

## Supplementary Information for 'Fmoc -chemistry of a stable phosphohistidine analogue'

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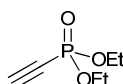
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## 1. Chemical experimental

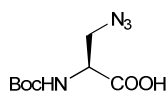
Unless otherwise stated, all reagents were purchased from Sigma Aldrich, Alfa Aesar, Merck, Iris Biochem or Fisher Scientific and were used without further purification. Silica chromatography was performed using silica (35-70  $\mu$ m particles). Thin-layer chromatography was carried out on pre-coated aluminium plates. Mixtures of solvents are v/v. NMR data were collected using a Bruker Avance 500, Bruker DRX500, or Bruker DPX300 and analysed using MestReNova software. IR spectra were recorded using a PerkinElmer spectrum one FTIR spectrometer. Optical rotations were measured using an AA-5 automatic polarimeter,  $[\alpha]_D$  values are given in  $10^{-1}$  deg  $\text{cm}^2 \text{g}^{-1}$ . High resolution mass spectrometry (HRMS) was carried out on a Bruker Daltonics micrOTOF by Mrs Tanya Marinko-Covell.

### a. Diethyl acetylenylphosphonate **6**<sup>1</sup>



Ethynylmagnesium bromide (0.5M solution in THF; 150 mL, 75 mmol) was added dropwise to a solution of diethyl chlorophosphate (11 mL, 76 mmol) in anhydrous THF (75 mL) at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was warmed to rt and stirred for 3 h, diluted with sat. *aq.*  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$  (50 mL) and extracted with EtOAc ( $5 \times 100$  mL). The organic extracts were washed with  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ( $1 \times 100$  mL), brine ( $1 \times 100$  mL), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ), and concentrated *in vacuo* to give a dark brown oil. Column chromatography, eluting with 1:1 EtOAc/Hexane yielded the title compound **6**<sup>1</sup> as a yellow oil (2.975g, 24%);  $R_f$ : 0.22 (1:1 EtOAc/Hexane)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  (film)/ $\text{cm}^{-1}$  3172 (CH alkyne), 2988 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ), 2065 ( $\text{C}\equiv\text{C}$ ), 1267 (P=O), 1050 (P-O);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$ (500 MHz; $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ) 4.22-4.15 (4H, m,  $2 \times \text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 3.14 (1H, d,  $^3J_{\text{P-H}}$  13.2, CCH), 1.39 (6H, t,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  7.2,  $2 \times \text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ );  $\delta_{\text{C}}$ (125 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ) 88.7 (d,  $^2J_{\text{P-C}}$  50.6, PCCH), 74.4 (d,  $^1J_{\text{P-C}}$  288.8, PCCH), 63.8 (d,  $^2J_{\text{P-C}}$  5.6,  $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 16.3 (d,  $^3J_{\text{P-C}}$  7.1,  $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ );  $\delta_{\text{P}}$ (121 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) -7.25 (dp,  $^3J_{\text{P-H}}$  13.2,  $^3J_{\text{P-H}}$  8.7);  $m/z$  (ES) 163.0554 ( $M^+ \cdot \text{H}$ .  $\text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_3\text{P}$  requires 163.0519), 185.0362 ( $M\text{Na}^+$ .  $\text{C}_6\text{H}_{11}\text{NaO}_3\text{P}$  requires 185.0338).

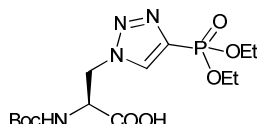
### b. (2S)-3-azido-2-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid **8**<sup>2</sup>



Freshly distilled triflic anhydride (3 mL, 17.8 mmol) was added dropwise to a vigorously stirred solution of sodium azide (5.76 g, 88.6 mmol) in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (15 mL) and DCM (30 mL) at 0 °C, and stirred for 2 h at room temperature. The organic layer was separated and the aqueous layer extracted with DCM ( $2 \times 15$  mL). The combined organic extracts were washed with sat *aq.*  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  solution ( $1 \times 25$  mL), added dropwise to a stirred solution of (2S)-3-amino-2-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid (1.86 g, 9.11 mmol),  $\text{K}_2\text{CO}_3$  (1.84 g, 13.3 mmol) and  $\text{CuSO}_4$  (22 mg, 0.088 mmol) in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (30 mL) and MeOH (45 mL), and stirred at room temperature overnight. The organic solvents were removed *in vacuo* and the remaining aqueous layer acidified to pH 6 with conc. HCl, diluted with potassium phosphate buffer (pH 6.2, 60 mL) and extracted with DCM ( $4 \times 100$  mL). The organic layers were combined, washed with brine ( $1 \times 70$  mL), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated *in vacuo* to yield the title compound **8**<sup>2</sup> as a blue/green oil (1.635 g, 78% yield);  $[\alpha]_D^{22} +30.5$  ( $c$  0.79 in MeOH);  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  (film)/ $\text{cm}^{-1}$  3328 (OH), 2554 (NH), 2108 ( $\text{N}=\text{N}=\text{N}$ ), 1693 (C=O acid/carbamate);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$ (500 MHz; $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ; 298 K) 6.70, 5.42 (1H, s-broad & d,  $J$  7.2, NH), 5.53, 4.35 (1H,  $2 \times$  s-broad,

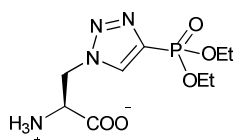
$H_{\alpha}$ , 3.79, 3.71 (2H, 2  $\times$  s-broad,  $H_{\beta}$ ), 1.47 (9H, s,  $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ) rotamer ratio 1:0.4;  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (500 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ; 268K) **A**: 7.46 (1H, d,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  6.6, NH), 4.38 (1H, dt,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  6.6,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  4.4,  $H_{\alpha}$ ), 3.78 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  12.6,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  4.4,  $H_{\beta}$ ), 3.68 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  12.6,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  4.4,  $H_{\beta}$ ), 1.49 (9H, s,  $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ); **B**: 5.53 (1H, d,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  7.7, NH), 4.53 (1H, dt,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  7.7,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  3.6,  $H_{\alpha}$ ), 3.84 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  12.7,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  3.6,  $H_{\beta}$ ), 3.84 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  12.7,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  3.6,  $H_{\beta}$ ), 1.46 (9H, s  $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ) rotamer ratio A:B = 1.25:1;  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (125 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ) 173.8 (COOH), 156.0 (NC(O)O), 81.5 ( $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ), 53.8 ( $C_{\alpha}$ ), 52.8 ( $C_{\beta}$ ), 28.6 ( $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ );  $m/z$  (ES) 253.0919 ( $\text{MNa}^+$ .  $\text{C}_8\text{H}_{14}\text{N}_4\text{NaO}_3$  requires 253.0907).

c. (2S)-3-(4-(diethyl phosphoryl)-[1,2,3]triazol-1-yl)-2-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid **4**<sup>3</sup>



(2S)-3-azido-2-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid **8** (300 mg, 1.30 mmol) and diethyl acetylenylphosphonate **6** (250 mg, 1.56 mmol) were dissolved in a 1:1 mixture of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $t\text{-BuOH}$  (15 mL), generating a pale yellow clear solution. A freshly made solution of  $\text{CuSO}_4$  (2 mg, 0.013 mmol) and sodium L-ascorbate (15 mg, 0.13 mmol) in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (1 mL) was added in one portion, and the reaction stirred at room temperature overnight. The reaction mixture was titrated to pH 12 with an aqueous solution of  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  (10%), diluted to 50 mL with  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  and extracted with ether (2  $\times$  20 mL), the aqueous phase was acidified to pH 1 with conc. HCl and extracted with EtOAc (5  $\times$  20 mL). The combined extracts were dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ), and concentrated *in vacuo* to yield a yellow oil, Column chromatography (EtOAc) yielded the title compound **4**<sup>3</sup> as a yellow oil (449 mg, 88% yield);  $R_f$ : 0.08 (EtOAc);  $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{22}$  -31.6 ( $c$  0.38 in MeOH);  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  (film)/ $\text{cm}^{-1}$  3405 (OH), 2579 (NH), 1702 (C=O acid/carbamate), 1236 (P=O), 1010 (P-OEt);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (500 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ) 8.29 (1H, s, Trz- $H_5$ ), 5.65 (1H, d,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  6.7, NH), 5.01 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  14.0,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  4.0,  $\text{CH}_{\square}$ ), 4.95 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  14.0,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  4.0,  $\text{CH}_{\beta}$ ), 4.81-4.74 (1H, m,  $\text{CH}_{\alpha}$ ), 4.28-4.15 (4H, m, 2  $\times$   $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.43 (9H, s,  $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ), 1.34 (6H, t,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  7.07, 2  $\times$   $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ );  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (125 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ) 174.3 (s, COOH), 170.7 (NHC(O)O), 136.5 (d,  $^1J_{\text{P-C}}$  241.8, Trz- $C_4$ ), 132.8 (d,  $^2J_{\text{P-C}}$  33.8, Trz- $C_5$ ), 80.7 (s,  $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ), 63.9 (d,  $^2J_{\text{P-C}}$  5.35,  $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 53.8 (s,  $C_{\alpha}$ ), 50.0 (s,  $C_{\beta}$ ), 28.4 (s,  $\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ ), 16.3 (d,  $^3J_{\text{P-C}}$  6.1,  $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ );  $\delta_{\text{P}}$  (121 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 8.24 (p,  $^3J_{\text{P-H}}$  7.9);  $m/z$  (ES) 393.1536 ( $\text{MH}^+$ .  $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}_4\text{O}_7\text{P}$  requires 393.1534), 415.1358 ( $\text{MNa}^+$ .  $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_4\text{NaO}_7\text{P}$  requires 415.1353).

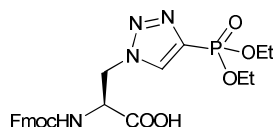
d. (2S)-3-(4-(diethyl phosphoryl)-[1,2,3]triazol-1-yl)-2-amino-propionic acid **9**



(2S)-3-[4-(Diethyl-phosphoryl)-[1,2,3]triazol-1-yl]-2-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid **4** (380 mg, 0.969 mmol) was dissolved in TFA (15 mL) and stirred at room temperature for 2 hrs. The reaction mixture was poured into  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (10 mL), the flask rinsed with  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (2  $\times$  10 mL) and the resultant cloudy solution concentrated *in vacuo* to yield a pale brown oil. Excess TFA was removed by dissolution in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (3  $\times$  10 mL), and lyophilisation to yield the title compound **9** as a pale brown oil (309 mg, 92% yield);  $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{22}$  -7.4 ( $c$  0.82 in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ );  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (500 MHz;  $\text{D}_2\text{O}$ ) 8.48 (1H, s, Trz- $H_5$ ), 5.06 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  15.7,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  5.2,  $H_{\beta}$ )\*, 5.02 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{\text{H-H}}$  15.7,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  5.2,  $H_{\beta}$ )\*, 4.60 (1H, t,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  5.2,  $H_{\alpha}$ ), 4.06 (4H, p,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  7.1, 2  $\times$   $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.17 (6H, t,  $^3J_{\text{H-H}}$  7.1, 2  $\times$   $\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ) [\* $H_{\beta}$  signals overlap];

$\delta_C$ (125MHz; D<sub>2</sub>O) 168.8 (s, COOH), 135.6 (d,  $^1J_{P-C}$  242.5, Trz-C<sub>4</sub>), 133.2 (d,  $^2J_{P-C}$  33.1, Trz-C<sub>4</sub>), 64.7 (d,  $^2J_{P-C}$  5.6, 2  $\times$  OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 52.8 (s, C $\alpha$ ), 49.1 (s, C $\beta$ ), 15.4 (d,  $^3J_{P-C}$  6.1, 2  $\times$  OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>);  $\delta_P$ (121Mhz; D<sub>2</sub>O) 9.58 (s - broad);  $m/z$  (ES) 293.1004 ( $MH^+$ ). C<sub>9</sub>H<sub>18</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>5</sub>P requires 293.1009).

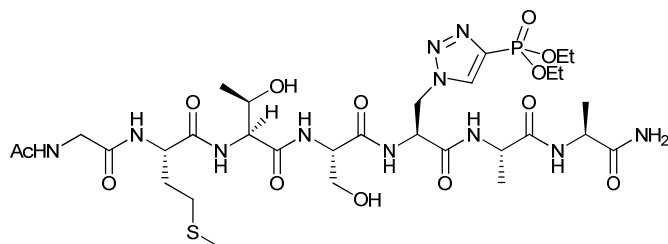
e. (2S)-3-[4-(Diethyl-phosphoryl)-[1,2,3]triazol-1-yl]-2-(9H-fluoren-9-ylmethoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid **5**



Diethyl acetylenylphosphonate **6** (111 mg, 0.685 mmol) was dissolved in THF (2 mL) and a solution of CuSO<sub>4</sub> (3 mg, 0.02 mmol) and sodium L-ascorbate (30 mg, 0.15 mmol) in H<sub>2</sub>O (1 mL) added. (2S)-3-azido-2-(9H-fluoren-9-ylmethoxycarbonyl)amino-propionic acid (200 mg, 0.568 mmol) was added as a solution in THF/H<sub>2</sub>O (1:1, 2mL) and the resultant solution stirred at room temperature for 24 h. The reaction mixture was titrated to pH 12 with aqueous Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (10%), the mixture diluted to 30 mL with H<sub>2</sub>O and extracted with ether (3  $\times$  10 mL), the aqueous phase was acidified to pH 1 with conc. HCl and extracted with EtOAc (4  $\times$  20 mL). The combined organic extracts were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>), and concentrated *in vacuo* to yield the *title compound 5* a yellow foam (283 mg, 96% yield);  $[\alpha]_D^{22}$  -38.1 (*c* 0.21 in MeOH);  $\nu_{max}$  (film)/cm<sup>-1</sup> 3426 (OH), 2984 (NH), 1717 (C=O acid), 1644 (C=O carbamate), 1266 (P=O), 1052 (P-OEt);  $\delta_H$ (500MHz; *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO) 8.63 (0.85H, s, Trz-H<sub>5</sub>), 7.97 (0.83H, d,  $^3J_{H-H}$  8.5, NH), 7.89 (2H, d,  $^3J_{H-H}$  7.5, 2  $\times$  Fmoc-H<sub>5</sub>), 7.67, 7.65 (2H, 2  $\times$  d,  $^3J_{H-H}$  7.5, 2  $\times$  Fmoc-H<sub>2</sub>), 7.42 (2H, t,  $^3J_{H-H}$  7.44, 2  $\times$  Fmoc-H<sub>4</sub>), 7.340, 7.336 (2H, 2  $\times$  t,  $^3J_{H-H}$  7.3, 2  $\times$  Fmoc-H<sub>3</sub>), 4.91 (2H, dd,  $^2J_{H-H}$  13.8,  $^3J_{H-H}$  4.6, *H* <sub>$\beta$</sub> ), 4.76 (1H, dd,  $^2J_{H-H}$  13.8,  $^3J_{H-H}$  4.6, *H* <sub>$\beta 2$</sub> ), 4.64 (1H, m, *H* <sub>$\alpha$</sub> ), 4.29-4.16 (3H, m, 1  $\times$  *H*<sub>A</sub> + 2  $\times$  *H*<sub>B</sub>), 4.03 (4H, m, 2  $\times$  CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.204, 1.200 (6H, 2  $\times$  t,  $^3J_{H-H}$  7.0, 2  $\times$  CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>);  $\delta_C$ (125MHz; *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO): 171.5 (s, COOH), 156.8 (s, NHC(O)O), 144.6 (s, Fmoc-C<sub>1</sub>), 141.6 (s, Fmoc-C<sub>6</sub>), 137.2 (d,  $^1J_{P-C}$  237.8, Trz-C<sub>4</sub>), 133.2 (d,  $^2J_{P-C}$  33.8, Trz-C<sub>5</sub>), 128.7 (s, Fmoc-C<sub>5</sub>), 128.2 (s, Fmoc-C<sub>2</sub>), 126.2 (s, Fmoc-C<sub>3</sub>), 121.1 (s, Fmoc-C<sub>4</sub>), 67.0 (s, C<sub>B</sub>), 62.2 (d,  $^2J_{P-C}$  5.5, PO(OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>)), 55.0 (s, C<sub>A</sub>), 50.7 (s, C <sub>$\beta$</sub> ), 47.6 (s, C $\alpha$ ), 16.0 (d,  $^3J_{P-C}$  6.1, PO(OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>));  $\delta_P$ (121MHz; *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO): 8.42 (p,  $^3J_{P-H}$  8.0);  $m/z$  (ES) 515.1710 ( $MH^+$ ). C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>4</sub>O<sub>7</sub>P requires 515.1690.

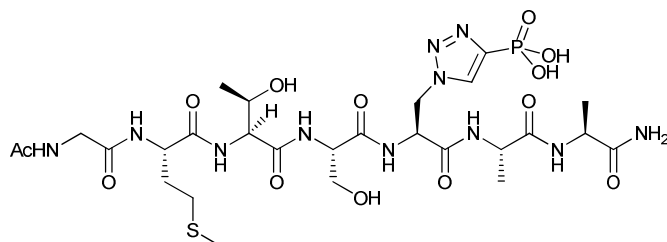
(2S)-3-[4-(Diethyl-phosphoryl)-[1,2,3]triazol-1-yl]-2-amino-propionic acid **4** (as TFA salt, 431 mg, 1.059 mmol) was dissolved in aqueous Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (10%, 20 mL), dioxane (10 mL) and H<sub>2</sub>O (5 mL). This mixture was cooled to 0°C, a solution of Fmoc-Cl (300 mg, 1.16 mmol) in dioxane (5 mL) added dropwise and the mixture stirred at 0°C for 10 min then at room temperature for 1 h. The reaction mixture was extracted with ether (2  $\times$  10 mL), the aqueous phase acidified to pH 1, and extracted with EtOAc (4  $\times$  15 mL). The EtOAc extracts were combined, dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated *in vacuo* to yield **5** as a pale yellow foam (372 mg, 68% yield).

f. Ac-Gly-Met-Thr-Ser-pTz(OEt)<sub>2</sub>-Ala-Ala-NH<sub>2</sub> **11**



Peptides were synthesised according to standard solid phase synthesis protocols using Rink amide Novagel resin (loading: 0.64 mmol/g). Resin (105 mg) was swollen in DMF for 30 min and a solution of Fmoc-Ala-OH (105 mg, 0.34 mmol, 5 eq.), HCTU (139 mg, 0.34 mmol, 5 eq.) and DIPEA (124  $\mu$ l, 0.68 mmol, 10 eq.) in DMF (2 ml) added to the resin and mixed for 1 h. The resin was washed with DMF (3  $\times$  2 ml, 2 min), 20% piperidine in DMF (5  $\times$  2 ml, 2 min) and DMF (5  $\times$  2 ml, 2 min). Couplings of Fmoc-Ala-OH, Fmoc-Ser(tBu)-OH, Fmoc-Thr(tBu)-OH, Fmoc-Met-OH and Fmoc-Gly-OH were carried out in the same fashion using 5 eq. amino acid, 5 eq. HCTU and 10 eq. DIPEA in DMF (2 ml) for 1 h. Coupling of the triazole amino acid was carried out using 3 eq. amino acid, 3 eq. HCTU and 6 eq. DIPEA in DMF (1.5 ml) for 1h. The N-terminus was acetylated by addition of a solution of acetic anhydride (32  $\mu$ l, 0.34 mmol, 5 eq) and DIPEA (62  $\mu$ l, 0.34 mmol, 5 eq) in DMF (2 ml) for 30 min and the resin washed with DMF (3  $\times$  2 ml, 2 min), DCM (3  $\times$  2 ml, 2 min) and MeOH (3  $\times$  2 ml, 2 min) before drying overnight under a stream of air. The peptide was cleaved from the resin by addition of 2 ml of a cleavage cocktail (TFA (94%), EDT (2.5%), H<sub>2</sub>O (2.5%) and TIS (1%)) for 2 h. The solution was added to ice-cold ether (10 ml) and the precipitate collected by centrifugation, and the pellet washed in cold ether (5  $\times$  10 ml). The residual ether was removed under a stream of nitrogen and the resultant gummy white solid dissolved in H<sub>2</sub>O/dioxane and lyophilised to give the *title compound 11* as a flocculent colourless solid (24mg, 0.028 mmol, 45%); *m/z* (ES) 852.3455 (*MH*<sup>+</sup>. C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>55</sub>N<sub>11</sub>O<sub>13</sub>PS requires 852.3438), 868.3387 (*MH*<sup>+</sup>-Met[O]. C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>55</sub>N<sub>11</sub>O<sub>14</sub>PS requires 868.3388), 874.3268 (*MNa*<sup>+</sup>. C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>54</sub>N<sub>11</sub>NaO<sub>13</sub>PS requires 874.3259), 890.3221 (*MNa*<sup>+</sup>-Met[O]. C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>54</sub>N<sub>11</sub>NaO<sub>14</sub>PS requires 890.3208).

g. Ac-Gly-Met-Thr-Ser-pTz(OH)<sub>2</sub>-Ala-Ala-NH<sub>2</sub> **12**



TMS-Br (120  $\mu$ l, 0.91 mmol) was added in one portion to a suspension of **11** (15.34 mg, 0.018 mmol) in anhydrous DCM (2.5 ml) and the mixture stirred for 72 h. The solvent was removed *in vacuo* to yield an amorphous colourless solid which was immediately dissolved in MeOH (10 ml) and stirred for 90 min. The solvent was removed *in vacuo* and the resultant colourless oil dissolved in H<sub>2</sub>O and lyophilised to yield a brown amorphous solid (14.5 mg, mixture of products); *m/z* (ES) 794.2694 (*M*<sup>-</sup>-acid. C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>45</sub>N<sub>11</sub>O<sub>13</sub>PS requires 794.2662), 822.3008 (*M*<sup>-</sup>-monoester. C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>49</sub>N<sub>11</sub>O<sub>13</sub>PS requires 822.2975), 850.3306 (*M*<sup>-</sup>-diester. C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>53</sub>N<sub>11</sub>O<sub>13</sub>PS requires 850.3288).

## 2. Modelling electrostatic potential

Calculations were performed in Gaussian\_03(e)<sup>4</sup> using the B3LYP functional with 6-311+g(d,p) basis. Full geometry optimizations were performed and converged in all cases. Electrostatic Potential (ESP) maps were plotted using Gaussview 4. Isosurfaces were generated at a total density of 0.0004 e/bohr<sup>3</sup>. ESP values range from -0.05 to 0.05 au, i.e. from -31.4 (red) to +31.4 (blue) kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>.

### Output Z-matrices from Gaussian for modelled structures

NATURAL = 3-methylimidazole-1-phosphoramidate

TRIAZOLE = 1-methyl-[1,2,3]-triazole-4-phosphonic acid

NATURAL: C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>7</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>P<sub>1</sub>

B3LYP/6-311+g(d,p)

ENERGY = -833.4221803 Hartree

C

C,1,B1

C,1,B2,2,A1

N,1,B3,2,A2,3,D1

H,2,B4,1,A3,4,D2

H,3,B5,1,A4,4,D3

C,1,B6,4,A5,3,D4

H,7,B7,1,A6,4,D5

H,7,B8,1,A7,4,D6

H,7,B9,1,A8,4,D7

P,3,B10,1,A9,4,D8

O,11,B11,3,A10,1,D9

O,11,B12,3,A11,1,D10

H,13,B13,11,A12,3,D11

O,11,B14,3,A13,1,D12

H,15,B15,11,A14,3,D13

N,3,B16,1,A15,4,D14

A15=73.60443818

D1=0.03181033

D2=179.5723352

D3=0.49377562

D4=179.81796701

D5=-59.68952524

D6=59.10991012

D7=179.73857085

D8=-179.4872967

D9=178.22242797

D10=-59.70529758

D11=-167.129144

D12=60.05048621

D13=72.41164846

D14=-179.95249244

Variables:

B1=1.36405678

B2=2.15560281

B3=1.39012312

B4=1.07657681

B5=1.0788792

B6=1.49314852

B7=1.09359005

B8=1.09357709

B9=1.09172658

B10=2.73842741

B11=1.4724792

B12=1.60281041

B13=0.96554743

B14=1.61734039

B15=0.96582528

B16=1.38957264

A1=74.60323711

A2=109.95432205

A3=132.22007207

A4=165.33060718

A5=121.19834465

A6=110.63277039

A7=110.65729474

A8=111.19530889

A9=103.97042348

A10=88.10069338

A11=114.46791039

A12=114.24962617

A13=120.31068911

A14=112.59751602

TRIAZOLE: C3H6N3O3P1

B3LYP/6-311+g(d,p)

ENERGY = -849.4201555 Hartree

C

N,1,B1

H,1,B2,2,A1

C,2,B3,1,A2,3,D1

H,4,B4,2,A3,1,D2

H,4,B5,2,A4,1,D3

H,4,B6,2,A5,1,D4

P,1,B7,2,A6,4,D5

O,8,B8,1,A7,2,D6

O,8,B9,1,A8,2,D7

H,10,B10,8,A9,1,D8

O,8,B11,1,A10,2,D9

H,12,B12,8,A11,1,D10

C,1,B13,2,A12,4,D11

N,2,B14,1,A13,14,D12

N,1,B15,14,A14,15,D13

D2	72.34285
D3	178.33504
D4	-75.62591
D5	-178.64987
D6	86.86402
D7	-158.55934
D8	-150.92664
D9	-59.84733
D10	114.01312
D11	179.66689
D12	-0.06982
D13	0.08534

Variables:

B1	2.22383
B2	1.07635
B3	2.43557
B4	1.09087
B5	1.08795
B6	1.09107
B7	2.88481
B8	1.47958
B9	1.61749
B10	0.96566
B11	1.61827
B12	0.96555
B13	1.37818
B14	1.29593
B15	1.35101
A1	158.26186
A2	65.80544
A3	122.51435
A4	78.39262
A5	120.72205
A6	97.65807
A7	119.23542
A8	80.46621
A9	112.24874
A10	118.47996
A11	112.35502
A12	69.52957
A13	73.09608
A14	104.2752
D1	0.81947



TRIAZOLE [P=O in plane]: C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>6</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>3</sub>P1

B3LYP/6-311+g(d,p)

ENERGY = -849.4161438 Hartree

C

N,1,B1

H,1,B2,2,A1

C,2,B3,1,A2,3,D1

H,4,B4,2,A3,1,D2

H,4,B5,2,A4,1,D3

H,4,B6,2,A5,1,D4

P,1,B7,2,A6,4,D5

O,8,B8,1,A7,2,D6

O,8,B9,1,A8,2,D7

H,10,B10,8,A9,1,D8

O,8,B11,1,A10,2,D9

H,12,B12,8,A11,1,D10

C,1,B13,2,A12,4,D11

N,2,B14,1,A13,14,D12

N,1,B15,14,A14,15,D13

Variables:

B1 2.22383

B2 1.07635

B3 2.43557

B4 1.09087

B5 1.08795

B6 1.09107

B7 2.88481

B8 1.47958

B9 1.61749

B10 0.96566

B11 1.61827

B12 0.96555

B13 1.37818

B14 1.29593

B15 1.35101

A1 158.26186

A2 65.80544

A3 122.51435

A4 78.39262

A5 120.72205

A6 97.65807

A7 138.36526

A8 85.91025

A9 112.24874

A10 93.03903

A11 112.35502

A12 69.52957

A13 73.09608

A14 104.2752

D1 0.81947

D2 72.34285

D3 178.33504

D4 -75.62591

D5 -178.64987

D6 2.00836

D7 127.581

D8 -175.98028

D9 -130.45382

D10 113.18482

D11 179.66689

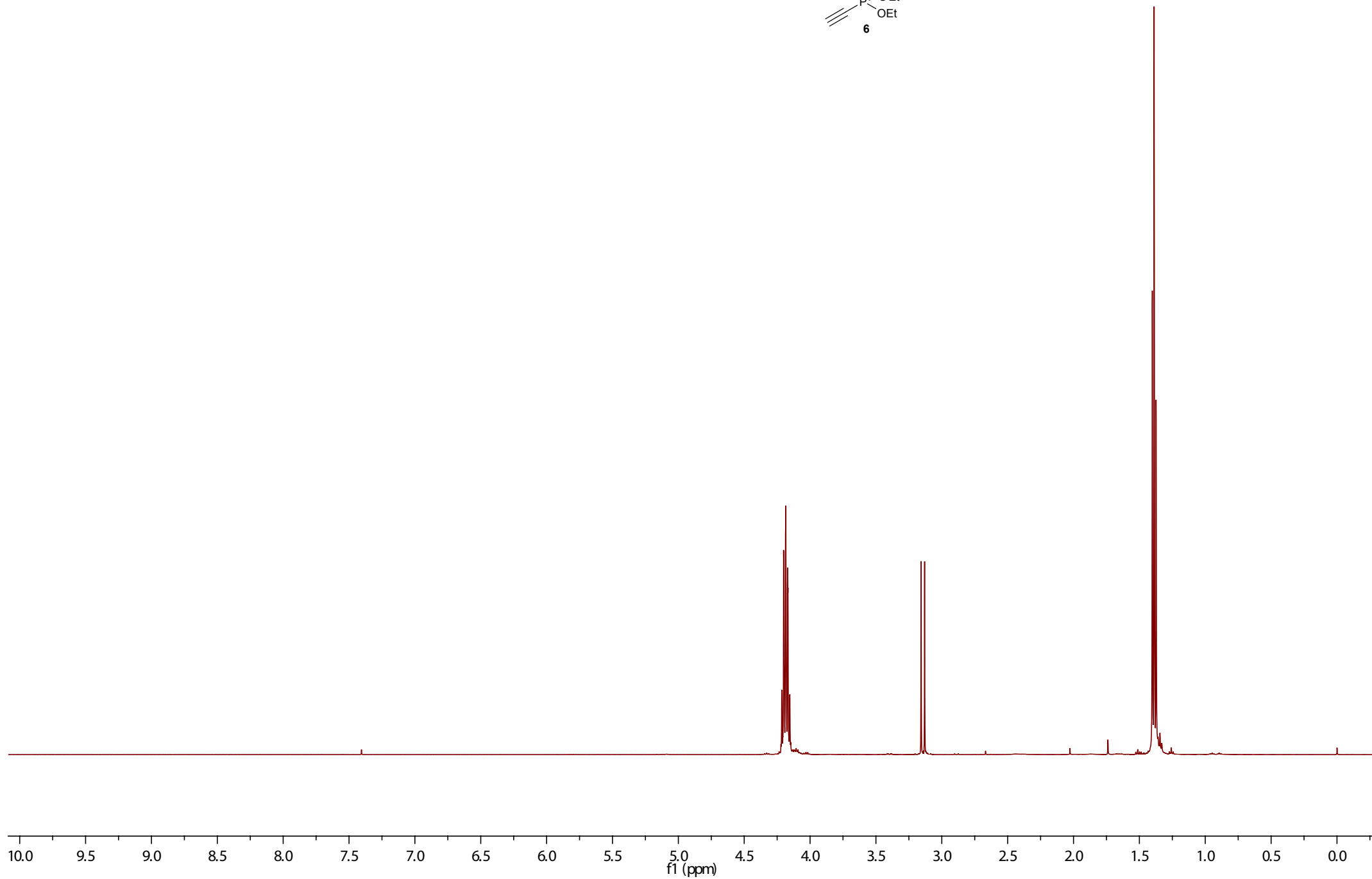
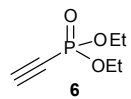
D12 -0.06982

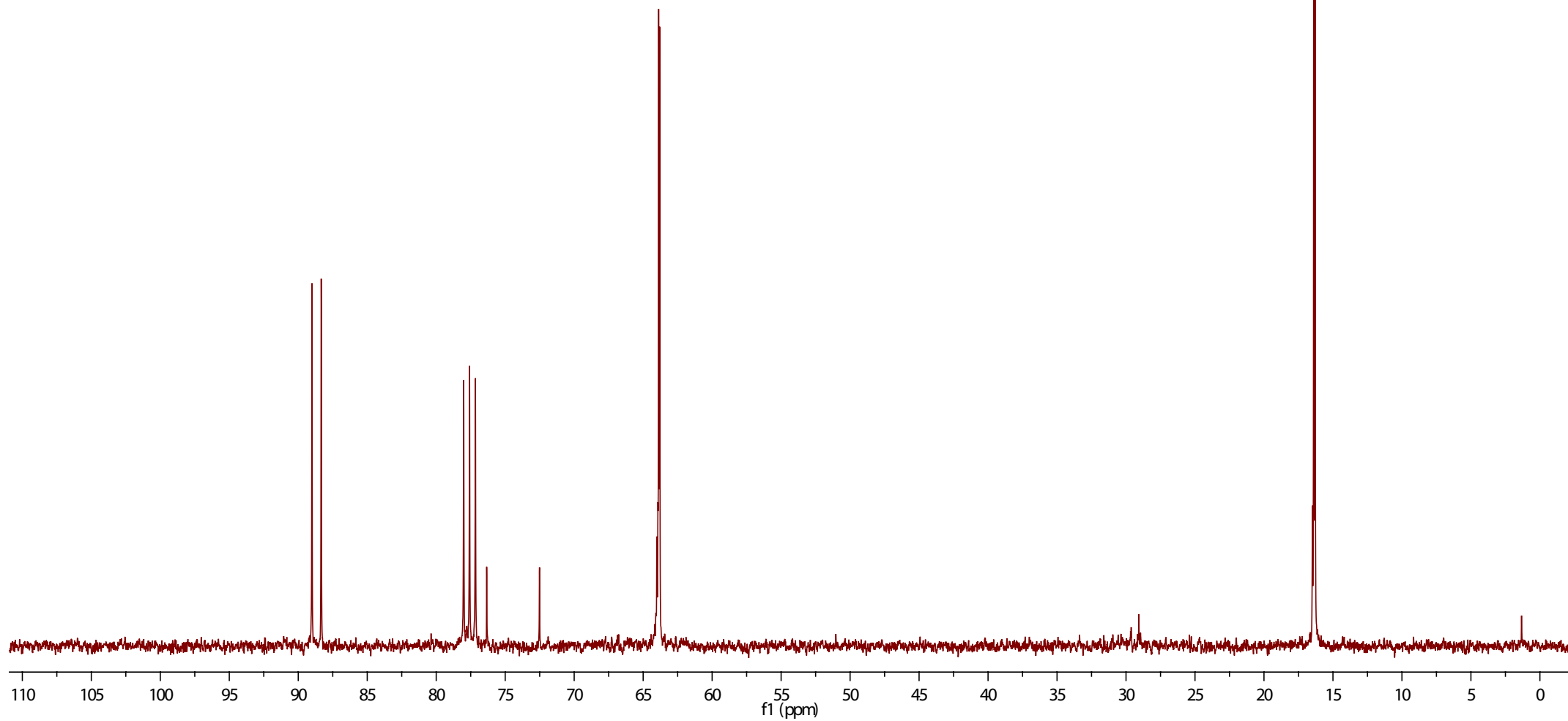
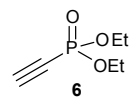
D13 0.08534

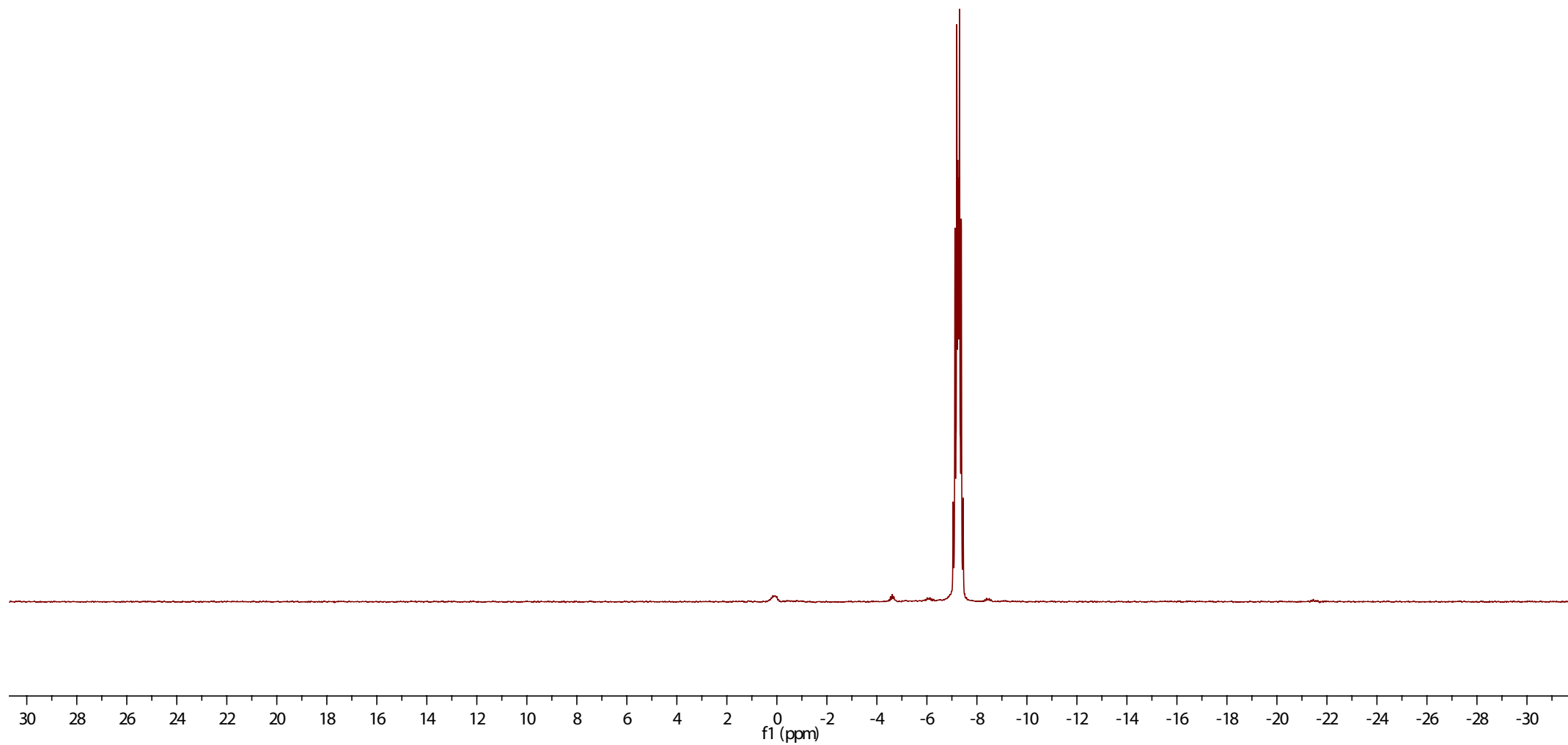
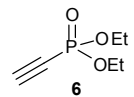
### 3. References

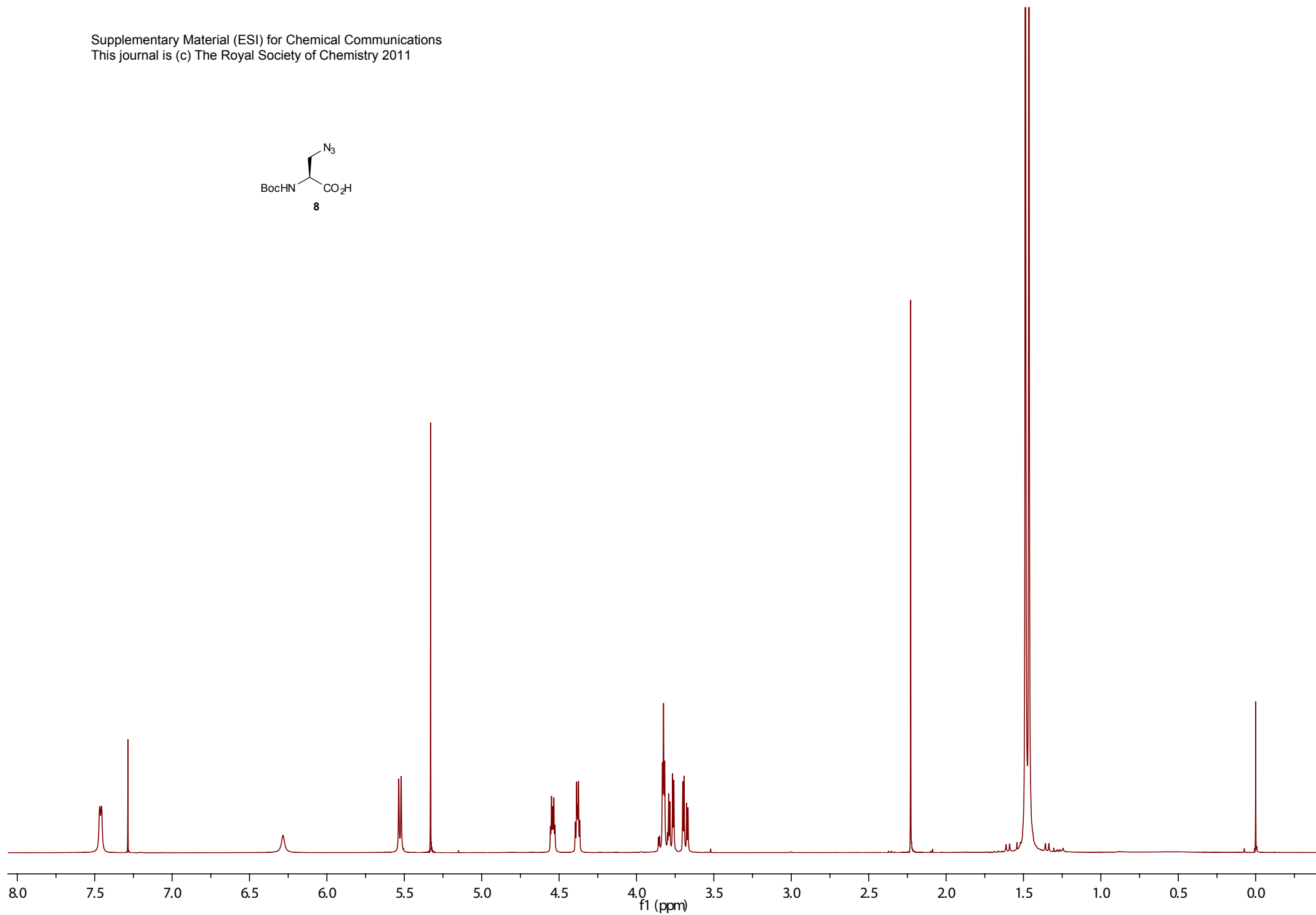
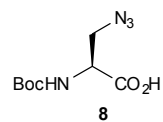
1. B. C. Saunders and P. Simpson, *J. Chem. Soc.* 1963, 3351-3360
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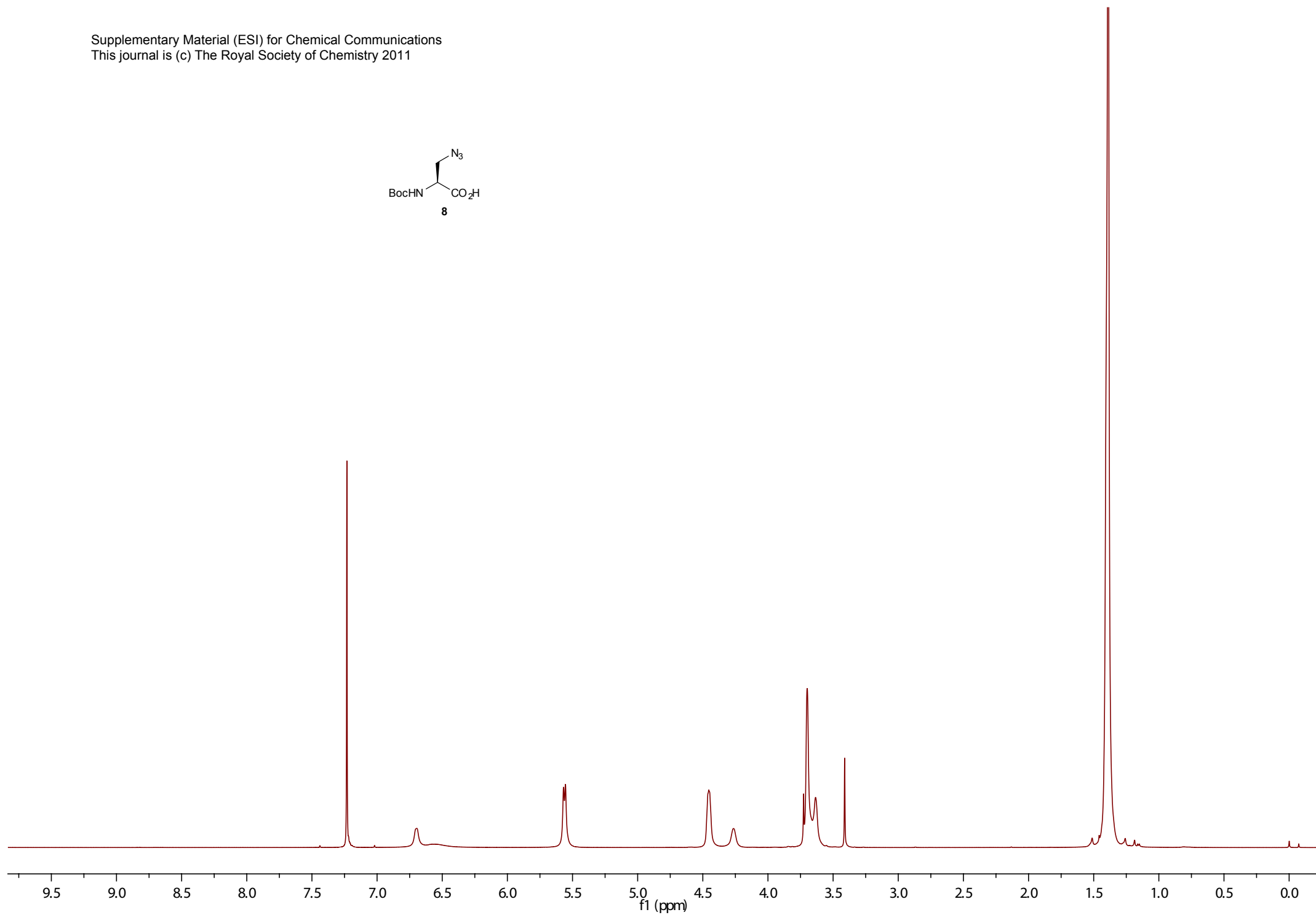
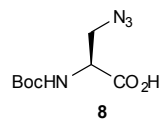
#### **4. NMR Spectra**



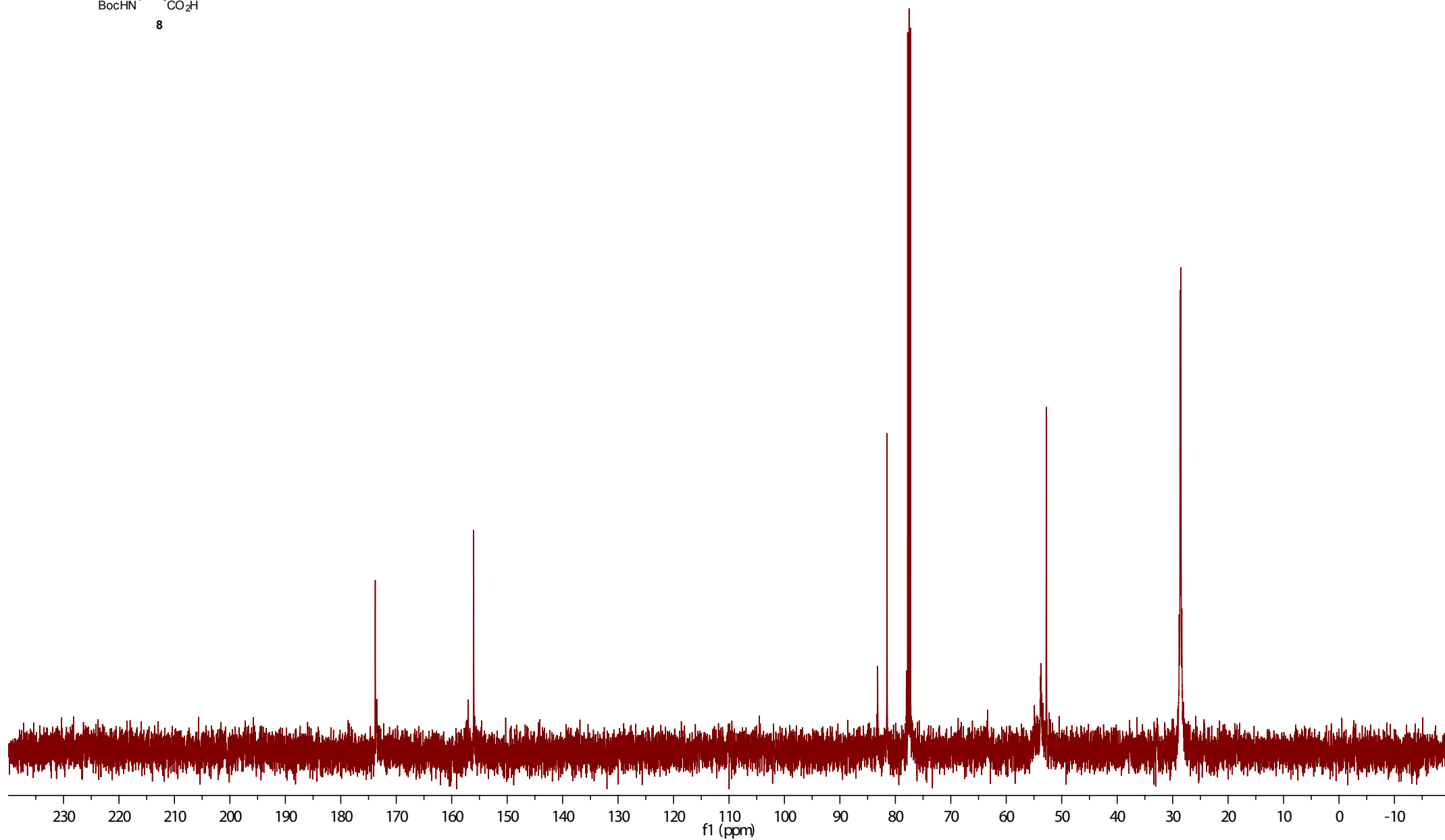
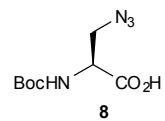


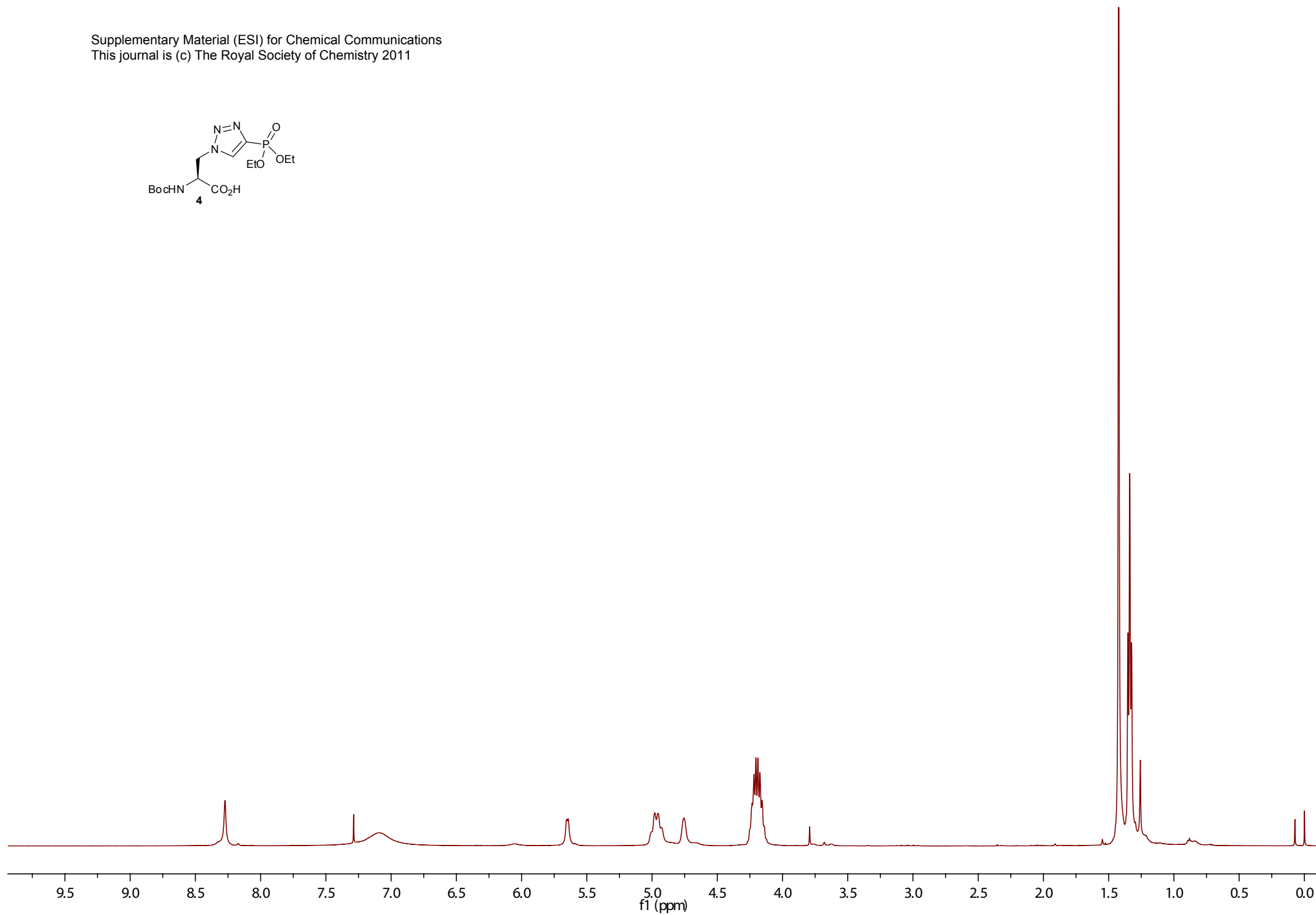
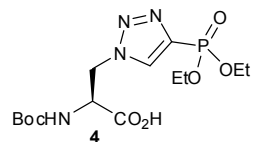


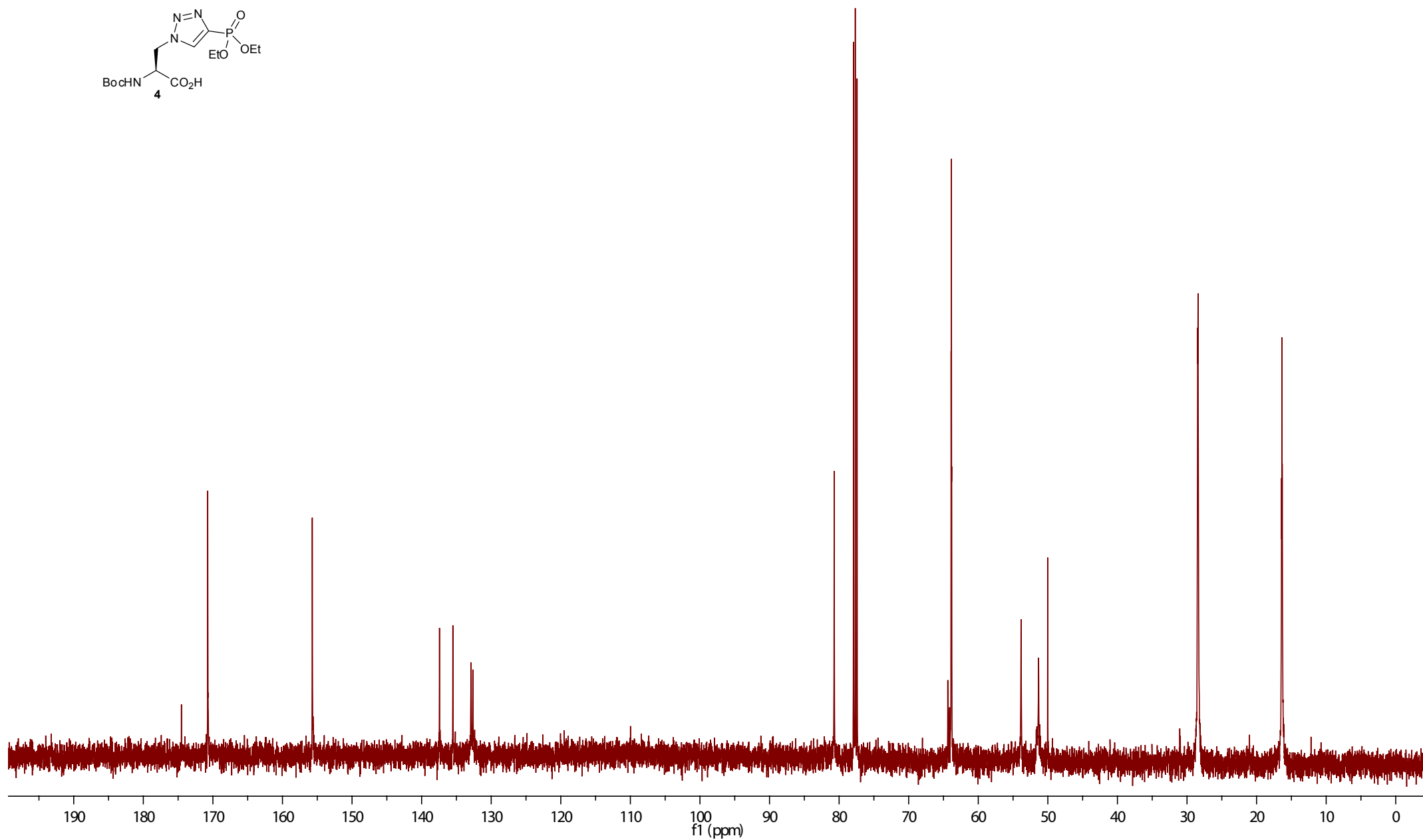
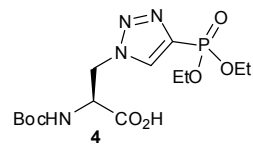


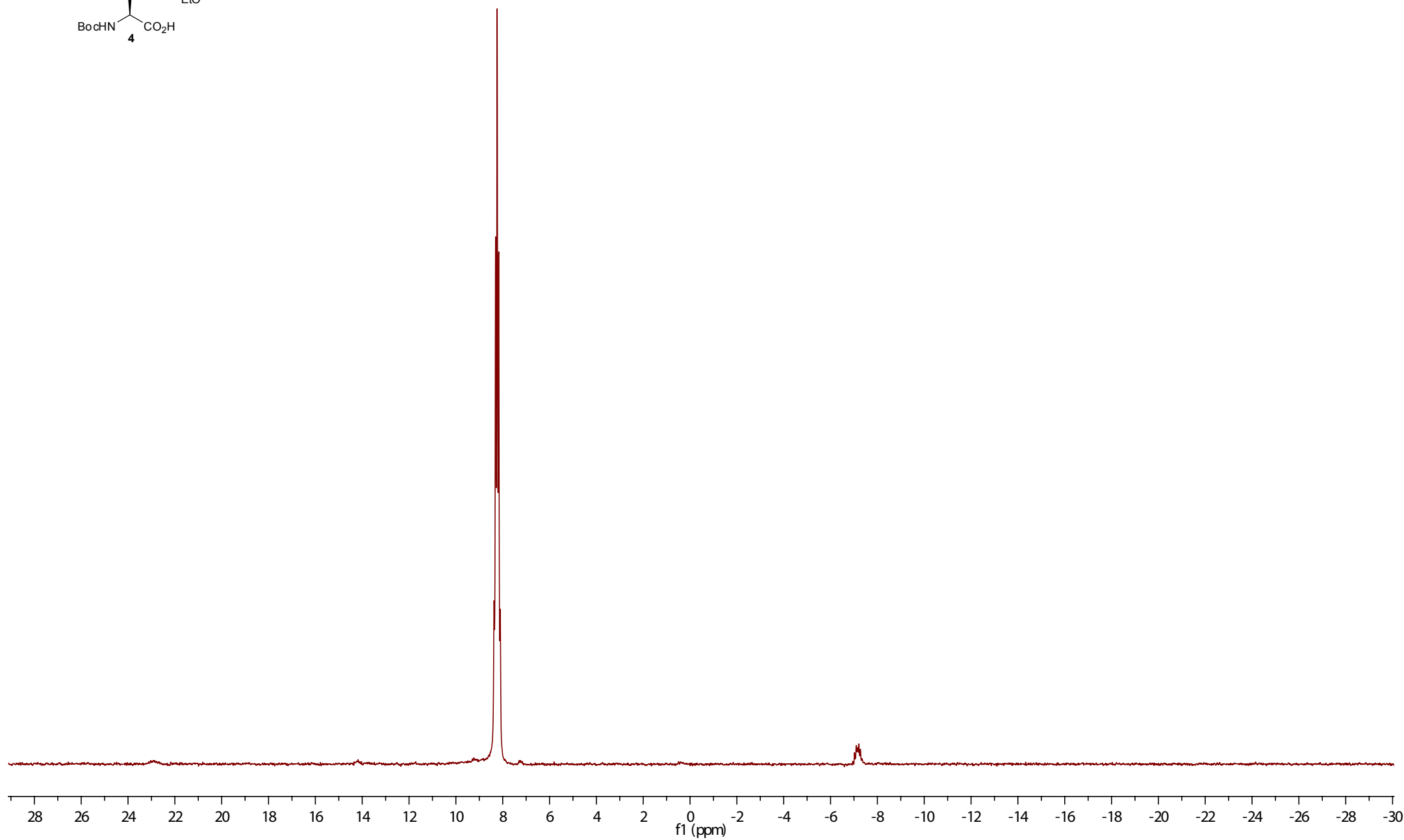
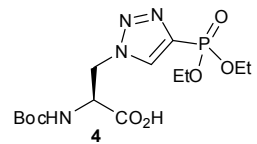


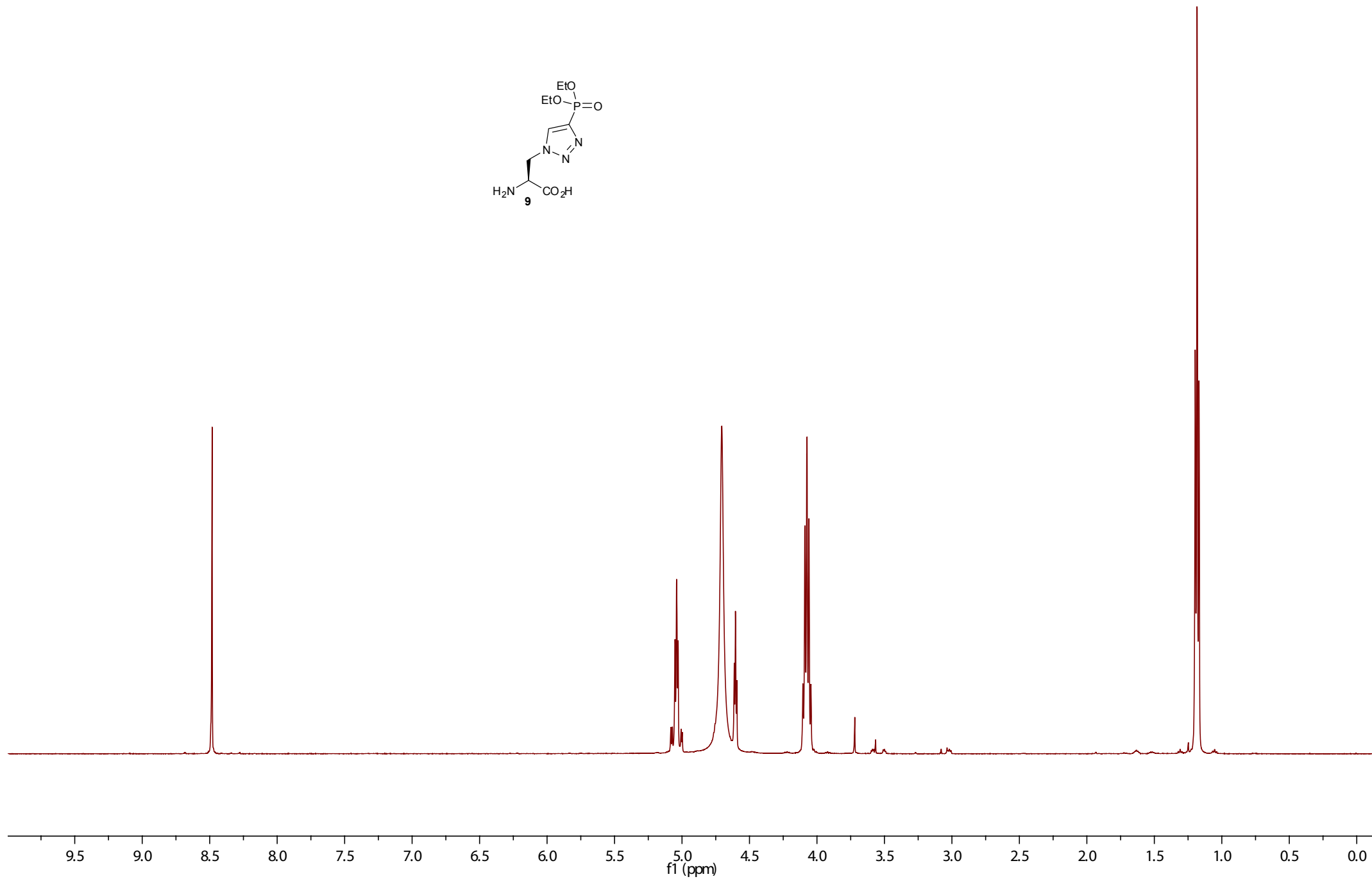
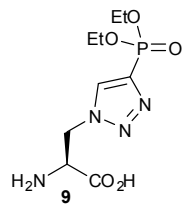


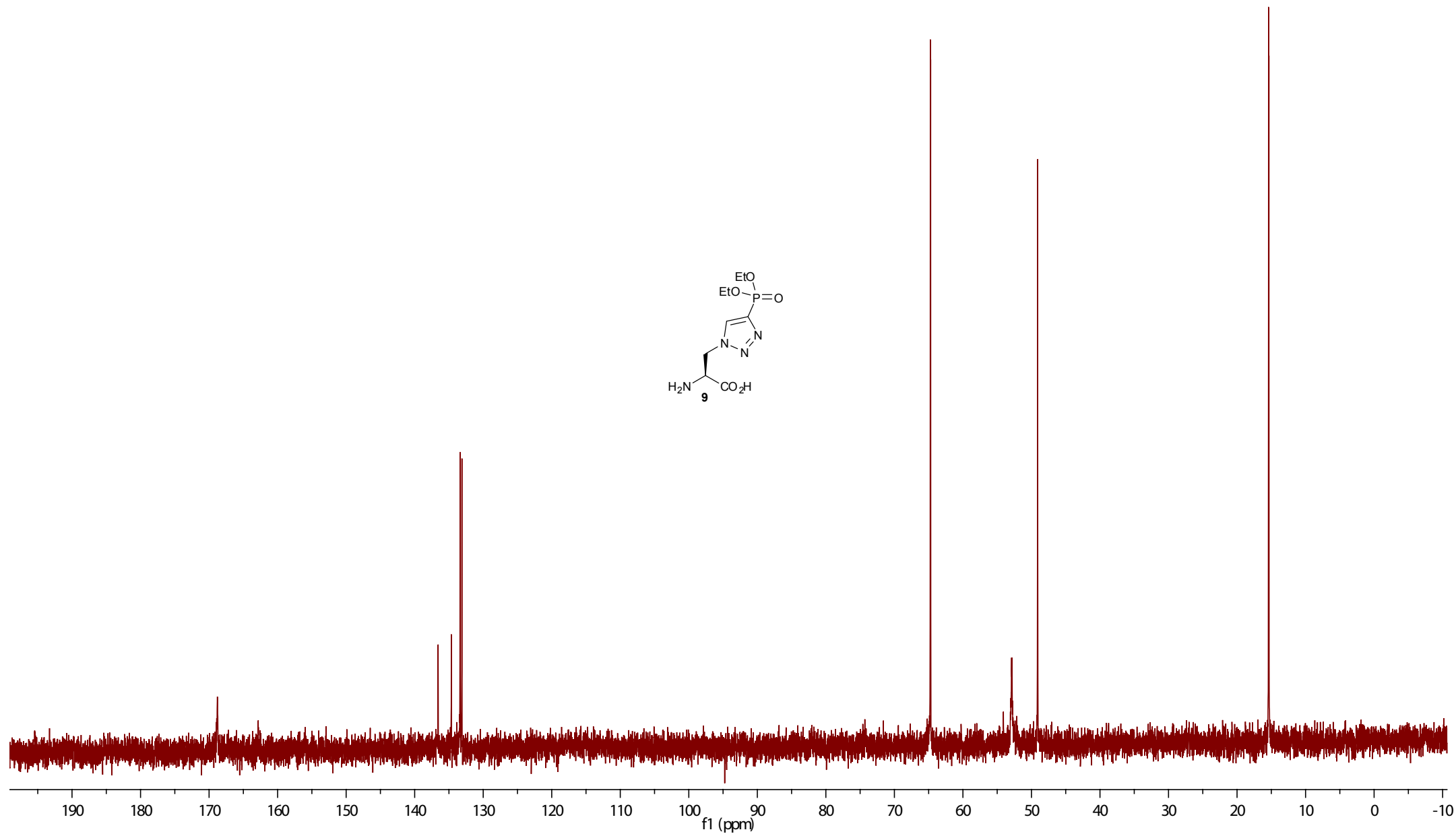
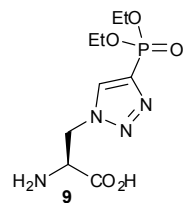


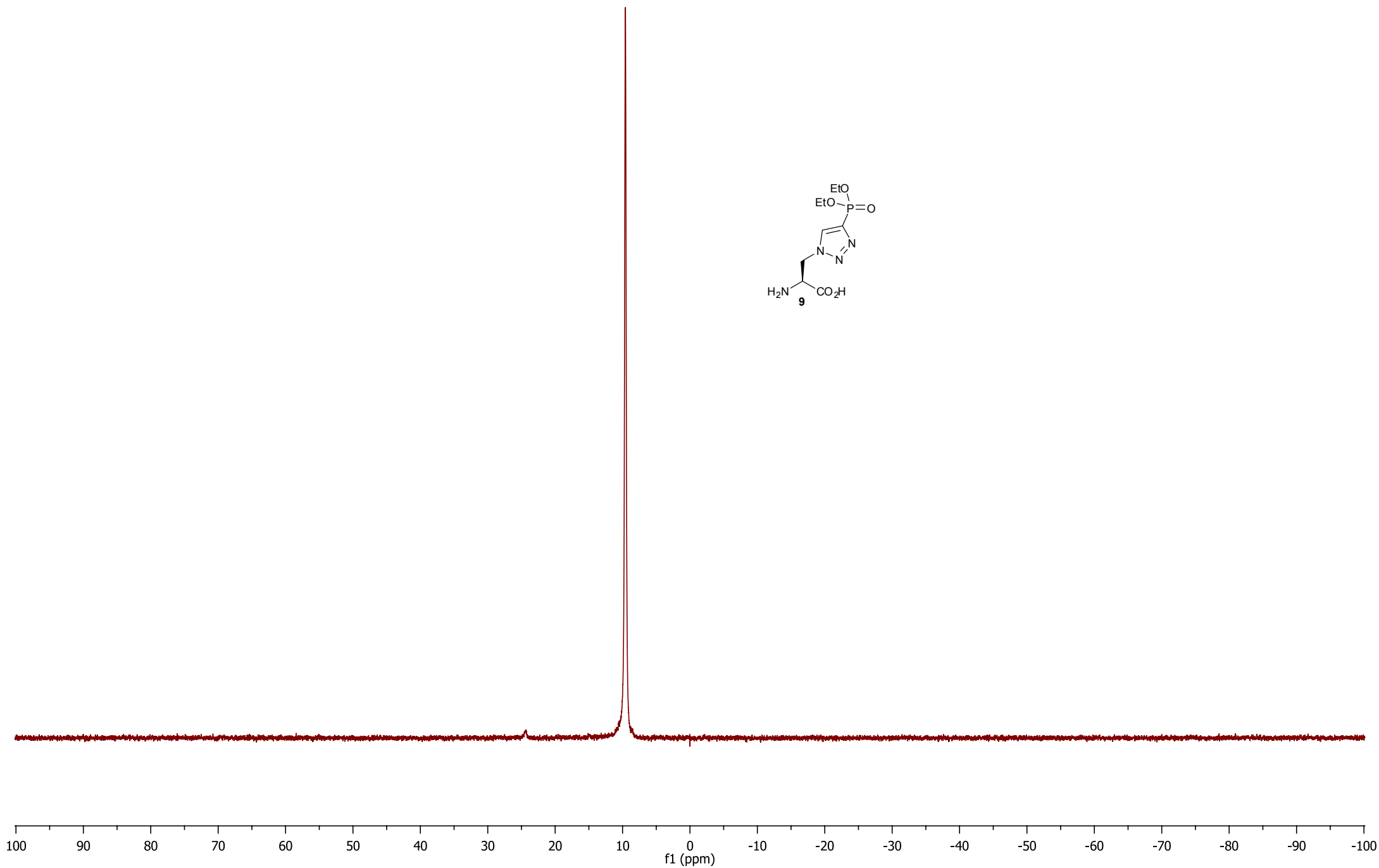
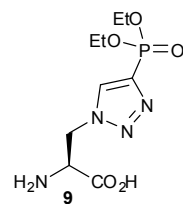


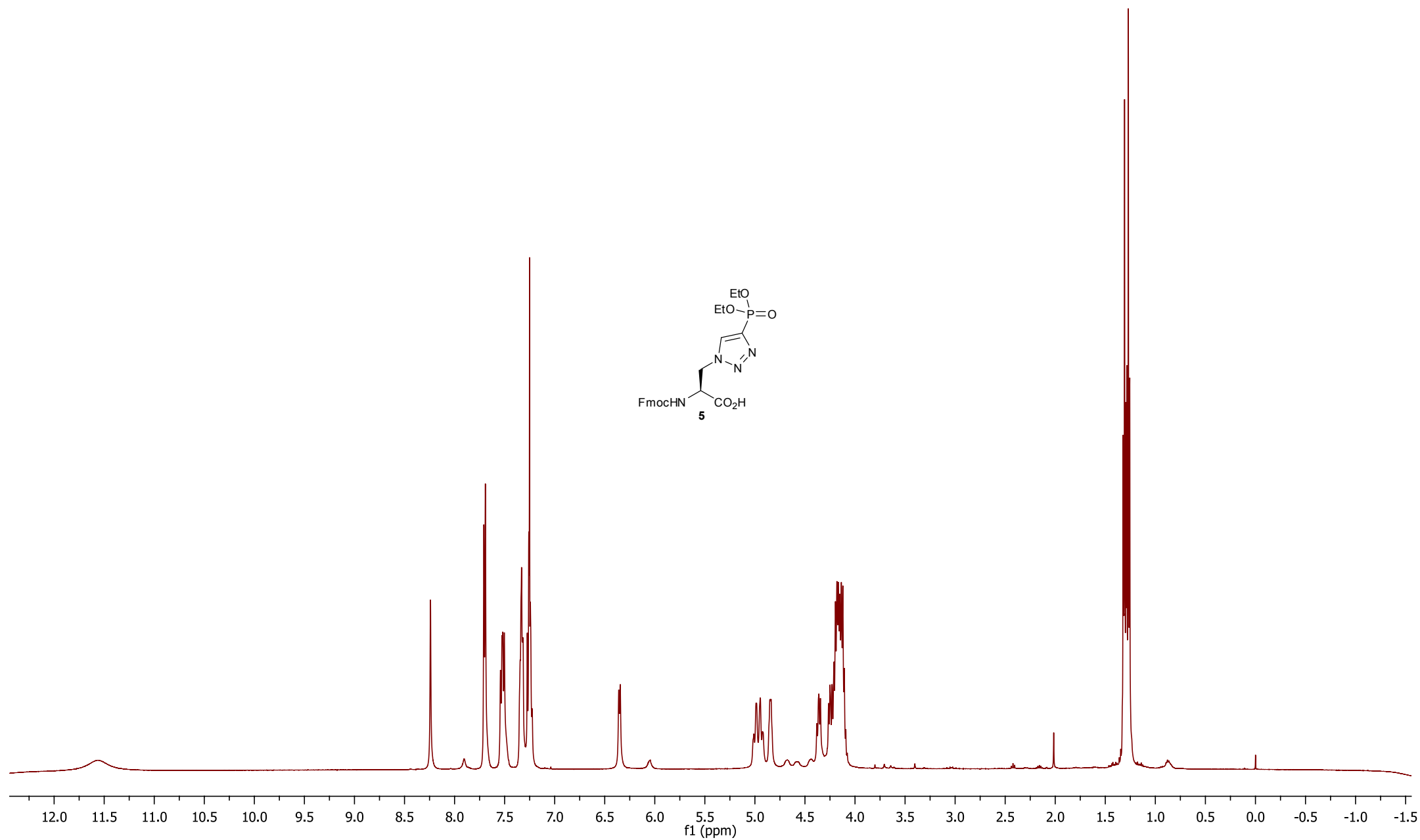
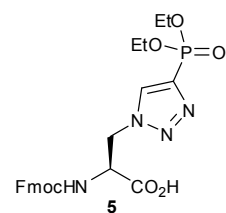




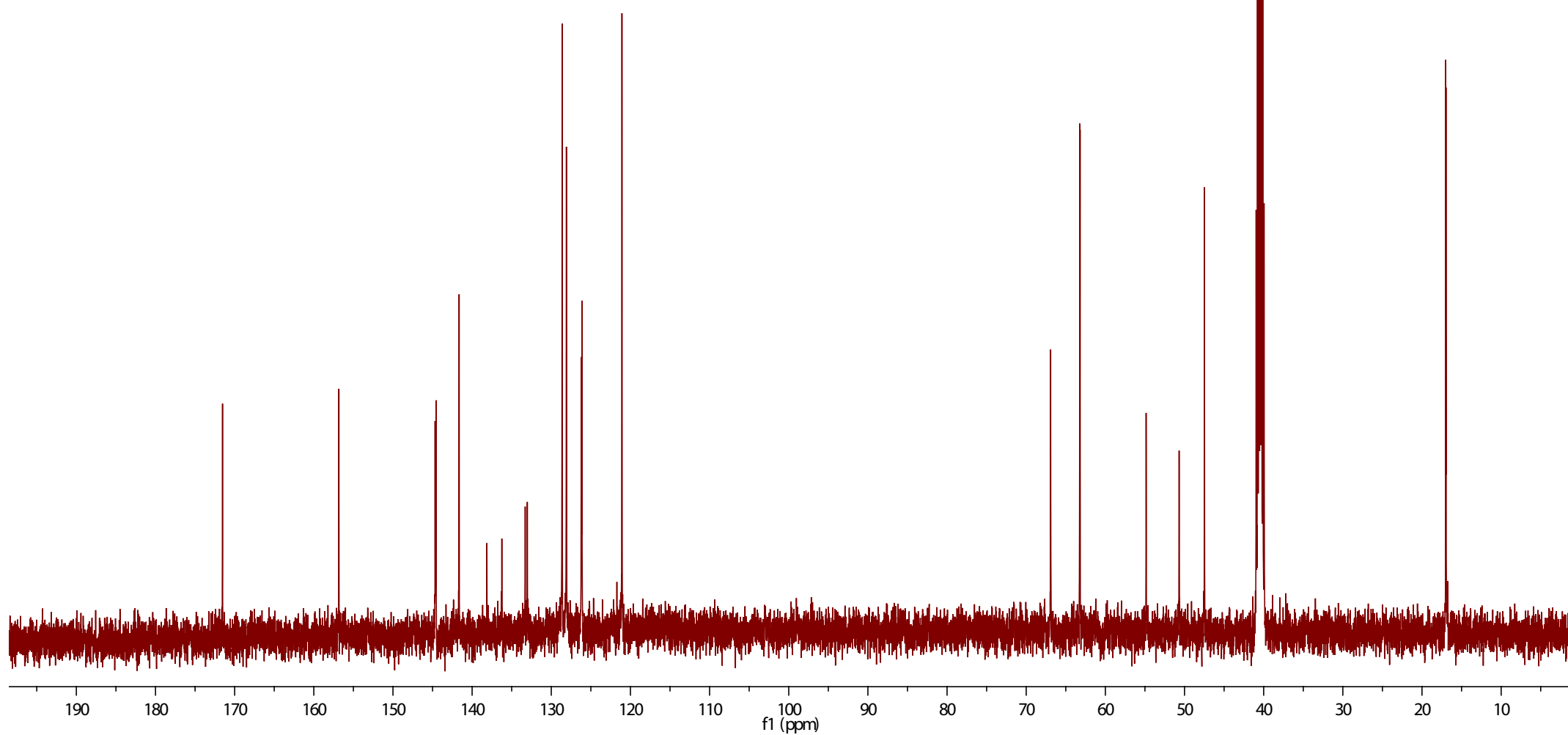
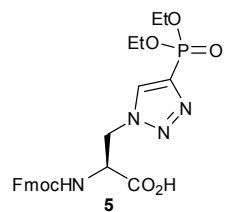


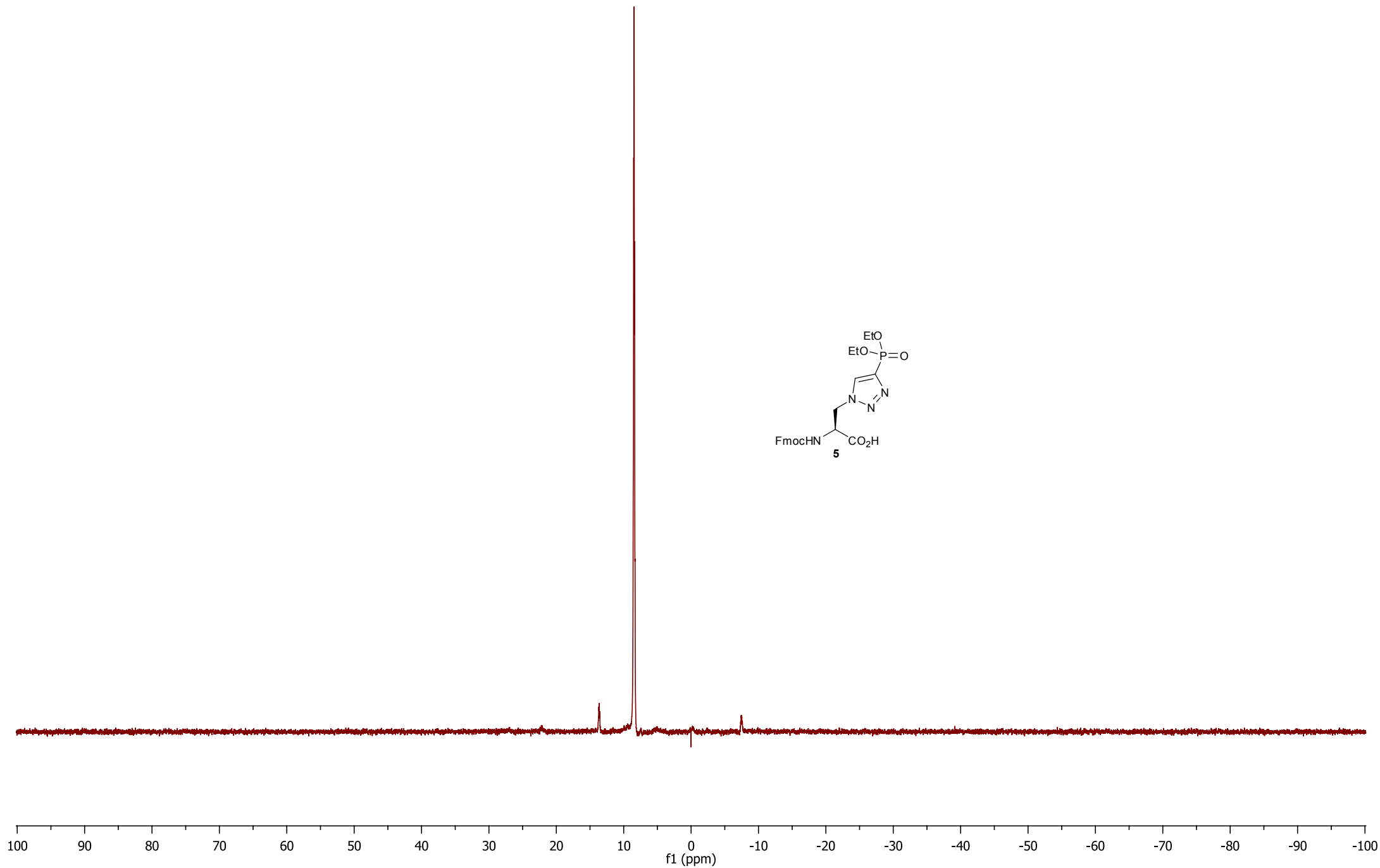












### Analytical HPLC-MS of peptide deprotection reaction

Analytical LC-MS was performed using an Agilent 1200 series LC system comprising a Bruker HCT Ultra ion trap mass spectrometer. Samples were run through a Phenomenex Luna C18 50 × 2 mm 5 μm column using a gradient from 5% to 90% MeCN over 1.8 min. The free phosphonic acid, monoester and diester were separated and detected by negative ion mass spectroscopy as shown below.

