GCE AS Examiners' Report

Biology

AS

Summer 2025

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

[1] ***Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***

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Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner | Eduqas

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Executive Summary

Overall, the standard of candidates' responses to questions was good and was similar to that shown in 2024, with a slight increase in the overall mean.

Better scoring candidates were able to use appropriate scientific terminology to express themselves well. However, a failure to include biological terminology and a lack of precision of expression prevented several candidates from gaining credit.

The responses to the quality of extended response questions on both components varied between centres. As mentioned in previous reports, candidates should be encouraged to structure their responses to address each of the three sections of the question using the information they are provided with.

Most candidates were able to show reasonable level of mathematical skills. However, a sizeable number not able to give an answer to a suitable number of significant figures or identify units from a given graph.

Although most candidates demonstrated a sound ability to process, analyse and interpret simple data and information, other practical skills were somewhat lacking. These included the identification of controlled variables and identifying improvements from a given method.

In Component 1 a good understanding of biological molecules, cell membrane structure and cell division was shown. However, the question assessing the understanding of an enzyme practical caused more issues. Some candidates appeared not to have read the given method which led to errors in answers. Very poor graph skills were also observed in this question. Candidates understanding of microscopy varied with few candidates appreciating that prokaryotes are a lot smaller than eukaryotic cells (hence the need for a higher magnification to observe them) and even fewer able to explain the need to recalibrate the microscope for each different objective lens.

Answers to the quality of extended response question on cell transport overall were excellent.

In Component 2, the understanding of gas exchange surfaces in animals, plant transport and classification was good. However, the question on tissue fluid appeared more challenging. Although many candidates understood the control of hydrostatic pressure in a capillary bed, some cited oxygenation as a factor. Most were able to calculate the resultant force at the venule end of a capillary bed but were unable to explain the consequence in relation to oedema. The quality of extended response question on nutrition seemed to cause the biggest issue for most candidates. Most attempted all three sections, with the descriptions of saprophytes being the fullest, but the other two sections lacking detail.

Areas for improvement

- Use of appropriate scientific terminology
- Application of practical skills

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Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Tel: 029 2240 4252
Email: science@eduqas.co.uk
Qualification webpage: AS and A Level Biology | Eduqas

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | Eduqas

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

Regional Rep Team

Our regional team covers all areas of England and can provide face-to-face and online advice at a time which is convenient to you.

Get in contact today and discover how our team can support you and your students.
Regional Support Team | Eduqas

Eduqas Qualifications

We are one the largest providers of qualifications for schools, academies, sixth form and further education colleges across England, offering valued qualifications to suit a range of abilities. Each and every one of our qualifications is carefully designed to engage students and to equip them for the next stage of their lives.

We support our education communities by providing trusted qualifications and specialist support, to allow our students the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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