
GCSE ECONOMICS

8136/2 How the economy works
Report on the Examination

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General

This was the first series to be completely assessed by external examination since 2019. Students and centres were given advance information of the topics which were assessed for all but the multiple choice questions, in order to account for the effects of disruption to teaching and learning over the previous two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Overall student performance was broadly in line with that of the first set of exams for the current specification sat in 2019. The publication of advance information ahead of the 2022 exam appears to have aided candidates in identifying key areas of knowledge tested, with the vast majority of candidates being able to access all questions on the paper. However, in line with points emphasised in AQA's feedback course for this specification in Autumn 2019, there are still key aspects of analysis, application and evaluation skills which candidates would benefit from developing ahead of future exams.

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 later questions proving more demanding than the earlier ones.

Questions 1-3 were answered correctly by at least three-quarters of all students. Questions 9 and 10 were difficult with just over half answering Question 9 correctly and around 70% answering Question 10 incorrectly. There were no questions which included distractors that were more popular than the correct answer, incorrect answers were dispersed fairly evenly across the remaining options.

Question 11

Although most students scored at least one mark on this, it was surprising that only 40% scored two marks on this question. Knowledge of the correct policies was not widespread, with many students offering answers that were clearly not a government policy, such as: 'create more jobs' or 'increase wages' which were common answers here.

Question 12

This was a reasonably straightforward question with 75% of students gaining some credit and with half of these scoring both marks, although some focused more on how the policies work rather than answering the question.

Question 13

Just over half of all answers gained both marks with a correct explanation followed by the consequence of the methods of reducing a deficit, or the consequence of the possibilities after reducing the deficit – either way being acceptable.

Question 14

The first part of the question was well answered with just over half of all answers scoring both marks. Marks were often lost for not being able to calculate the balance of trade or by not rounding the answer to the correct level of accuracy.

For the second part of the question, most answers gained some credit for providing a reason, but around half of the students managed to explain this and gain both marks. This area of the specification is not always answered well but it is worth noting that this topic will normally feature in some form across the whole paper – so it is worth some attention when teaching this topic.

Question 15

Answers were well distributed across the levels. There were, however, not as many answers scoring the top level as in previous exams. Only around one quarter of answers achieved Level 3. Most answers focused on government provision. Better answers considered this provision as a solution and also looked at the use of taxes, or subsidies as a method of correcting this market failure.

Question 16

Although this might be considered a more obscure part of the specification, it was pleasing to see more than two thirds of students scoring both marks for this question with only a small minority gaining no marks.

Question 17

This area of the specification had not been explicitly covered in previous exams. Most gained some marks but there was a relatively high rate (around 4%) of students who did not attempt this question.

Question 18

This was a reasonably straightforward question with more than 80% of students gaining some credit and with half of these scoring both marks.

Question 19

Around half of the students scored both marks in the calculation part of this question. Those who didn't were likely to have either not rounded their answers correctly or made a mistake when using billions and millions.

Almost three quarters of answers gained both marks for the second part of the question.

Question 20

Very few answers scored no marks at all. Just over half scored all three marks. Marks were usually lost for not fully labelling the axes, or one of the bars being inaccurate in the chart drawing.

Question 21

Most answers were good or better for this question. Around one third of answers gained marks in Level 3 (top) band which was very encouraging. Good answers were well structured and used the information to reach a well-reasoned conclusion. It was pleasing to see that there were very few weak answers – those scoring poorly were usually quite short in length. One interesting point is that there was some evidence of planning a response, but this was not widespread, which it should be for any extended answer question.

Section B**Question 22**

Although this might be considered a more obscure part of the specification it was pleasing to see more than two thirds of students scoring both marks for this question with only a small minority gaining no marks.

Question 22

Two thirds of students scored both marks on this question. Many students were fully aware of the methods used to prevent free trade. Fewer than one in ten students scored no marks at all on this question.

Question 23

Although half of students scored all three marks, one quarter scored no marks at all. This suggests, as mentioned earlier, that the topic of measuring aspects of the balance of payments is not fully understood. Teachers are advised to focus on this topic because it is frequently assessed in examinations.

Question 24

Most students could access the benefits of foreign trade. Effective use was made of the source material. Occasionally, students repeated themselves in explaining the benefits and did not score as highly as they could have done otherwise. Almost 40% of students scored in the top level (Level 3) of marks for this question. There were very few poor answers to this question.

Question 25

A small number of answers lost focus and talked about interdependence in general rather than its effects specifically on UK employment. Strong answers were often able to extend the depth of their answers by identifying the different types of unemployment affected by global interdependence.

Question 26

The structure of responses for this extended answer question had improved compared with previous series. Students were able to produce developed arguments both in favour and against the question and then could generate an effective conclusion in many places. There were very few poor answers. Students were able to use information from the items effectively in supporting their answers.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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