



### Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Lower 6th

Thank you for participating in the 2015 Cambridge Chemistry Challenge for Lower Sixth (Year 12). Once again, we had a record number of entries with around 8,500 marks being entered into the database, an increase of 1,500 from 2014.

The feedback from schools was overwhelmingly positive. While many centres found the paper stretching, comments suggested that it was perhaps more accessible than in past years, with reports of significantly higher marks. This was reflected in the higher grade boundaries for all the certificates. Schools also commented on the usefulness of the pre-released material on skeletal formulae.

The highest scoring papers were moderated by the committee, with quite a number moving both up and down. This year, all schools submitting at least one mark will be sent one of the stunning  $3d_{xy}$  crystal orbitals. We hope schools will continue to submit marks, in order to build up their collection, which we trust will be a useful teaching tool.

Given the switch to linear A Level Chemistry, we should welcome comments from centres as to the optimum timing for the 2016 paper.

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 should welcome any additional feedback: please email [feedback@C3L6.com](mailto:feedback@C3L6.com).

For your interest a summary of the results is included, over the page. As in previous years, we accepted a few entries from overseas schools but we have not included these students in this analysis.

#### Supporters of C3L6

**aramco**



**St Catharine's College  
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#### The C3L6 committee

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## Results Summary

We felt a mark of 26 or above represented a very good achievement on this paper and showed the students were able to think their way successfully through unfamiliar material. Nearly a quarter of the candidates were of this standard and achieved at least a Silver Award. A mark over 33/60 was considered very good indeed and demonstrated a significant leap beyond AS-level. These students were given a Gold Award or higher. The highest award, the Roentgenium, was only given to the top 0.7% of students: they have been invited to attend a residential course at the University of Cambridge. It was very pleasing to see 46 schools from *all* sectors of secondary education represented in this group; this confirms our view that talented and ambitious students can be found everywhere. Around 480 schools submitted at least one mark; few of these schools did not achieve any award. A further 40 schools registered at least one student but did not submit any marks. Sadly, a couple of schools submitted marks but no school details of any kind and so could not be sent their certificates! This emphasises, once again, the importance of teachers filling in the online registration accurately.

Teachers should be encouraged to submit all marks scored by their students as a certificate at any level represents a significant achievement; any fears that this could ever count against a student in terms of university applications are entirely unfounded.

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 talked about and is 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 achieve anything like typical AS scores.

Award	Mark	Number of Students	Percentage
Roentgenium	46-60	60	0.71%
Gold	33-45	641	7.6%
Silver	26-32	1339	15.8%
Copper	17-25	2906	34.3%
No Award	0-16	3535	41.7%

