



## Course Report 2015

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 and assessors 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**

Candidate achievement was slightly better this year. Candidates seemed well prepared when dealing with the one-mark-per-point 'describe' questions.

The more discriminating questions allowed the more able candidates to show their ability.

### **Component 2: Assignment**

Candidate achievement was slightly better this year, and most adhered to the advised structure.

The topics chosen were wide ranging and generally interesting.

## **Section 2: Comments on candidate performance**

### **Component 1: Question paper**

Overall performance was better and more consistent than last year.

Some candidates are incorrectly using the terms 'EU' and 'Eurozone' interchangeably.

### **Component 2: Assignment**

Overall performance was better in 2015. Support for centres in the Course Report (2014), and the advice given at the Understanding Standards event regarding layout and structure, appear to have prepared candidates better, thus allowing the awarding of higher marks.

## **Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well**

### **Component 1: Question paper**

Most candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the basic economic problem, costs, markets and Scottish entrepreneurs.

### **Component 2: Assignment**

In general, candidates gained good marks for the Introduction, Research and Viewpoints elements of the Assignment.

Topic choice was broader than last year (which for many focused on the Commonwealth Games).

## Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

### Component 1: Question paper

#### Question

- 1 (f) Many candidates described the advantages/disadvantages of international trade in general, rather than the EU specifically.
- 2 (d) Significant numbers of candidates gave the answer in pence whilst denoting their answer as £.
- 2 (f) Many candidates repeated one disadvantage with two examples, eg less spending on schools and less spending on defence.
- 3 (a) Many candidates confused disposable income with discretionary income.
- 3 (c) (i) Many candidates gave answers that related to card payments in general rather than credit cards in particular.
- 4 (b) Several candidates described why demand rises as price falls rather than why demand falls as price rises.

### Component 2: Assignment

Providing Analysis and Interpretation is a higher-order skill, and many candidates found it challenging. Analysis without research evidence gained no marks.

Many candidates merely re-stated an Analysis or Interpretation point as a Conclusion, rather than expanding and developing it further.

Many candidates failed to provide enough information to gain marks for Economic Theory, for example writing 'this shows the law of demand and supply', rather than showing **how** something exemplified the law.

## Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

### Component 1: Question paper

'Explain' questions require a detailed answer to gain one mark (eg 'what' and 'why', or 'what' and 'how'). Candidates should be encouraged to practice answering 'explain' questions with this mark allocation.

Centres should encourage candidates to draw large diagrams (eg about a third of a page) and correctly insert all labels.

## **Component 2: Assignment**

Any Analysis and Interpretation has to come from, and refer back to, research evidence gathered.

In the Conclusions and Recommendations section, candidates should link their points to the evidence and analysis.

Economics Theory should be evident throughout the report, and candidates should pause their narrative to ensure that the theory point is described, rather than just mentioned.

Candidates who choose a topic linked to the decline of the high street should make sure that they write an economics report, as the topic lends itself to drifting into a business management report.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	89
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Number of resulted entries in 2015	150
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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	48.7%	48.7%	73	70
B	30.0%	78.7%	45	60
C	15.3%	94.0%	23	50
D	2.7%	96.7%	4	45
No award	3.3%	-	5	-

For this Course, the intention was to set similar grade boundaries to last year. The grade boundaries were lowered last year as the assessment was deemed to be more challenging than expected. This year the Course Assessment functioned as intended therefore an adjustment to grade boundaries of 3 marks was made to take them back to notional difficulty.