



Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Lower 6th

Thank you for participating in the 2014 Cambridge Chemistry Challenge for Lower Sixth (Year 12). We were again really pleased at the large number of entries; this year, almost 7000 marks were entered into the database, again an increase on the previous year.

The feedback from schools was overwhelmingly positive; “We felt the paper was perfect – challenging but accessible; interesting and enjoyable”, “It was a very stretching and challenging paper, and many pupils felt it was harder than the Olympiad which they sat earlier in the year. However, many of them performed comparatively better. It was also very straightforward and quick to mark”. Initial detailed comments received suggested that each question had marks accessible to all AS students but, as ever, the paper is designed to challenge the very brightest. Performances of particular note were the three Roentgenium awards given to students in Year 11 or below.

As last year we accepted a few entries from overseas schools. We have not included these students in the analysis below.

The boundaries for Roentgenium, Gold and Silver were approximately the same as last year, but the boundary for Copper came out a little higher than last year. Perhaps this was because there were more easily accessible marks on the paper.

The highest scoring papers were moderated by the committee with quite a number moving both up and down.

The paper, the mark-scheme, and the examiners' comments will appear on the website soon. We hope you feel taking part in this competition was a worthwhile experience and we would welcome any additional feedback; please email feedback@C3L6.com.

For your interest a summary of the results is included over the page.

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Results Summary

We felt a mark of 21 or above represented a very good achievement on this paper and showed the students were able to think their way successfully through unfamiliar material. More than a fifth of the candidates were of this standard and achieved at least a Silver Award. A mark over 27/60 was considered very good indeed and demonstrated a significant leap beyond A-level. These students were given a Gold Award or higher. The highest award, the Roentgenium, was only given to the top 0.8% of students: they have been invited to attend a residential course at the University of Cambridge. It was very pleasing to see 44 schools from *all* sectors of secondary education represented in this group; this confirms our view that talented and ambitious students can be found everywhere. 435 schools submitted at least one mark; very few of these schools did not achieve any award. A few schools registered at least one student but did not submit any marks. We hope this group will be encouraged to submit their marks in the future.

We must stress again that the grade boundaries on this paper, and therefore what represents a good achievement, are very different from the AS papers that these students are used to tackling. The “resilience” of A level students and the importance of students keeping going with questions, even in the face of difficulty, is still much talk about and highly desirable by Universities. We think that the C3L6 paper provides a great opportunity to practise these skills. It should be remembered that a score of 70% in a university exam is a first-class performance and very few undergraduates score anything like the scores that AS exams produce.

Award	Mark	Number of Students	Percentage
Roentgenium	42-60	56	0.82%
Gold	27-41	533	7.8%
Silver	21-26	987	14.4%
Copper	14-20	2452	35.7%
No Award	0-13	2839	41.4%

