O Level Additional Combined Science (5130)
Frequently Asked Questions

Can my candidates take a dictionary / calculator into the examination?

Calculators can be used in all science papers and students should take a calculator, ruler, pencil, protractor and set of compasses into all science exams. Dictionaries are not allowed.

What is the difference between the Science O Level (Combined), the Combined Science Syllabus (5129) and the Additional Combined Science Syllabus (5130)?

The Science O Level papers are combinations of two out of three science subjects. For example, Science (Physics/Chemistry) consists of separate papers for Physics and Chemistry, together with a Multiple Choice Paper of twenty Physics and twenty Chemistry items.
On the other hand the Combined Science O Level (5129) has questions equally balanced between the three subject areas of Biology, Physics and Chemistry.
The Additional Combined Science O Level (5130) is offered in conjunction with Combined Science (5129) and provides a more extended coverage of basic scientific principles. This qualification provides a sound basis for studies beyond O Level in pure sciences, in applied sciences or in science-dependent vocational courses.

What equipment should we have in our laboratories?

A CIE booklet entitled *Planning Science in Secondary Schools* is available from CIE Publications.

What help and advice can you give me about health and safety in the laboratory?

The most important point of first contact is with the organisation responsible for health and safety in schools locally; they must be consulted if you are in any doubt and will advise on any local legal requirements. In addition, there are several useful guides available and many are listed in the booklet 'Planning Science in Secondary Schools'. Most chemical suppliers' catalogues have details of safety requirements for specific chemicals, and 'Hazards' (published by CLEAPSS Development Group, Brunel University, Uxbridge), 'Hazards in the Chemical Laboratory' (published by the Royal Society of Chemistry, ISBN 0-85186-489-9) and 'Hazard Data Sheets' (published by BDH Laboratory Supplies) are all excellent reference points. An on-line resource is located at www.labsafety.org.

There is no practical paper in these examinations. Is practical work tested?

Although there is no practical examination it is certainly expected that students will gain awareness of the study and practice of science through experimental work. This practical aspect will be tested in both of the theory papers.

Is this examination available in both examination sessions?

This examination is offered in the November session only.

Which is the correct textbook for the course?

We don't require Centres to use any one particular textbook for our courses, and we would hope that wherever possible teachers would make use of a variety of different resources, drawing from the best bits of each. We do provide a list of books that we believe teachers may find helpful, and this is published in the syllabus

Do I need to teach the course in the order given in the syllabus?

No, and we don't particularly recommend it. The syllabus outlines what may be assessed in the examination, but we would normally expect teachers to follow their own scheme of work based on the syllabus.