

Determination of Critical Micelle Concentration

Practical 09 | Physical Pharmaceutics I

Aim

To determine Critical Micelle Concentration, and interpret the recorded observations.

Principle

- A change in a concentration-dependent property identifies the transition associated with micelle formation. The breakpoint is method- and condition-dependent.
- The property is obtained from a defined observable under controlled conditions.
- Replicate measurements, instrument checks and consistent units are needed before comparison.

Materials and Apparatus

- Assigned surfactant series and conductivity or surface-tension apparatus.
- Assigned test material and calibration or comparison material.
- The apparatus specified for this property, a balance or volumetric equipment where relevant, and a record sheet.

Method

1. Identify the measured property, units and controlled variables before setting up the apparatus.
2. Check the instrument, zero or calibration and record the relevant operating conditions.
3. Prepare a representative measured portion without changing its intended composition.
4. Obtain the readings specified for the property and repeat under the same conditions.
5. Calculate the required property, including corrections stated for the apparatus or method.
6. Summarize the replicate results and explain the effect of the variable studied.

Observation Record

Complete this record using actual laboratory findings or the provided teaching data.

Observation / parameter	Record / finding
Surfactant concentration	_____
Temperature	_____
Measured property	_____
Breakpoint estimate	_____

Calculations and Interpretation

- Plot the chosen property against concentration or log concentration as appropriate.
- Estimate CMC from the intersection of the two fitted regions and state the units.

Result

Record the actual finding, calculated value with units where relevant, and a conclusion supported by the observations.

Finding: _____

Conclusion: _____

Precautions

- Keep temperature and test conditions consistent across comparative readings.
- Record raw readings before rounding calculated values.
- Do not compare results obtained with different methods as if they were interchangeable.

Viva Questions

1. Why control the test conditions?

A change in conditions may alter the measured property independently of the intended variable.

2. Why retain replicate readings?

They show repeatability and help identify an anomalous measurement.

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