



GCSE **Economics**

8136/2

Report on the examination

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General

Overall, student performance was slightly up on the performance level achieved in 2024, with a higher mean score achieved. In line with points emphasised in previous AQA feedback courses for this specification, there are still key aspects of exam skills and technique which students would benefit from developing ahead of future exams. There are still gaps in the knowledge and understanding of certain topics – such as policies to correct market failure, knowing why interest rates vary in different markets, and factors affecting the exchange rate and the balance of payments.

Section A Questions 1-10

The multiple-choice questions within section A of the paper were generally well completed. There was a clear progression in the challenge presented with the later questions proving more difficult than the earlier ones, though this was not always the case.

Questions 2, 3 and 4 were answered correctly by over 90% of all students, with question 2 being the most accessible. Question 6 was the most challenging in this part of the exam, with only 30% of students getting this right – probably due to not fully understanding how changes in the exchange rate affect inflation. Question 9 also proved tricky with only 40% answering this question correctly. The most challenging of the multiple-choice section were questions 6, 8, 9 and 10.

Question 11

Although just over half of students scored at least one mark here, only one-third scored both marks. The topic of correcting market failure has been covered multiple times across previous sessions, so it was surprising to see a significant number of answers having no focus on the topic at all – with answers provided about macroeconomic policies in general.

Question 12

This question was fairly well answered. Around three-quarters of responses scored both marks.

Question 13

Just over half of answers scored one mark here. The main failings which prevented both marks being awarded were lack of sufficient development or not focusing on the application to UK producers.

Question 14

Both parts of this question were reasonably accessible.

For the calculation question, incorrect rounding or an incorrect denominator were often the reasons full marks were not awarded. Just over 60% of answers scored both marks for the calculation question. Around one third of answers scored both marks on the second part of the question. There is still some confusion where students conflate the budget balance and

the trade balance – the distinction between the two is important as there are likely to be questions covering both of these sections of the specification.

Question 15

Answers were generally good. Around one third of answers achieved level 3. Over 80% of answers achieved level 2 – showing some relevant development of points raised in their answers.

Question 16

Nearly all students scored at least one mark with around half of responses gaining both marks. Incorrect answers were often focused on issues irrelevant to the question.

Question 17

This proved a very challenging question – with more than half of answers not scoring any marks. This part of the specification has not been assessed in many exam papers, but it should not be considered a ‘difficult’ topic area to cover in classroom lessons.

Question 18

More than two-thirds of answers scored both marks. Fewer than one in ten answers scored nothing.

Question 19

Just over half of responses scored both marks on the calculation part of this question. Unusually, a significant number of answers used the compound interest method for calculating the answer – which has not been seen before in any significant number of responses. This was allowed credit. Common areas for mistakes were where the final answer included the principal as well as the interest.

The second part of the question was well answered with over 70% scoring both marks and around 90% of answers scoring at least one mark.

Question 20

This question was very accessible with over 90% of answers scoring full marks.

Question 21

Most answers were good or better for this question. Just over one third of answers gained marks in the level 3 (top) band which is very encouraging. Good answers were well structured, used the information in to reach a well-reasoned conclusion. There were very few less successful answers to this question. Answers that had evidence of planning usually scored well – a lesson to be learned there for future students. One area for improvement would be to ensure that there is not too much of the data contained in the extract simply quoted in full (often at great length) in the answer. There is evidence that students wrote lengthy answers which often consisted of excessively large chunks of the extract being quoted back were often not linked to answering the question.

Section B

Question 22

A straightforward question with around 70% of all students scoring full marks. Very few students scored zero.

Question 23

Although not a straightforward question, it was surprising how few managed to attain full marks on this question. Many used the wrong figure for unemployment, and many used the incorrect figure for the working population, to calculate the unemployment rate. However, around 70% of answers did score some credit on this question.

Question 24

Answers were generally very good on this question. Around three quarters of answers scored four marks or higher and nearly all answers gained some credit.

Question 25

This question provided more of a challenge with only 20% of answers scoring in the top level, and around 40% of answers scoring in level 1. The question covered an area of the specification that isn't always well understood. There were a number of clues provided in the passages in section B to serve as a starting point for answering this question. However, students rarely saw how to use the problem of low productivity to explain the persistent deficit. Conflation of low productivity and low production was a common feature of answers.

Question 26

The structure of answers for this extended answer question has improved since 2019 but was not as strong as compared with earlier sessions. There was some evidence that more emphasis needs to be placed on ensuring students are familiar with the skills of analysis, application and evaluation. Conclusions and evaluative comments were often brief when compared to the overall answer provided.

The good answers focused on the arguments for and against focusing on lower unemployment. These students were able to produce developed arguments arguing both in favour and against the question and then could generate an effective conclusion in many places. Students who wrote strong answers were able to use information from the text effectively in supporting their answers but there were a significant number of answers that made, as with Q21, too much use of simply regurgitating long parts of the passages provided. A good plan, as was evident, appeared to help students score well. Around half of all answers scored more than half marks for this question, with around 40% of answers scoring in the top two levels (i.e. scoring 10 or more out of 15)

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.