

What to Expect in the Exams

Before you get cracking with your [revision](#) and [exam practice](#), here's a [handy guide](#) to what you'll have to face in the exams. You're welcome.

1. Topics are Covered in Different Papers

For Edexcel GCSE Higher Chemistry, you'll sit [two exam papers](#) at the [end](#) of your course.

Paper	Time	No. of marks	Topics Assessed
1	1 hr 45 mins	100	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
2	1 hr 45 mins	100	1, 6, 7, 8 and 9

2. There are Different Question Types

In each exam, you'll be expected to answer a mixture of [multiple choice](#) questions, [structured](#) questions, questions that have [short, closed answers](#) as well as [open response](#) questions.

For some [open response](#) questions, as well as being marked on the [scientific content](#) of your answer, you'll also be marked on [how well written](#) it is. So...

[Always](#) make sure your answers:

- Have a [clear](#) and [logical structure](#).
- Include the right [scientific terms](#), spelt correctly.
- Include [detailed, relevant information](#).

3. You'll be Tested on Your Maths...

At least [20% of the total marks](#) for GCSE Chemistry will come from questions that test your [maths skills](#). For these questions, always remember to:

- Show your [working](#) — you could get marks for this, even if your final answer's wrong.
- Check that the [units](#) of your [answer](#) are the same as the ones they asked for in the question.
- Make sure your answer is given to an appropriate number of [significant figures](#).

4. ...and on Your Practical Skills

- GCSE Chemistry contains [8 mandatory core practicals](#) that you'll do during the course. You can be asked about these, and the practical skills involved in them, in the exams.
- At least [15% of the total marks](#) will be for questions that test your understanding of the practical activities and practical skills.
- For example, you might be asked to comment on the [design](#) of an experiment (the [apparatus](#) and [method](#)), make [predictions](#), [analyse](#) or [interpret results](#)... Pretty much anything to do with planning and carrying out the investigations.



5. You'll Need to Know About Working Scientifically

[Working Scientifically](#) is all about how science is applied in the outside world by [real scientists](#).

For example, you might be asked about ways that scientists [communicate](#) an idea to get their point across without being [biased](#), or about the [limitations](#) of a scientific theory.

You need to think about the [situation](#) that you've been given and use all your [scientific savvy](#) to answer the question. Always [read the question](#) and any [data](#) you've been given really carefully [before](#) you start writing your answer.

Seven Golden Rules for Your Exam

I've jotted down a few 'Golden Rules', too — remember these and you'll be off to a good start on exam day.

Golden Rules

- 1) **Always, always, always** make sure you read the question properly.

For example, if the question asks you to give your answer in mm, don't give it in cm.

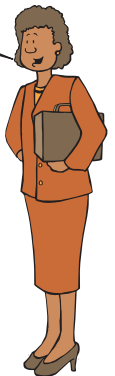
- 2) **Look at the number of marks** a question is worth.

The number of marks gives you a pretty good clue of how much to write. So if a question is worth four marks, make sure you write four decent points. And there's no point writing an essay for a question that's only worth one mark — it's just a waste of your time.

- 3) **Use specialist vocabulary.**

You know the words I mean — the sciencey ones, like intermolecular and electrolyte. Examiners love them.

Oh, we love them alright!



- 4) **Write your answers as clearly and accurately** as you can.

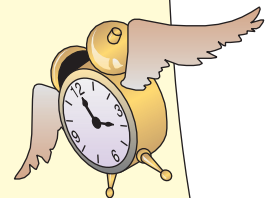
For some open response questions, as well as being marked on the scientific content of your answer, you'll also be marked on the overall quality of it. So always make sure your answers have a clear and logical structure, you include detailed, relevant information and you answer the question fully.

- 5) **Show each step in your calculations.**

You're less likely to make a mistake if you write things out in steps. And even if your final answer's wrong, you'll probably pick up some marks if the examiner can see that your method is right. You also need to make sure you're working in the right units — check before you put any numbers in your calculator.

- 6) **Pay attention to the time.**

Don't spend ages staring at the question paper. If you're totally, hopelessly stuck on a question, just leave it and move on to the next one. You can always go back to it at the end if you've got enough time.



- 7) **Be prepared and try not to panic.**

Exam day can give anyone a case of the jitters. So make sure you've got everything you need for the exam (pen, spare pen, pencil, ruler, calculator) ready the night before. Eat a good breakfast. And try to relax...

Obeying these Golden Rules will help you get as many marks as you can in the exams — but they're no use if you haven't learnt the stuff in the first place. So make sure you revise well and do as many practice questions as you can.