within the leaf.

Many learners described the word equation given or stated why photosynthesis happens, there was no credit awarded for this.

9	Photosynthesis happens in the leaf of a plant.						
	The equation fo	r photosynthes	is is shown.				
	c	arbon dioxide	+ water	sunlight	\longrightarrow gluco	se + oxyger	1
	Explain how the photosynthesis.	e leaves, leaf str	ucture and lea	f cell comp	onents are	adapted for	
	When	the	sun	Shir	185	on	(0)
	the	leaves	it	Crea	14605	the	
	Food.	The 1	Raves	h¢	Ne	Carbo	5
	clioxide	and	war	er	ΪΛ	it	50
1110.444	when	the	Sun	Shi	nq	they	60th
	turn	into	food			· · · · ·	

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