



Course Report 2014

Subject	Economics
Level	National 5

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment and marking instructions for the examination.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Question paper

Candidates performed in line with previous question papers at Standard Grade Credit and Intermediate 2. Candidates performed well on less taxing questions, as would be expected, and more able candidates handled more discriminating questions well.

Candidates responded well with the move to a compulsory paper. All candidates seemed able to cope with the paper in the time allocated for completion. The new approach to dealing with “Describe” questions (see page 4) was taken into account when setting the Grade Boundaries for this year.

Component 2: Assignment

There was a clear distinction in performance in the assignment between those who followed the guidance given and adhered to the advised structure, and those who did not.

Some centres prepared their candidates very well for the assignment, while others seemed less supported. Overall, there was a wide variety of style and ability presented in this component.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Component 1: Question paper

Overall performance was as expected.

Some candidates misinterpreted consumer confidence as being that of an individual consumer.

There were some very able candidates presented in this first cohort.

Component 2: Assignment

Candidate performance was very clearly split. Candidates who followed the published guidance and use the advised structure performed well. Candidates who did not follow the published guidance performed less well.

Specifically, candidates who did not follow the advised structure and content for the assignment typically achieved low marks. A lack of structure and layout often meant that it was difficult to award marks as per published marking guidelines to these candidates.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Question paper

Costs were handled well in item 1, as was inflation.

Candidates demonstrated understanding of the basic economic problem and clearly understood taxation and Scottish industry.

Component 2: Assignment

Topic choice was appropriate. Many candidates focused on the Commonwealth Games or the opening of a shopping mall and the impact of these events on the economy.

Introductions were generally well done and attracted good marks.

Research sources gained marks where they were clearly expressed.

Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Question paper

- ◆ Candidates gave weak definitions of the Eurozone and Economic growth.
- ◆ Explanations of the shape of the demand curve were poor.
- ◆ Candidates' knowledge of savings accounts and the difference between supply and output was poor.
- ◆ Some candidates appeared confused between different areas of government spending and between emerging and developing economies.
- ◆ Candidates did not describe trade barriers well in question 6(c).
- ◆ Some candidates were not clear in their descriptions of aid or how it assists developing countries in Q6a.

Component 2: Assignment

Many candidates attracted very low marks in the Analysis and Interpretation section of the assignment. Often the analysis was not directly connected to the topic studied. Many candidates did not relate analysis and interpretation to the viewpoints they had selected, and consequently there was no interpretation within their assignment.

Assignments often lacked appropriate use of evidence. A number of candidates merely stated points without any justification, evidence, analysis or interpretation. This section forms the crux of the assignment, so candidates who performed poorly here struggled to consider economic theory and invariably ended with a weak conclusion.

Candidates who failed to follow the suggested structure tended to produce less coherent assignments.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Question paper

Centres will note a slightly different approach to 'Describe' questions, with each description now attracting one mark. There is scope for development marks to also be awarded.

Component 2: Assignment

Candidates should follow the guidance given and adhere to the structure and headings outlined, as this helps them in producing a coherent assignment.

Economic theory must be evident in the assignment.

Resources used should be clearly stated, and evidence from these used to back up their points and facilitate analysis and interpretation.

There must be clear interpretation of the viewpoints researched and analysis of these in the context of the assignment.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	0
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	89
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 100				
A	36.0%	36.0%	32	67
B	20.2%	56.2%	18	57
C	27.0%	83.1%	24	47
D	6.7%	89.9%	6	42
No award	10.1%	-	9	-