



GCSE Examiners' Report

Mathematics

GCSE

Summer 2024

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.edugas.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 unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and component level. 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 (edugas.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.

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.edugas.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

The examinations for each tier and for both components were comparable with those asked in previous series with the papers being a fair test for the candidates at each level.

As is always the case, some questions were more demanding than others. There was a high engagement with the majority of questions, especially at higher tier. For foundation tier, engagement and success decreased towards the end of the papers.

At both tiers, it is important candidates re read the question to ensure they have answered it fully; write the fraction/ratio in its simplest form, give the answer to 1 decimal place, how many **minutes** etc. Many candidates could have picked up a few more marks had they checked the precise requirements of each.

For the calculator allowed paper it is vital that candidates learn efficient methods, e.g. percentages of an amount: decimal $\times$ amount, rather than a partitioning method; repeated proportional change; amount $\times$ multiplierⁿ, rather than a step-by-step approach where rounding errors are easily introduced. When a calculator is used, it is vital that the calculation that is being carried out is written down, (you must show all your working), method marks can then be awarded even if there has been a mistype into the calculator.

At both tiers, candidates would benefit from checking their answers, e.g. foundation tier: does their input/value of x give the desired outcome? higher tier: multiplying out their factorised brackets, does it give the question?

At foundation tier, the domain area of geometry was the weakest. Symmetry both reflection and rotational, bearings and interior and exterior angles of polygons were very poorly answered.

At higher tier, more fluency in algebra is required including solving equations involving fractions (C2 Q14) and the ability to complete the square.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Higher Tier: Completing the square	COMPLETING THE SQUARE	BLENDED LEARNING MODULE
Foundation tier: Interior and exterior angles of a polygon	INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR ANGLES OF A POLYGON	BLENDED LEARNING MODULE
Foundation tier: Rotational symmetry	SYMMETRY AND TESSELATIONS	BLENDED LEARNING MODULE

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Foundation tier: Component one

Overview of the Component

All candidates seemed to have sufficient time to answer those questions that were within their capabilities.

Very few candidates used checking strategies, such as applying inverse operations, to check whether their answers were correct. This is something to be encouraged to increase the accuracy of candidate responses.

Points of interest from the areas of mathematics

Number:

Most candidates answer the earlier questions with ease. Topics such as rounding, ordering of operations and adding decimals were well answered by candidates, though some arithmetical errors were seen.

Some of the later questions were answered poorly, including dividing decimals, product of primes, reverse percentage, percentage multipliers and calculations in standard form.

Algebra:

Candidates sitting Foundation tier often find algebra challenging and this component was no different. They were successful at writing coordinates, solving basic equations, and forming equations in the simultaneous equations question.

Candidates were less successful at simplifying expressions, substitution, factorising and changing the subject. Very few candidates demonstrated an awareness of how to solve a pair of simultaneous equations.

Ratio, proportion and rates of change:

Candidates were successful with some basic ratio questions, such as 7(c). There were some good attempts seen at 12(a), though many candidates lost marks because they did not write their ratio in simplest form.

Later ratio questions involved problem-solving and were poorly answered by candidates, such as 25(b) and 26.

Geometry and measures:

Candidates did not perform well in Question 13 (both a and b), where reflecting in a line and rotational symmetry were assessed.

Very few correct answers were seen in question 14, where the final step involved candidate converting their answer from centimetres to kilometres. Those who were successful typically converted from centimetres to metres and then metres to kilometres.

Question 20 was poorly answered, with many candidates unable to calculate the total volume by counting cubes. Those who did this, rarely went on to give correct dimensions of a cuboid with the same volume.

Probability:

Candidates engaged well with question 2, where they were assessed on their knowledge of the language of basic probability, and question 7(b) where they had to use a probability scale.

Statistics:

Question 7(a) assessed the mode and was well answered.

In question 19, candidates often picked up marks for a correct median or range, but they found the mean much more challenging.

Candidates answered question 21(a) poorly. Whilst appropriate questions were often seen, they were nearly always accompanied by response boxes which overlapped and/or weren't exhaustive.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 (a) Place value	Answered correctly by roughly a half of candidates. Incorrect answers of 20 were often seen.
Q.1 (b) Rounding	Most candidates were able to round correctly to the nearest thousand. Common incorrect answers were 3000 and 32000.
Q.1 (c) Squaring	This was well answered, though some incorrect answers of 16 were seen.
Q.1 (d) Order of operations	Approximately a half of candidates were able to do this calculation correctly. Incorrect answers of 6 were often seen.
Q.1 (e) Adding decimals	This was well answered, with some incorrect answers of 0.65 seen.
Q.1 (f) Ordering numbers	This was well answered, though some candidates thought that -7 was smaller than -7.5 .
Q.1 (g) Inequality in words	This was answered correctly by just under three-quarters of candidates.

Q.2 Describing chance	In parts (a), (b) and (c) some candidates incorrectly gave their answers as fractions. If this was done consistently, a SC1 mark was available in part (c). Part (a) was answered correctly by most candidates. Many correct answers of 0 seen in part (b). Part (c) was the most challenging for candidates, with incorrect answers of 2 often seen.
Q.3 (a) Fraction as a decimal	Less than half of candidates were able to write $\frac{3}{50}$ as a percentage, with 3% the most common incorrect answer.
Q.3 (b) Fraction of an amount	Most candidates divided by the denominator and then multiplied 20 by the numerator, though some candidates wrote $\frac{3}{5}$ as 60% and calculated 60% of 20. A few candidates used equivalent fractions to obtain an answer of $\frac{12}{20}$. Those that went on to write their final answer as 12 were awarded both marks, but some left their answer as the fraction and were only awarded the method mark.
Q.3 (c) Percentage of an amount	Most candidates found 10% of 50 before multiplying their answer by 7, but some multiplied 50 by 0.7. A few answers of 35% were seen and these candidates were only awarded the method mark.
Q.4 (a) Cost of trip to zoo	Candidates engaged well with this question, with many fully correct answers of £35 seen. Some candidates forgot to include the cost of the petrol and gave an answer of £75. They were awarded 3 marks. Some lost marks by changing the number of adults and the number of children in their calculations – calculating the cost of 2 adult tickets, but 3 adult lunches, for example.
Q.4 (b) Animal feed inference	Most candidates knew they needed to calculate 10% of 65 000 but some were unable to work this out correctly. A few candidates calculated 10% correctly but then subtracted it from 65 0000.
Q.5 (a) Expression	This multiple-choice question was answered correctly by just over a quarter of candidates, with 4/y the most commonly selected incorrect answer.

Q.5 (b) Substitution	This part was not well answered by candidates, with –24 and –11 the common incorrect answers.
Q.6 (a) Coordinates	Over three-quarters of candidates were able to plot point <i>B</i> correctly.
Q.6 (b) Right-angle	Candidates found this more challenging than part (a). Most candidates who gave a correct response plotted point <i>C</i> at (1, –2).
Q.6 (c) Midpoint	Candidates answered this part well. Some reversed coordinates were seen but most of the candidates who marked the midpoint on the line <i>AB</i> went on to give the correct coordinates.
Q.7 (a) Mode	This was very well answered.
Q.7 (b) (i) Probability scale	This was answered correctly by less than three-quarters of candidates. Some put their arrow in the middle of the probability scale, perhaps confusing <i>A</i> with <i>B</i> .
Q.7 (b) (ii) Probability	This was answered correctly by over a half of candidates. Some incorrect answers of 1 : 6, '1 out of 6' or 'unlikely' were seen.
Q.7 (c) Ratio from cards	This was very well answered.
Q.8 (a) Simplify expression	Less than half of candidates answered this correctly, with $12 \times wy$ often seen. This was awarded 0 marks.
Q.8 (b) Completing statement	Very few correct answers were seen, with many candidates giving numerical terms. 12 and 6 were often seen.
Q.8 (c) Solving equations	(i) was answered correctly by over three quarters of candidates. Candidates were less successful at answering (ii) with an incorrect answer of 10 often seen.
Q.8 (d) Formula	Most candidates added the £20 and £15 in the formula and then incorrectly worked with £35 – whether that was dividing 150 by 35 or listing multiples of 35. An incorrect answer of 4 was often seen.

Q.9 Conversion graph	Less than half of candidates were able to correctly read off the conversion graph in (a). Some correct answers were seen in (b) but a few candidates simply divided 26 by 2 to give an answer of 13 acres.
Q.10 Candles problem	Some fully correct responses were seen, but most candidates were awarded 1 of the 2 marks for showing Sam could buy 12 full price candles. Some went on to incorrectly state that Sam would be able to buy 24 half price candles.
Q.11 Train timetable problems	Candidates engaged well with both parts (a) and (b). In part (a) some candidates gave a final answer of 1 hour 13 minutes, despite the question asking for the time of minutes, so were awarded 1 of the 2 marks. Part (b) was well answered, with candidates who identified the correct train typically going on to give the correct answer of 4 minutes.
Q.12 (a) Ratio problem	Lots of candidates neglected to simplify their ratios and were awarded 1 of the 2 marks.
Q.12 (b) Incorrect method	Just over a quarter of candidates were able to explain why Siân's method is incorrect, typically making reference to the need to write both measurements in the same unit before simplifying the ratio. The most commonly seen incorrect response was that Siân should have included units in her final answer, with some giving final answers of 1 m : 15 cm.
Q.13 (a) Reflecting in a line	This was answered poorly by candidates, with few fully correct reflections seen. Some candidates reflected in the y-axis, others in the x-axis, whilst others translated triangle T. A minority of candidates were awarded 1 mark for reflecting T in the line $x = 2$ or for drawing the line $y = 2$.
Q.13 (b) Rotational symmetry grid	Very few correct responses were seen to this part. Most candidates simply reflected the shapes from the top two quadrants into the bottom two quadrants.

Q.14 (a) Calculating distance with speed	Most candidates showed awareness of the need to multiply speed by time to calculate distance. Those that attempted to multiply 52 by 2.5 found it challenging. Candidates that worked with 1 hour + 1 hour + $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, i.e. 52+52+26 were more successful. Some candidates converted 2.5 hours to minutes before multiplying by 52, whilst some incorrectly attempted to divide 52 by 2.5.
Q.14 (b) Map scale and kilometre conversion	Candidates found this part challenging, with most of the candidates who were awarded marks getting them for correctly using the map scale. Very few candidates were able to convert the actual distance from centimetres to kilometres.
Q.15 (a) Factorising	Very few candidates were able to factorise the expression. Answers of 10ab were often seen.
Q.15 (b) Changing the subject	Very few candidates were able to change the subject of the formula. Typically, candidates who demonstrated good algebra skills went on to get both marks, but this was very rare.
Q.16 Triangle problem	Very few full-mark responses were seen. Candidates often picked up marks by finding missing angles on the diagram, typically $\angle ACB = 60^\circ$. Some stated $\angle ADC = 30^\circ$ but many were unable to use the properties of isosceles triangles to find $\angle ACD$. The reason provided by candidates was often simply 'angles on a straight line add to 180°'.
Q.17 (a) Dividing decimals	Very few correct responses were seen to this calculation. 0.04 was the common incorrect answer.
Q.17 (b) (i) Adding fractions	Some candidates simply added both numerators and both denominators to get an answer of $\frac{4}{9}$. Others showed awareness of the need to write both fractions over a common denominator, but some neglected one or both of the numerators.
Q.17 (b) (ii) Multiplying fractions	Lots of candidates correctly multiplied the two fractions but did not write their answer in simplest form

Q.18 Perimeter problem with expressions	Some candidates were awarded 2 marks in this question for working with the perimeter and given length to correctly calculate the width. Few candidates went on to form an equation and solve it to find the value of x.
Q.19 Mean, median and range problem	Very few fully correct responses were seen to this problem. Most candidates picked up a mark for writing five numbers with a median of 3 or a range of 5. Some candidates wrote 3 in the middle box but then included numbers less than 3 in the 4th or 5th boxes, hence changing the median of their numbers.
Q.20 Cube volume problem	This was poorly answered by candidates. A few candidates were able to calculate the total volume of both cubes, but many stopped there and did not attempt to give possible dimensions for Sarah's cuboid.
Q.21 (a) Estimation	Some candidates did not round the values to estimate the value of this calculation and instead worked with the actual values. Candidates who rounded all three values to one significant figure typically went on to complete the calculation correctly and get both marks. Some candidates rounded the 99.4 to 99 and then struggled to divide 198 by 40.
Q.21 (b) Place value	Over half of candidates answered (i) correctly, but few correct answers were seen for (ii). Some candidates didn't use the given calculation and instead completed both calculations. These candidates were sometimes successful in (i) but were unable to answer (ii) correctly.
Q.22 (a) Product of primes	Few candidates demonstrated awareness of how to write a number as a product of its prime factors. Those who were familiar with methods such as 'factor trees' or 'repeated division' sometimes went on to get all 3 marks, but numerical errors were often seen.
Q.22 (b) Square numbers	Very few correct responses were seen to (b). A common incorrect answer was $8 \times 5^4 \times 7^4$.
Q.23 (a) Questionnaire design	Most candidates were able to give an appropriate question but were unable to give a suitable selection of response boxes. Many of their response boxes overlapped, whilst others weren't exhaustive.

Q.23 (b) Best average and reliability	Both (i) and (ii) were poorly answered by candidates. Some picked up marks on (ii) by stating Joe's sample was too small.
Q.24 Water tank	Very few fully correct responses were seen to this problem. Some candidates engaged with the second part of the question and were awarded 1 mark for stating $x = 8$, whilst a few candidates were awarded 2 marks for finding the capacity of 240 litres.
Q.25 (a) Fraction from ratio	Over half of candidates were able to use the ratio to find the fraction of prize money given to Jamal.
Q.25 (b) Ratio problem	This part was poorly answered, with many candidates simply attempting to share £45 in the ratio 3 : 7 : 11.
Q.26 Proportion problem	Some candidates were able to do one step of this multi-step problem (typically dividing by 2) but very few could go any further. Incorrect answers of 18 minutes were often seen.
Q.27 (a) Reverse percentage	Very few correct responses were seen to this question, with most candidates incorrectly trying to increase £54 by 25%.
Q.27 (b) Percentage multipliers	These multiple-choice questions were poorly answered. In (i) most candidates selected 0.33 and in (ii) the most common answer was 0.06 ³ .
Q.28 Simultaneous equation	Some candidates were awarded 1 mark for forming both equations, but very few candidates demonstrated any awareness of how to solve simultaneous equations.
Q.29 Standard form	Both (a) and (b) were poorly answered, though candidates were marginally more successful in (b) where they were able to write out both numbers in ordinary form before adding them. If candidates did this correctly, they were awarded 1 mark and if they were able to convert it back into standard form they got both marks. In (a) very few candidates demonstrated awareness of the laws of indices and those who did often struggled with the -7 in the denominator.

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Foundation tier: Component two

Overview of the component

Candidates were able to use a calculator for this paper but sometimes chose to use non-calculator methods. For example, on question 7(c) some candidates used a partitioning method to find 36% of 1350 instead of an efficient calculator method. Similar methods were observed on question 20. When this approach was used, there were often numerical errors.

There were several questions which required simplifying a fraction or a ratio. These were often not written in their simplest form. Candidates should be aware of how to use their calculator to assist them in these scenarios.

There were various questions on this paper which involved calculations with money. These were answered well and £ and p were used correctly most of the time when given.

Questions such as 5(b) and 11 which involved interpretation of real-life contexts were multi-step problems which required candidates to select appropriate methods. These were well attempted, and many candidates presented their solutions methodically.

Various questions throughout the paper required the use of algebra skills either to form or simplify expressions. Where expressions were formed correctly, they were often spoilt by incorrect subsequent working. For example, in 8(c) and 8(e), correct answers of $8x + 5$ and $72p - 24$ were often incorrectly simplified to $13x$ and $48p$ respectively.

In questions 5(a), 8(a)(ii) and 8(f) candidates had to solve an equation. Many opted for the use of trials instead of a more efficient approach using inverse operations. Whilst some were able to use trials correctly others made multiple attempts and did not arrive at the correct answer. There was very little understanding of finding the n th term or stating the terms of a sequence given the n th term.

Parallel line angle properties and the sum of the interior and exterior angles of polygons were not applied well on question 12. Candidates found this question particularly challenging.

All candidates seemed to have sufficient time to answer those questions that were within their capabilities.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 (a) Calculations with money	Most candidates attempted this question in stages; $5 \times 84p$ was usually calculated first and then added to the other items. This occasionally led to incorrect answers where an answer in pence was not correctly converted into pounds. Some candidates did not interpret their calculator answer correctly and wrote £62.4p instead of £62.40 but it did not happen often. There were several occasions where an item was not included in the calculation, either the bracelet or the charm was omitted.
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Q.1 (b) Calculations with money	Most candidates were able to arrive at the correct answer of 5 charms. Some used a direct method by dividing £187.70 by £37.54 whilst others used trials and offered an embedded answer of 5 in their calculation.
Q.1 (c) Calculations with money	This was well answered, there were many fully correct responses seen.
Q.2 Area	Many candidates confused area and perimeter and counted the number of lines around the outside of the shape to arrive at what they thought was the area. Occasionally, in part (b), this was followed by a shape with the same area as their answer given in (a), but often they also drew a shape with the perimeter of their answer in (a).
Q.3 Types of number	Candidates had the most success in identifying the multiple of 7 in part (a), this was well answered. They were least successful in identifying the square number in part (d). In part (b) a common misconception was that 200 is a factor of 100.
Q.4 (a) Measuring an angle	Most candidates who gave an obtuse answer were often within the accuracy required to be awarded the mark. However, there were several acute angle answers given.
Q.4 (b) Shape properties	Candidates were most successful in identifying the parallel lines in part (iii) and least successful in identifying the perpendicular lines in part (ii).
Q.4 (c) Shape properties	Around half of the candidates were able to successfully identify the shape described.
Q.4 (d) Lines of symmetry	Candidates were usually able to identify at least one line of symmetry, although these answers were sometimes spoiled by adding additional incorrect lines. There were some lines that did not meet the required minimum length to be awarded marks. Occasionally there were a series of dots drawn to represent a line of symmetry, these were not given credit as a line is what was required.
Q.5 (a) Worded equation	A large proportion of candidates chose a two-step method to calculate the correct answer of 45 boxes. Whilst others used trials and arrived at an embedded answer of 45 boxes. A common error observed was adding the delivery charge onto £63.75 and then dividing by £1.35, this led to an incorrect answer of 49 boxes.

Q.5 (b) Perimeter	There were a variety of methods chosen by candidates to attempt this question, many of them were awarded some of the marks. Methods were often seen in multiple steps starting with the calculation of the perimeter of one cake board. This was sometimes the only mark awarded. Whilst other candidates went on to double this answer to correctly find the perimeter of two boards. Some candidates subtracted one perimeter off the total amount of ribbon to arrive at an incorrect answer of 257.6cm. There were errors observed in converting cm to metres and $4000 - 284.8$ was seen several times. A proportion of candidates did not engage with perimeter and simply doubled the 35.6cm seen on the diagram and subtracted this from 400cm. This was not awarded any marks.
Q.5 (c) Conversion metric/imperial units	In part (i) several candidates engaged with the conversion from ounces to grams. The answers 198.45g and 595.35g were awarded one and two marks respectively several times. However, there were a large proportion of candidates who did not interpret the scales correctly and multiplied 28.35g by three (the number of cakes) instead of the number of ounces. In part (ii) candidates who attempted a direct conversion between grams and ounces were often awarded one, or two marks, if they subsequently rounded their answer correctly. Some candidates attempted to use trials for this question which wasn't an appropriate strategy in this context, these were rarely successful in gaining credit as this method would not lead them to an exact answer.
Q.6 Listing combinations	It was pleasing to see so many candidates successfully listing all possible combinations in part (a). Most responses were also systematic and followed a pattern. Whilst some of these candidates were able to follow up in part (b) with a correct probability many were unsuccessful. Incorrect responses included 'unlikely', 1:12 and 1 out of 12. Some candidates chose to give their answer as a decimal or percentage and did not give it to an appropriate degree of accuracy to be awarded the mark.
Q.7 (a) Simplifying a fraction	Candidates were usually able to select the correct percentages from the table to get a total of 14% but then did not go on to convert to a fraction. Of those that did convert to a fraction, most did not fully simplify their answer.
Q.7 (b) Percentages	This was poorly answered. The majority of candidates found 5% of 486 instead of interpreting the percentage of sugar as one quarter of the percentage of fish, meat and dairy products. It was rare to see a fully correct response.

Q.7 (c) Percentage of an amount	This was not answered as well as expected, some candidates struggled with the interpretation of the information given in the question and did not select an appropriate method. Of those that did choose to calculate 36% of 1350 there were various partitioning methods seen which led to inaccuracies in the calculation. On a calculator paper candidates should use an appropriate efficient method such as 0.36×1350 .
Q.8 (a) Number machine	Part (i) was fairly well answered, 13 was seen a good number of times. However, some candidates used 83.6 as the input instead of the output. Part (ii) was not well answered. Some candidates were able to form an expression using the number machine but were not able to use it to find the value of a. Whilst others subtracted 17.5 from the output then used trials to find a.
Q.8 (b) Forming an expression	Very few correct responses were seen. Some candidates did not fully simplify their expression and left it as a calculation e.g. $\frac{1}{3} \times t$ and were not awarded the mark.
Q.8 (c) Forming an expression	This question proved challenging and very few candidates gave a fully correct response. Some correct expressions were seen but were either not fully simplified or they were spoiled by further incorrect work. It was common to see $8x + 5 = 13x$.
Q.8 (d) Simplifying an expression	This was not well answered, it was rare to see a correct answer. Most candidates used BIDMAS incorrectly and gave an answer of $147f$. Where BIDMAS was used correctly sometimes the power of f was incorrect e.g. $117f^2$.
Q.8 (e) Expanding a bracket	Some candidates multiplied the first term and not the second term by 8. There were a lot of candidates doing further incorrect work e.g. $72p - 24 = 48p$.
Q.8 (f) Solving an equation	A common error on this question was subtracting 2 from 11 instead of adding 2. This led to an answer of 1.8. Some candidates chose trial and improvement to get an embedded answer.
Q.8 (g) Rounding/decimal places	A good proportion of candidates understood the use of the square root button on the calculator. The most common response was a truncated answer of 5.56. A misconception observed frequently was and answer of 15.5 from $31 \div 2$ instead of $\sqrt{31}$.

Q.9 (a) Interpreting information	This was very well answered, most candidates were able to list the correct two places from the table.
Q.9 (b) Average speed	380 was usually selected, however this was often followed with incorrect work. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and subtracted 380 from 658 which is the value closest to Wellington on the same row of the table. Of those candidates who did engage with $\text{speed} = \text{distance} \div \text{time}$, the most common answer was 88.37... km/h from use of 4.3 instead of 4.5. Another common response was 1.407... from $380 \div 270$. It wasn't often that full marks were awarded for the correct answer of 84.4.. km/h.
Q.10 (a) Number patterns	Part (i) was well attempted but there were various errors in the drawings. The drawing for pattern 4 was often what was given. In part (ii), some candidates referenced that 'the number of squares and triangles could not be even', this was an acceptable response. Others stated, 'the number of triangles and squares go up in 2's', this was not a suitable response without reference to them being even or multiples of 2.
Q.10 (b) Nth term	This question was not well answered, full marks were rarely awarded. A common incorrect response was -1, -6, -11 from use of $n = 1$ to find the first term but then subtracting 5 from this twice.
Q.11 Lowest common multiple	It was pleasing to see various good attempts at this question with a good number of fully correct responses seen. Candidates often listed multiples of 28 and 35, when this was done successfully, 140 was usually identified as the lowest common multiple. Occasionally, 280 was incorrectly identified as the lowest common multiple. Some candidates made errors when listing the multiples of 28 and 35 and could not identify a common multiple which meant no further progress was made. Where a common multiple was identified, a correct method to calculate the cost usually followed.
Q.12 (a) Angle properties of polygons	Part (i) and (ii) were not answered well. Very few candidates were able to identify the number of sides or the sum of the interior angles for the polygon.
Q.12 (b) Angle properties/parallel lines	Very few correct responses. Some candidates were able to calculate the base angles of the isosceles triangle, but the use of parallel line angle properties to calculate the value of x was rare.

Q.13 (a) Surveys	This question was well attempted, however only a small proportion of these were awarded marks. Candidates were expected to comment on the appropriateness of the location, the time of the survey, and the sample size. Common incorrect responses included 'the number surveyed was odd' and 'people book online'.
Q.13 (b) Questionnaire	In this question, candidates were expected to comment on the overlap of 3 in the number boxes and the missing time frame in the question. Common incorrect responses included 'you will not know exact numbers as they are grouped' and 'the option boxes are not evenly spaced'.
Q.14 (a) Scale diagram	Not many fully correct responses seen. Some candidates could correctly measure the straight-line distance between the post office and the bus station but did not engage with the scale. Others went one step further and multiplied their length in cm by 24000. But it was rare to see this correctly converted into metres.
Q.14 (b) Bearings	Very few candidates understood what a bearing was. There were lots of lengths given instead of bearings.
Q.15 (a) Sharing in a ratio	A common error was dividing 390ml by 5 (parts of lemonade) instead of the total number of parts.
Q.15 (b) Simplifying a ratio	Candidates were able to write a correct ratio e.g. 120:270 but this was rarely simplified fully. Some did not interpret the question correctly and forgot to subtract the 120ml of apple juice from 390ml.
Q.16 Estimating the mean/frequency diagram	Foundation tier candidates found this question particularly challenging and there were very few correct responses seen. Candidates could sometimes identify the mid-points of the group and occasionally they multiplied these by the frequencies and calculated the sum of them. Of those candidates that made this much progress, it was common to then divide by 5 instead of 45.
Q.17 (a) Factorising a quadratic	Very few candidates understood what it meant to factorise a quadratic. Poorly answered.
Q.17 (b) Indices rules	Occasionally a mark was awarded for either $27h^n$ or kh^6 , but a fully correct expression was rare.
Q.17 (c) Inequalities	There were attempts where one end of the line was correct, but it was rare for both ends to be correct.

Q.18 Pythagoras theorem/area of a triangle	Foundation tier candidates found this question particularly challenging and there were very few correct responses seen. Whilst some used the area of a triangle formula, very few engaged with the use of Pythagoras' theorem to find the base of triangle BCD.
Q.19 (a) Tree diagram	Candidates were usually successful in completing the first branch correctly, however the second set of branches were usually incorrect and did not sum to 1. It was common to see 0.25 repeated on all branches.
Q.19 (b) Tree diagram	This was not well answered with most candidates adding the probabilities on the two branches instead of multiplying. $0.6 + 0.25 = 0.85$ was a common response.
Q.20 Repeated proportional change	Candidates should choose an appropriate efficient method for repeated proportional change. Most candidates used a partitioning method which is more appropriate on the non-calculator paper. Candidates could calculate the first reduction correctly; 220cm or 2.2m was usually what a mark was awarded for. But very few could continue to the 7 th reduction. Those that did manage to attempt 7 reductions, often lost accuracy in their final answer by rounding prematurely. I would encourage the use of an efficient method such as 4×0.55^7 to ensure the final answer is accurate.
Q.21 Venn diagram	This question was challenging for foundation candidates, it was rare to see a correct response. It was common to see 27, 8 and 32 placed in the diagram without consideration of the intersection.
Q.22 Exchange rates	It was pleasing to see so many candidates having a good attempt at this question, and although it was rare to award full marks, the first two marks were awarded for 5172.75 reals several times. Some candidates went further and rounded to 5150 reals. After arriving at 5172.75 reals, some candidates chose to divide by 50 to get 103 notes but then struggled to make any further progress with this. A few candidates converted 50 reals into pounds first but often lost accuracy marks due to premature rounding to £7.97.
Q.23 Changing the subject of a formula	Not well answered.

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Higher tier: Component one

Overview of the component

It was really pleasing to see a high level of engagement of the questions in this paper. Some lovely solutions were regularly seen for the more demanding questions by able candidates. Despite lack of knowledge by weaker candidates, this did not seem to deter them from making a really good effort across much of the paper. However, having said that, one again questions whether these weaker candidates were entered at the appropriate tier. Sitting the Foundation Tier would have probably led to greater success and more confidence gained within the areas of mathematics tested.

As already mentioned, some questions yet again, were answered very well while others proved to be more challenging. Questions that weren't as well answered were not necessarily related to their demand. It was pleasing to see some of the more demanding questions, in terms of their assessment objectives, were tackled well, and with just as much success as those with an obvious, recognisable method. It was also pleasing to see that despite obvious lack of knowledge, attempts were being made, often with some marks being picked up for method or values seen within their working. There were still disappointingly, a number of 'multiple choice' questions left blank.

Checking processes were again not always obvious to see, leading to many errors not being picked up. This aspect is possibly more vital with the lack of a calculator available. Numerical calculations often made much more difficult by using incorrect values within subsequent working.

A number of candidates still showed many attempts at working within the same question with no clear indication of which solution was being presented.

Points of interest from the areas of mathematics

Number:

In general candidates tackled the earlier questions with relative ease, however mistakes were still being made by some, with lack of understanding with powers, i.e. Q1, Q3(b), Q8, Q12 and Q13. The surd question, Q21, was not well answered by all but a few of the more able candidates.

Algebra:

Apart from one or two numerical errors, Q2 was well answered. It was also pleasing to see so many perfect responses to the simultaneous equation Q11. Unfortunately, there are still a number of candidates attempting this question using trial and improvement leading to a maximum of 1 mark out of the 6 available. In terms of the algebraic questions with higher demand, Q14a proved difficult with most candidates attempting to use some trials as a proof, leading to a maximum of 1 of the 2 marks available. It was disappointing to see many candidates were not able to engage with the inequalities/regions Q16(a). It was very rare to see a fully correct response for this question. There were many attempts seen with Q17 but again, obvious lack of checking that their solution expanded back to the original question meant that many candidates lost marks. A similar pattern was seen with Q22. Q24 was again, well answered by many, but the usual 'translation' misconceptions were regularly seen.

Ratio:

Some of the earlier ratio questions of lower demand, did prove to be difficult for many candidates with very few picking up full marks. Q7 and Q9 fell into this category. The two more recognisably, straightforward questions, namely Q10 and Q15 were also not well answered.

Geometry:

Q18 proved difficult with many candidates getting confused with which circle formula to use. The more able candidates for Q18(b) worked entirely with the fractions of the two shapes – a much neater solution. Despite questions like Q20 being more commonly seen on a calculator allowed paper, most candidates fully engaged with this question, with many fully correct solutions seen. The vector question, Q23, was again attempted by most candidates with at least some marks picked up. The correct explanations needed for a(ii) were not seen very often and many 'sign' errors appeared in the responses.

Data Handling/Probability:

Candidates found the 'explanation' questions quite difficult, Q4, Q5b, Q19a. It was clear that in many cases, candidates' 'clumsy' wording lost them these marks. The variation of response boxes needed for Q5(a) was extensive, many candidates using totally the wrong notation for inequalities. For Q16(bi) some candidates did not know how to find the height of a bar in the histogram if the area and width are given. Q16(bii) however proved to be more successful with most candidates picking up at least some marks. Q19 (b) was well answered with many fully correct solutions presented.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 Estimation	Generally well answered with very few candidates receiving 0 marks.
Q.2 Equation	Well answered with very few receiving 0 marks. A number of candidates making at least one slip in their algebraic manipulation and many more unnecessarily attempting and often incorrectly, writing their final answer as a decimal.
Q.3 (a) Product of primes and powers	Nearly all candidates attempted this question using the 'factor tree' method. Many candidates making at least one slip in the division but then picking up the final mark for writing 'their products of prime factors' in index form.
Q.3 (b) Square root of product of primes	Not well answered with most candidates not realising the links with powers and square root.
Q.4 Criticism of Graph	Most candidates picked up the first mark with reference to missing months however the second mark was gained by only a handful of candidates.
Q.5 (a) Questionnaire	The question was written correctly by all but a few candidates. The response boxes, however, were very poorly presented, full marks could have easily been obtained by e.g. Less than £10 £10-£20 More than £20
Q.5 (b) Analysing Mean	(i) Mean - It was nice to see some candidates referencing anomalies and outliers, however these responses were few and far between. (ii) Reliability – the lack of reliability due to the size of the sample was more successful than (i).
Q.6 Rate of Flow	Many candidates found the correct value of x and then the correct volume, however, very few formed a correct algebraic equation or even an equation at all. Those that did write the correct equation, used a full algebraic method, usually without mistakes.
Q.7 Ratio	(a) Very well answered. (b) Many candidates did not realise that 5 parts represented £45. Those that did mostly went on to get the fully correct solution.

Q.8 (a) Number manipulation – multiple choice	Well answered on the whole with most candidates picking up at least one mark. No particular part was answered better or worse than any other.
Q.8 (b) Reciprocal	Very poorly answered with candidates not understanding the term reciprocal. It was also disappointing that so many candidates could not change $3\frac{1}{2}$ to an improper fraction or even thinking it was $3^{1/2}$ and tried to engage with $\sqrt{}$
Q.8 (c) Power zero	More correct answers than wrong answers – the main wrong answer being 0.
Q.9 Proportionality	Calculating the time needed for 9 printers from 6 printers caused a problem for most candidates although the ‘softer’ method mark, usually calculated after the incorrect time for 9 booklets, i.e. by just halving their previous time, was picked up by many candidates.
Q.10 (a) Reverse percentage	Many candidates did not realise that the value of £54 represented 75%. For those that did, usually led to candidates getting full marks.
Q.10 (b) Percentage change - multipliers	(i) and (ii) Many candidates got both these questions correct. For those that didn't there was a good spread of incorrect answers chosen.
Q.11 Simultaneous Equations	Very few 0 marks seen with most candidates fully engaging with question. Many fully correct solutions seen which was pleasing to see. Some silly slips along the way caused most problems, mainly with scaling which led to more difficult number work.
Q.12 (a) Standard Form - divide	Many candidates struggled with this question. Some candidates taking values out of standard form and making more difficult for themselves leading to mistakes. For those candidates who used the method of dividing and use of rules of indices fared better.
Q.12 (b) Standard Form - add	For those candidates that correctly converted the initial values usually then went on to give a fully correct solution.
Q.13 Power manipulation	It was disappointing to see so many candidates at this level not getting full marks on this question, especially the handling of $(2^3)^7$.

Q.14 (a) Quadratic sequence – algebraic proof	Most candidates went for trials but unfortunately did not attempt 2 odd and 2 even trials, that if done correctly would have gained then 1 mark. For those that went down the more formal, 'worded' or algebraic routes tended to be the more able candidates and were more successful.
Q.14 (b) nth term	Not many with a fully correct solution but most candidates did engage, with many going down the more formal 'second differences' route. Few used the easier route of recognising squares plus 2 extra tiles.
Q.15 (a) Proportion - graph	Very poor explanations seen by candidates with most just criticising the sketch being 'not smooth'.
Q.15 (b) Indirect proportion	It was disappointing to see a typical indirect proportion question not being attempted in the conventional way. Very few of these candidates gained any marks.
Q.16 (a) Inequalities and regions	Candidates really struggled to fully engage with this question. (i) hardly any candidates picked up both marks here – the second inequality causing the most problems – the latter did not stop a number of the more able candidates drawing the line correctly for the 'correct' inequality. (ii) the boundary for $l > 12$ picked up most marks, following by $l < 2s$. The final line $6l + 4s < 120$ was rarely seen so few candidates picked up full marks here. (iii) despite not gaining many marks for (i) and (ii) a number of candidates picked up this final mark.
Q.16 (b) Histogram	A number of fully correct solutions seen here which was pleasing to see. A number of those not getting full marks for part (i) still managed to get full marks for (ii).
Q.17 Factorising and solving a quadratic	A number of fully correct factorisations seen although worrying to see so many attempting to use the quadratic formula which was worthy of no marks. Many part marks awarded for correctly solving their factorisation that led to two terms correct. Disappointing to see very few 'checking' via expansion which may have helped candidates realise that they didn't get the brackets quite right.
Q.18 (a) Surface area of cylinder	Not well answered. Many candidates not realising they needed to find the area of two circles and one rectangle, the latter needing the circumference of the circle.

Q.18 (b) Volume of cylinders and parts of cylinders	Not answered very well, a mix of very good attempts and very poor attempts but unfortunately many not attempted at all. A large number of candidates did not even attempt to create a fraction. It was pleasing to see a few of the more able candidates evaluate $1/12 \times 8/25$ correctly for full marks.
Q.19 (a) Probability – French and Spanish	Nearly all candidates attempted both parts of this question although many not quite being succinct enough to award the (i) explanation mark. Many used tree diagrams as part of their method.
Q.19 (b) Probability – Multiple choice exam	Many candidates evaluated that 45 questions would be answered correctly of the ones known but few then found 6 as $1/5$ of the remaining 30. For those that did, the two values were not always added and written as a fraction. The more able candidates worked with percentages e.g. $60\% + 20\% \text{ of } 40\% = 68\% \text{ or } 0.68$
Q.20 (a) Trig ratios as surds	A mix of success here. Very few candidates that incorrectly wrote values for $\cos 30$ and $\tan 30$ seemed to use the 'triangle' drawn to help them.
Q.20 (b) 3-D distance within cuboid	It was lovely to see nearly all candidates fully engaging with this question with so many gaining full marks. For those that didn't get the correct height of the shape, found it more difficult to work with Pythagoras after. Occasional use of sine rule seen.
Q.21 Mean with surds	Very few candidates gave a fully correct solution and it was disappointing to see so many not being able to simplify $(\sqrt{3})^5$ or $12/\sqrt{3}$ for part marks. It was nice to see some candidates successfully multiplying through by $\sqrt{3}$.
Q.22 Completing the square	A big mix here in terms of understanding, many candidates with no knowledge of 'completing the square' and so a lot not attempted, others guessed at something totally incorrect and so gained no marks.
Q.23 (a) Vectors and facts	(i) The first 2 marks were commonly gained for '$3f - 2g$' but few then found $k = 1/3$. (ii) Parallel was seen occasionally but the need for the word 'length' as opposed to just $RQ = 1/3 OP$ etc (which was just repeating question) meant that very few picked up full marks here.
Q.23 (b) Vectors	(b) Many candidates picked up at least one mark here although some did have problems with signs.

Q.24 (a)
Horizontal
translation

Answered quite well although the most common mistake was a translation to the left.

A few translated vertically.

Q.24 (b)
Reflection and
vertical
translation

Most candidates correctly reflected the original shape but then did not perform a positive vertical translation, but instead performing either a negative vertical translation or horizontal translation.

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Higher tier: Component two

Overview of the component

This component tested the content of topics from the full specification. The paper was set with the level of difficulty increasing through the paper and in a variety of styles to assess all three assessment objectives.

The questions asked were comparable with those on previous papers ensuring a fair test for candidates correctly entered at this level. Candidates engaged with the majority of the questions with attempt rates only occasionally falling below 80%.

Candidates need to ensure that they re-read a question when they believe they have completed it. Questions 3, 13, 15 and 24 are examples of questions where easy marks were lost through not checking the precise requirements of each question.

The use of a calculator is expected in this paper, but candidates are expected to show sufficient working to illustrate the method of solution they are employing.

In some questions the accuracy of the required answers is specified. In others candidates should consider the accuracy of the values provided in the question and work appropriately.

All candidates seemed to have sufficient time to answer those questions that were within their capabilities.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 Estimating the mean/frequency diagram	The majority of candidates were able to answer the question correctly. Other candidates were able to identify the mid-points of the group and occasionally multiplied these by the frequencies and calculated the sum. It was rather too common to then divide by 5 instead of 45.
Q.2 (a) Factorising a quadratic	Well answered by many candidates, the errors being the incorrect use of signs.
Q.2 (b) Indices rules	The majority of candidates were awarded a mark for either $27h^n$ or kh^6 , but only a minority were able to obtain the fully correct expression.
Q.2 (c) Inequalities	Well answered by a majority of candidates but a minority seemed unaware of the conventions for the end points.

Q.3 Pythagoras theorem/area of a triangle	Well answered by many candidates. Too many of the candidates that failed to answer the whole question correctly were able to use Pythagoras' Theorem but then decided to calculate the length of BD rather than the area of triangle BCD .
Q.4 (a) Tree diagram	Most candidates completed a fully correct tree diagram but some were only successful in completing the first branches correctly.
Q.4 (b) Tree diagram	Well answered either using the correct values or the FT values from their tree diagram.
Q.5 Repeated proportional change	The majority of candidates calculated the final height using 4×0.55^7 as is expected at this level. A number of candidates decided to calculate 4×0.45^7 instead. A few candidates decided to calculate each of the 7 heights and were accordingly penalised where accuracy was lost.
Q.6 Venn diagram	In (a) the majority of candidates were able to complete the Venn diagram successfully, but a number used values that only satisfied some of the requirements. In (b) the majority of candidates were able to identify the number of people required but not always the correct probability.
Q.7 Exchange rates	The question was well answered by many candidates. Those that failed to complete the question successfully generally gained the first two marks for 5172.75 reals. A few candidates went further to get 103 notes but then failed to appreciate that the answer was the 5150 reals converted back into pounds (£).
Q.8 Changing the subject of a formula	Well answered by a majority of candidates. Very few candidates that successfully completed the first step to obtain $P^3 = RQ$, then failed to complete the question.
Q.9 Expanding and simplifying identity	In (a) most candidates were able to expand both sets of brackets successfully but there were the usual sign errors seen with too many answers. (b) Poorly answered indicating that candidates are not aware that identities are true for all values of the variables in use.
Q.10 Constructions	Candidates need to appreciate the need to make clear the construction arcs that have been used. A minority of candidates were unable to complete the constructions but were able to demonstrate their understanding by accurately drawing the requisite lines.

Q.11 Pressure	Well answered.
Q.12 Trigonometry	Well answered by the majority of candidates. A few candidates were able to start the question with $\tan(72) = 35/x$ but were then unable to rearrange the equation to obtain x as the subject.
Q.13 Trial and improvement	Many candidates failed to appreciate that the answer was required to 1 decimal place and that showing that x was nearer to 2.6 than 2.7 requires showing a change of sign between the values obtained when using 2.6 and 2.65.
Q.14 Algebraic fraction	Well answered by around half of the candidates but others lost marks when removing brackets especially when the minus sign was involved. Few candidates used the most expedient method of removing all the fractions by multiplying through by 6 as their first step.
Q.15 Mass of a cone	Many candidates were able to obtain the correct expression, but few were able to simplify it correctly. A few candidates used the formula for the volume of a cylinder rather than that for the cone.
Q.16 Cumulative frequency and box-plot	(a) Many candidates failed to appreciate that the median is found at half the total frequency and not half-way up the graph. Values must be stated when making a comparison. (b)(i) A minority of candidates were able to identify that 40 minutes is the lower quartile on the box-plot and therefore 25% spent less than 40 mins. (ii) Whilst the 4 students were often seen, converting this to a percentage out of 80 was too demanding for many. (c) The inter-quartile range for the 10-year-olds was a problem for many candidates as was the interpretation that the inter-quartile range is a measure of spread.
Q.17 Probability	(a) A sketch of a tree diagram would have assisted many candidates who failed to appreciate that for Jenny to take a shot at all, means that Noah has missed. (b) The occurrence of miss, miss, hit was not understood by many candidates.
Q.18 Bounds	Bounds calculations involving division are generally considered demanding. Here maximum distance $\div$ minimum time was required. A minority of candidates achieved this, but some gained marks by using appropriate values that were not the relevant maximum and minimum ones.

Q.19 Enlargement with a negative scale factor	Well answered by a few candidates. Marks were gained from use of the incorrect centre, or the incorrect scale factor and the correct centre. On too many occasions the appropriate 'rays' were seen but with no completed shape as an answer.
Q.20 Circle Theorems	Most candidates gained some marks, but the 132 degrees was sometimes identified as the reflex angle at O . Annotating the diagram is way of illustrating an understanding of some of the theorems. In explanations, the use of the appropriate language is expected.
Q.21 Simplifying a fraction	Few candidates were able to factorise both the numerator and denominator correctly and thus cancel to obtain the simplification required.
Q.22 Perpendicular lines	Few candidates were able identify the gradient of the perpendicular line and accordingly use it to obtain the required equation.
Q.23 Area of a triangle/cosine rule	Those candidates that started with the sine rule on triangle WXZ were able to make progress with the question. Few candidates were able to complete the question satisfactorily. Despite the two given sides of triangle WXZ being of different lengths, rather too many candidates still decided that it was an isosceles triangle.
Q.24 Similar solids	Those candidates that understood that the scale factor change for area was 0.625^2 were generally successful with the question. A common error was to use a linear scale factor only for which a special case allowed 2 marks.
Q.25 Tangent to a circle	There were many methods employed with the question, the easiest approach being that the tangent meets the circle at $(4, 4)$ meaning that $a = 8$.

Q.26
Roller coaster

(a) Converting m/s to km/h proved too challenging for many of the candidates.

(b) A tangent is required and then the values from the tangent need to be read accurately from the graph. Very few candidates drew a tangent.

(c) Deceleration (or negative acceleration) was required.

(d) Candidates need to appreciate that the estimate is obtained by use of trapezia and that the values need to be accurately obtained from the graph. Many candidates failed to read the graph accurately.

Whilst not in the specification, the use of the trapezium rule is, of course, acceptable in questions such as this.

Q.27
Simultaneous
equations – linear
and quadratic

A demanding final question that was well answered by very few candidates. As y was given in terms of x in the linear equation, the substitution for y^2 as $(x - 3)^2$ was the most logical starting point. Where the quadratic formula is used, the appropriate working is expected and not just the calculated answers.

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