

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2009

IGCSE

IGCSE Science (Double Award)(4437) Paper 6H

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Publications Code UG022413

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Question 1

This question was well answered although some failed to mention that when the fuse wire melts this breaks the circuit. Most secured all three marks in (b) though some tried to use the Ohm's Law equation. Most chose the 13A fuse and went on to explain that the other fuses would blow or were below the operating current. A wide variety of answers, such as electric kettle, were acceptable in part (d) but 'microwave oven' and 'air conditioning' were not.

Question 2

Most knew that alpha particles are something to do with helium but only a minority were able to gain both marks by stating that they are helium nuclei. Most were able to name a source of background radiation other than cosmic rays. However, much of cosmic radiation is from the Sun so that source is not an appropriate answer. In part (b) the idea that, in space, there would not be any molecules to interact with alpha particles was generally well understood. 'Half life' was generally well understood though some confused themselves with 'half the life of carbon14' and similar examples of poor expression. Most were able to show on the graph how to determine half-life but a minority went on the misread the graph and gave a value 5200 rather than 6000 years. Most were able to give another use for radioactivity.

Question 3

Most were able to obtain full marks throughout this question on efficiency; though there were a few who shot themselves in the foot by giving the efficiency as 0.4 % rather than as 0.4 or as 40 %.

Question 4

Part (a) was generally well answered though some confused roof and loft and in (ii), though double (and triple) glazing, shutters and curtains were all correctly suggested, 'shut the window' was not. In (b) though most secured two marks for the suggestion that air is heated and then it rises only a few correctly explained that this is because the air expands or becomes less dense.

Question 5

Few candidates offered both an electric motor and a loudspeaker as examples. Some did not appear to think about the question and erroneous responses, such as transformers and generators, were often suggested. However 'use a more powerful magnet' and 'increase the current' were frequently correctly suggested in part (b). Part (c) was generally well done with the connection between thumb and direction of force being the most popular correct link. In part (d) very few realised that when a wire carrying a current is parallel to a magnetic field there will be no electromagnetic force on it.

Question 6

Most got full marks in (a)(i) and (ii) but some, who clearly had the right idea, did not realise that to answer part (iii) both the correct number and the correct unit need to be given. In part (iv) many correctly expressed the idea that 'no energy is wasted' but there was no mark for claiming that the 'assumption' is that 'GPE = work done'. That's how you answer part (iii) and the 'assumption' is whatever you conveniently overlook to get there for example, that 'no energy is wasted as heat'. Most knew the equation for kinetic energy though some seemed to think that the 'v' refers to velocity, it doesn't it refers to speed, and most would have probably demonstrated how to use the equation if they had not overlooked the difference between 823.2 kJ and 823.2 joules.

Question 7

Part (a)(i) was generally well answered with the upward slope being calculated and the unit stated correctly, though there were some who offered m/s^{-2} and other mistakes. Some gave a clear indication that the distance is equal to the area under the graph though others tried, unsuccessfully, to use distance = speed \times time taken. In part (c) a common careless mistake was to 'misread' the time as 0.6 s rather than as 0.06 s. There was a good response to (b) with most able to state the equation correctly and to use it to calculate the mass of the other car which hits the barrier.

Question 8

A common mistake was to fail to convert correctly four hours to $4 \times 60 \times 60$ seconds. In part (b) few knew that in (i) its 'charge' and in (ii) its 'coulomb'.

Question 9

Most recognised the labelled parts as 'prisms' and that the process shown by the path of the light is total internal reflection. Part (b)(i) was generally well answered; most recognised CD as the normal and wrote the required equation as $y = x$, though a minority suggested $y = u$, and most remembered the relationship between the refractive index, the angle of incidence and the angle of refraction. In part (ii) some recognised that, in the given diagram, the angle of incidence must be greater than the critical angle and were able to give an equation which relates critical angle and refractive index.

Question 10

Part (a) was generally well answered and some might have gone on to obtain all six of the other marks if only they had not carelessly overlooked the fact that 1200 kHz is not 1200 hertz.

Question 11

Many were able to relate 'area', 'force' and 'pressure' correctly. In part (ii) many were able to make an appropriate start, for one mark, by stating that the edge of a sharp blade has a smaller area than the edge of a blunt blade. However only a minority were then able to complete the comparison by stating either that for the same pressure the sharp blade will give a greater force or that for the same force it will give a greater pressure. In part (b) candidates were required to make an appropriate connection between two ideas; that 5 kPa is 5000 pascals and that a pascal is one newton per square metre. From this it follows that an example such as '5000 N on 1 m^2 ' is an appropriate example but only a minority got this far.

Question 12

In part (a) some gave a response such as 'heated water produces steam that drives a turbine to rotate a generator' and gained all three marks. Some others contented themselves, but not their examiner, with science fiction answers involving radioactivity. Part (b) was generally well answered with the function of the moderator in (iv) being recognised by nearly all candidates. Most made a secure start, and gained one mark for part (v), by stating that neutrons are emitted and that these collide with other uranium nuclei. However only a minority of candidates went on to convey their understanding of the consequential 'cascade' or 'falling domino' effect.

SCIENCE (DOUBLE AWARD) 4437, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Option 1 : with Paper 7 (Biology) & Paper 8 (Chemistry)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Foundation Tier				52	42	32	23	14
Higher Tier	76	65	54	44	35	30		

Option 2 : with Paper 7 (Biology) & Paper 9 (Physics)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Foundation Tier				52	42	32	23	14
Higher Tier	76	65	54	43	35	31		

Option 3 : with Paper 8 (Chemistry) & Paper 9 (Physics)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Foundation Tier				53	43	33	24	15
Higher Tier	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

No candidates at higher tier entered so there are no grade boundaries for this category.

Option 4: with Coursework (Paper 10)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Foundation Tier				N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Higher Tier	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

No candidates entered coursework so there are no grade boundaries for this option.

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demand of the question paper.

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