

Ten tips to give your students for Paper 1

Preparation

1. Revision. Go through the syllabus thoroughly checking that you know and understand the chemistry given in the syllabus for each sub-topic under the separate headings of 'Content statement', 'Application of content', 'Guidance' and 'Linking questions' all of which I've set out in this website under the heading of "Learning outcomes" Check through the gallery of slides for each sub-topic on this site and ensure that you understand all the concepts and the exemplar tasks given.

2. Practice. For Section A practice with multiple choice questions in two ways. As you review each topic test yourself with the quiz questions on each sub-topic and the multiple choice questions given on this site for each whole topic. Once you have revised (UK) or reviewed (US) all topics, practice with past multiple choice exam papers and the practice papers on this website paying attention to the time limit. For Section B practice with past data response questions and the short-answer questions on experimental techniques.

If you get a question wrong try to understand why you got it wrong. You can do this by reading around the topic, checking the information on this site, discussing with other students or by asking your teacher. Learn from your mistakes. Similar questions do come up each year.

During the exam

3. Answer correctly. In Section A the multiple choice answer you should give is the one you consider to be the **best** answer to the question.

4. Read each question carefully. In an exam it is easy to confuse *decrease* with *increase* or confuse *contain* with *not contain* etc. You can make notes on rough paper or even write on or around the question. Some students underline or **highlight** key words. Section B questions will usually use command words so make sure you understand the correct meaning of each command word listed in the syllabus.

5. Multiple completion. Be aware that some of the questions in Section A may involve multiple completion. There will be three statements **I**, **II** and **III**. The answers are always in the same order:

A. I and II only

B. I and III only

C. II and III only

D. I, II and III

This means that if you know that **III** is **not** correct then the answer must be **A**. even though you may be uncertain about **I** and **II**.

6. Timing. You are recommended to spend 45 minutes (SL) or 1 hour (HL) on each section. This means on average you have 1.5 minutes to answer each multiple choice question. The questions are usually arranged in order of topic. If you are finding you are spending too long on a question move on. (Some students leave stoichiometric relationships questions which can take longer to answer to the end). Do not be tempted to spend more time on Section A (or Section B) so that you do not leave enough time to answer all the questions on the other section.

7. Don't panic. There are likely to be one or two questions that you find difficult. Don't let this cloud your judgement about other more straightforward questions.

8. Use of Periodic Table. The periodic table in the data booklet gives atomic masses to two decimal places. Although you have a calculator, for multiple choice questions you can usually just use whole numbers (except for chlorine where you should use 35.5). However for Section B questions where required you should use the atomic masses as given to two decimal places.

9. Problem questions. As you go through the paper some answers you will be fairly sure about and others you may have some doubts. Make a note of those questions where you are uncertain of the answer. At the end, if you have time, you can then revisit the questions you had difficulty with rather than trying to go through all of your answers again.

10. Guess. At the end of the exam make sure you have left no question in Section A unanswered. You are not penalised for giving a wrong answer. You cannot 'phone a friend' but your computer (brain) may be able to take two away. Make an educated guess if you can – if you can't then just guess randomly – you have a one in four chance of being right!