

Foundation

GCSE

Biology B Twenty First Century Science

J257/02: Depth in Biology (Foundation Tier)

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS**PREPARATION FOR MARKING****RM ASSESSOR**

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone, email or via the RM Assessor messaging system.

5. Crossed-Out Responses

Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed-out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed-out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM Assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple-Choice Question Responses

When a multiple-choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate). *When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.*

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only one mark per response)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth two or more marks)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space).

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.
7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):
 - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your Team Leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**
9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.

10. For answers marked by levels of response:

Read through the whole answer from start to finish, using the Level descriptors to help you decide whether it is a strong or weak answer. The indicative scientific content in the Guidance column indicates the expected parameters for candidates' answers, but be prepared to recognise and credit unexpected approaches where they show relevance. Using a 'best-fit' approach based on the skills and science content evidenced within the answer, first decide which set of level descriptors, Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3, best describes the overall quality of the answer.

Once the level is located, award the higher or lower mark:

The higher mark should be awarded where the level descriptor has been evidenced and all aspects of the communication statement (in *italics*) have been met.

The lower mark should be awarded where the level descriptor has been evidenced but aspects of the communication statement (in *italics*) are missing.

In summary:

The skills and science content determines the level.

The communication statement determines the mark within a level.

Level of response questions on this paper are **6(c)(iv)** and **9(d)**.

11. Annotations available in RM Assessor

Annotation	Meaning
	Correct response
	Incorrect response
	Omission mark
	Benefit of doubt given
	Contradiction
	Rounding error
	Error in number of significant figures
	Error carried forward
	Level 1
	Level 2
	Level 3
	Benefit of doubt not given
	Noted but no credit given
	Ignore

12. Abbreviations, annotations and conventions used in the detailed Mark Scheme (to include abbreviations and subject-specific conventions).

Annotation	Meaning
/	alternative and acceptable answers for the same marking point
✓	Separates marking points
DO NOT ALLOW	Answers which are not worthy of credit
IGNORE	Statements which are irrelevant
ALLOW	Answers that can be accepted
()	Words which are not essential to gain credit
—	Underlined words must be present in answer to score a mark
ECF	Error carried forward
AW	Alternative wording
ORA	Or reverse argument

13. Subject-specific Marking Instructions

INTRODUCTION

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. This material includes:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper
- the mark scheme.

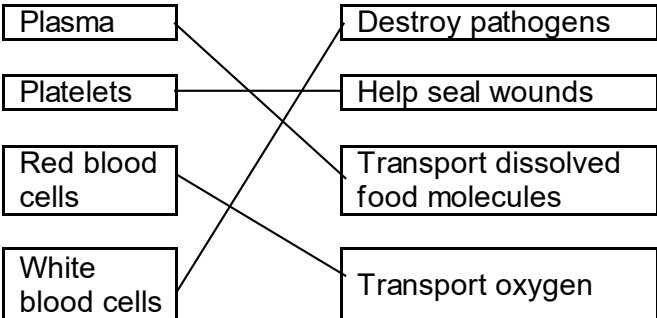
You should ensure that you have copies of these materials.

You should ensure also that you are familiar with the administrative procedures related to the marking process. These are set out in the OCR booklet **Instructions for Examiners**. If you are examining for the first time, please read carefully **Appendix 5 Introduction to Script Marking: Notes for New Examiners**.

Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

The breakdown of Assessment Objectives for GCSE (9-1) in Biology B:

	Assessment Objective
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific techniques and procedures.
AO1.1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas.
AO1.2	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific techniques and procedures.
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.
AO2.1	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas.
AO2.2	Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.
AO3	Analyse information and ideas to interpret and evaluate, make judgements and draw conclusions and develop and improve experimental procedures.
AO3.1	Analyse information and ideas to interpret and evaluate.
AO3.1a	Analyse information and ideas to interpret.
AO3.1b	Analyse information and ideas to evaluate.
AO3.2	Analyse information and ideas to make judgements and draw conclusions.
AO3.2a	Analyse information and ideas to make judgements.
AO3.2b	Analyse information and ideas to draw conclusions.
AO3.3	Analyse information and ideas to develop and improve experimental procedures.
AO3.3a	Analyse information and ideas to develop experimental procedures.
AO3.3b	Analyse information and ideas to improve experimental procedures.

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
1	(a)		Circulatory system ✓	1	1.1	
	(b)		Heart ✓	1	1.1	
	(c)		Vein ✓	1	1.1	
	(d)		 ✓✓✓	3	1.1	One correct line = 1 mark Two correct lines = 2 marks Three for four correct lines = 3 marks IGNORE branching lines IGNORE any box with more than one line joined to it

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
2	(a)		Chromosome before Gene ✓ Gene before Nucleotide ✓	2	1.1	
	(b)		The entire genetic material of an organism ✓	1	1.1	
	(c)		The number of bases in each nucleotide – 1 ✓ The number of different nucleotides found in DNA – 4 ✓ The number of strands in the DNA double helix – 2 ✓	3	1.1	IGNORE branching lines IGNORE any description with more than one line joined to it

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
3	(a)	(i)	Plant ✓	1	3.1a	
		(ii)	DNA / genome / chromosomes / genes / alleles / genetic variants / genetic material / genetic information / base sequence / nucleotide sequence ✓	1	2.1	DO NOT ALLOW bases unqualified OR nucleotides unqualified DO NOT ALLOW genetic code DO NOT ALLOW genotype DO NOT ALLOW plasmid(s) DO NOT ALLOW ref. to anything not in the nucleus, e.g. mitochondria/chloroplasts
	(b)		Any two from: No nucleus ✓ It has plasmid(s) ✓ DNA is in the cytoplasm/DNA is a (continuous) loop. ✓ No mitochondria ✓	2	2.1	DO NOT ALLOW ref. to flagellum/whip/tail DO NOT ALLOW ref. to shape/size

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
4	(a)		A D B C ✓✓	2	1.2	One or two correct = 1 mark Three or four correct = 2 marks
	(b)		slide ✓ objective ✓ eyepiece ✓	3	1.2	
	(c)		So you can see how close the slide gets to the lens / know when to stop moving it / don't smash the slide/lens. ✓	1	2.2	ALLOW "to see if anything is in the way"
	(d)	(i)	First check the answer on the answer line. If answer = 4.5 (mm²) award 2 marks 2.5 x 1.8 ✓ = 4.5 (mm ²) ✓	2	2.2	
		(ii)	13 (cm ²) ✓	1	2.2	ALLOW any number between 11.0 and 13.0 inclusive
		(iii)	Any two from: Count (mean) number of stomata in (small) section(s) / field of view / sample(s). ✓ Idea of multiplying this to produce an estimate for the whole area of this side of the leaf. ✓	2	3.3a	ALLOW 1 mark max. for idea that number on underside can be estimated from number on top side by multiplying by 5 ALLOW 1 mark max. for idea of counting number vertically and number horizontally then multiplying ALLOW number of stomata = (mean) number in sample x (total area of leaf ÷ area of sample)

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
4	(d)	(iv)	Any one from: Quicker ✓ Too many/too difficult to count all of them ✓ Idea that likely to make errors when trying to count all of them / not likely to be any more accurate than an estimate ✓	1	3.2a	IGNORE “easier” unexplained ALLOW idea that an estimate is good enough / don’t need to know exact number ALLOW more efficient
	(e)		(five times) more stomata on the underside than the top side ✓	1	3.2b	ORA ALLOW idea that number on underside increases as number on top side increases DO NOT ALLOW conclusion about an individual leaf
	(f)		C ✓	1	2.1	

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance												
5	(a)		76 ✓ 19 19 19 19 ✓	2	2.1													
	(b)		38 ✓	1	2.1													
	(c)	(i)	B(C)DEA ✓✓✓	3	1.1	B before D = 1 mark D before E = 1 mark E before A = 1 mark												
		(ii)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td>Interphase</td></tr><tr><td>The cell divides</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>The cell grows larger</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>The chromosomes are copied</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>The chromosome copies separate</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>The nucleus divides</td><td></td></tr></table> ✓		Interphase	The cell divides		The cell grows larger	✓	The chromosomes are copied	✓	The chromosome copies separate		The nucleus divides		1	1.1	Two correct ticks for 1 mark
	Interphase																	
The cell divides																		
The cell grows larger	✓																	
The chromosomes are copied	✓																	
The chromosome copies separate																		
The nucleus divides																		
	(d)		identical ✓	1	1.1													
	(e)		Any two from: changes in cells OR changes/mutations in DNA/genes/the genome ✓ <u>uncontrolled</u> cell division/mitosis ✓ a tumour forms ✓	2	1.1	ALLOW genes triggering cell division permanently switched on DO NOT ALLOW rapid division/mitosis ALLOW “continuous” division/mitosis DO NOT ALLOW “repeated”												

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
6	(a)		Producer ✓	1	2.1	
	(b)		Any two from: lack of food / fewer prey / idea of disruption to food chain ✓ loss of habitat / shelter / places to hide / more exposed to predators ✓ loss of building materials (e.g. for nests/dams) ✓ loss of breeding/nesting sites ✓ fewer mates ✓ fewer predators (so less likely to be eaten) ✓	2	2.1	IGNORE ref. to population decrease/increase unexplained ALLOW need to move/migrate DO NOT ALLOW ref. to levels of oxygen/carbon dioxide ALLOW starvation DO NOT ALLOW “die” / “die out” / “extinction” unexplained DO NOT ALLOW loss of home ALLOW loss of place to live
	(c)	(i)	Fungus ✓ Spores carried by the wind ✓	2	1.1	

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
6	(c)	(ii)	Antimicrobial substances ✓ Waxy leaf cuticle ✓	2	1.1	
		(iii)	mutation ✓ reproduction ✓ natural selection ✓	3	2.1	

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
6	(c)	(iv)*	Please refer to the marking instructions on page 4 of this mark scheme for guidance on how to mark this question. Level 3 (5–6 marks) Explains examples of benefits AND risks in detail, including knock-on effects on wider biodiversity such as animals and other plants. <i>There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and substantiated.</i> Level 2 (3–4 marks) Explains limited examples of benefits AND risks. <i>There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is relevant and supported by some evidence.</i> Level 1 (1–2 marks) Explains only benefits. OR Explains only risks. <i>There is an attempt at a logical structure with a line of reasoning. The information is in the most part relevant.</i> 0 marks <i>No response or no response worthy of credit.</i>	6	2.1	AO2.1 Applying knowledge and understanding to explain benefits and risks For example: Benefits • The fungus could stop/reduce the spread of ash dieback (pathogen) • Could save (millions/billions of) ash trees • Could save money / millions/billions of pounds • Could protect biodiversity / (important role of trees in) ecosystems • Could protect food chains/webs • Could protect animals that need the ash trees for food / habitat / materials / breeding sites Risks • The fungus would be an invasive species / is not native / does not belong in the woodland ecosystem. • The fungus could be difficult to control / could spread to other habitats/ecosystems/places. • The fungus could be a pathogen / cause disease / could harm other plant species. • The fungus could harm animals / humans. • Could reduce biodiversity. • The toxic chemical released by the fungus could harm other species. • The toxic chemical released by the fungus could disrupt/bioaccumulate in the food chain. • Ash dieback/pathogen could become resistant. DO NOT ALLOW trees become resistant / anything becomes <u>immune</u> • Savings (trees/money) only predicted/not certain • Idea that long-term effects are unknown • Costs are unknown

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
7	(a)	(i)	2.5 (%) ✓	1	2.2	
		(ii)	Every year, a higher percentage of women than men were severely obese. ✓ The overall change in percentage of people classed as severely obese between 2000 and 2019 was bigger for men women than for men. ✓ The overall trend is an increase in severe obesity levels for both women and men ✓	3	3.1a	3 rd 4 th and 6 th boxes ticked
		(iii)	Any two from: Obesity / high fat diet increases risk of / is a risk factor for CVD ✓ Obesity / high fat diet can cause high cholesterol / high blood pressure ✓ Obesity / high fat diet can cause fatty deposits in blood vessels / (coronary) arteries ✓ Can cause damage to blood vessels/arteries OR Can cause blood clot(s) ✓ Can cause a heart attack ✓	2	2.1	ALLOW idea that obesity causes CVD IGNORE overweight IGNORE veins, capillaries

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
7	(b)	(i)	First check the answer on the answer line. If answer = 25 (kg/m²) award 2 marks $81 \div (1.80^2)$ OR $81 \div (1.80 \times 1.80)$ OR $81 \div 3.24$ ✓ $= 25 \text{ (kg/m}^2\text{)}$ ✓	2	2.2	
		(ii)	ideal ✓	1	3.2b	ALLOW tick/ring-around “ideal” in table ALLOW category described as number <u>range</u> “18.5 – 24.9”
	(b)	(iii)	First check the answer on the answer line. If answer = 0.45 award 2 marks $81 \div 179 = 0.452(51397)$ ✓ $= 0.45$ to 2 d.p. ✓	2	1 x 2.2 1 x 1.2	ALLOW 1 mark for clear evidence of incorrect answer correctly rounded to 2 decimal places
		(iv)	Any three from: She is (classed as) obese ✓ (Obese) according to both BMI and waist-to-height-ratio ✓ Obesity increases risk of / is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes / insulin resistance ✓ (To reduce the risk) she should lose weight / should change her lifestyle ✓	3	3.2a	Ref. to risk must be comparative (e.g. <u>higher</u>) ALLOW obesity causes type 2 diabetes ALLOW example of lifestyle change, e.g. get more exercise, eat less fat DO NOT ALLOW general examples unexplained, e.g. “be more healthy”, “eat a healthy diet”

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
7	(b)	(v)	Any two from: His high/obese BMI/body mass is due to muscle (not fat). ✓ His waist-to-height-ratio is ideal. ✓ He doesn't need to lose weight / his risk of developing disease due to obesity is low because his lifestyle is healthy. ✓	2	3.2a	ALLOW if he loses weight he'll be underweight

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance			
8	(a)			2	2.2	All three correct = 2 marks One or two correct = 1 mark			
							Dependent variable	Independent variable	Neither
			Distance between lamp and eye (m)						✓
			Light brightness (lumens)					✓	
			Pupil diameter (mm)				✓		
			✓✓						
	(b)		(Length of) time (exposed to light) OR Type of light source / colour of light OR (Same) person / (same) right/left eye ✓	1	3.3a	ALLOW same lamp IGNORE lamp/light unqualified ALLOW idea of controlling/excluding other light sources IGNORE age, sex, ethnicity, eye colour, eye health DO NOT ALLOW same room unqualified			
	(c)		First check the answer on the answer line. If answer = 960 (lumens) award 2 marks 2 x 480 OR 4 x 240 OR (80 ÷ 100) × 1200 ✓ = 960 (lumens) ✓	2	2.2	Check table if nothing written on answer line ALLOW other valid methods for calculating the percentage			
	(d)		Measure from a photograph / video of the eye OR Use a pupillometer ✓	1	3.3b	ALLOW idea of measuring on safety glasses			

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
8	(e)		Any three from: description of the trend (pupil diameter decreases as brightness increases) OR idea that the prediction fits/continues the trend ✓ 1200 lumens is very bright / is brighter than 960 lumens / is brighter than anything tested in the investigation ✓ idea that pupil diameter would (therefore) be smaller than 4 mm ✓ idea that 2 mm would actually occur at > 1200 lumens OR > 100 % light level ✓ this (reflex action) protects the retina/eye from damage/bright light ✓ only a small amount of light needs to pass through the pupil (to the retina) to enable us to see when it's this bright ✓	3	3.1b	ALLOW 1200 = 100% if compared to the lumens for another % ALLOW 2 mm if compared to 4 mm ALLOW any other stated number smaller than 4 mm

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
9	(a)		Plant ✓	1	2.1	
	(b)		It is not living / alive. OR It is not a <u>living</u> organism. ✓	1	2.1	ORA e.g. “it needs to be living/alive to be biotic” DO NOT ALLOW “organism” unqualified IGNORE idea that it does not grow IGNORE is not made of cells
	(c)		ref. to photosynthesis OR needs light to make its own food/glucose/carbohydrate ✓	1	2.1	IGNORE the plant needs light to grow DO NOT ALLOW ref. to energy being made/produced

Question	Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
9 (d)*	Please refer to the marking instructions on page 4 of this mark scheme for guidance on how to mark this question. Level 3 (5–6 marks) Explains why the plant needs water. AND Explains how the plant gets water, including a detailed explanation of how water is cycled through the bottle garden ecosystem. <i>There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and substantiated.</i> Level 2 (3–4 marks) Explains why the plant needs water. AND Explains simply how the plant gets water. <i>There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is relevant and supported by some evidence.</i> Level 1 (1–2 marks) Explains why the plant needs water. OR Explains how the plant gets water. <i>There is an attempt at a logical structure with a line of reasoning. The information is in the most part relevant.</i> 0 marks <i>No response or no response worthy of credit.</i>	6	2 x 3.1a 4 x 2.1	AO3.1a Analysing and interpreting the information and diagram presented AO2.1 Applying knowledge and understanding of photosynthesis and the water cycle For example: [AO2.1] <i>Why the plant needs water:</i> • for photosynthesis • photosynthesis equation • to make food/glucose/carbohydrate/starch • ref. to splitting water in first stage of photosynthesis • for transport of substances within the plant • for transpiration (stream) • for translocation • for filling up cells / staying turgid / preventing wilting / making cytoplasm • as a solvent / it's where chemical reactions occur • idea of regulating temperature/cooling <i>How the plant gets water:</i> • [AO3.1a] there is water in the (moist) soil • [AO2.1] water (from soil) is absorbed by roots (by osmosis) • [AO2.1] water moves up stem to leaves (by transpiration / through xylem) • [AO2.1] water is lost from leaves into air (by evaporation/transpiration) (through stomata) • [AO2.1] some water in soil evaporates into air • [AO3.1a] (the bung/seal means all) the water (vapour) stays inside the bottle • [AO3.1a] water (vapour) in the air inside the bottle condenses (to liquid water) on the walls

Question			Answer	Marks	AO element	Guidance
						• [AO2.1] condensation/drops of water run down the walls back into the soil / comparison to water cycle stages of precipitation and runoff • [AO2.1] idea that water is cycled (through soil, plant roots, stem, leaves, air, and back to soil) • [AO2.1] water is (also) made by (aerobic) respiration (in plant cells)

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