



Advanced Higher
Coursework
Assessment Task



Advanced Higher Economics Project Assessment task

This document provides information for teachers and lecturers about the coursework component of this course in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

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Introduction

This document contains instructions for teachers and lecturers, marking instructions and instructions for candidates for the Advanced Higher Economics project. You must read it in conjunction with the course specification.

This project is worth 40 marks. This is 33% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This is one of two course assessment components. The other component is a question paper.

Instructions for teachers and lecturers

Early in the course, you should give candidates information about what they have to do to complete the project. As the course progresses, this allows them time to start thinking about and researching what economic issue they may wish to consider for their project.

Choosing a suitable economic issue may be daunting for some candidates. You should provide candidates with reasonable assistance on the types of issue that enables them to meet all of the requirements of the project.

There is no time limit on how long candidates can spend on their project.

The timing of when to start the project is at your discretion. Candidates should start it when they have developed the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. It is expected that candidates will work on the bulk of their project at home, in their own time. Some centres start work on the project near the beginning of the course, for example in September or October, and regularly use time in class to work on it. Some centres start the project later and use more class time to complete it.

Marking instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following marking instructions for the Advanced Higher Economics project are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for course assessment.

Candidates' evidence is submitted to SQA for external marking.

General marking principles

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

- a Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- b If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- c The report must be between 3,500 and 4,000 words, excluding footnotes or endnotes, bibliography, and appendices. There is a penalty for exceeding the word count by more than 10%. There is no penalty for using fewer than 3,500 words.
- d Award marks for specific skills, knowledge and understanding as follows:
 - **analyse:** candidates must demonstrate their ability to explain relevant parts and the relationship between the parts and/or the whole – they should be able to draw out any implications and/or consequences (positive and negative)
 - **evaluate:** candidates must be able to justify the degree of impact of something within context, and draw a reasoned judgement
 - **conclude:** candidates must reach supported or justified conclusions based on a text, scenario, or set of information or data
- e The project has a total mark allocation of 40 marks, broken down as follows:

Introduction (3 marks)

Award marks for clearly stating the aim of the report, providing detailed background information, and for justifying the choice of issue.

Analysis and evaluation (18 marks)

Award marks for making relevant analytical and/or evaluative points based on research and linked to the topic of the report.

Conclusions (6 marks)

Award marks for drawing supported or justified conclusions based on the analysis and evaluation, and related to the topic of the report.

Research (4 marks)

Award marks for using a variety of relevant, up-to-date sources of information that support the economic argument.

Structure and coherence (6 marks)

Award marks for presenting a clear, logically structured report, and for using consistent and accurate economic terminology.

Presentation and referencing (3 marks)

Award marks for clear presentation, using full, consistent referencing throughout, and for providing an appropriate bibliography.

Detailed marking instructions

	Marking instructions	Max marks	Additional guidance
Introduction	<p>Award 1 mark for giving detailed, relevant background and/or contextual information.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for giving a detailed economic justification for the choice of issue.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for clearly stating the aim of the report.</p>	3	
Analysis and evaluation	<p>Award 1 mark for each analytical or evaluative comment that is based on the research, up to a maximum of 10 marks.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each in-depth, substantive analytical or evaluative comment, up to a maximum of 6 marks.</p> <p>Award up to 2 marks for using applied economic theory in the context of the issue.</p> <p>Do not award marks for analysis and/or evaluation of a finding that is not referenced in a footnote or an endnote.</p>	18	<p>To gain 10 marks for analysis and/or evaluation using research findings, candidates could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain and/or compare the impact on different agents of the economy ◆ explain and/or compare any impact in the short term and long term ◆ give a critical analysis and/or evaluation of any data, tables, infographics, diagrams, charts and/or graphs used ◆ present alternative theories and/or viewpoints <p>To gain 6 marks for in-depth, substantive analytical and/or evaluative comments using research findings, candidates could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ use referenced evidence to prove or disprove a point made previously

	Marking instructions	Max marks	Additional guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ present sub-issues that add value to the overall argument ◆ pull together various strands of an argument to develop an over-arching and/or synergistic point of analysis or evaluation <p>To gain 2 marks for using applied economic theory, candidates could use relevant economic theory to predict and/or explain the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ behaviour of individuals, firms or governments ◆ behaviour of the whole economy, or a particular market and/or industry ◆ outcome of decisions, policies, and/or actions on the economy <p>Do not award marks if candidates only define economic terms.</p>
Conclusions	<p>Award 1 mark for each relevant, supported or justified conclusion linked to the aim of the report, up to a maximum of 6 marks.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for each relevant, supported development, up to a maximum of 5 marks.</p> <p>Award up to 2 marks for appropriate, justified recommendations that are linked to the aim of the report.</p>	6	<p>Candidates could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ make a valid judgement based on the evidence gathered ◆ pull together information from more than one analysis point to form a justified conclusion

	Marking instructions	Max marks	Additional guidance
Research	<p>Award 1 or 2 marks for research sources that are relevant and sufficient to support the economic arguments put forward.</p> <p>Award 3 or 4 marks for research sources that are relevant and strongly support the arguments put forward.</p>	4	<p>Evidence of research must be integrated throughout the report and should not be a separate section in the body of the report.</p> <p>Candidates must show that they have referred to information from a source.</p> <p>Some examples of research sources that could be used are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ websites ◆ news articles, magazines, journals, and/or books ◆ audio and/or visual media ◆ social media ◆ field trips and/or visiting speakers ◆ interviews, surveys, and/or questionnaires
Structure and coherence	<p>Award 1 mark for presenting a clear line of argument.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for presenting a logical structure.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for using economic terminology accurately on a number of occasions.</p> <p>Award 1 additional mark for using economic terminology accurately throughout the report.</p>	6	

	Marking instructions	Max marks	Additional guidance
	Award up to 2 marks for integrating and interpreting relevant supporting data, tables, infographics, diagrams, charts and/or graphs.		
Presentation and referencing	<p>Award 1 mark for using a title, a contents page, page numbering, and appropriate headings (and sub-headings, if applicable).</p> <p>Award 1 mark for full, consistent referencing throughout the report, using footnotes or endnotes.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for an appropriate bibliography.</p>	3	

Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the project for Advanced Higher Economics.

This project is worth 40 marks. This is 33% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

It assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ identifying an economic issue from the last two years (which should be posed as a question)
- ◆ gathering up-to-date research from a range of sources
- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and/or theory to explain, analyse and evaluate the issue
- ◆ reaching valid judgements and conclusions based on research
- ◆ structuring a detailed, well-informed report on the issue
- ◆ organising, presenting and referencing findings using appropriate conventions

In this assessment, you have to carry out research, analyse information found in the research, and write a report on a current economic topic or issue of your choice.

Marks for the project are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| ◆ introduction | (3 marks) |
| ◆ analysis and evaluation | (18 marks) |
| ◆ conclusions | (6 marks) |
| ◆ research | (4 marks) |
| ◆ structure and coherence | (6 marks) |
| ◆ presentation and referencing | (3 marks) |

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know if there are any specific conditions for doing this assessment.

Your report must be between 3,500 and 4,000 words, excluding footnotes or endnotes, bibliography, and appendices.

If your word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied. There is no penalty for using fewer than 3,500 words; however, a short report is unlikely to contain enough information to gain full marks.

You should use appropriate headings and sub-headings to guide the reader through your report. You should:

- ◆ use 'Introduction' and 'Conclusions' as headings for these sections
- ◆ present your analysis and evaluation using relevant chapter headings
- ◆ integrate 'Research', 'Structure and coherence', or 'Presentation and referencing' throughout your report. Do not use headings for these areas.

There is no time limit for how long you can spend on your project. Your teacher or lecturer will ask you to start it at a suitable point during the academic year.

You can work on the project in the classroom and outwith your centre.

Choosing a topic

- ◆ Select a topic that is a current or on-going economic issue and is of interest to you.
- ◆ Discuss your topic with your teacher or lecturer before making a final decision – they can advise if:
 - you will be able to gather enough information about the topic
 - the topic is suitable (not too simple or too complex)
 - the topic will allow you to carry out sophisticated and detailed analysis
- ◆ Decide on a title for your report. There are examples in the course specification document to give you some ideas.
- ◆ Your report title should be posed as a question so that you can answer the question in your conclusions.

Using sources of information

- ◆ Choose a range of relevant research sources that could include:
 - websites
 - news articles, magazines, journals, and/or books
 - audio and/or visual media
 - social media
 - field trips and/or visiting speakers
 - interviews, surveys, and/or questionnaires
- ◆ The majority of your research sources should be up to date.

A research source is generally considered to be up to date if it is written within the past two years. You can, however, use older sources of information to set the scene and/or provide background for contextualising your issue, and for adding value to your analysis.

As soon as you start your research, keep a record of all the sources you look up to save time later. One way to do this is to paste every URL into in a Word document, along with the date accessed, or note the author and title of any printed source. This is helpful if you need to refer back to a website. It will also help you when selecting the sources for your footnotes or endnotes and your bibliography.

Writing the report

Introduction (3 marks)

Your introduction must:

- ◆ give detailed relevant background and/or contextual information
- ◆ give a detailed economic justification for your choice of issue
- ◆ clearly state the aim of your report

You could include:

- ◆ scene-setting information and/or an overview about the economic issue
- ◆ reasons why or how the issue is relevant today
- ◆ statistics that justify why the issue is relevant now
- ◆ the question to be answered
- ◆ a breakdown of how the question will be addressed in the report

Analysis and evaluation (18 marks)

This section is the main part of your report, where you should present your main arguments, so it is likely to be quite lengthy.

Your analysis and evaluation must:

- ◆ be based on findings from your research:
 - You must clearly show and reference your findings.
 - There are no marks for analysis that is not based on referenced findings.
- ◆ provide breadth and depth of analysis. Your analysis should show that:
 - you have read widely around the issue
 - you have drilled down into the detail of the issue
- ◆ Use applied economic theory that directly relates to your topic, although it could enhance or contradict your analysis. There are no marks for defining economic terms.

When writing your report, you should consider the following:

- ◆ Your comments should be logical and clearly linked to the issue and aim(s) of the report.
- ◆ It should be obvious that your analysis is referring back to your title.
- ◆ You should plan your comments so that they flow for the reader.
- ◆ If you think it would be helpful for your reader, you could divide the text into chapters using appropriate headings, for example:
 - Chapter 1 – ‘Benefits of capital spending on XXX’; Chapter 2 – ‘Costs of capital spending on XXX’. Further examples could be ‘proposition x versus proposition y’; ‘EU versus UK versus USA’; ‘effects on individuals versus firms versus government’; or ‘pre versus post’.

- ◆ In addition, you could sub-divide chapters into sub-sections, for example, for ‘Benefits of capital spending on XXX’:
 - ‘Effect on business investment’; ‘Effect on employment’; ‘Effect on productivity’.
- ◆ Your report can use any chapter structure you choose. However, you should use a logical sequence for your main line of argument.

You could show your analysis and evaluation by:

- ◆ explaining and/or comparing any impact on different agents of the economy
- ◆ explaining and/or comparing any impact on the short and the long term
- ◆ giving a critical analysis and/or evaluation of any data, tables, infographics, diagrams, charts and/or graphs used
- ◆ presenting alternative theories and/or viewpoints
- ◆ using referenced evidence from research to prove or disprove a previously made point
- ◆ pulling together various strands of an argument to develop an over-arching, synergistic point of analysis or evaluation
- ◆ exploring sub-issues if the points you are making are related to the title:
 - Using sub-issues can assist with in-depth analysis. However, you should make sure any of your sub-issues add value to your overall argument.

Conclusions (6 marks)

You must provide a main conclusion at the end of your report, which wraps up your report so that it answers your title question. In addition, you may want to provide sub-conclusions at the end of your chapter(s) and/or section(s), as this may help with the flow of your report.

You can refer back to your sub-conclusions, but if you just repeat your sub-conclusions in your main conclusions without adding value to them, you will not gain additional marks.

Your conclusion(s) must:

- ◆ be supported or justified
- ◆ come from your research evidence
- ◆ be consistent with your analysis and evaluation
- ◆ be clearly linked to the economic issue and/or aim(s) of the report
- ◆ not introduce any new material

You could:

- ◆ make conclusions based on any of the agents of the economy
- ◆ use economic reasoning to reach an overall judgement
- ◆ draw together two or more points of analysis to make a conclusion
- ◆ address any limitations of your conclusion(s)
- ◆ make a justified recommendation

Research (4 marks)

Your research sources must:

- ◆ support the economic arguments you put forward
- ◆ be relevant to the topic and/or issue
- ◆ use up-to-date research sources (written within the past two years); however, you can use older research sources if they contextualise your issue
- ◆ integrate your research throughout your report; do not put it under a separate section heading
- ◆ use credible research sources

Structure and coherence (6 marks)

Your report must:

- ◆ have a clear line of argument, from the introduction through to the conclusion, that addresses the title
- ◆ make sense, and flow for the reader
- ◆ use a sequence of chapters that are logical
- ◆ use economic terminology accurately throughout
- ◆ make appropriate use of any of the following:
 - supporting data
 - tables
 - infographics
 - diagrams
 - charts
 - graphs

Presentation and referencing (3 marks)

Your report must:

- ◆ include the following components:
 - a title
 - a contents page
 - page numbering
 - appropriate headings and sub-headings (if used)
- ◆ use consistent referencing throughout – using footnotes or endnotes for all your findings, showing their source
- ◆ include a bibliography for all your sources

In addition to the requirements listed above, you should:

- ◆ include a front cover showing your:
 - report title
 - name
 - centre name
 - word count
- ◆ use 1.5 or 2 line spacing
- ◆ use a readable, clear font (for example Trebuchet, Arial, Times New Roman, or Candara)
- ◆ use font size 12

Guidance on referencing and appendices

The purpose of referencing is to:

- ◆ show clearly which ideas or words are not your own
- ◆ provide enough information for someone else to find the source of those ideas or words
- ◆ present information consistently

The guidelines below are based on the Harvard referencing system. However, you can use any approach if you use it consistently.

Footnotes or endnotes

You should insert footnotes or endnotes for each finding you source, for example facts, quotes, diagrams, illustrations and/or images.

Your footnotes or endnotes should run sequentially throughout the document and should not restart for each chapter or section.

You can use either footnotes or endnotes, but **not** a mixture of both.

Citing footnotes or endnotes

Footnotes or endnotes should follow the same format as bibliographies, with the important exception that in footnotes or endnotes an author's initials or forename precedes, rather than follows, the surname.

If you use the same book or journal source for a second or subsequent time, you should only use the author's surname, title and page number as a new footnote or endnote.

If you use the same website reference for a second or subsequent time, you should reinsert the URL as a new footnote or endnote.

Your endnotes should appear at the end of the body of the project, before the bibliography.

Bibliography

You should include a bibliography at the end of your report, in alphabetical order of author's surname. If you wish, you can split the bibliography into sub-headings of print sources and website sources.

Bibliography styles

Books:

<author's surname>, <initials>. <year of publication> in brackets, <title> in italics, <edition – if not the first>, <place of publication: publisher>, <page number (if relevant)>

For example:

Hannagan, T. (2012), *Management Concepts and Practices*, 3rd ed, Harlow: Prentice Hall, p39

Journals and periodicals:

<author's surname>, <initials>. <year of publication> in brackets, <title of article> in single inverted commas, <journal title> in italics, <volume> <issue> in brackets, <page numbers>

For example:

Evans, W.A. (1994) 'Approaches to intelligent information retrieval', *Information Processing and Management*, 7 (2), p147-168

Internet:

<*author's/editor's surname>, <initials>. <year> in brackets, <article title> in italics, <online> in square brackets, <place of publication: publisher>. <Available from: URL> <accessed date> in square brackets

*Note: the author may be an organisation, and you may not always be able to find the place/publisher; provide as much detail as possible.

For example:

Academic Services (2007), *BU guide to citation in the Harvard style: brief guide* [online], Poole: Bournemouth University. Available from: <https://www1.bournemouth.ac.uk/discover/library/using-library/how-guides/how-cite-references> [accessed 06 February 2018]

Podcasts:

<author's/narrator's surname>, <initials>. <title of podcast> in single inverted commas, <podcast> in square brackets, <date posted> in brackets, <publisher>. <Available from: URL> <accessed date> in square brackets

For example:

Harford, T. '50 things that made the modern economy' [podcast], (13 May 2019), BBC. Available from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csz2wb> [accessed 20 May 2019]

TV programmes and documentaries:

<title of programme> in italics, <channel or publisher> <year produced> in brackets.
<Available from: URL> <accessed date> in square brackets

For example:

Dispatches: Secrets of Cadbury, Channel 4 (2017). Available from:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njgW-c3fAUk> [accessed 15 February 2017]

Appendices

You do not gain marks for appendices in their own right.

You can use appendices if including them in the body of the report would disrupt the reader's flow.

You should only include information that is referenced in the body of the report.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Note: you are advised to check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

Security and confidentiality

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