CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

CANDIDATE NAME

CENTRE NUMBER

CANDIDATE NUMBER

PHYSICS **9702/31**

Paper 3 Advanced Practical Skills 1 **May/June 2026**

2 hours

You must answer on the question paper.

You will need: The materials and apparatus listed in the confidential instructions

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Use a black or dark blue pen. You may use an HB pencil for any diagrams or graphs.
- Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the boxes at the top of the page.
- Write your answer to each question in the space provided.
- Do **not** use an erasable pen. Do **not** use correction fluid or tape.
- Do **not** write on any bar codes.
- You will be allowed to work with the apparatus for a maximum of 1 hour for each question.
- You should record all your observations in the spaces provided in the question paper as soon as these observations are made.
- You may use a calculator.
- You should show all your working and use appropriate units.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 40.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

For Examiner's Use	
1	
2	
Total	

This document has **12** pages.

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[Turn over

You may not need to use all of the materials provided.

1 In this experiment, you will investigate an electrical circuit.

You have been provided with several resistors, each with a different value of resistance.

(a)
- Set up the circuit shown in Figure 1.1.
- Select the 18 Ω resistor and connect it so that resistance R is 18 Ω.

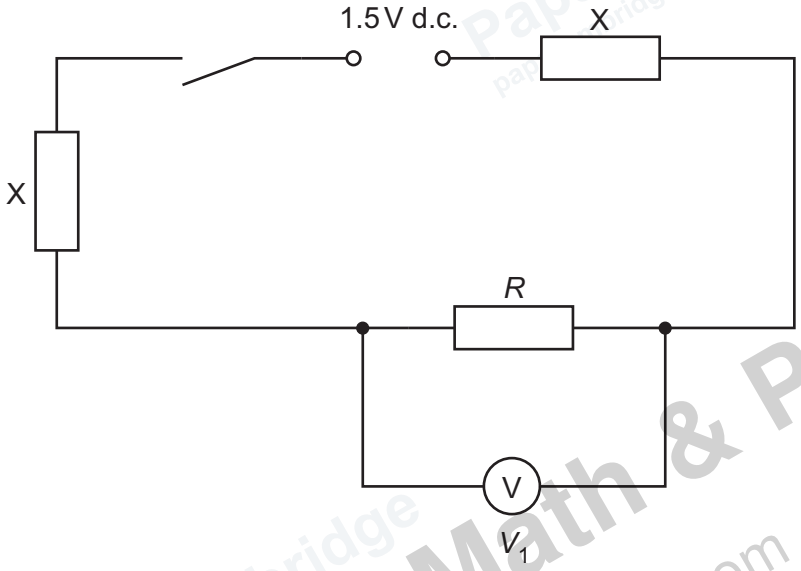


Figure 1.1

- Close the switch.
- Record R and the voltmeter reading V_1.

R = ...

V_1 = ...

- Open the switch.

[1]

(b) (i) • Connect a wire W as shown in Figure 1.2.

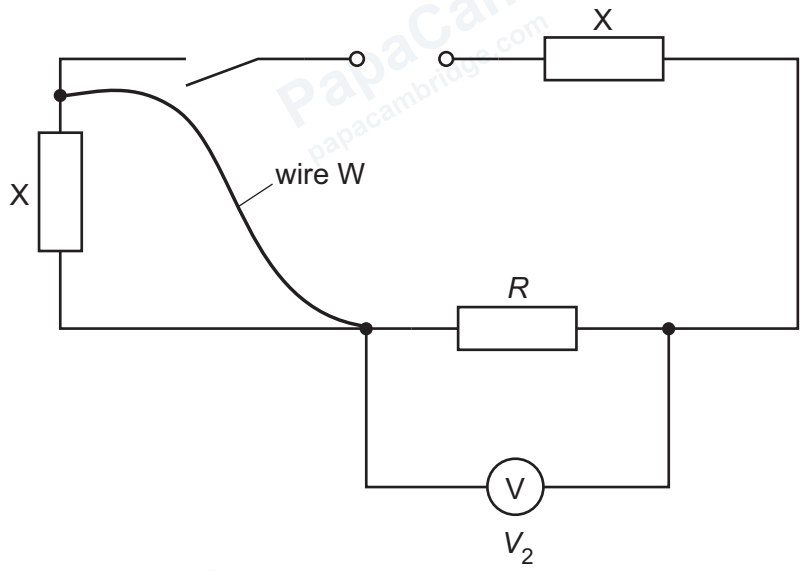


Figure 1.2

- Close the switch.
- Record the voltmeter reading V_2.

V_2 = ...

- Open the switch.
- Remove wire W.

[1]

(ii) Calculate $\frac{V_1}{V_2 - V_1}$.

$\frac{V_1}{V_2 - V_1}$ = ... [1]

(c) Vary R by using a different resistor. Record R, V_1 and V_2. Repeat until you have six sets of readings of R, V_1 and V_2. Include your values from **1(a)** and **1(b)**.

Record your results in a table. Include values of $\frac{V_1}{V_2 - V_1}$ in your table.

[8]

(d) (i) Plot a graph of $\frac{V_1}{V_2 - V_1}$ on the y-axis against R on the x-axis. [3]

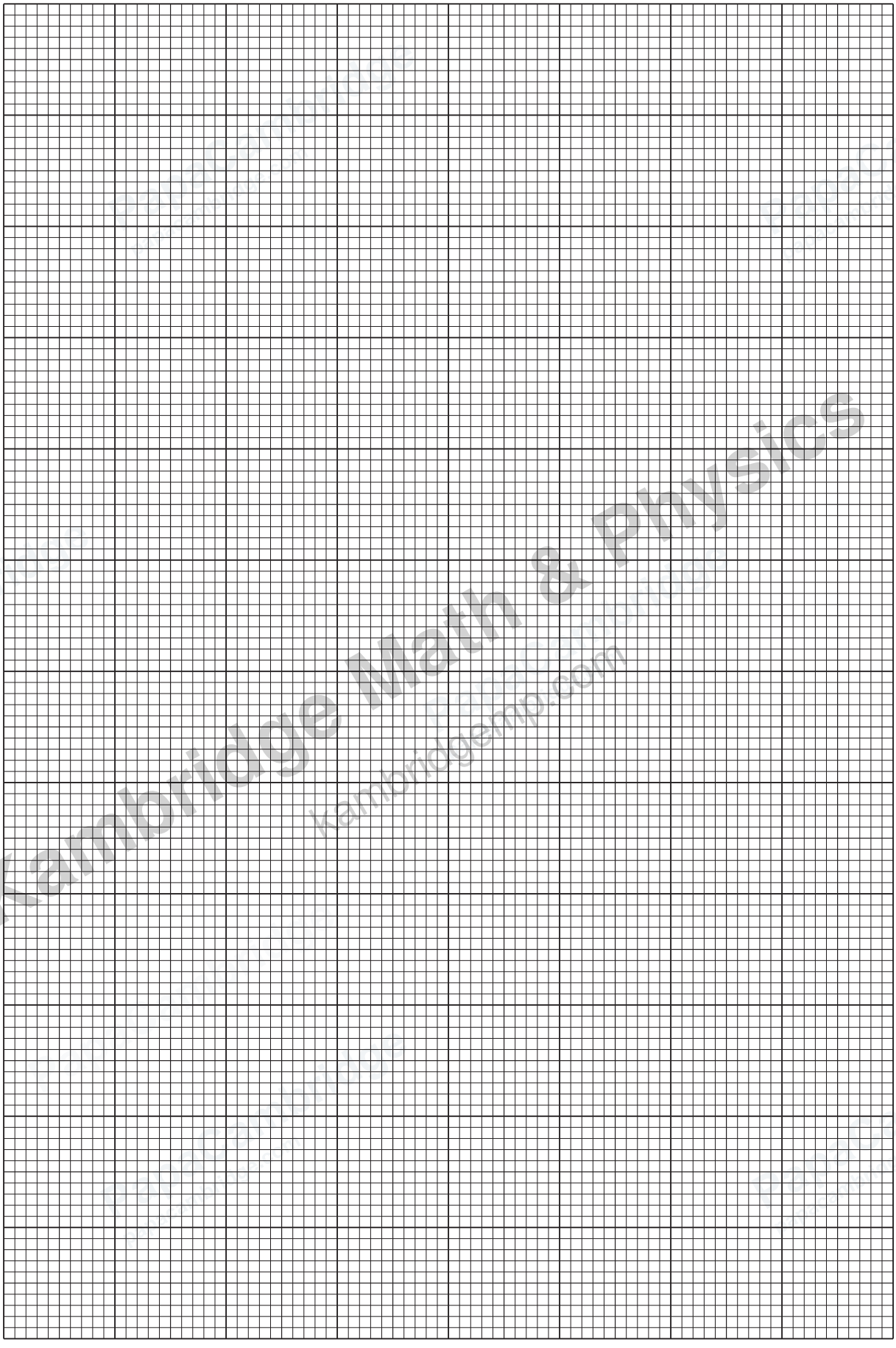
(ii) Draw the straight line of best fit. [1]

(iii) Determine the gradient and y-intercept of this line.

gradient = ...

y-intercept = ...

[2]



(e) It is suggested that the quantities V_1, V_2 and R are related by the equation

$$\frac{V_1}{V_2 - V_1} = PR + Q$$

where P and Q are constants.

Using your answers in **1(d)(iii)**, determine values for P and Q.
Give appropriate units.

P = ...

Q = ...

[2]

(f) The resistance of each resistor X is X.

Theory suggests that $P = \frac{1}{X}$ and that Q is independent of X.

A student repeats the experiment using a smaller value of X.

Sketch a second line on the graph to show the expected results.
Label this line Z.

[1]

[Total: 20]

You may not need to use all of the materials provided.

2 In this experiment, you will investigate the oscillations of a spring system.

You have been provided with three springs connected together.

(a)
- Choose one of the **end** springs (**not** the middle one). This is spring A.
- The length of the coiled section of spring A is l_0, as shown in Figure 2.1.

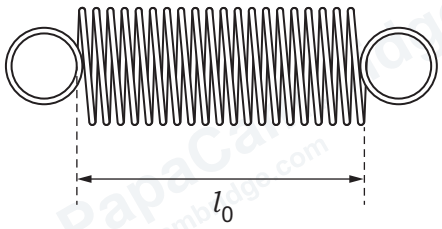


Figure 2.1

Measure and record l_0.

l_0 = ... [1]

(b) • Set up the apparatus as shown in Figure 2.2.

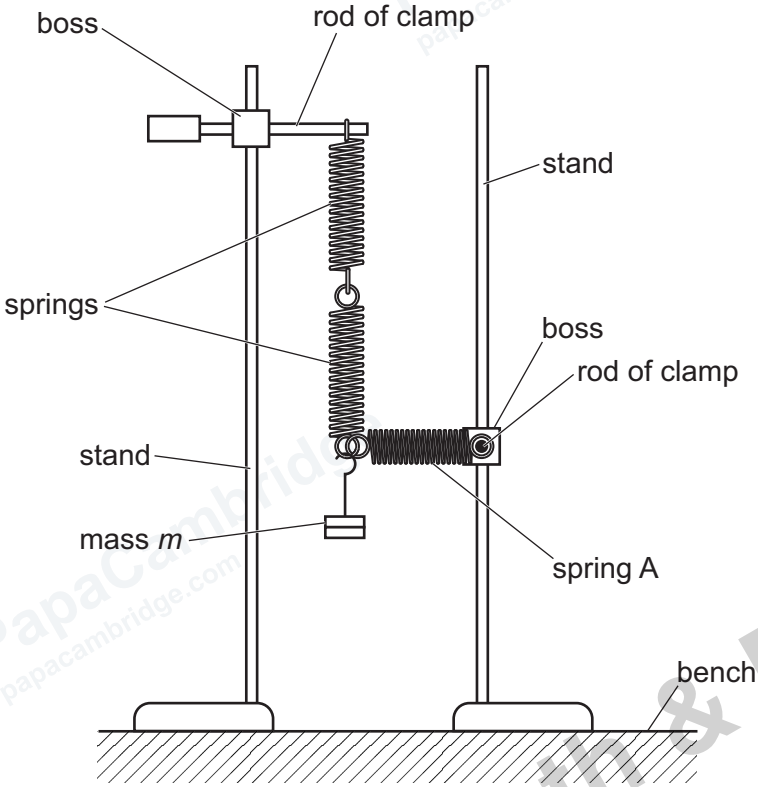


Figure 2.2

- Hang a mass *m* of 200 g from the springs as shown in Figure 2.2.
- Record the value of *m*.

m = ... g

- Adjust the apparatus until spring A is horizontal and unstretched with a coiled section of length l_0 and the other two springs are vertical.
- Gently pull the mass down through a short distance. When released, the mass will oscillate.
- Take measurements to determine the period T_0 of the oscillations.

T_0 = ...
[2]

(c) (i) • Adjust the apparatus so that the coiled section of spring A is extended to a length of approximately l_0 + 4.5 cm and spring A is horizontal, as shown in Figure 2.3.

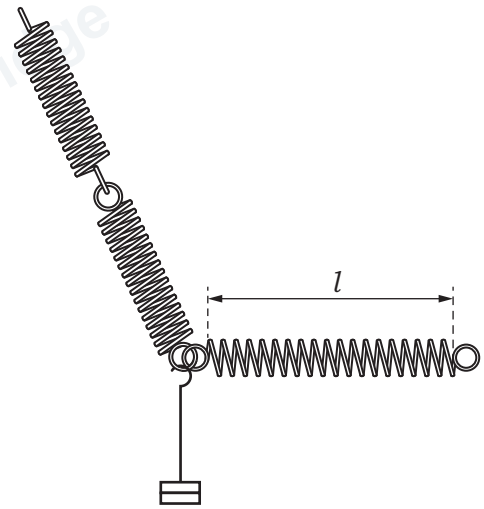


Figure 2.3

• Measure and record the extended length l of the coiled section of spring A.

l = ...

• Calculate the extension e of spring A, where

$e = l - l_0$.

e = ... [1]

(ii) Estimate the percentage uncertainty in your value of e. Show your working.

percentage uncertainty = ... % [1]

(d) (i)
- Gently pull the mass down through a short distance. When released, the mass will oscillate.
- Take measurements to determine the period T of the oscillations.

T = ... [1]

(ii) Calculate $(T_0 - T)$.

$(T_0 - T)$ = ... [1]

(e) Repeat **2(b)**, **2(c)(i)** and **2(d)** using a value of m = 300 g and a value for the length of the coiled section of spring A of approximately l_0 + 6.5 cm.

m = ... g

T_0 = ...

l = ...

e = ...

T = ...

$(T_0 - T)$ = ...
[3]

(f) It is suggested that the relationship between T_0, T, e and m is

$$(T_0 - T) = \frac{Ce}{\sqrt{m}}$$

where C is a constant.

Using your data, calculate **two** values of C.

first value of C = ...

second value of C = ...

[1]

(g) It is suggested that the percentage uncertainty in the values of C is 15%.

Using this uncertainty, explain whether your results support the relationship in **2(f)**.

.....

.....

.....

..... [1]

(h) (i) Describe **four** sources of uncertainty or limitations of the procedure for this experiment.

For any uncertainties in measurement that you describe, you should state the quantity being measured and a reason for the uncertainty.

1 .....

.....

2 .....

.....

3 .....

.....

4 .....

.....

[4]

(ii) Describe **four** improvements that could be made to this experiment. You may suggest the use of other apparatus or different procedures.

1 .....

.....

2 .....

.....

3 .....

.....

4 .....

.....

[4]

[Total: 20]

