GCSE

Science A

Twenty First Century Science Suite

Teacher Support

OCR GCSE in Science A J630

Contents

Managing Skills Development and Assessment in Twenty First Century Science

An education in science means different things for different people. The report *Beyond 2000 – science education for the future* [Robin Millar and Jonathan Osborne, eds; King's College, London 1998, ISBN 1 871984 78 5] identified two main purposes for science education at secondary level:

- the first stage in training for future scientists;
- a preparation for life in a modern society for all pupils.

The new assessment structure for GCSE Science in the National Curriculum recognises that these two purposes require courses with different content and different approaches. Thus, the former "Double Award" science, which tried to combine the different purposes into a single course, has been replaced by "Dual Science" – two separate specifications, taught with different aims in view, and leading to two independent qualifications.

The Twenty First Century Science suite of specifications has been designed from the beginning to address both purposes in a way which allows the maximum curriculum flexibility. It provides valid, meaningful and motivating learning experiences for the widest possible variety of students, regardless of interest, ability or career intentions.

The key to this flexibility is provision of a full suite of single subject specifications, which can be combined in many different ways.

The National Curriculum core requirement for science is a minimum of single award science. This must provide a basis of scientific literacy: science for citizenship, for all young people, based on sufficient knowledge of science content to comprehend major issues in modern society.

This coverage is provided through the specification

- Science (J630), which provides an education for all students, based on scientific contexts and issues in contemporary society;

It is anticipated that the majority of students will wish to learn more about science. In this suite, two alternative varieties of Additional Science are offered.

- Additional Science (J631), which extends knowledge and understanding of science to provide a sound basis for more advanced study
- Additional Applied Science (J632), which provides a work-oriented experience of how science is applied in chosen manufacturing or service areas

These three specifications are designed to suit different populations with different needs. Thus, the assessment of skills is different in each specification and designed to match the different objectives of each specification. Because many students will take one of the additional sciences as well as Science, the assessments for the Additional Science specifications are designed to be complementary to those for Science, not merely to repeat similar activities.

The three schemes of assessment are different, but each is based on activities which should occur as a normal part of teaching and learning in the course. The general procedures followed in awarding, recording and submitting assessment marks follow the same pattern for all of the specifications.

An Introduction to Skills Assessment for the Three Schemes

Where a centre is introducing all three schemes at the same time, it may be helpful to ask different staff to 'lead' on different schemes, thus sharing out the load of developing new techniques and learning new marking criteria.

The key features of the three schemes are summarised in table 1.

Table 1: *Key features of each skills assessment scheme*

specification	Science A J630	Additional Science A J631	Additional Applied Science J632
Abilities to be developed	Responding to science in the media and in society	Practical investigative skills	Workplace skills and activities
Assessment activities	Analysis of first-hand data + A case study of science in the media	A complete practical investigation	Standard procedures + Suitability test + Work-related report

For each separate science subject (J633:Biology, J634:Chemistry or J635:Physics), each candidate may offer –

either: a case study and data exercise, as for Science

or: a practical investigation, as for Additional Science

Staff at a centre may decide to allow candidates to carry out both types of activity, thus developing the full range of skills, and then submit whichever gives the higher mark; or to concentrate on just the one type of assessment.

Marking Internally Assessed Work

Strands and aspects of performance

The method of marking the skills assessment is the same across all specifications in this Science suite. The award of marks is based on the professional judgement of the science teacher, working within a framework of descriptions of performance which are divided into **strands** and **aspects**. Within each strand there are different aspects of performance, which in turn have four descriptions of performance illustrating what might be expected from candidates working at different levels.

For example, in the assessment of Data Analysis, Strand I: Interpreting Data

Aspect of Performance	Strand I Mark			
	2	4	6	8
(a) Graphical or numerical processing of data	Display limited numbers of results in tables, charts or graphs, using given axes and scales.	Construct simple charts or graphs to display data in an appropriate way, allowing some errors in scaling or plotting.	Correctly select scales and axes and plot data for a graph, including an appropriate line (normally a line of best fit) or construct complex charts or diagrams (e.g. stacked histograms, species distribution maps).	Additionally, indicate the spread of data (e.g. through scatter-graphs or error bars) and give clear keys for displays involving multiple data-sets.
	Select individual results as a basis for conclusions.	Carry out simple calculations e.g. correct calculation of averages from repeated readings.	Use mathematical comparisons between results to support a conclusion	Use complex processing to reveal patterns in the data e.g. statistical methods, use of inverse relationships, or calculation of gradient of graphs.

Each aspect in turn should be considered, comparing the work first against the two mark performance descriptor, then the four mark, then six etc. until the best match is found.

Where performance significantly exceeds that required by one descriptor, but does not sufficiently match the next, the intermediate mark (1, 3, 5 or 7) should be awarded.

Note the implication that performance descriptors indicate the quality of performance required, as distinct from mark criteria which look for mechanical matching and too easily lead to 'hoop jumping' for its own sake.

Thus, the level of performance in each aspect is decided. The single, overall, mark for the whole strand is then taken as the best fit to the level of performance shown. This would normally be the average of the levels judged for the individual aspects.

In a few instances, dotted lines on the assessment scheme are used to indicate alternative ways of accessing credit. For example, some work may be best described by graphical display of results, and other work by numerical processing – either can be used as the basis for the mark, allowing a wider variety of different types of investigation to match the criteria. Where it is possible to award some credit under both of the alternatives, the better of the two should be taken as the mark to count.

With these few exceptions, all the aspects must be taken into account in reaching the final mark for the strand. If there is no evidence of achievement for an aspect, a mark of zero should be recorded and included in calculation of the overall strand mark.

Candidates may not always report their work in a particular order, so evidence of achievement in a strand may be located almost anywhere in the work. Thus, it is necessary to look at the whole piece of work for evidence of each strand.

Where a decision is based partly on teacher observation of the candidate at work, the work should be suitably annotated at the appropriate point in the report.

Marking Grids

Marking decisions should be recorded on marking grids. A master copy for Science is provided in Appendix H. The completed grid serves as a cover-sheet for the work if it is required for moderation.

Within any one strand, each aspect should be considered in turn. A tick on the grid should be used to indicate the performance statement that best matches the work.

When each aspect of performance within a strand has been assessed in this way the pattern of achievement is interpreted by a 'best-fit' judgement to give a mark for that strand. For example,

Strand	Aspect of performance	Level of performance related to mark scale									Mark for Strand
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
I	(a) graphical or numerical processing of data					✓					5
	(b) summary of evidence					✓					
	(c) explanations suggested							✓			

This method of marking can be applied even where there is a wide variation between performance in different aspects. Thus, weak performance in one aspect need not depress marks too far if other aspects show better performance.

In some cases, in order to allow credit for the widest possible variety of activities, an aspect of performance is represented by two (or more) rows of performance descriptions (for example, graphical or numerical processing in the Strand I example above). In such cases, where a row is not relevant or appropriate for a particular activity, it should be left blank and not included in making any marking decision. If both rows are appropriate then the best mark for that aspect can be used.

A Rationale for Skills Assessment in Science A

The National Curriculum Programme of Study specifies that science should be a course to develop scientific literacy. ‘Literacy’ in any subject area may be described as the ability to comprehend what is written about the subject – to take an informed part in discourse about the subject.

In everyday life, citizens most often become aware of science-related issues through reports in the media: newspapers, teenage magazines, television, etc. Work on this course should help candidates to develop capabilities in evaluating such reports, and the reliability of the evidence they are based on, and to increase awareness of appropriate ways of making decisions about the issues which are raised.

The skills assessment is designed to identify and reward these capabilities. Schemes of work should be designed to build up the skills gradually through suitable activities including the study of topics where different views can be considered and compared. These activities should arise naturally out of teaching, so that it can be assessed by teachers, internally standardised and then externally moderated by OCR. The skills assessment contributes 33.3% to the overall assessment of the specification.

The skills assessment comprises two components: the critical analysis of primary data, and a case study on a topical (scientific) issue.

Data analysis activity

First-hand experience of the problems of collecting valid and reliable data can give candidates a better sense of what the difficulties really are, a 'feel' for how great they are in specific cases, and provide a context for beginning to understand how to tackle and perhaps overcome them. The published scheme of work (Oxford University Press) includes many experimental practical activities to ensure that candidates experience how scientific evidence is obtained.

It must be clear that the candidate has been personally involved in generating at least some of the data, but the collection of the data is not directly assessed. This avoids pressure to ‘drill’ particular techniques simply for assessment purposes. However, it must be clear that the candidate has been personally involved in generating at least some of the data.

The assessment is based on analysis and evaluation of data because these skills are necessary for deciding the merit of scientific claims made in the media, or in support of proposed actions. Analysing and interpreting data illustrates how scientists use experimental evidence to develop and test theories. Evaluating the procedures and data shows how the reliability of scientific findings can be assessed.

The mark-scheme used is identical to the two corresponding strands of the assessment of Investigations in Additional Science (J631).

Case study

The case study is designed to motivate candidates and give them an insight into how science is reported to the public, and to teach them how to assess the validity of underlying research and claims or recommendations based on the research. Ideally, the study should arise from such a media source. Suitable topics involve some degree of controversy, or disagreement, either about the interpretation of the scientific evidence, or about how individuals or society should respond. The title for a case study is best phrased as a question with a yes/no answer, to be answered by the careful balancing of evidence and opinions from a variety of sources.

Arriving at the final mark

The final mark for each candidate comprises the total for **one** practical data interpretation exercise plus **one** case study. It is not permitted to aggregate part-marks from different activities as the assessment covers the candidate's ability to complete a task. Candidates should be given opportunities to develop their skills before completing the assignments for assessment.

Data Analysis (Assessment Unit A219)

Data from observations and measurement, are of central importance in the various processes that lead to new scientific knowledge.

Throughout the course, candidates will carry out a variety of practical activities, to illustrate principles and to gather data as a basis for discussion or further work. Any activity in which students are personally involved in generating first-hand data is suitable as a basis for this assessment. Any such activity is also suitable for introducing ideas about quality and reliability of data, and the relationship between the data and how it can be explained.

Whenever data is being collected, attention should be drawn to the quality of the data.

Time should be taken to:

- analyse the data;
- evaluate the reliability of the data;
- discuss the conclusion;
- discuss the level of confidence in the conclusions.

In this way, students will gradually develop familiarity with the terminology used, and the requirements of the assessment marking criteria. Every experiment should be a part of the preparation for this assessment.

The intention of these activities is to give an appreciation of the limitations to data, and develop an understanding of accuracy and reliability in data. These are described in the specification as Ideas about Science. This part of the assessment highlights in particular

IaS 1: *Data and their limitations*

IaS 2: *Correlation and cause*

IaS 3: *Developing explanations*

Ideas about Science are described more fully in Appendix J, where they are also linked to performance by a candidate, indicating the level of understanding expected.

The performance criteria used for marking this assessment form two of the five ‘strands’ of a complete investigation as defined in the Additional Science specification (J631).

Many centres use marks for this assessment from full investigations and in many ways candidates appear to be better placed to make realistic evaluations of their procedures and data collected. However, in the case of weaker candidates, the data collected is often poor in quality and quantity so that they find interpretation difficult. Therefore, in these cases, data collection activities involving whole class participation were generally the most successful. These included pollution surveys, fitness studies and habitat surveys. In these activities, the whole class can be involved in the planning stage. Each candidate takes some measurements, so that they are familiar with the practical difficulties involved. The total body of data collected can be very large, so that there is plenty for students to say about accuracy, validity and reliability.

Guidance in Marking the Data Analysis Task

Marks are awarded for two strands, Interpretation (Strand I) and Evaluation (Strand E). The two marks which make up the assessment total for this element of skills assessment must both come from the same activity.

The full criteria are given in Appendix A.

Strand I: Interpreting data

This aspect of the marking criteria relate to Ideas about Science 1.4, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4.

Aspect (a) Revealing patterns in data

Students should be encouraged to look for patterns or relationships within the data they have available. This is often easier if a substantial amount of data is accumulated.

To save time, a class can share data. Each student or working group can collect a little data, to experience the practical problems involved. Pooling the data makes it easier to look for trends or patterns, or to establish the range covered by ‘repeat’ readings.

Some activities lend themselves to the graphical display of results giving visual indications of any patterns or trends e.g. relationships between variables over a range of values. Others may be more easily analysed by numerical or statistical processing e.g. patterns of species distribution in a habitat. To allow for this, the mark scheme provides alternative sets of performance descriptors (two rows in the table of descriptors, separated by a dotted line). This allows a much wider variety of tasks to give access to the mark range. Where work allows aspects of both, then both should be assessed, and the higher of the resulting marks is taken.

Aspect (b) Summarising the evidence

As part of the conclusion students should be encouraged to give verbal summaries of the patterns they find in their results, e.g. “all of the balls in a set of snooker balls have the same mass” or “the resistance of a wire is proportional to its length”. For higher marks, the conclusion should be quantitative or based on statistical analysis, and any limitations or uncertainties should be recognised.

Aspect (c) Explaining the evidence

A scientific explanation is a suggestion which involves a plausible mechanism to explain why the results turn out as they do. Students should be encouraged to refer to prior scientific knowledge to support their explanation.

Strand E: Evaluation

Candidates are expected to be able to look back at the experiment they have carried out, show what they have learned from doing it and explain how they would modify it in the light of this, were they to carry it out again.

This aspect of the marking criteria focus on the Ideas about Science 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7.

Aspect (a): Evaluation of procedures

Students review any practical difficulties encountered in collecting the data. They also review the extent to which they were able to control factors which might have interfered with their experiments and affected the accuracy or reliability of the data. They then consider whether they could make any improvements in the apparatus, materials or procedures.

Aspect (b): Reliability of evidence

Students review the consistency of the data, for example in respect of the closeness of ‘repeat’ measurements, or the ‘scatter’ evident on graphs of the data. They identify any results which appear to be ‘outliers’ and attempt to explain how these may have arisen.

Aspect (c): Level of confidence in the conclusion

Students consider how secure their conclusion is. This should be related to the precision and reliability of the data, to the adequacy of the ranges covered and, if relevant, whether there are real differences between data sets. They identify any areas of weakness in the data and suggest what extra work might be needed to strengthen these.

Appendix B includes a list of activities which might be used for the teaching and assessment of data analysis and evaluation skills.

Case Studies (Unit A219)

Each candidate is required to present **one** case study, a report based on detailed study of a chosen topic.

The case study is designed to motivate candidates and give them an insight into how science is reported to the public, and how they can explore the validity of underlying research and claims or recommendations based on the research. The case study will draw on the Ideas about Science described in Appendix J.

These assignments should arise naturally from work on the course or from an issue that arises while candidates are following the course. They should be related to an aspect of science that involves an element of controversy, in terms either of the interpretation of evidence, or of the acceptability of some new development.

When should the assessment be done?

Assessment can take place at any time during the course. Some centres may wish to carry out a study early in the course, or at the end of year 9 to introduce the idea of case studies and the marking requirements. This would provide marks which could be counted. However, the course modules are designed to allow regular activities which illustrate and help to develop the necessary skills, so it is generally more effective to delay the assessment until several course modules have been covered.

If the course is being taught over two years, then the second half of summer term in year 10 provides a suitable time. For a one-year course, an alternative time may be early in spring term. However, note that where GCSE Science teaching is completed in year 10, and all the examination papers are also completed in year 10, submission of skills assessment and final aggregation to give a GCSE grade need not be done until the end of year 11. This means that the case study could be done following the examinations in summer of year 10, with opportunities for completion or re-drafting in autumn of year 11.

Note that skills assessment can only be submitted for moderation in the June examination season (not January). It is necessary to register for moderation. It is also necessary to notify OCR when unit marks are to be aggregated for award of GCSE certificates.

Some centres have devoted a short period of time entirely to case studies e.g. all science lesson time for a week. Others prefer to spread the task over a longer period. This would require some preliminary discussion with students – perhaps revisiting possible topics from modules already covered, in order to select questions for study. Some students may need to be given topics, but in most cases better motivation is achieved if each student can choose their own question to study. If possible, one or two lessons should be timetabled to give students individual access to the internet. If this is not possible, it will be important to negotiate access to the web for non-contact time e.g. via the school library. Finally at least one lesson, preferably two, should be allocated so that the majority of the final writing up can be done under classroom supervision.

Preparing Students for the Assessment of Case Studies

One main aim of the course is to help students make better sense of science stories or issues they encounter in the media. Most of the teaching modules include examples of issues for students to explore. These provide opportunities to gradually develop competency in

- searching for information;
- acknowledging sources;
- considering the scientific basis for claims or ideas they encounter;
- comparing different views and opinions;
- justifying their conclusion by reference to the evidence;
- presenting ideas effectively.

Format of the Case Study

Candidates will find it helpful to have a clear sense of audience in their writing – perhaps students in year 9, to encourage them to explain the basic science behind the topic.

Case studies will often take the form of a 'formal' written report. However, candidates should not be discouraged from other styles of presentation, for example:

- a newspaper or magazine article;
- a PowerPoint presentation;
- a poster or booklet;
- a teaching/learning activity such as a game;
- a script for a radio programme or a play.

In all cases, sufficient detail must be included to allow evaluation in all of the performance areas. Some types of presentation will require supporting notes to explain the choice of reporting medium chosen.

Choice of topic for a Case Study

Topics for study should be selected by candidates in discussion with teachers, and should be seen as an extension or consolidation of studies undertaken as a normal part of the course. The work should be capable of being completed within approximately 4–6 hours over a period of time, for example, one lesson per week for half a term, with some non-contact time.

Suitable topics often fall into one of three main types:

- Evaluating claims where there is uncertainty in scientific knowledge (e.g. “Is there life elsewhere in the Solar System?” or “Does using mobile phones cause risk of brain damage?”). Controversies of this type focus attention on the relationship between data and explanations in science, and on the quality of research which underlies competing claims.
- Contributing to decision making on a science-related issue (e.g. “Should a shopping street be pedestrianised to reduce air pollution?” or “Should the government restrict research into human cloning?”). Studies in this category are more likely to involve elements of personal choice, values and beliefs, and may involve balancing of risks and benefits of any proposed action.

- Personal or social choices (e.g. "Should my child receive the triple MMR vaccine?"). Ethical and personal issues are likely to figure in such studies, but it is important to evaluate these in relation to what is known about the science which underlies the issue.

In all cases, an important factor in choice of subject should be the availability of information giving a variety of views in forms that can be accessed by the candidate. Candidates may be provided with the initial stimulus for the study, but should be encouraged to search for a range of opinions in order to reach a balanced conclusion.

The subject need not be restricted to topics studied in the course. However, it is necessary for the candidate to apply some relevant scientific knowledge and understanding to a discussion of the issues raised. This is most likely to be the case if the study arises naturally during normal work on the course.

Candidates need not all study the same, or related, topics. Motivation is greatest if they are given some degree of autonomy in the choice of topic. This may be achieved by allowing a choice of different issues related to a general topic (e.g. different aspects of air pollution when studying Air Quality) or by encouraging candidates to identify topics of interest and begin collecting resource materials over an extended period. At a time chosen by the centre, candidates then complete their Case Study, and may each be working on a different topic.

The assessment might be introduced in a lesson which reviews controversial topics in modules already studied (e.g. air pollution issues in Air Quality, issues related to GM foods or cloning in You and Your Genes, etc). This might also include a look forward to issues which will be met in later modules, especially if these turn out to be topical in the media at the time. Students can then choose the area of greatest interest to themselves, and define a question to address within that topic.

This initial lesson should at least define the questions to be studied, and if possible provide some initial ideas for sources of information.

It is then very helpful if one or two lessons can be time-tabled in a library or computer room, so that pupils can continue to research additional information with some supervision and help from staff.

Finally, one or two lessons should be provided when pupils can complete the majority of their writing-up under supervision (to avoid plagiarism or sharing of work).

Some centres prefer to provide these as successive lessons, completing the whole task within a week. Others prefer to spread them out, say one per week over 4/5 weeks. In either case, it should be remembered that this is **coursework** and so should be done within course time. The centre should provide the lesson time, supervision and support which is needed. If too much of the work is done outside class time, pressure is put on pupils with poor home facilities and on conscientious pupils who may feel they have to produce excessively long studies.

The total amount of class contact time required should be about 4–5 lessons.

Several of the teachers who took part in the pilot have contributed activities which help to develop case study skills. Jim Beresford, of Fartown High School has used a variety of activities:

- Distribute newspapers round the class (the free "METRO" is often a good source of science-related stories). Ask each group to find headlines which are 'science-related'. When headlines are read back, encourage class discussion to identify which bits of science knowledge are linked to the story.
- Find a science-linked story in a paper. Distribute copies together with an activity to focus on the text e.g. highlight science claims or theories in green, supporting evidence in blue, opposing views in red. Then discuss how reliable the opinions in the article seem to be.
- Provide media stories as stimulus. Ask each student to generate two or three questions which could be answered as a case-study. Collect and display suggestions then prompt discussion of how suitable, or easily managed, each might be.

- Provide copies of (anonymous) case-studies from other classes or previous groups and 'pupil-speak' versions of the marking criteria. Ask each group to mark the case-study, then discuss the marks awarded and the good or weak features of the study.

Appendix E includes suggestions of topics studied by students in pilot schools. Appendix F provides some guidance notes that can be used with students. Appendix I provides specific guidance for supporting very weak students doing Science coursework.

Guidance in Marking Case Studies

A Case Study represents a major piece of work and it is not expected that students should attempt more than one full study during the course. If a student attempts more than one case study, then the mark for the assessment should be based on the highest-scoring single study. It is not permitted to aggregate marks from two or more different pieces of work, nor to add together marks taken from separate, limited range tasks, exercises or part studies.

Because of the risk of some studies becoming excessively long, it is important to link marks to the quality of the work done, rather than the quantity.

Appendix D shows the marking criteria arranged on a single page for easy reference.

Appendix H shows the sheet used for recording the marks awarded which count towards the final assessment total. When work is selected as part of the sample for moderation, the work of each candidate in the sample should have one of these forms completed and attached as a cover-sheet to the work. The sheet will be used as a working document by the moderator.

Strand A: Selecting information

Where possible, students should use multiple and different types of sources of information e.g. web-sites, encyclopaedias, library books, course textbook and their own notes. There should be a list of the sources used and these should be detailed referring to, for example, book and page number and full URL, not just to the homepage of the particular website.

Material from the sources should be selectively used, not just a collection of ‘cut-and-paste’ extracts. This will usually include some direct quotation, but should also involve some re-structuring and comment on the information. Where sections of text are directly quoted, this should be made clear e.g. quote-marks or different font from the main body of the text if word processed.

To score well in this strand, students must link information in the report to the sources used and evaluate the quality of the sources, recognising any discrepancy between sources.

Strand B: Quality of scientific understanding

Students should show their understanding of the background scientific knowledge and understanding which will help them evaluate the information in their sources. Students should explain the basic scientific facts, principles and concepts of the topic and their student textbook or own notes will be a good source. This can be backed up by extra information from more advanced or specialist books, encyclopaedias or web-sites.

It is often helpful, before marking begins, to think about what would represent excellent, good, fair or poor performance in each aspect for the particular title chosen by each student. This is particularly important in marking strand B.

The first aspect of strand B requires students to use scientific knowledge and understanding to provide a background for the study. This must be interpreted in relation to the knowledge available to the student through studies already completed on the course, together with what might reasonably have been found from the sources available for the study.

Most current science issues are likely to extend well beyond the limits of GCSE science. It should be made clear to students that they will not be required to recall any of this extra theory in their examinations. However, they will find it helpful to look up science knowledge beyond what they have done in lessons to help them understand the topic they are studying. Many students respond very positively to the experience of finding that they are able to follow a topic beyond the limits of what has been presented in class.

Marking trials during the pilot were used to develop agreement about the levels of science to be expected. The following examples were developed by pilot teachers as a result of marking work done by their pupils.

Table 2: *Related scientific knowledge and understanding for some case study topics*

Case study title	Related science knowledge and understanding
How dangerous is sunbathing?	the e/m spectrum make-up of solar radiation effects of ultra-violet radiation on the skin differences between cancer cells and normal cells types of skin cancer and treatments available sun screens and other protection methods SP factors in relation to exposure time benefits of sunlight: vitamin D formation, ‘feel-good factor’
Is it worth trying to protect ourselves from asteroid strikes?	what are asteroids where are they found and how do they move numbers and sizes of known asteroids detecting asteroids and predicting their paths probable effects of ‘earth-strike’ by asteroids of different sizes, and predicted frequencies what methods have been suggested for stopping or diverting asteroids feasibility vs. cost for each method
Who is to blame for obesity?	what is a balanced diet major and minor nutrients respiration, metabolic rate, and fat storage health problems associated with obesity ‘junk food’, publicity and social pressure combined effects of exercise and diet
Are mobile phones dangerous?	the e/m spectrum mobile phones use microwaves short range of microwaves and need for booster masts – the ‘cell’ system decrease in radiation intensity with distance from phone or mast continuous signals from masts, occasional from phone heating effect of microwaves children have thinner skulls and are more susceptible to radiation radiation and cancer risk the Stewart report and other medical surveys ways of minimising exposure – short calls, hands-free, ‘intelligent’ phones

Should we add fluoride to water?	fluorine as a group 7 element; fluorides evidence for the effect of reducing tooth decay harmful or side effects alternative ways to administer fluoride opting in or opting out ethical issues related to compulsory medication

This sort of preliminary survey of a topic allows markers to develop judgement about the amount of science which would be expected at each mark level.

The second aspect of strand B requires students to recognise and evaluate the scientific basis of any claims they find in their sources – how much if any research was done, how clear and relevant are the results? Successful studies will show a critical approach to judging the reliability of the claims which are reported.

Strand C: Conclusions

There should be evidence that the sources used have been compared to check for consistency and to identify areas of conflict or disagreement. There should also be evidence that the underlying science has been used to try to resolve any differences.

There should be evidence that points 'for and against' have been compared and that candidates have given their own viewpoint or position in relation to the original question, and have justified this by reference to the sources.

Strand D: Presentation

Communication skills should be rewarded for effective presentation including use of different forms for presenting different types of information (e.g. pictures, tables, charts, graphs, etc.).

Suitable diagrams and graphics should be incorporated as appropriate to clarify difficult ideas and encourage effective communication. A table of contents gives structure to the report and also helps to guide readers quickly to particular sections.

Reports which are presented as PowerPoint should include notes to accompany each slide, enabling student to access the higher mark descriptions across other strands.

Appendix D shows the marking criteria for case-studies.

Appendix G gives marking commentaries for the three example case-studies.

Management and Administration of the Skills Assessment

The scheme of skills assessment is designed to award credit for capabilities which are developed as part of the normal teaching and learning process through the course.

In order to achieve this, schemes of work should:

- make pupils familiar with the assessment requirements and the marking criteria;
- present activities in ways which emphasise aspects of the assessable skills;
- identify activities which will be suitable for formal assessment.

The overall aims of the course include teaching the ability to assess the quality of scientific data, and of forming critical judgements about issues of public or personal policy which involve science-based decision-making. An important aspect of this is to provide regular activities involving these skills.

Record-keeping

Many practical activities throughout the course could provide evidence for assessment. Teachers may wish to award marks and record these, either as evidence of pupil progress or as a 'fall-back' source of marks if a more formal assessment later in the course is missed or not well done. The final mark for data analysis will be the highest score achieved for any one activity, and evidence for this must be kept safely.

Note that, for pupils who also take Additional Science, this highest mark may come from strands I and E of an investigation in the Additional Science course. These marks may be used for Science even if they are also used for the assessment in Additional Science.

The case study is a major undertaking. Many activities in the course deal with issues and decision-making, so the skills can be developed gradually. However, most centres only attempt one full case study during the course, although some may also carry out a class exercise early in the course to illustrate the principles involved.

The final mark for case-studies will be the highest total obtained for any one case-study. It is a general principle in all specifications within this suite that totals must be for a single piece of work. It is not permitted to aggregate strand marks from different activities.

Appendix H is a master copy for the cover-sheet which should be kept with the marked script following assessment. It has spaces in which all marking decisions can be recorded as the work is marked. The sheet is then attached to the pupil work. If the work is later required for moderation, the pupil scripts and cover sheet are simply taken from the store and posted to the moderator. The cover sheet will be used by the moderator when checking the marks for the work. It will be retained by OCR as a complete record of all marking decisions made by both the centre and the moderator.

Internal Standardisation of Marks

It is the responsibility of the centre to make sure that the rank-order of pupils is secure. This requires that all work is consistently marked to the same standard.

Appendices C and G provide examples of completed data analyses and case-studies with commentaries to explain the mark decisions. These can be used as a focus for discussion between all staff involved in the marking, to exemplify standards.

Internal standardisation should also be carried out. Some or all of the following procedures may be found to be effective:

- one member of staff moderates samples from all markers, thus providing a single reference standard for all;
- copies of scripts are passed round for marking agreement trials at department meetings (it is essential that this is accompanied by a discussion of reasons for any disagreements);
- a common approach to marking, or customised mark-scheme may be devised and agreed by all markers;
- for data analysis tasks, all scripts from all classes for the same activity, may be marked by one marker;
- Scripts from one cohort, which have been part of external moderation samples, should be kept and referred to, in order to carry forward consistent standards from year to year.

OCR provide a free consultancy service. As part of this, centres can send in up to three marked scripts and receive feedback on their marking standards.

External Moderation of Marks

After work has been marked in the centre, a sample of the work will be checked by an external moderator. The purpose of this is to ensure that the activities used are appropriate and match the specification requirements, and that the marking standards used in the centre are consistent and in line with national standards.

Shortly after entries are submitted for the skills assessment, OCR will provide form MS1 (mark-sheet) and instructions for what must be submitted from the centre (Appendix K). The mark sheet is in three layers and is self-carboning. The top copy is sent to OCR and will be used to enter raw marks on the computer. The second copy is sent to the moderator. The third copy is kept by the centre as a record.

The moderator will ask for the work of a sample of candidates. The work which counts towards the final total must be sent, together with information which shows what activities were used and how they were presented to pupils. In a few cases, the moderator may ask for further work or information to be sent.

The work will be returned, and a moderator’s report will be sent to the centre when results are published. This will provide a commentary on the work seen. In the past, marks from the majority of centres have been in line with standards and have been accepted without change. Where any change has been required, this will be clearly stated and an explanation of the reasons for any changes will be given.

Courses completed in one year

Some centres plan to complete the work for Science in year 10, then complete Additional Science or Applied Science in year 11. Where this is done, the centre may choose to NOT submit coursework marks in the summer of year 10. This is because students may have time after the June examinations to add to their work, and those taking Additional Science may be able to improve their data analysis marks through investigations done in year 11.

Authentication of Students' Assessed Work

Overall authentication

Samples of work sent for moderation must be accompanied by a signed copy of the centre authentication form (appendix M). Staff involved in the assessment sign this form to certify that the work presented is the authentic work of the individual candidates.

Data analysis

This assessment awards credit for interpretation and evaluation of data. It does not credit planning the experiments, or carrying them out to obtain the data.

It is necessary for each candidate to be involved in gathering at least part of the data first-hand. Thus, it is not acceptable to base these assessments on data entirely made up, or taken from a simulation or a secondary source.

Candidates may work in pairs or groups when collecting the data. Data may be pooled from whole classes or year-groups in order to provide a sufficiently large body of data for candidates to address issues of reliability or range. Provided that some direct experimental data is included this may be supplemented where necessary with secondary data, but the main intention of this assessment is that candidates should be aware through their own experience of how the data was collected.

The interpretation and evaluation must be carried out by each candidate working individually.

Case studies

The case study is essentially an individual activity. In no case should candidates work together when collecting information. If it is felt that a particular study would benefit from some degree of joint work or collaboration, or from a joint presentation, the moderator consultancy service should be used in advance to obtain guidance on the acceptability of the collaboration.

Candidate authentication

Candidates should complete an authentication form as a cover sheet for their work, a master copy of this can be found in Appendix L.

Appendix A: Marking Criteria for Data Analysis

The marking criteria used are taken from the marking of investigations in Additional Science. They cover strand I (Interpretation and explanation of results) and strand E (Evaluation).

Thus, the marking of these exercises provides a comparison of standards between single and additional science. Where a candidate for Single Science is also taking Additional Science, they may use an investigation in Additional Science to provide the marks and evidence for this component of the Single Science coursework thus avoiding duplication of assessment and reducing the overall assessment burden.

Within each strand, different aspects of performance are identified. Achievement related to each of these is assessed, and the professional judgement of the teacher is then used to award an overall mark out of 8 for the strand.

Strand I: INTEPRETING DATA (I)

Each row represents increasing achievement in a different aspect of performance.

Within each row, the statements should be used hierarchically. Tick the highest level statement which can be matched by the work done. Intermediate awards (1, 3, 5 or 7) are made where performance exceeds one defined level but does not fully match the next. The mark (0–8) awarded for this strand should be a 'best-fit' from the overall pattern of statements matched.

In some cases, in order to allow credit for the widest possible variety of activities, an aspect of performance is represented by two (or more) rows of mark descriptors. In such cases, where a row is not relevant or appropriate for a particular activity, it should be left blank and excluded from the 'best-fit' marking judgement and the more appropriate alternative row used.

Aspect of Performance	2	4	6	8
(a) Graphical or numerical processing of data	Display limited numbers of results in tables, charts or graphs, using given axes and scales.	Construct simple charts or graphs to display data in an appropriate way, allowing some errors in scaling or plotting.	Correctly select scales and axes and plot data for a graph, including an appropriate line (normally a line of best fit) or construct complex charts or diagrams (e.g. stacked histograms, species distribution maps).	Additionally, indicate the spread of data (e.g. through scatter-graphs or error bars) and give clear keys for displays involving multiple data sets.
	Select individual results as a basis for conclusions.	Carry out simple calculations (e.g. correct calculation of averages from repeated readings).	Use mathematical comparisons between results to support a conclusion.	Use complex processing to reveal patterns in the data e.g. statistical methods, use of inverse relationships, or calculation of gradient of graphs.
(b) Summary of evidence	Note differences between situations/cases, or compare individual results.	Identify trends or general correlations in the data.	Describe formal or statistical relationships within the cases/situations studied.	Review the extent of, or limitations to, formal conclusions in relation to the scatter evident in the data.
(c) Explanations suggested	Link the outcomes to previous experience or 'common sense'.	Relate the conclusion to scientific ideas/explanations.	Justify the conclusion by reference to relevant scientific knowledge and understanding.	Use detailed scientific knowledge to explain all aspects of the given conclusion.

Strand E: EVALUATION				
Aspect of performance	2	4	6	8
(a) Evaluation of procedures	Make a relevant comment about how the data was collected and safety procedures.	Comment on the limitations to accuracy or range of data imposed by the techniques and equipment, used.	Suggest improvements to apparatus or techniques, or alternative ways to collect the data, but without sufficient practical detail.	Describe in detail improvements to the apparatus or techniques, or alternative ways to collect the data, and explain why they would be an improvement.
(b) Reliability of evidence	Make a claim for accuracy or reliability, but without appropriate reference to the data.	Note the presence or absence of results that are beyond the range of experimental error.	Use the general pattern of results or degree of scatter between repeats as a basis for assessing accuracy and reliability.	Consider critically the reliability of the evidence, accounting for any anomalies.
(c) Reliability of conclusion	Relate judgement of the reliability (or otherwise) of the conclusions only to techniques used, not to data collected.	Link confidence in the conclusion to the apparent reliability of the data collected.	Discuss the precision of apparatus and techniques, the range covered and reliability of data to establish a level of confidence in the conclusions.	Identify weaknesses in the data and give a detailed explanation of what further data would help to make the conclusion more secure.

Appendix B: Activities Which Might be Used for Teaching or Assessment of Data Interpretation and Evaluation Skills

Science
B2 Keeping healthy
B3 Life on Earth
Investigate the distribution of species in one or more habitats, e.g. to build up a picture of the interactions between different species, or investigating the effect of environmental factors on the distribution (fieldwork).
C1 Air quality
Investigate how concentrations, including students' own measurements, of particular atmospheric pollutants change with time and/or location. *e.g. Pollution by particulate matter from road vehicles. Sticky tape mounted on poles used to collect particles in the air at different distances from a busy road. Each student set up a sampling point, and classified and counted the particles collected using a microscope. Results from the whole year group were collected and students plotted scatter graphs.*
C2 Material choices
Measure and compare properties of selected materials in relation to their uses such as a range of polymer films, or a polymer compared to metal, glass or pottery or rubber. *e.g. What material is most suitable for a bicycle brake, a sole of a shoe etc.* Investigate 'stretching' of materials *e.g. stretching nylon thread, cotton thread, plastic bags, cling film. springs, rubber bands.* Compare the effectiveness of different materials for drinking vessels *e.g. insulating properties of different types of plastic/paper cups.* What is the best material for a squash ball? How to make the best concrete? How do shampoos and conditioners affect the strength of hair?
C3 Food matters
Investigate the effect of a variable (e.g. temperature, enzyme concentration, substrate concentration) on the digestion of starch and/or protein by enzymes or other suitable enzyme systems. *e.g. breakdown of starch using amylase/clotting of milk – the usual experiments give results which show considerable variation. By pooling results across a class, sufficient data is collected to show a more reliable interpretation.* Identifying food colours using chromatography *e.g. identifying colours in sweets (Smarties)* Which 'food' produces the most energy/fastest when it reacts with oxygen? Investigate the effect of fertilisers on plant growth. Use DCPIP to compare vitamin C in different foods Compare the sugar content of drinks.

P1 The Earth in the Universe

Investigate a simulation of the impact of an 'asteroid' on the Earth
e.g. dropping spheres into sand and measuring effect.

P2 Radiation and Life

Compare the transmission through glass of light and infrared radiation.
Interpret and evaluate temperatures inside and outside a model greenhouse.
How does the strength of the microwave signal from a mobile phone vary with distance?

Appendix C: Example of Data Analysis Tasks with Commentaries

Script A

Pollution from Road traffic

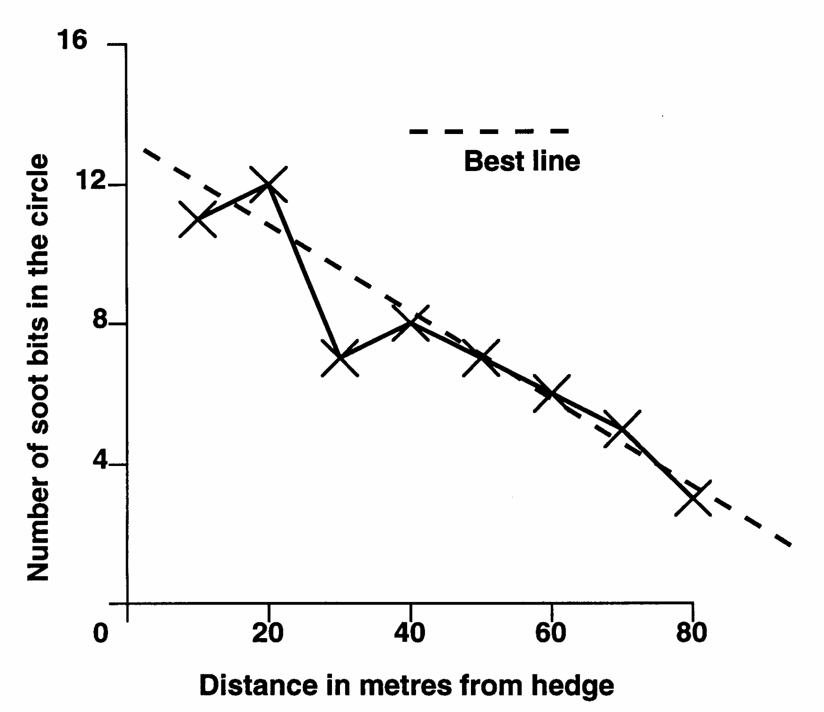
Our class and 10CD put tapes to catch soot from lorries on the motorway. We counted the dirt. I got answers from 3 other people to make sure they were fair.

<u>Results</u>: (ours were called A)

Card	Distance	Me	Joseph	Carl	Neil	Average
1	10	10	14	9	11	11
2	20	11	9	12	15	12
3	30	3	11	9	4	7
4	40	10	8	7	8	8
5	50	7	7	8	7	7
6	60	9		6	3	6
7	70	5		6	5	5
8	80	4		1	5	3

Analysis

The results table and the graph has shown me that there is a general trend in the amount of soot you would breathe in if you were different distances from the road. This is because the soot bits are heavier than the air and they fall down quite soon unless the wind is blowing them.



<u>**Evaluation:**</u>

We had to not count the brown bits of mud on the cards, but they got in the way. If we had put them much higher (e.g. on a bridge over the road) there wouldn't have been as much ordinary dust.

The 10CD cards (called B) were some of them too near where the buses wait and got soot from there to spoil the results, but near the road they were like ours, so the investigation is reliable.

We didn't look at all of the tape and there were more bits in some parts than others, but I think the results are good because it came out like I predicted.

Commentary on Script A

Aspect	Mark	Comment
Strand I: Interpreting data [4 marks awarded]		
(a)	6	[The graph has been word-processed, but matches the layout and appearance of the original hand-drawn graph.] The scales are appropriate and correctly marked, both axes are labelled. Data is plotted accurately and a suggested line of best fit is given. This graph would fully satisfy A6a in the previous common scheme for Sc1.2.
(b)		Mathematical processing was not relevant in this task, so this line is ignored.
(c)	3	The candidate has implied a relationship by drawing the best-fit line. They also refer to the general trend in the results. If they had said what the trend was, this would match 4 marks. Unfortunately, we are left to infer what was meant from the following sentence about the soot "falling down quite soon".
(d)	2	The 'falling down' comment is taken as 'common sense' rather than 'scientific explanation'. There is no other explanation for the pattern of results
Strand E: Evaluation [3 marks awarded]		
(a)	4	The limitation caused by difficulty in recognising soot particles as distinct from soil or dust is described, and there is an implied reference to the incomplete sampling of the tapes. The only suggestion for improvement is impractical.
(b)	2	There is a recognition that results varied depending on which bit of a tape was viewed, but no detailed comment on the degree of scatter of the results.
(c)	2	There is very little comment about reliability. The comment that 'results are good because it came out like I predicted' just justifies the award of 2 in this aspect.

Hence the overall mark awarded for this candidate is 7 marks out of 16.

How Far Does Pollution Spread?

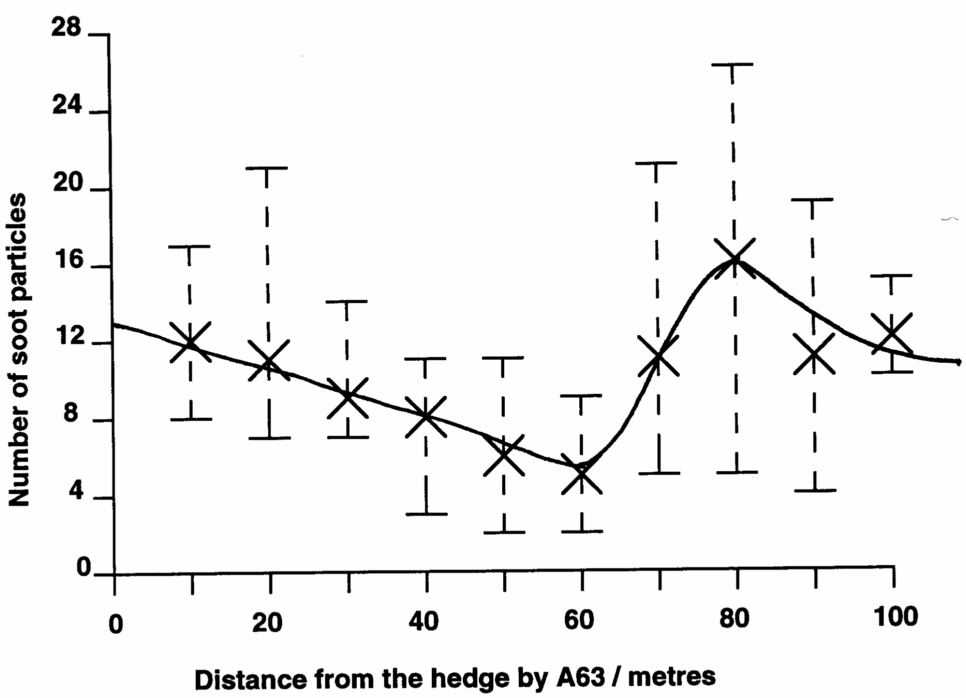
Two classes worked on this survey. My class put up the poles which were set B. My partner and I set up card B4. All the class looked at several pieces of tape under the microscope so that lots of data was collected.

Results:

(My results in the first results column)

Card Number	Distance from road /metres	Number of black spots in microscope eye ring						Average
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
B1	10	12	17	8	11	13	9	12
B2	20	21	8	7	9	11	12	11
B3	30	9	14	9	8	9	7	9
B4	40	9	10	11	7	3	6	8
B5	50	7	7	8	2	11	-	6
B6	60	5	9	2	3	-	6	5
B7	70	11	5	21	14	9	8	11
B8	80	26	14	21	5	17	14	16
B9	90	17	13	8	19	4	7	11
B10	100	12	12	12	12	15	10	10

Graph of our results:



Conclusion:

At first, as the distance from the road increases, the amount of particles from vehicle exhausts decreases. Some of the groups found lower counts on the first card (B1) and this may have been because the hedge lifts the air currents over this card.

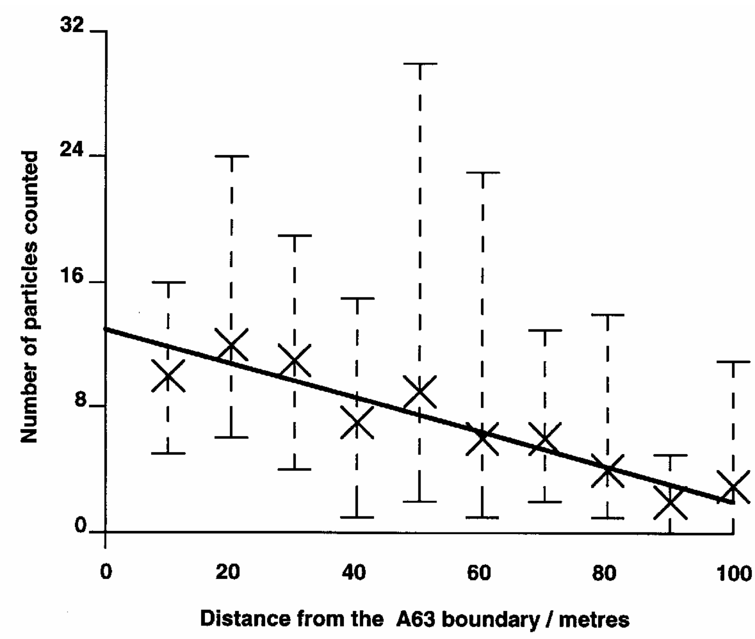
After card B6, the count suddenly went up and this was a surprise. The other class did not find this effect. When we went out to look at the field again, we realised that the place where the school buses wait for the end of afternoon school is beside where cards B7, 8, 9 and 10 were put. We did not realise this because there were no vehicles there when we put the cards out and took them down (lunch times).

Now I think that this makes our conclusion even stronger. Vehicles produce sooty particles which are carried into the air. Because they are heavier than air, they fall back to earth quite quickly, so the amount in the air decreases quite quickly as you move away from the road.

This second graph shows the results from the A cards. These were at the other end of the field, where there is only the main road and nowhere else for soot to come from.

The number of particles is always decreasing as you move away from the road. The first part of the graph is very similar (with similar numbers) to the first part of our graph.

This shows that the jump at the end of our graph is caused by the school buses waiting in the afternoon.

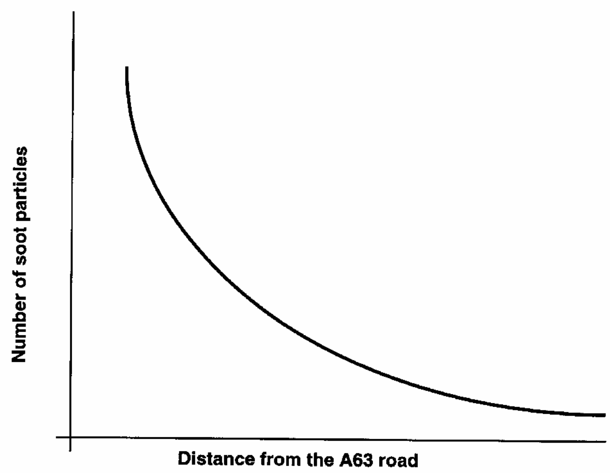


Theory:

The amount of air that goes into an internal combustion engine is limited, so the fuel is not completely burned. In most engines, especially diesel engines, some particles of soot (carbon) are formed, and come out with the exhaust gases.

As you move away from the road, the particles are spread over a larger volume of air, so the number in any space is less. Also, the particles are heavier than air and gravity pulls them down. This means the numbers decrease quickly with distance, as shown in the graph.

Our results showed the general pattern of decrease with distance, but not the curve.



Evaluation:

We used a long tape measure from sports day to show where to put the poles. If we had measured 10 metres from where the last pole was each time, there might have been a few centimetres error each time and these might have added up. So we stretched out all 50 m and put a pole by each 10 metre mark, then did this again for the other 5 poles.

The poles were easy to push in the ground and they stayed up straight. The cards fitted into the split in the end of each pole and stayed in position all right.

For each card, different people counted the number of soot specks they could see under the microscope. The number is the number that could be seen in the visible circle. Each time the microscope was on low power. Each person moved the card so that they counted a different bit of the tape. This is why the results are different each time for a card.

We had to tell the difference between brown specks (mud or dust) and black ones (soot from traffic). Some of the black ones might have been bits of rubber from tyres, or dirt with oil on.

The size of the specks varied, some were bigger than others, so that means not the same amount of soot, or pollution. The number of specks on each bit of the card was different because they were just scattered. The size of the error bars on the graph shows that there was a large range for the results from any card. This range was bigger than the change from one card to the next, but the mean values should be nearer to the 'true' value and these did show a steady pattern.

The results didn't match the curved shape of graph we predicted, this may be because of the big uncertainty range, or it may be because the soot particles weren't all the same size. If small particles travel further, maybe the cards near the road would have fewer, larger particles and ones further away would have more smaller ones. We didn't check this.

The pattern does seem very clear, especially as putting extra diesel vehicles near some of the poles pushed the numbers up so much. I am confident that soot pollution in the air is caused by road vehicles. However, this is only a problem for a few hundred metres from the road, so would be more of a problem in a town than in the country.

On the day we did this, there was almost no wind. It would be interesting to do this again on a day when the wind was blowing towards the school, and when it was blowing away.

Commentary on Script B

Aspect	Mark	Comment
Strand I: Interpreting data [7 marks awarded]		
(a)	8	In the earlier Sc1.2 scheme, graph work is limited to 6 marks out of 8. The new Single science places much greater emphasis on the quality of experimental data, especially on the degree of scatter in results as an indication of reliability. Hence the additional requirement for 8 marks to give a visual indication of the range of uncertainty in data whenever this is appropriate. The graphs produced by this candidate fully illustrate the extra information which can be provided in this way.
(b)		Mathematical processing was not relevant in this task, so this line is ignored.
(c)	7	The overall patterns in the results are summarised. A slight effect close to the hedge is noted, and the larger effect due to pollution from school buses is noted and explained. The degree of scatter in the results is recognised, and linked to the multiple random counting strategy used to average out the variation.
(d)	6	The source of the particulate pollution is described. There are references to the range of particle sizes and the fact that they are denser than air. The overall pattern is explained through a combination of dilution and gravity.
Strand E: Evaluation [7 marks awarded]		
(a)	5	There is comment about the care taken to avoid cumulative errors in measuring distances, and several comments related to difficulties in counting particles. There are no suggestions for alternative or improved techniques.
(b)	8	The scatter of results is discussed in detail and related to the counting strategy. Possible causes of counting error are given, and there is also a thoughtful consideration of the effect of variation in particle size.
(c)	7	Weaknesses and limitations in the data are identified and linked to the degree of confidence in the conclusion. The comparison of results from two sets of experiments is used effectively here to increase confidence. The suggestion for further work would add little to the basic conclusion.

Appendix D: Marking Criteria for Case Studies (A219)

A	1 mark	2 marks	3 marks	4 marks
Planning the use of sources of information	Very little information is given beyond that provided by the original stimulus material.	Information from a limited range of additional sources is included, although some may be irrelevant or inappropriate to the study.	Relevant information is selected from a variety of sources.	Sources of information are assessed for reliability as a basis for selection of relevant information from a wide variety of sources.
Acknowledgement of sources used		Sources are identified by incomplete or inadequate references.	References to sources are clear, but limited in detail.	References to these sources are clear and fully detailed.
Linking information to specific sources		Direct quotations are rarely indicated as such.	Direct quotations are generally acknowledged.	The sources of particular opinions are indicated at appropriate points in the text of the report.
B	**2 marks**	**4 marks**	**6 marks**	**8 marks**
Making use of science explanations	Only superficial mentions of science explanations, often not correctly applied to the case	Provides a basic outline of the main scientific ideas which are relevant to the case.	Provides a detailed review of the scientific knowledge needed to understand the issues studied.	Considers how different views described in the study can be supported by detailed scientific explanations.
Recognition and evaluation of scientific evidence	Sources are uncritically quoted without distinguishing between scientific evidence and unsupported claims.	Science content and data in sources is recognised.	Claims and opinions are linked to the scientific evidence they are based on.	The quality of scientific evidence in sources is evaluated in relation to the reliability of any claims made.

C	2 marks	4 marks	6 marks	8 marks
Comparing opposing evidence and views	Information is unselectively reported without taking any clear view about any course of action.	Claims for a particular idea, development or course of action are reported without critical comment.	Claims and arguments for and against are reported, but with little attempt to compare or evaluate them.	Details of opposing views are evaluated and critically compared.
Conclusions and recommendations	A conclusion is stated without reference to supporting evidence.	A conclusion is based on evidence for one view only.	Some limits or objections to the conclusion are acknowledged.	Alternative conclusions are considered, showing awareness that different interpretations of evidence may be possible.
D	**1 mark**	**2 marks**	**3 marks**	**4 marks**
Structure and organisation of the report	The report has little or no structure or coherence, or follows a pattern provided by worksheets.	The report has an appropriate sequence or structure.	Information is organised for effective communication of ideas, with contents listing, page numbering etc. as appropriate to aid location of key elements.	Considerable care has been taken to match presentation and format to present issues and conclusions clearly and effectively to a chosen audience.
Use of visual means of communication	There is little or no visual material (charts, graphs, pictures, etc) to support the text.	Visual material is merely decorative, rather than informative.	Visual material is used to convey information or illustrate concepts.	Pictures, diagrams, charts and or tables are used appropriately and effectively to convey information or illustrate concepts.
Spelling, punctuation and grammar	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of generally poor quality, with little or no use of appropriate technical or scientific vocabulary.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of variable quality, with limited use of appropriate technical or scientific vocabulary.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are generally sound, with adequate use of appropriate technical or scientific vocabulary.	The report is concise, with full and effective use of relevant scientific terminology. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are almost faultless.

Appendix E: Suggestions for Topics for Case Studies

Developing the skills for case studies

These activities make it possible to develop and practice the techniques which will lead to successful case studies. They provide opportunities to introduce the marking criteria which will be used for assessment.

The **Air Quality** module includes an activity on hay fever. Students plot data about prescriptions for hay fever treatments. This can lead to discussion of apparently anomalous results, and the importance of repeating measurements to check reliability. They then sort through information about the illness and use it as a basis for a report or poster showing how the evidence supports the theory that hay fever is an allergic response to pollen in the air. This exercise allows a focus on judging the strength and reliability of evidence, and on organising items of information to present a coherent argument. Other topics in the module which could provide a basis for a case study include use of (a chosen) renewable energy resource for power generation to reduce dependency on fossil fuels, or issues related to nitrogen oxides in air from car exhausts.

In the module **You and Your Genes**, students study Huntington's disease to show how ethical considerations are important in genetic counselling. They can be introduced to the use of search engines to trace information on the internet and taught how to acknowledge sources. Related topics include studies of the acceptability of pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, or therapeutic cloning, or GM crops.

In the module **Earth in the Universe**, the risks of asteroid strikes on the Earth are discussed. Information searches introduce estimates of these risks, leading to discussion of whether governments should take action to try to develop defence systems.

Successful Topics for Case Studies

B1 You and your genes
Should gene therapy be allowed?
Should gene therapy be allowed to prevent Huntington's disease?
Human cloning – should it be banned?
Designer viruses – good or bad?
Is genetic testing ethically right?
Should human cloning be allowed?
Should we produce designer babies?
Is cloning the way of the future?

B2 Keeping healthy

MRSA – is hospital the best place when you are ill?
Antibiotics – is there a crisis?
How safe is MMR vaccination?
Is animal testing justified?
Should cannabis be used as a medical drug?
Does MMR cause autism?
Are edible vaccines best?
Should DDT be banned?

B3 Life on earth

Creation or evolution?

C1 Air quality

Should smoking be banned in public places?
Does traffic pollution cause asthma?

C2 Material choices

Sustainable development – what is best?

C3 Food matters

Is organic food better for us?
Diet – are young children eating unhealthily?
Who is to blame for obesity?
Do food colours cause problems for children?
Should GM crop research continue?
GM foods – a help or hindrance to society?
Is chocolate addictive?
GM foods – harmful or helpful?
Are calorie controlled diets effective?
Do diets really work?

P1 The Earth in the Universe

Should we attempt to find extraterrestrial life?
Should we pursue manned space flight?
Asteroids – did they cause the extinction of the Dinosaurs?
Extinction of species – natural or man-made?
Is there life on Mars?
What killed the dinosaurs?
How long will the sun burn?

P2 Radiation and Life

Do mobile phones cause brain tumours?
Is sunbathing good for you?
Are mobile phones safe?
Are power lines dangerous to health?
Global warming – natural or man made?

P3 Radioactive materials

Would you want to live near a nuclear power station?
Is nuclear power the answer for the future?
Are wind farms a good idea?
What are the best fuels to produce electricity?
Is hydrogen the fuel of the future?
How should the government spend its money on future energy resources?
Should we allow the remaking of humans using nanotechnology?
Should we allow cyborg technology of the mind?

Appendix F: Guidance for Students Writing a Case Study

We live in a developing technological age. People in governments, industry and other institutions have to make decisions that can have a significant effect on our lives. Newspapers, journals, television and other forms of media often report science-related stories where there is some disagreement about how we should react.

In doing your case study, you will learn how to find out what a variety of different people think about the story you have chosen, and how to use your science knowledge to reach a balanced judgment about how to respond.

Choose a story which interests you and where you can find enough information from people with different points of view. The title for your case study is probably best as a question that you can answer by balancing evidence and opinions from the information you have gathered.

Assessment

The case study will be marked, and this contributes 20% to your final GCSE grade so it is worth putting some effort into this activity. It could have a significant effect on your final grade. However, do not make your report too long as it is quality not quantity that counts!

Your teacher will mark your case study under four main headings:

A How good was your research:

- how did you find the story?
- have you looked for more information from other sources?

B Do you understand the science:

- have you described science ideas which help you to understand what is important in the study?
- have you checked what science data or ideas are used in the articles you looked at?

C Have you compared different views and formed a conclusion

- have you considered arguments for and against?
- have you thought about the risks and benefits of the action that is suggested?
- have you said clearly what you think (and why)?

D Have you presented your report in an attractive and interesting way?

- is the report well-organised so that it is easy to follow the story?
- are your spelling, punctuation and grammar correct?
- have you used pictures, charts, tables, graphs or explanatory diagrams to help make information easier to understand?

A Quality of Selection and use of Information: (maximum 4 marks)

- You should use different types of sources of information that contain relevant information for your Case Study e.g. course book, web-sites, library books and your own notes.
- Give a list of the sources used and these should be detailed referring to, for example, book and page number and full website address not just to the homepage of the website.
- Material from the sources should be selectively used, not just a collection of 'cut-and-paste' extracts. This will usually include some direct quotation, but should usually also involve some re-structuring of information.
- In the body of the report, make it clear where each particular piece of information came from e.g. "The Daily Mail of 21st Sept said…" or "these results came from Prof X. Smith at the University of …."
- Where sections of text are directly quoted, this should be made clear e.g. quote-marks or italic script. This allows the reader to see which source a particular claim or piece of information has come from.
- At the 4 mark level, any obvious disagreement between sources should be recognised.
- It is important to say how reliable you think each of your sources is. This is particularly important for data from web-sites, which vary widely in the reliability and authority of the opinions expressed.

B Quality of Understanding of the Case: (maximum 8 marks)

- This section lets you show what you understand of the background scientific knowledge and understanding which will help you evaluate the information from your sources.
- You should assume that your target audience is intelligent, but doesn't know anything about the topic. You should explain the basic ideas of the topic and your student textbook or own notes will be a good source. This can be backed up by extra information from more advanced or specialist books, encyclopaedias or web-sites.
- Think carefully about whether the articles you read are based on scientific evidence or not, and explain how reliable you think these claims are.

C Quality of Conclusions: (maximum 8 marks)

- There should be evidence that the sources you used have been compared to check for consistency and to identify areas of conflict or disagreement. There should also be evidence that the underlying science has been used to try to resolve any differences.
- There should be evidence that points 'for and against' have been compared.
- You should describe your view-point or position in relation to the original question, and justify this by reference to the sources.

D Quality of Presentation: (maximum 4 marks)

- Think about who you want to look at your report – make it attractive and interesting for them.
- Give the report a good clear structure by using headings and/or sub-headings and a table of contents. This helps to break up the report and guides readers quickly to particular sections.
- Reports should also include suitable tables, diagrams and graphics to clarify difficult ideas or to present large amounts of data in a quick and easy way. Do not include graphics just to decorate your report, they must provide useful information.
- Be careful to write clearly, with correct spelling and grammar.

Case Study checklist

Title page:

- Title of case study written in the form of a question

Contents page:

- Sections, sub-sections and appropriate page numbers included

Introduction:

- Explanation of what the case study is about and how the report is structured

Scientific theory:

- Relevant background science included

Evidence:

- Relevant information from sources collected with detailed references in each case
- Evidence from both sides of the case
- Authenticity and reliability of the evidence recognised; explanation of the evidence using underlying science

Conclusion:

- Evidence compared and evaluated
- Conclusion written and justified, pointing out any limitations or alternative interpretations

Bibliography:

- References listed in detail

Presentation:

- Report clearly organised into appropriately headed sections and in a suitable sequence
- Report includes diagrams, data tables, graphs etc. to illustrate ideas and concepts
- Report is concise, uses relevant scientific terminology and has correct spelling, punctuation and grammar

Appendix G: Examples of Completed Case Studies with Commentaries

Script C

Does the Sun Effect our Skin?

Contents:

Are freckles dangerous and does the sun effect our skin?

The first thing you should know about freckles is that they are completely harmless. Freckles are pigment cells (cells that contain colour) that are contained within the skin in small batches. Freckles are usually tan or light brown, flat and very small (smaller than the head of a pin). Sometimes they overlap and run together, so they may look larger.

Being outside in the sun may help cause freckles or make them darker. People, especially young children, with fair complections – lighter skin and eye colour – are more likely to have freckles because there is less melanin in their skin. Melanin is a chemical produced by certain skin cells that helps protect the skin from sun damage by reflecting and absorbing ultraviolet (UV) rays.

The more melanin you have in your skin the tanner you look. People with fair skin have less melanin in their skin to begin with so instead of easily getting an even suntan, they sometimes get freckles.

I have red hair and freckles so I know how hard it is for fair skinned people to get a suntan without burning. There are lots of things that you can do to help prevent burning in the sun.

Cover up:

Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts, trousers, or long skirts.

Wear a hat:

A three-inch broad brimmed hat protects the back of the neck, ears, eyes and scalp.

Wear sunglasses:

Look for glasses that block out from 95 to 100 percent of the UVA and UVB rays. Wraparound glasses protect the eyes from all angles.

Apply sunscreen:

If people are going out in the sun then to be safe they should ware suncream with a protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 or higher.

If you don’t look after yourself in the sun then there is a possibilitiy that you may get skin cancer.

More than 90 percent of all skin cancers occur on sun exposed skin. The face, neck, ears, forearms and hands are the most common places it appears. The three most common types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma.

Basal cell carcinoma usually develops on the face ears and nose and around the mouth of a fair skinned person. It can start as a red patch or shiny bump that is pink red or white. It may be crusty or have an open sore that does not heal. This type of cancer can be cured easily if treated early.

Squamous cell carcinoma usually appears as a scaly patch or raised warty growth. It also has a high cure rate when found and treated early. In rare cases, if not treated, it can be deadly.

Melanoma is the most dangerous form of skin cancer. It usually looks like a dark brown or black mole like patch with irregular edges. This type of skin cancer can occur anywhere and the body and when found early can be cured. If ignored, it spreads throughout the body and can be fatal. My mum was diagnoses with melanoma, after sunbathing without any protection on. Luckily, she went to get her mole looked at by the doctor just in time.

They cut the mole off, and tested it, just to make shore it was melanoma and it was, so she went back into theatre to have the tissue that was surrounding the mole removed just in case it spread to the rest of the arm. Luckily, she survived.

Skin cancer is not the only thing that you can get from exposing your body to the sun for too long. You can also get wrinkles, which are directly related to sun exposure. Smoking can intensify them. Wrinkles can only be removed by surgical treatment.

Many people have different views on the sun and how it can affect our skin. Mrs Celia Hall (a medical editor from the Guardian) believes that "avoiding the sun can be bad for your health". The article says that over 80% of the body's intake of vitamin D comes from the sun. Scientists said, on the 16th of September 2004 that staying out of the sun, using sun cream and wearing Clothing favoured by the Asian communities may be contributing to a vitamin deficiency among millions of people. The scientists soon called for action to increase vitamin D levels in the population through food supplements, without increasing the risk of skin cancer.

On the 28th July 2002 Lorraine Fraser, a Medical Correspondent for the Sunday telegraph states that "skin test exposes sun lover's risk of cancer". She said that Sunbathers will be able to learn how much damage they have done to their skin and their risk of developing skin cancer in a new test developed by skin specialists. The technique will also make it possible to assess how well commercial suntan creams and lotions actually work and if they are protecting you at all.

Lorraine fester says "that a test for the damage could easily be offered to patients during a visit to the family doctor" So we will all be able to check and see weather our skin has been affected by the sun or not.

Some people develop allergic reactions to the sun. These reactions may show up after only a short time in the sun. Bumps, hives, blisters or red blotches are the most common symptoms of a sun allergy. Other than wrinkles, skin cancer and allergies, the sun also makes diseases worse, including cold sores and chickenpox. UV rays also can cause cateracts, which is a gradual clouding of the lens in the eye

After all my research on the sun and how it affects our skin, I have come to a conclusion that the sun is a health risk to humans because of all the dangerous cancers that are caused by it. I must admit that I would much rather have a nice healthy glow to my skin, rather than being all white and pasty. Two weeks after our holidays the tan ends up down the plug anyway, so is it worth it? Is two weeks of being tanned worth having the risk of getting skin cancer along the way? When there are many self-tanning products in the shops today that give the same effects but without any risk.

My sources of information:

The Guardian newspaper, www.theGardian.com

www.millenium-dibate.org/suntel

The Sunday telegraph

www.gov/bcp/online/pubs/health/sunkids.htm

www.thesun/health.co.uk

My personal view

My mothers experiences.

Commentary on Script C: Does the Sun Effect our Skin?

Aspect	Mark	Performance
Quality A: Planning and use of reference sources [3 marks awarded]		
(a)	3	R relevant information has been selected from several sources. There is no rationale for this particular selection, or attempt to compare them for reliability.
(b)	3	The sources are identified, but in many cases the references are only to 'home pages' of large sites.
(c)	3	There are three instances where particular comments are linked to identified authors (is "Loraine fester' the same person as 'Lorraine Fraser'?) but no other indication of what information is quoted and what is comment from the candidate.
Quality B: Understanding of relevant science [5 marks awarded]		
(a)	5	There is a good review of types of skin cancer and how over-exposure to sunlight is associated with them. A range of allergic reactions is described. The importance of early diagnosis is brought out. What is missing is information about what uv radiation is.
(b)	5	Some of the main claims in the report are linked to authoritative sources.
Quality C: Balancing arguments and reaching a conclusion [6 marks awarded]		
(a)	6	The risks associated with over.
(b)	5	The fact that total avoidance of sunlight is impossible is acknowledged, but rather more could have been written about how to use sun.
Quality D: Communication [2 marks awarded]		
(a)	2	This is a straight-forward textual report.
(b)	2	The pictures on the front cover are purely decorative.
(c)	3	The use of English is generally sound.

The overall total for this case study is 3 + 5 + 6 + 2 = 16 out of 24

Mobile Phones

ARE THEY A RISK TO YOUR HEALTH?

What are we worried about?

Over Christmas 1999, more than 4 million mobile phones were bought in Britain. By mid-2000, the number of mobile phones in use was about one for every two people in the country. The number continues to grow.
When you use your mobile phone, it gives out radiation in all directions – some of this goes through you. It is the same type of radiation that cooks food in microwave ovens!! The amount of radiation is small, but is it harmless?
In this case study I shall write about some of the claims that have been made, and the evidence for them.

Contents

What is in a mobile phone?

A mobile phone contains a small card which has a microwave radio receiver and transmitter. It also has a microphone and a loudspeaker. Most phones now have a screen that can show text and pictures and some include a camera. It is all driven by a battery and it has a key-pad to type in text messages or dial numbers.

About microwaves

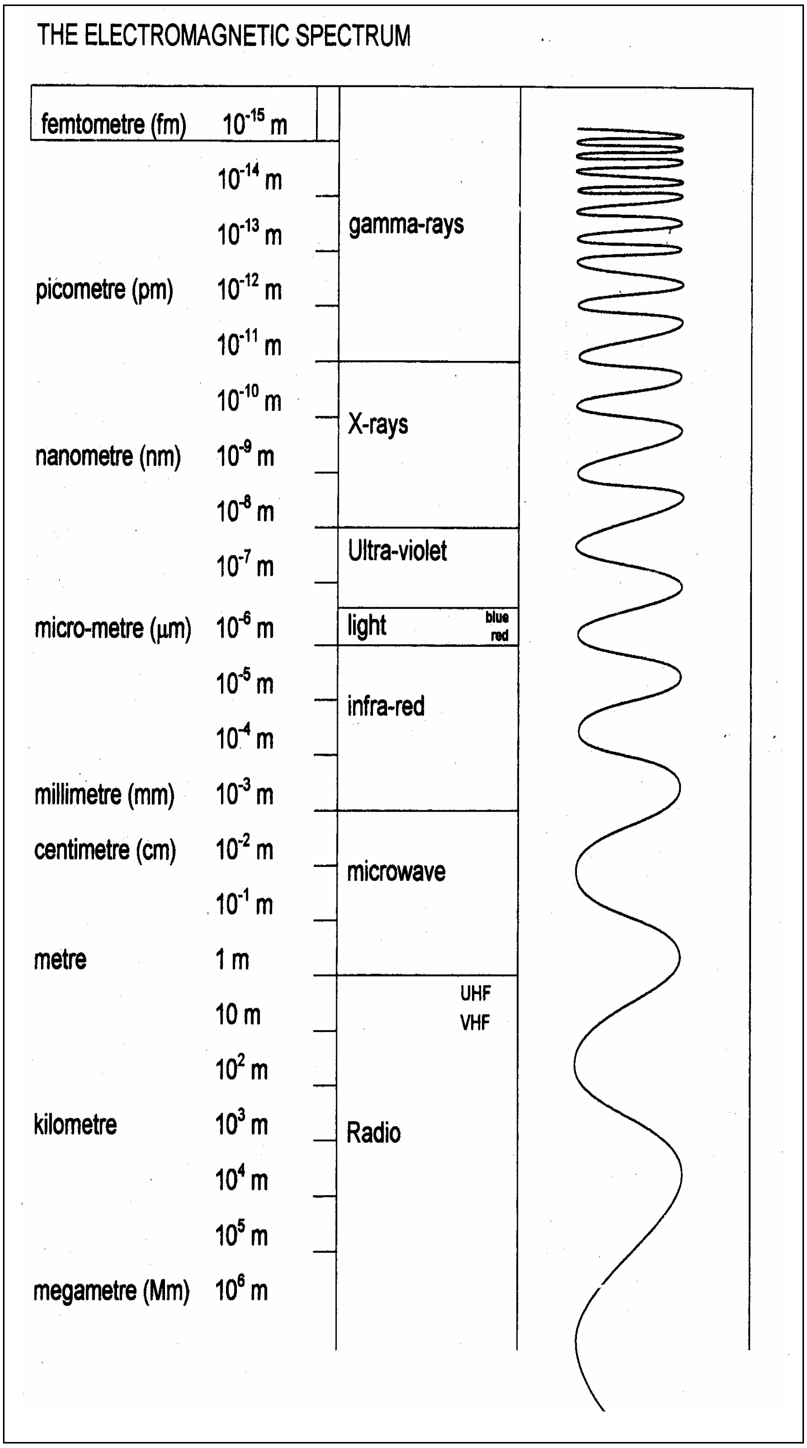
Microwaves are electromagnetic waves. This type of wave transfers energy so that it can produce effects some distance from the source of the waves. No matter is moved, or needed to carry the waves. They can travel through space.

Microwaves can travel through air and can also get through some solid materials, so that phones still work indoors. There are other sorts of e/m waves, they have different wavelengths and make up a spectrum as shown beside.

Microwaves are very short wavelength radiowaves. They don't travel very far through air, so phone systems need 'booster' masts to strengthen the signal every 20 miles or so. A phone network needs a network of masts. Each one gives signals to a 'cell' around it. In America, they are called 'cell phones'.*(I got this from New Scientist magazine.)*

Microwaves can have two effects. They are absorbed by water, causing heat, so they can heat up living tissues.

Microwaves are also thought to cause changes in cells if they pass through your body.



Ionising and non-ionising radiation

Radiation with very short wavelength (such as gamma rays or X-rays) can break bonds in substances they pass through. They are called ionising radiation and are very harmful. Microwaves are non-ionising. They do not damage molecules but they do cause heating which could damage tissues and some reports claim they can harm living cells. (Course text-book C5 pg 35,41)

A mobile phone only produces microwaves when it is working, but booster masts give them out all the time.

Do microwaves cause any harm?

Most scientific evidence has found no adverse reactions in the short term, but the long term effects are as yet unknown and may not be clear until the youth of today have reached middle age.” (www.tcodevelopment.com/pls/nvp/document)

Here are some of the effects which have been claimed to result from use of mobile phones:

Tumours (cancer) in various parts of the head – this claim is based on the idea that “radiation can upset the way cells work” (New Scientist article)

Changes in cell structure or growth – this might be seen as the first step towards cells becoming cancerous.

Masts like this one are used to ‘boost’ signals to mobile phones within a radius of about 25 – 30 miles.

They give out micro-waves all the time

Some are disguised (this one looks like a tree!).

Why are they trying to hide these masts?

Fatigue, headache, learning problems, sleep disorders, memory loss: These might be linked to “over-use” rather than “use” of mobile phones. In other words they are a result of too much time spent on one activity (or doing the activity at the wrong times). There is no theory to explain any link to the radiation. Because of this, I am going to write about the first two effects.

There are other “secondary effects”. For example, drivers who use their phones might be more likely to be in an accident. You might be mugged by someone who wants your phone. Mobile phone signals can upset navigation in aircraft, so should not be used by passengers when flying. These should be balanced against benefits such as if your car breaks down or you miss the bus, you can phone for help

Tumours:

Tumours are made of cells which grow abnormally and damage other cells round them. Researchers have tested the idea that radiation might set off this abnormal growth.

In Sweden, 750 people were asked how much they used mobile phones. Researchers found that in mobile phone users, the risk of acoustic neuroma (tumour in the auditory nerve) rose by up to 3.9 times on the side of the head where the phone was used, but not on the other side. The effect was greatest for those who had used mobile phones for over ten years. This was carried out by doctors so is based on evidence of tumours, but only on memory reports of the amount of phone use. (www.newsvote.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/3742120.stm)

The British Government commissioned the Stewart report to look at all the available evidence. This concluded that there was no clear evidence of general risk from mobile phones or transmitter masts. However, they recommend that use of mobile phones by children should be kept as low as possible, because their skulls are thinner, and their brains are still developing.

The following quotes are from the summary of the report:

http://www.iegmp.org.uk/documents/iegmp_1.pdf

Guidelines for exposure to radiation have been set by both British and European governments. The doses typically received from mobile phones are below these limits and from masts are even lower. The balance of evidence suggests that radiation below the limits does not cause adverse health effects. There is some evidence that some biological effects may occur even below these limits. This does not necessarily mean they are linked to health effects, but we need to consider the implications.

“We conclude, therefore, that it is not possible at present to say that exposure to RF radiation, even at levels below normal guidelines, is totally without adverse health effects, and that the gaps in knowledge are sufficient to justify a precautionary approach.

In January 2004, New Scientist reported on a study in Denmark, part of a study by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. It involves 13 countries. Denmark was the first country to report and conclude there is no increased risk of brain tumours during the first 10 years of mobile phone use. This is a large study and carefully designed. It tried to recruit every brain tumour sufferer over the entire population. (www.newscientist.com/articles.ns?id+dn4624)

Effects on cell structure and activity:

A team of Swedish scientists carried out experiments with 32 rats, by exposing them to different amounts of radiation. After watching carefully for 50 days to look for any effect, the rats were killed and their brains were examined for any effects. They found a correlation between the amount of ‘leakage’ of albumen from blood vessels into “inappropriate areas”. This may accelerate decay in brain function. (www.protectingourhealth.org/newscience/learning/2003/2003-0129salfordtalh)

A study in Spain tested one 11 year-old boy and one 13 year-old girl. Their brain wave activity was measured during and after mobile phone calls. This study found that the natural brain wave activity was altered and remained altered for up to one hour after the call.

(www.grn.es/electropolucio/maisch294.htm - from an article in the Sunday Mirror Thurs 27/12/01)

Are children more at risk?

Many of the articles I read agree that children are more at risk. Partly because their skulls are thinner than those of adults, small children can absorb up to 60% more radiation energy than adults (Stewart report). The brain is also developing more rapidly and so more susceptible to damage

Children will also have a longer life-time to go on absorbing radiation.

Conclusions:

Mobile phones are very convenient. In emergencies they can save lives. Because there is no clear evidence yet of any harm from them, we should not ban their use. However, we should find ways of keeping check for any evidence of slow-developing effects. In particular, use of mobile phones by children should be kept to a low level. This is the precautionary principle, or ALARA (as low as reasonably achievable) approach – to go on using new technology, but to keep the risks as low as possible.

Do NOT -
Use the phone more than necessary
Hold it too close – a 'hands'free' set, or an extension ear-piece will keep the source of radiation further away (radiation spreads out and gets less intense)

It is a good thing that people take an interest in questions like this. As a result of public concern, regulations have been made about how much energy can come from phones. Phone manufacturers measure and publish the SAR (specific absorption rate) from each type of phone, so that you can choose ones with lowest radiation. Some phones now adjust their energy levels to the lowest that will reach the nearest radio mast. Improvements like this are results of public pressure and will continue to make mobile phones safer.

Bibliography

I used information from the text-book: Core science C4 – C6 chapter on radiation.

I also looked at the following web-sites. I didn't use anything from the last two, because one was from a pressure group against dangerous radiation and the other was from a mobile phone company so I thought either of them might have been biased.

I have also taken extracts from the Stewart Report and from several articles in New Scientist.

www.tcodevelopment.com/pls/nvp/document

www.newsvote.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/3742120.stm

http://www.iegmp.org.uk/documents/iegmp_1.pdf

www.newscientist.com/articles.ns?id+dn4624

www.protectingourhealth.org/newscience/learning/2003/2003-0129salfordtalh

www.grn.es/electropolucio/maisch294.htm

web.ukonline.co.uk/faderuk/Health/ Reports/Stewart_Report/stewart_report.html

www.virginmobile.com/mobile/ user_guides/health_guide1.html

Commentary Script D: Mobile Phones – are they a risk to your health?

A carefully researched study, well organised and attractively presented. Relevant information has been selected with care, but there is little 'editorial comment' from the candidate to evaluate the evidence or link it to the conclusions – hence lost marks on strands B and C.

Strand A Research	A variety of sources of information from BBC and New Scientist web sites are used to extract relevant information. Sites are considered for reliability, and some are not used, because of possible bias/nature of pressure groups/phone manufacturer. References are clear and detailed with specific web addresses. The sources of particular opinions and conclusions are indicated within the body of the text.	**4**
Strand B Science	A review of the electromagnetic nature of microwaves and also the need for 'booster' masts around the country are considered. However, this information is not always effectively linked to the rest of the study. The scientific evidence for the development of 'tumours' is mentioned but issues of sample size were not referred to in the conclusions in the 'Spanish' study. Further quantitative information/data could have been included.	**6**
Strand C Conclus-ions	The information from each source is reported but little comparison or evaluation is attempted. Conclusions are made taking into account the issues involved and recommendations as for future use are made.	**6**
Strand D Present-ation	Good clear structure to the report, use of sub-headings, contents listing and bibliography are all included. Visual material is used to illustrate the report but there were more opportunities which were not taken. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are good and scientific terminology used to good effect.	**4**
	Overall total mark for the case-study:	**20**

Are Mobile Phones Damaging our Health?

Are mobile phones damaging our health?

Mobile phones work on a transmitting and receiving operation by extremely low levels of radiation. Although the radiation levels are "believed" to be entirely safe, there have been long links between radiation exposer and also health problems the most dangerous of all cancer!

More than 27 million people in the United Kingdom now use a mobile phone this is half the population and is increasing every minute! In the UK last year there was an average of 41000 new users per DAY. The most commonly found amongst young people. Eight million users are of school age?

The main reason that children are using mobile phones is because parents want them to as a protection but are they protecting your children? Peer pressure to have the "new" phone is increasing supposedly it makes you look cool and mature in the same way as it is "cool to smoke" but do mobile phones carry health risks as cigarettes do?

Children are particularly vulnerable to radiation because in children the nervous system has not yet fully formed. Their brain tissue is more likely to absorb energy, and, if they use mobile phones, there is a concern that they will also have a far longer lifetime of exposure to radiation.

The most recent report to be carried out into the health risk of mobile phones was that the government commissioned "Stewart report". It's finding made the headlines in May 2000 it said children and teenagers should be discouraged from mobile phones because of the vulnerability to radiation. It also pointed out that there were serious gaps in scientific knowledge, and called for more research into this field. It did, however, conclude that on balance there was not yet any evidence that mobile phones presented a real threat to health. But other research has suggested that there are more definite links between health problems and mobile phone use. Swedish studies, for example, are among several, which claim that users are more likely to develop brain tumors. And further reports have linked mobile phones with health problems ranging from Alzheimer's disease to speech problems, skin disorders and memory loss. But along with the *Stewart Report*, the general consensus seems to be that more research is urgently needed.

The mobile phone industry's response to these health concerns has been slow, insisting that radiation amounts are well within the establish

Mobile phone – Health issues

- Mobile phones can cause cancer.
- Is research into mobile phones accurate?
- Are people living close to a base station more at risk?
- Can people using hearing aids use mobile phones?
- Will pace makers be affected by mobile phones?
- If there is an on-board computer in a car will the mobile phone affect it
- Why can't mobile phones be used during a flight?

These are some of the questions asked about mobile phones!

There is no convincing scientific evidence that the use of mobile phones can cause brain tumors or other cancers in humans. It is the consensus of the world wide scientific community that the low powered radio signals produced by a mobile phone do not have sufficient intrinsic energy to affect genetic material.

Independent scientific institutions around the world review relevant research as it is published. The consensus of these expert groups is that there is no demonstrable evidence of a risk to human health from mobile phone use. The GSM association however, continues to support international quality research into this question.

Head safety guidelines
There is a recent claim of a 30% increase in brain tumors found in regular mobile phone users Brain cancers were most frequently developed on side of head to which the person held their phone. Biggest increase in cancerous growths was in acoustic neuromas, which form behind the ear and are usually treated quite easily. Incidence of these types of growths is increasing in the UK. analysis of 1600 people with growths who had used mobile phones for up to ten years before diagnosis. Risk increased with frequency and duration of exposure to mobile phone radiation. Scientists compared tumor victims with those who led similar lives but did not use mobile phones, and also with another group w Suggestion that mobile phone radiation can destroy brain cells and may lead to the early Alzheimer's disease. Long exposure said to destroy cells inparts of the

rat brain important for memory, movement and learning and could possibly cause premature onset of illnesses such as Alzheimer's if the same effect was found in humans. Lund University Hospital did not look at cancer risk but at direct damage to brain cells. Professor Leif Salford said mobile radiation was already known to allow harmful proteins and toxins through the brain barrier in rats. Now, he detected significant degree of damage to brain neurons in adolescent rats. "If this effect was to transfer to young mobile users, the effects could be terrifying. We can see reduced brain reserve capacity, meaning those who might normally have got Alzheimer's or dementia in old age could get it much earlier" He used rats aged 12-26 weeks because their brain cells were still developing in a similar way to teenagers and younger children. They were exposed for just two hours to radiation equivalent to mobile phone use. Sections of rat brain were examined 50 days after exposure. Animals exposed to medium and high-level radiation had many dead neurons.

Environmental Health Perspectives, the journal of the US Government's National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences February 2003 ho had tumors but did not use mobile phones. Mobile phones may make cancer cells grow faster. Dr Fiorenzo Marinalli of National Research Council in Bologna found that leukaemia cells divide much more rapidly after exposure to mobile phone radiation. They used 1 mill watt (many phones can produce up to 2 mill watts) at 900 megahertz (a European frequency). After 24 hours of continuous exposure many cancer cells died, but the effect was reversed after 48 hours, with activation of genes leading to very rapid multiplication. Other scientists dismissed the findings as odd. New Scientist Mail 24 October 2002

Mobile phone radiation disturbs sleep patterns.

Electromagnetic fields from mobile phone use in bed significantly increase brain activity during early non-rapid-eye-movement sleep. Alexander Borbely and Peter Ackerman at the University of Zurich subjected 16 people to electromagnetic radiation similar to mobile phone use for 30 minutes before they went to sleep. Increased brain activity lasted up to 50 minutes. Senior Department of Health source says: "This effectively means that people will soon have to accept that mobile phone do have a biological effect

The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) which advises the government on safety levels, said the study "lacks statistical precision" to draw such conclusions. The findings were revealed on Monday in an edition of the BBC's Panorama programme. The researchers who conducted the study called on the mobile phone industry to acknowledge that its product poses a risk to human health. But the industry denied there is any proven risk to health associated with the devices.

Variation in emission rates
Research carried out exclusively for Panorama by the National Physical Laboratory also features in the programme.

The study looked at the levels of emissions absorbed by the brain from different makes of mobile phone. This is measured by what is known as a specific absorption rate (SAR). An SAR is measured by Watts of radiation energy per kilogram of brain.

An SAR of 10 Watts per kilogram is the safety limit set by the NRPB.

The research shows that although all eight of the phones tested were below the safety limit, there was a considerable difference between the lowest and the highest. Mobile phones are useful as you can

- Make calls
- Contact if emergency occurs
- Send sms texts
- Send and receive picture messages
- Listen to the latest ringtones

This is the list of the advantages of using a mobile phone now look at the disadvantages.

- Risk of brain tumor
- Brain tissue being damaged
- Radiation being emitted into the body
- Ear problems
- Leg problems because it is affecting the blood from flowing

In my opinion I would take note of the disadvantages as these are life threatening. Mobile phones may you look hip and trendy but I would rather have a healthy life than an unhealthy life that can lead to fatal illnesses in Later life. There has not yet been a scientific analysis of whether or not mobile phones are causing problems but it seems logically correct as the problems that are occurring are in the places where the mobile phone are being used most. The ear for instance the ear is connected to the throat and the brain where the mobile is held up against the ear so high levels of radiation are passing through the earlobe up to the brain where symptoms have been found. The leg – mainly the groin when mobile phones are placed into pockets radiation levels are still passing through although you don't realize it but the levels of radiation being past out are leading to problems in the lower region. Although it hasn't been scientifically proven my guesses are that problems are occurring due to the transmitting of radiation.

Many parents are asking whether it is healthy to provide their youngsters with new flash mobile phones. The answer is simply when children at at the age between 0 and 20 years of age there brain tissue and blood cells are very sensitive and is an easy target for radiation. Although you do not realize but the transference of radiation is affecting brain tissue and causing problems that will not be discovered until later life. To keep low levels of radiation at bay a head set is a good source of equipment as radiation waves are not passing directly into the body it has also been said that mobile phones with and Arial is also a good source.

I am a very fond person of all the latest new flash mobile phones but when I examined health issues I would rather a life a healthy life than look popular with an up to d date phone.

Commentary on Script E: Are Mobile Phones Damaging Our Health?

This report focuses on possible effects on children and on the teenage view of mobile phones. There is some evidence of "sense of audience" here. Quotations are not acknowledged, but the changes in vocabulary and quality of expression indicate extensive 'cut-and-paste' from different sources. Again, the treatment of background science is rather weak.

Strand A Research	Sources include research studies, TV and magazines. The information selected lacks detail but is relevant to the study. There is no attempt to evaluate the reliability of any of the sources. (Better than 2, but not a very strong match to 3). Some references are very vague (e.g. "Stewart Report", "Swedish studies"), but references in later parts of the study give more detail. There is no overall bibliography. Quotations are used sensibly and are generally acknowledged as such, though the source is not always clear.	**3**
Strand B Science	There is no explanation of how mobile phones use radiation, or of what activities create the highest risks. The effects which may be produced on living cells are not described or explained in any detail. Some of the claims reported from the media are linked to scientific research, but with no detail of the scope or quality of the studies.	**3**
Strand C Conclus-ions	Risks and benefits are listed, but without any supporting detail. Claims from several studies are reported but no comment is made about the differences between them. Most comments relate to negative effects. The conclusion is not clearly defined, but suggests that the risks of mobile phone use outweigh the advantages. Possible causes of action, or ways to reduce risks are hinted at, but not clearly stated. There is a recognition that evidence is limited so far.	**4**
Strand D Present-ation	There is little structure to the report. There are discontinuities where material appears to have been omitted or lost during word-processing. A colourful cover is provided but there is no attempt to use diagrams, charts tables, etc. to convey information. Spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally sound, though some sentences seem to be incomplete.	**2**
	Overall total mark for the case-study	**12**

Appendix H: Cover Sheet for Work for Moderation

OCR RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT	Science A **Twenty first century science** Subject J630 Skills assessment Unit A219	**200_**

Centre No: | | | | | | Centre Name:

Candidate No: | | | | | Candidate Name:

A219 Marks for data exercise (strands I and E)

Title of activity (as shown on the work): ……………………………………………………………………………….

Use ticks in the boxes (one per row) to indicate the level of performance as judged by the centre, and enter the mark awarded for each strand. The final two columns must be left blank for the moderator.

Strand	Aspect of the work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Strand mark	Mod	T/L
I	Graphical display **or** Processing data												
	Summary of evidence												
	Explanations												
E	Evaluation of procedures												
	Reliability of evidence												
	Reliability of conclusion												

Tick here if these marks are taken from the **same** activity which is counted for assessment of the Investigation in Additional Science. ☐

A219 Marks for the Case Study:

Title of the Case-study (as shown on the script): ……………………………………………………………………….

Use ticks in the boxes (one per row) to indicate the level of performance as judged by the centre, and enter the mark awarded for each strand. The final two columns must be left blank for the moderator.

Strand	**Aspect of the work**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Strand mark**	**Mod**	**T/L**
A	Planning use of sources												
	Acknowledgements												
	Internal referencing												
B	Using science knowledge												
	evaluating scientific evidence												
C	Comparing arguments												
	Conclusions												
D	Structure and organisation												
	Visual communication												
	Quality of language												

Centre overall total mark		Moderator overall total mark		Difference	

Appendix I: Support for Very Weak Students to Produce Coursework

Value of preparation for weak candidates

The preparation of extra materials and the careful administration needed to support very weak candidates should be given a high priority within the Science Department, because these resources can also be used in cases of extended staff absence, or for candidates who miss the normal opportunities for preparing their coursework in lessons. As the coursework is worth a high proportion of the marks for the whole GCSE it is very important that all candidates attempt every component.

Organising the work

A strict timetable improves the pace of work. A clear, achievable outcome for each lesson builds confidence and makes supervision and guidance much more manageable. An A4 or A3 tick chart for each group can be displayed and updated to confirm completion of each outcome and to indicate work that is incomplete or missing.

Collecting all work in each lesson for checking helps to ensure an appropriate rate of progress. Rough work should also be collected as it may prove useful later. Support staff can help to ensure that all work is named and handed in. A brightly-coloured and clearly labelled folder for coursework emphasizes its value and significance.

It is important to check that individual Support staff understand the internal assessment; and especially that they understand that it is the candidates' own ideas that are being assessed, so that telling them what to write, may stop them from getting marks.

Case Study

The Case Study allows weak candidates to be given very structured tasks, with guidance. The assessment criteria take account of the extent of guidance provided whilst crediting the work of the candidate.

Choosing a topic

Candidates will be better motivated if they have some choice, but in order to provide adequate support for weak candidates this needs to be limited to a couple of titles. When the coursework is first introduced, a short list of possible titles can help to illustrate the idea of the project. A brief class discussion of these titles to select the two most popular can give more ownership to the project. The short listed titles must refer to an issue which is familiar to the candidates so they can understand the extra information they find whilst producing their report. They need to refer to science explanations (Strand B), so it is better for the topics to be based on science ideas which are important in the Units.

The best title is a question which demands an answer, so the candidates have a clear target of deciding on their own answer to the question.

For example, the title 'Should smoking be banned?' has been successful for weak candidates.

Strand A: Quality of selection and use of information

Aspect (a): planning the use of sources of information

A Case Study for a weak candidate could be based on one or two paper sources of information. Preparing the information in advance of starting the Case Study makes it much easier to manage the task. It is important to avoid a classroom situation where some pupils cannot proceed with their work because they do not have access to information that they understand.

Two or three websites could be suggested to the candidates for them to select illustrations and/or further information.

This would allow them to gain a mark in Strand A.

The information given to them should include:

- the science explanations for the topic;
- an opinion for the suggestion or question in the title, with a reason for this opinion;
- an opinion against the suggestion or question in the title, with a reason for this opinion.

Aspect (b): acknowledgement of sources used

This is not expected of the weakest candidates.

Aspect (c): linking information to specific sources

This is not expected of the weakest candidates.

Strand B: Quality of understanding of the case

Aspect (a): making use of science explanations

It is unlikely that weak candidates will be able to tell which parts of a science topic are relevant to the case they are studying, but it would help them to describe a relevant science topic; for example, for a Case Study on smoking, a revision lesson could cover the respiratory and circulatory systems.

The key scientific words and phrases for the topic should be listed so candidates can learn them and use them correctly when writing their report.

Aspect (b): recognition and evaluation of scientific evidence

It is safer for the candidates' understanding of the case if the stimulus material includes scientific evidence rather than unsupported claims, as weak candidates find the distinction difficult.

If candidates enter a blog site that discusses a contentious issue, they are likely to find many unsupported claims. Caution is needed in using such sites because unsupported claims and opinions could make too deep an impression, especially if expressed by peers.

Strand C: Quality of conclusions

Aspect (a): comparing opposing evidence and views

Very weak candidates may be unable to recognize whether ideas that are opposed to, or linked to, different points of view. Other candidates may recognise this, but have difficulty in articulating their views. They may be helped by physical means of sorting information from their extracts; for example by cutting out statements and sorting into different envelopes, by using distinct colours of paper on which to paste or write the information, or by highlighting using different colours.

Aspect (b): conclusions and recommendations

If the coursework title is a question with a yes/no answer, then candidates can provide a yes/no answer as their conclusion.

Once the conclusion is written, candidates can be asked to add a reason for their view.

Strand D: Quality of presentation

Aspect (a): structure and organisation of the report

The Case Study can be structured by the use of worksheets or writing frames which can guide them through the process so that their efforts are linked to the criteria by which they are assessed. They need to include: an introduction, explaining why they have chosen the topic; the science involved in the topic; the arguments for and against the issue; and their own conclusion.

Aspect (b): use of visual means of communication

Two or three websites can be suggested to the class, where they can find suitable illustrations for their work. It may be better to do this once the written work is complete, in order to avoid distractions.

Aspect (c): spelling, punctuation and grammar

A revision lesson can be used to remind candidates of the key words for the topic and a literacy-based homework could be set so they can practice using these words. They should be reminded of the importance of correct spelling and punctuation and reminded to use the spell checker if using a word processing package. If the work is to be hand written, writing on alternate lines leaves space for corrections and improves the appearance of the Report.

Data analysis

Weak candidates need a familiar topic for this task so that they know how to collect the data and how to interpret the results. Whilst only strands I and E are assessed, the experience from the Pilot shows that students need to be involved in planning and carrying out the test so they can understand the scientific ideas before interpreting the data.

Worksheets with detailed writing frames can be used to guide candidates through each stage in their work, but the work for assessment must be their own.

It is important to check that individual support staff understand the internal assessment; and especially that they understand that it is the candidates' own work that is being assessed, so that doing work for them, may stop them from getting marks. It would be helpful to have clear instructions on how to support individuals who may have particular difficulties with practical tasks.

Choosing a topic

The work should involve a very simple practical task. The meaning of the results should be very clear to the candidates; for example, if you soak a piece of potato in a glucose solution, its mass changes. It is better to avoid tasks where candidates have to think about the meaning of the quantity they measure; for example, measuring pH; because if they do not understand the scientific idea, they cannot interpret the results.

Strand I: Interpreting data

The candidate's data should be part of the data set used for this it can be supplemented by the data from other members of the class.

Aspect (a): graphical or numerical processing of data

The candidates must display results in a table, chart or graph. A template for a graph, with the appropriate axes and scales, can be prepared by the teacher and duplicated for use by weaker candidates.

Aspect (b): summary of evidence

The candidate needs to compare the results from two different situations. Two individual results can be compared.

The differences in the results must be recorded.

Aspect (c): explanations suggested

Weak candidates struggle to explain their observations using scientific knowledge. They should be encouraged first to write an explanation based on previous experience. When that has been completed, they could describe simply the scientific idea underpinning the test.

In the case of the leaking can, this would be the fact that pressure increases with depth and that that more pressure causes a faster flow.

If they succeed in relating the conclusion to scientific ideas the score would be higher than a mark of 2.

Strand E: Evaluation

Aspect (a): evaluation of procedures

Most candidates find it hard to evaluate their procedures and very weak candidates may be unable to make a comment about the how the data was collected. They could be helped by being given incomplete sentences to finish, and rewarded with a single mark for doing this successfully.

Aspect (b): reliability of evidence

Candidates can be prompted into writing an opinion by being given a menu of options, for example, 'I think my data is very reliable/reliable/not very reliable. They could then be asked to give a reason for their opinion. A sensible opinion, which does not refer appropriately to the data, would be worth 2 marks.

Aspect (c): reliability of conclusion

A question such as "Are you sure your conclusion is right?' can be used to help candidates consider the reliability of their conclusion. This can be followed with other questions, for example, 'What did you do, to make sure you got a good result?'

Pilot centres have found the Evaluation to be the hardest part of the task and weak candidates have often scored 1 in this Strand.

Appendix J: Ideas about Science

In order to deal sensibly with science as we encounter it in everyday life, it is important not only to understand some of the fundamental scientific explanations of the behaviour of the natural world, but also to know something about science itself, how scientific knowledge has been obtained, how reliable it therefore is, what its limitations are, and how far we can therefore rely on it – and also about the interface between scientific knowledge and the wider society.

The kind of understanding of science that we would wish pupils to have by the end of their school science education might be summarised as follows:

The aim of science is to find explanations for the behaviour of the natural world. A good explanation may allow us to predict what will happen in other situations, and perhaps to control and influence events.

There is no single 'method of science' that leads automatically to scientific knowledge. Scientists do, however, have characteristic ways of working. In particular, data, from observations and measurements, are of central importance.

One kind of explanation is to identify a correlation between a factor and an outcome. This factor may then be the cause, or one of the causes, of the outcome. In complex situations, a factor may not always lead to the outcome, but increases the chance (or the risk) of it happening. Other explanations involve putting forward a theory to account for the data. Scientific theories often propose an underlying model, which may involve objects (and their behaviour) that cannot be observed directly.

Devising and testing a scientific explanation is not a simple or straightforward process. First, we can never be completely sure of the data. An observation may be incorrect. A measurement can never be completely relied upon, because of the limitations of the measuring equipment or the person using it.

Second, explanations do not automatically 'emerge' from the data. Thinking up an explanation is a creative step. So, it is quite possible for different people to arrive at different explanations for the same data. And personal characteristics, preferences and loyalties can influence the decisions involved.

The scientific community has established procedures for testing and checking the findings and conclusions of individual scientists, and arriving at an agreed view. Scientists report their findings to other scientists at conferences and in special journals. Claims are not accepted until they have survived the critical scrutiny of the scientific community. In some areas of enquiry, it has proved possible to eliminate all the explanations we can think of but one – which then becomes the accepted explanation (for the time being).

Where possible scientists choose to study simple situations in order to gain understanding. But it can then be difficult to apply this understanding to complex, real-world situations. So there can be legitimate disagreements about how to explain such situations, even where there is no dispute about the basic science involved.

The application of scientific knowledge, in new technologies, materials and devices, greatly enhances our lives, but can also have unintended and undesirable side-effects. An application of science may have social, economic and political implications, and perhaps also ethical ones. Personal and social decisions require an understanding of the science involved, but also involve knowledge and values beyond science.

This is, of course, a simplified account of the nature of science, which omits many of the ideas and subtleties that a contemporary philosopher or sociologist of science might think important. It is intended as an overview of science in terms which might be accessible to 14-16 year old candidates, to provide a basic understanding upon which those who wish may later build more sophisticated understandings. It is important to note that the language in which it is expressed may well not be that which one would use in talking to candidates of this age.

The following pages set out in more detail the key ideas that such an understanding of science might involve, and what candidates should be able to do to demonstrate their understanding.

Data and their limitations

Data are the starting point for scientific enquiry – and the means of testing scientific explanations. But data can never be trusted completely, and scientists need ways of evaluating how good their data are.

	Ideas about science	A candidate who understands this…
1.1	Data are crucial to science. Explanations are sought to account for known data, and data are collected to test proposed explanations.	uses data rather than opinion in justifying an explanation
1.2	We can never be sure that a measurement tells us the true value of the quantity being measured.	can suggest reasons why a measurement may be inaccurate
1.3	If we make several measurements of the same quantity, the results are likely to vary. This may be because we have to measure several individual examples (e.g. the height of cress seedlings after 1 week), or because the quantity we are measuring is varying (e.g. amount of ozone in city air, time for a vehicle to roll down a ramp), and/or because of the limitations of the measuring equipment or of our skill in using it (e.g. repeat measurements when timing an event).	can suggest reasons why several measurements of the same quantity may give different results when asked to evaluate data, makes reference to its reliability (i.e. is it repeatable?)
1.4	Usually the best estimate of the value of a quantity is the average (or mean) of several repeat measurements.	can calculate the mean of a set of repeated measurements from a set of repeated measurements of a quantity, uses the mean as the best estimate of the true value can explain why repeating measurements leads to a better estimate of the quantity
1.5	The spread of values in a set of repeated measurements give a rough estimate of the range within which the true value probably lies.	can make a sensible suggestion about the range within which the true value of a measured quantity probably lies **can justify the claim that there is/is not a ‘real difference’ between two measurements of the same quantity**
1.6	If a measurement lies well outside the range within which the others in a set of repeats lie, or is off a graph line on which the others lie, this is a sign that it may be incorrect.	can identify any outliers in a set of data, and give reasons for including or discarding them

Correlation and cause

Scientists look for patterns in data, as a means of identifying possible cause-effect links, and working towards explanations.

	Ideas about science	A candidate who understands this…
2.1	It is often useful to think about processes in terms of factors which may affect an outcome (or input variable(s) which may affect an outcome variable).	in a given context, can identify the outcome and the factors that may affect it in a given context, can suggest how an outcome might be affected when a factor is changed
2.2	To investigate the relationship between a factor and an outcome, it is important to control all the other factors which we think might affect the outcome (a so-called 'fair test').	can identify, in a plan for an investigation of the effect of a factor on an outcome, the fact that other factors are controlled as a positive feature, or the fact that they are not as a design flaw **can explain why it is necessary to control all factors thought likely to affect the outcome other than the one being investigated**
2.3	If an outcome occurs when a specific factor is present, but does not when it is absent, or if an outcome variable increases (or decreases) steadily as an input variable increases, we say that there is a correlation between the two.	can give an example from everyday life of a correlation between a factor and an outcome
2.4	A correlation between a factor and an outcome does not necessarily mean that one causes the other; both might, for example, be caused by some other factor.	uses the ideas of correlation and cause appropriately when discussing historical events or topical issues in science **can explain why a correlation between a factor and an outcome does not necessarily mean that one causes the other, and give an example to illustrate this**
2.5	In some situations, a factor increases the chance (or probability) of an outcome, but does not invariably lead to it, e.g. a diet containing high levels of saturated fat increases an individual's risk of heart disease, but may not lead to it. We also call this a correlation.	can suggest factors that might increase the chance of an outcome, but not invariably lead to it can explain that individual cases do not provide convincing evidence for or against a correlation
2.6	To investigate a claim that a factor increases the chance (or probability) of an outcome, we compare samples (e.g. groups of people) that are matched on as many other factors as possible, or are chosen randomly so that other factors are equally likely in both samples. The larger the samples the more confident we can be about any conclusions drawn.	can evaluate the design for a study to test whether or not a factor increases the chance of an outcome, by commenting on sample size and how well the samples are matched **can use data to develop an argument that a factor does/does not increase the chance of an outcome**
2.7	Even when there is evidence that a factor is correlated with an outcome, scientists are unlikely to accept that it is a cause of the outcome, unless they can think of a plausible mechanism linking the two.	**can identify the presence (or absence) of a plausible mechanism as significant for the acceptance (or rejection) of a claimed causal link**

Developing explanations

Scientific explanations are of different types. Some are based on a proposed cause-effect link. Others show how a given event is in line with a general law, or with a general theory. Some theories involve a model, which may include objects or quantities that cannot be directly observed, which accounts for the things we can observe.

	Ideas about science	A candidate who understands this…
3.1	A scientific explanation is a conjecture (a hypothesis) about how data might be accounted for. It is not simply a summary of the data, but is distinct from it.	can identify statements which are data and statements which are (all or part of) an explanation can recognise data or observations that are accounted for by, or conflict with, an explanation
3.2	An explanation cannot simply be deduced from data, but has to be thought up imaginatively to account for the data.	can identify imagination and creativity in the development of an explanation
3.3	A scientific explanation should account for most (ideally all) of the data already known. It may explain a wide range of observations. It should also enable predictions to be made about new situations or examples.	can justify accepting or rejecting a proposed explanation on the grounds that it: • accounts for observations • **and/or provides an explanation that links things previously thought to be unrelated** • **and/or leads to predictions that are subsequently confirmed**
3.4	Scientific explanations are tested by comparing predictions made from them with data from observations or experiments.	can draw valid conclusions about the implications of given data for a given explanation, in particular: • recognises that an observation that agrees with a prediction (derived from an explanation) increases confidence in the explanation **but does not prove it is correct** • recognises that an observation that disagrees with a prediction (derived from an explanation) indicates that either the observation or the prediction is wrong, **and that this may decrease our confidence in the explanation**
3.5	For some questions that scientists are interested in, there is not yet an answer.	can identify a scientific question for which there is not yet an answer, **and suggest a reason why**

The Scientific Community

Findings reported by an individual scientist or group are carefully checked by the scientific community before being accepted as scientific knowledge.

	Ideas about science	A candidate who understands this…
4.1	Scientists report their findings to other scientists through conferences and journals. Scientific findings are only accepted once they have been evaluated critically by other scientists.	can describe in broad outline the 'peer review' process, in which new scientific claims are evaluated by other scientists can recognise that new scientific claims which have not yet been evaluated by the scientific community are less reliable than well-established ones
4.2	Scientists are usually sceptical about findings that cannot be repeated by anyone else, and about unexpected findings until they have been replicated.	can identify absence of replication as a reason for questioning a scientific claim **can explain why scientists regard it as important that a scientific claim can be replicated by other scientists**
4.3	Explanations cannot simply be deduced from the available data, so two (or more) scientists may legitimately draw different conclusions about the same data. A scientist's personal background, experience or interests may influence his/her judgments. (e.g. data open to several interpretations; influence of personal background and experience; interests of employers or sponsors).	can suggest plausible reasons why scientists involved in a scientific event or issue disagree(d)
4.4	A scientific explanation is rarely abandoned just because some data are not in line with it. An explanation usually survives until a better one is proposed. (e.g. anomalous data may be incorrect; new explanation may soon run into problems; safer to stick with ideas that have served well in the past).	**can suggest reasons for scientists' reluctance to give up an accepted explanation when new data appear to conflict with it**

Risk

Every activity involves some risk. Assessing and comparing the risks of an activity, and relating these to the benefits we gain from it, are important in decision making.

	Ideas about science	A candidate who understands this…
5.1	Everything we do carries a certain risk of accident or harm. Nothing is risk free. New technologies and processes based on scientific advances often introduce new risks.	can explain why it is impossible for anything to be completely safe can identify examples of risks which arise from a new scientific or technological advances can suggest ways of reducing specific risks
5.2	We can sometimes assess the size of a risk by measuring its chance of occurring in a large sample, over a given period of time.	can interpret and discuss information on the size of risks, presented in different ways.
5.3	To make a decision about a particular risk, we need to take account both of the chance of it happening and the consequences if it did.	**can discuss a given risk, taking account of both the chance of it occurring and the consequences if it did**
5.4	People are often willing to accept the risk associated with an activity if they enjoy or benefit from it. We are also more willing to accept the risk associated with things we choose to do than things that are imposed, or that have short-lived effects rather than long-lasting ones.	can suggest benefits of activities that have a known risk can offer reasons for people's willingness (or reluctance) to accept the risk of a given activity can discuss personal and social choices in terms of a balance of risk and benefit
5.5	If you are not sure about the possible results of doing something, and if serious and irreversible harm could result from it, then it makes sense to avoid it (the 'precautionary principle').	**can identify, or propose, an argument based on the 'precautionary principle'**
5.6	Our perception of the size of a risk is often very different from the actual measured risk. We tend to over-estimate the risk of unfamiliar things (like flying as compared with cycling), and things whose effect is invisible (like ionizing radiation).	**can distinguish between actual and perceived risk, when discussing personal and social choices** **can suggest reasons for given examples of differences between actual and perceived risk**
5.7	Reducing the risk of a given hazard costs more and more, the lower we want to make the risk. As risk cannot be reduced to zero, individuals and/or governments have to decide what level of risk is acceptable.	**can explain what the ALARA (as low as reasonably achievable) principle means and how it applies in a given context**

Making Decisions about Science and Technology

To make sound decisions about the applications of scientific knowledge, we have to weigh up the benefits and costs of new processes and devices. Sometimes these decisions also raise ethical issues. Society has developed ways of managing these issues, though new developments can pose new challenges to these.

	Ideas about science	A candidate who understands this…
6.1	Science-based technology provides people with many things that they value, and which enhance the quality of life. Some applications of science can, however, have unintended and undesirable impacts on the quality of life or the environment. Benefits need to be weighed against costs.	In a particular context, can identify the groups affected and the main benefits and costs of a course of action for each group
6.2	Scientists may identify unintended impacts of human activity (including population growth) on the environment. They can sometimes help us to devise ways of mitigating this impact and of using natural resources in a more sustainable way.	can explain the idea of sustainable development, and apply it to specific situations
6.3	In many areas of scientific work, the development and application of scientific knowledge are subject to official regulations and laws (e.g. on the use of animals in research, levels of emissions into the environment, research on human fertility and embryology).	shows awareness that scientific research and applications are subject to official regulations and law
6.4	Some questions, such as those involving values, cannot be addressed by scientists.	can distinguish questions which could be addressed using a scientific approach, from questions which could not
6.5	Some applications of science have ethical implications. As a result, people may disagree about what should be done (or permitted).	where an ethical issue is involved, can: • say clearly what this issue is • summarise different views that may be held
6.6	In discussions of ethical issues, one common argument is that the right decision is one which leads to the best outcome for the majority of people involved. Another is that certain actions are unnatural or wrong, and should not be done in any circumstances. A third is that is that it is unfair for a person to choose to benefit from something made possible only because others take a risk, whilst avoiding that risk themselves.	in a particular context, can identify, and develop, arguments based on the ideas that: • the right decision is the one which leads to the best outcome for the majority of people involved • certain actions are never justified because they are unnatural or wrong
6.7	In assessing any proposed application of science, we must first decide if it is technically feasible. Different decisions on the same issue may be made in different social and economic contexts.	**in a particular context, can distinguish what can be done (technical feasibility), from what should be done (values)** **can explain why different courses of action may be taken in different social and economic contexts**

Appendix K: Advice to Centres on Preparation of Sample for Moderation

Specification J630: Assessment unit A219

This note is to remind you of the stages in preparation of a sample of coursework for moderation. If you have any further queries about coursework, or any aspect of the assessment, please contact the science team, tel 01223 553311.

The notes which follow summarise the materials and evidence required for moderation of the coursework assessment, and explain how to use the documentation which is also enclosed.

Unit A219: Data analysis + case-study

Each candidate is required to complete a data interpretation and evaluation exercise and a Case-study. The evidence for these will consist of a report of the interpretation and evaluation, and the completed case study report. In each case, candidates may complete more than one, but the final mark is the mark for the best single piece of work. It is not permitted to aggregate part marks from different pieces of work.

The centre will be provided with self-carboning mark sheets (MS1). Enter the overall total mark (one data analysis + one case-study). The top copy of the completed MS1 form is sent to OCR, the second copy to the moderator, to arrive not later than 15th May, and the third copy is retained by the centre.

The moderator will ask for the work of a sample of candidates. The work of these candidates should be sent as quickly as possible to the moderator. The list will identify the names and candidate numbers for each candidate whose work is required by the moderator. This list may be kept to provide a record for you of what work has been sent.

The sample sent to the moderator should contain:

- Brief notes about the activities used for assessment.
- A description of procedures used within the centre to ensure internal standardisation of marking
- The sample of work (one case study and one data exercise) for each candidate in the sample.
- A completed cover-sheet for each candidate in the sample.

Recording of marks for assessed work

The cover sheet may be photocopied to make sufficient copies to provide for each candidate in the sample. The sheet should be used by the teacher to record marking decisions when marking the work. The pages in each piece of work should be stapled together. A paper-clip provides a convenient way of linking the piece of work and the completed mark sheet.

It is essential that a completed sheet is sent for each sample of work which is called for moderation. Enter the centre name and number and the candidate name and number at the top of the sheet.

The sheet also includes spaces which should be left blank. These will be used as a working document by the moderator when checking the work. The sheets will be retained by OCR as a complete record of all judgments related to the moderation.

The centre should also keep its own record of the work done and marks awarded.

'Double counting' of marks for the data exercise

For candidates who are also taking Additional Science A (J631) it is permissible to use an investigation from Additional Science to provide the marks for data interpretation and evaluation. If the same piece of work is called for from both specifications, tick the space on the cover-sheet to indicate this. Copies of the work should be included in both Single and Additional Science samples of work.

Special consideration candidates

If a special consideration application regarding internally assessed marks has been made for any candidate, the work of the candidate(s) concerned should be added to the sample, with a note to explain that they are for special consideration.

The sample of work will be returned to the centre, normally early in July. A report on the moderation will be sent with the notification of results.

I hope that these guidelines are clear and will help the process of moderation to run smoothly. Please do not hesitate to get in contact if you have any queries.

Appendix L: Student Authentication Statement

OCR
RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

Candidate Authentication Statement

The completed form should be retained within the Centre and should not be sent to the moderator or OCR unless specifically requested.

NOTICE TO CANDIDATE

The work you submit for assessment must be your own.

If you copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you, or if you cheat in any other way, you may be disqualified from at least the subject concerned.

1. Any help or information you have received from people other than your subject teacher(s) must be clearly identified in the work itself.
2. Any books, information leaflets or other material (e.g. videos, software packages or Information from the Internet) which you have used to help you complete this work must be clearly acknowledged in the work itself. To present material copied from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception.

Declaration by candidate

Centre name ______ Centre No ☐☐☐☐☐

Session ______ Year ☐☐☐☐

Specification of Unit title ______

Candidate Name ______ Candidate Number ☐☐☐☐

I have read and understood the **Notice to Candidate** (above). I have produced the work without any help from other people apart from that which I have declared in the work itself.
I have acknowledged all source materials in the work itself.

Candidate's signature:

Date:

Notes:

The Candidate Authentication statement once completed should be stored securely within the centre. A copy of this authentication form must be available upon request for each coursework/portfolio submission.

Standard Candidate Authentication Statement

Appendix M: Centre Authentication Form

OCR
RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

Centre Authentication Form

OCR Advanced GCE GCSE Entry Level

One copy of this form must be completed for **each** unit or coursework component and signed by the appropriate person(s). The completed form **must** accompany the coursework or portfolios submission to the moderator/examiner or be inspected by the visiting moderator for Entry Level, GCSE, GNVQ, VCE and GCE qualifications.

It is now a requirement of the Code of Practice that this authentication form is signed.

*'**Authentication of candidates' work** – The internal assessor must present a written declaration that the candidates' work was conducted under the required conditions as laid down by the specification.'*

Centre Name ____________________ **Centre No** ☐☐☐☐☐

Specification or Unit title ____________________

Qualification or Unit number/component code ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Session ____________________ **Year** 2 0 0 ☐

Moderated unit
(Please tick box if yes) ☐

In this case this form must accompany the sample posted to the moderator or inspected by the visiting moderator

or

Examined unit
(Please tick box if yes) ☐

In this case this form must accompany the packet of coursework which is posted to the examiner or assessed by the visiting examiner.

Signature(s) of internal assessor(s) – i.e. person(s) responsible for carrying out internal assessment and/or supervision (in the case of examined coursework) of work:

I/We the undersigned confirm that the candidates' work was conducted under the required conditions as laid down by the specification.

Signature:.. Print name:..

Signature:.. Print name:..

Signature:.. Print name:..

Please continue on a separate sheet if required.

In order to support internal assessors in authenticating their students' work an **example** of a standard Candidate Authentication Statement is provided on the OCR Website (www.ocr.org.uk). Alternatively centres may wish to continue to use their own internal arrangements for candidate authentication, but these must provide equivalence to the standard Candidate Authentication Statement.

Notes

In the case of private candidates or distant tutored candidates, the centre must ensure that:

- *the tutor/teacher has acquainted themselves thoroughly with the general standard of candidates' work before accepting coursework for Internal Assessment. Work submitted by candidates that is atypical or inconsistent with their general standard may raise concerns over authenticity.*
- *sufficient on-going regular monitoring of the candidates' examination coursework has taken place.*
- *Centres are reminded that they must comply with restrictions that may apply to entries e.g. the exclusion of Private candidates from a specification.*

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Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations

Appendix N: Health and Safety Information

In UK law, health and safety is the responsibility of the employer. For most centres entering candidates for GCSE examinations this is likely to be the Local Education Authority or the Governing Body. Teachers have a duty to co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters. Various regulations, but especially the COSHH Regulations 1996 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, require that before any activity involving a hazardous procedure or harmful microorganisms is carried out, or hazardous chemicals are used or made, the employer must provide a risk assessment.

A useful summary of the requirements for risk assessment in school or college science can be found in Chapter 4 of Safety in Science Education. For members, the CLEAPSS guide, Managing Risk Assessment in Science offers detailed advice.

Most education employers have adopted a range of nationally available publications as the basis for their Model Risk Assessments. Those commonly used include:

- Safety in Science Education, DfEE, 1996, HMSO, ISBN 0 11 270915 X
- Topics in Safety 3rd edition, 2001, ASE ISBN 0 86357 316 9
- Safeguards in the School Laboratory, 10th edition, 1996, ASE ISBN 0 86357 250 2
- Hazcards, 1995 with 2004 updates, CLEAPSS School Science Service*
- CLEAPSS Laboratory Handbook, 1997 with 2004 update, CLEAPSS School Science Service*
- CLEAPSS Shorter Handbook (CLEAPSS 2000) CLEAPSS School Science Service*
- Hazardous Chemicals, A manual for Science Education, (SSERC, 1997) ISBN 0 9531776 0 2

*Note that CLEAPSS publications are only available to members or associates.

Where an employer has adopted these or other publications as the basis of their model risk assessments, an individual Centre then has to review them, to see if there is a need to modify or adapt them in some way to suit the particular conditions of the establishment. Such adaptations might include a reduced scale of working, deciding that the fume cupboard provision was inadequate or the skills of the candidates were insufficient to attempt particular activities safely.

The significant findings of such risk assessment should then be recorded, for example on schemes of work, published teachers guides, work sheets, etc.

There is no specific legal requirement that detailed risk assessment forms should be completed, although a few employers require this.

When candidates plan and carry out their own investigative work the teacher has a duty to check the plans before the practical work starts and to monitor the activity as it proceeds.