

- 9 During the de-commissioning of a nuclear reactor, a mass of  $2.5 \times 10^6 \text{ kg}$  of steel is found to be contaminated with radioactive nickel-63 ( $^{63}_{28}\text{Ni}$ ).  
The total activity of the steel due to the nickel-63 contamination is  $1.7 \times 10^{14} \text{ Bq}$ .

(a) Calculate the activity per unit mass of the steel.

activity per unit mass = .....  $\text{Bq kg}^{-1}$  [1]

- (b) Special storage precautions need to be taken when the activity per unit mass due to contamination exceeds  $400 \text{ Bq kg}^{-1}$ .  
Nickel-63 is a  $\beta$ -emitter with a half-life of 92 years.  
The maximum energy of an emitted  $\beta$ -particle is  $0.067 \text{ MeV}$ .

- (i) Use your answer in (a) to calculate the energy, in J, released per second in a mass of  $1.0 \text{ kg}$  of steel due to the radioactive decay of the nickel.

energy = ..... J [1]

- (ii) Use your answer in (i) to suggest, with a reason, whether the steel will be at a high temperature.

.....  
.....  
..... [1]

- (iii) Use your answer in (a) to determine the time interval before special storage precautions for the steel are not required.

time = ..... years [3]