

Examiners' Report June 2017

IAL Economics WEC03 01





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Introduction

This was the fourth series of summer examinations for WEC03 Business Behaviour. A further four papers have been set for previous winter series.

The examination seeks to test the candidates' abilities to select and apply appropriate economic concepts, theories and techniques in a variety of contexts. As Unit 3 is a synoptic unit, the examination may draw on material from Units 1 and 2.

Candidates choose to attempt two out of four essay titles in Section A. Each essay is marked out of a total of 20 marks using a 5 level of response performance criteria. Question 3 was the most popular question (Is a perfectly competitive firm always more efficient that a monopoly firm?). Question 4 also proved to be a popular choice (Government measures to promote international competitiveness).

Candidates choose one out of two data response questions in Section B. Each question has four parts to it. Part (a) is worth 4 marks and parts (b) to (d) are each worth 12 marks. For parts (b) to (d) it is vital that candidates make effective use of the information provided in order to access Levels 2 and 3 for knowledge, application and analysis marks. A further 4 marks are available for evaluation. Question 6 was the most popular question.

It is most encouraging to note that the overall standard of answers is continuing to improve. There were a number of high quality answers this year.

Successful candidates were able to:

- Clearly identify what they were being asked to do. For example, in Question 3 maintain a clear focus on **efficiency** concepts and in Question 4 focus on policies to improve **international** competitiveness.
- Draw and label appropriate diagrams accurately. For example, showing productive and allocative efficiency points on diagrams of perfect competition for Question 3 and a shut down point diagram for Question 5(b) and Question 6(c).
- Effectively time manage their answers. As was the case in the last series, there was far less evidence of candidates having to rush part (d) of Section B.
- Select and apply information from the extracts to enhance their answers in Section B

Less successful candidates often:

- Presented a prepared answer rather than the one which was being asked. For
 example, in Question 1 focusing on issues of divorce of ownership and control without
 broadening the answer and in Question 2 discussing the advantages and disadvantages
 of a large firm rather than focusing on whether or not a large firm can maintain its cost
 advantages as it continues to grow.
- Drew inaccurate and inappropriate diagrams. For example, not showing the output level where MC = AR and not showing MC intersecting with AC at the lowest point of AC (Question 3).
- Confused contestability with competitive in Question 6(b).

The main implications for future teaching, learning and examination preparation are:

- To ensure that **all** parts of the specification are taught and internally assessed. For example, knowledge of contestable markets was weak in several cases.
- To encourage candidates to make full use of previous examination papers, mark schemes and examiners reports.

Question 1x

Candidates who performed well were able to identify a range of business objectives and how they may or may not apply to different types of business organisations. A sound response typically discussed how objectives vary both within and between private and public sectors and went on to consider how these objectives may be similar depending on circumstances. Diagrams were used to show profit maximisation, revenue maximisation and sales maximisation. Such a response would potentially achieve a sound Level 4 mark of 14/16.

Further evaluation as to why similarities exist, e.g. private sector firms having increased social responsibilities and commercial public sector organisations having financial targets would open up the possibility of achieving a Level 5 mark.

An answer which only considered a limited type of organisation, for example private sector companies, with sound analysis would have scored high Level 3, since the response would have lacked sufficient breadth.

It was disappointing to see that several candidates were unable to discuss a range of business objectives. Some answers veered away from the question and discussed different models of market structure.

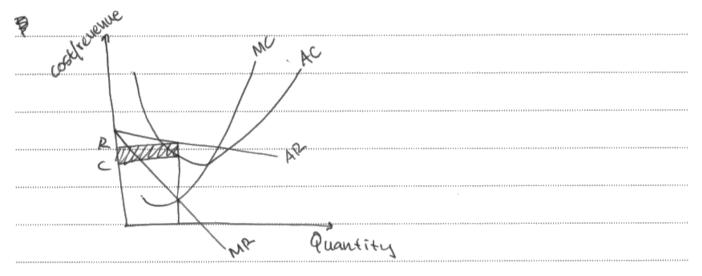
Private sector businesses are those businesses which are owned and managed by private individuals. These business organisations can include public limited companies and co-operative. Some private firms have divorce of ownership and control, like public limited company where shareholders own the company but board of directors or managers run the company.

Public sector businesses the those businesses owned and managed by the government. These business organisations are include governmental departments and commercially oriented businesses.

Business objectives can vary between private sector businesses.

Since private businesses and public sector businesses.

Since private businesses are owned by private individuals.



At profit maximising point MC=MR firms would want to mcrease Auerage revenue so as to get supernormal profits. This is at the main objective of large businesses such as public limited companies. Co-operatives, which are owned by its members, such as workers, may have different objectives. The main aim of co-operatives is to increase the welfare of it's members. They do not have profit maximising as the main objectives. This is as most co-operatives get government grants or funds to keep going So they work for the betterment of the members Also, some charity organisations such as the Gates Foundation or charity branches of farmous companies such as LEGO and do not have profit motive or welfare of members They work for the betterment of the unfortunate, poor or de people with diseases mostly in developing countries. They are funded by profits from the owner so they do not to need to maximise profits.

Moreover, public sector businesses do not aim to maximise profits. But rather they work for the welfare of the public providing merit goods and public goods which private sector could not provide. They are funded by government tax revenues, so they do not need profits However carperation not all co-operatives get help from government to achieve its objectives So when they do not get thelp funding from government co-speratives would have to make profit to survive, at least in the long own So, It can be argued that all firms private forms have to make profit. Furthermore, large transmational companies and even other public limited companies have corporate social responsibility in their business agenda; this is where they work for the betterment and improved living standard of It's customers or employees Coca-Cola employs such techniques around the globe, such as providing clean water in India So welfare is a part of almost all private businesses, meaning there is lesser diffe variation in business objectives Also, the commercially oriented businesses in public sector may will aim to maximise profits. Most of these & businesses are partly or mostly owned by private individuals, so in order to keep the owners happy profit has to be made Also, these componies

provide some sort of good such as railway or electricity, and so will need profit to innovate and enhance the service. Eventhough most are supported by government nevenues, this may not be possible for long run, so they have to make profit to survive.

Lastly divorce in ownership of public limited companies may mean they do not always maximize profits. Hanagers may aim for profit satisfying to keep shareholders happy while engaging in other objectives such as higher wages or better working conclitions.



This response showed a sound level of understanding and the candidate addressed the question throughout the answer.

There is a clear and succinct introduction outlining examples of organisations in both sectors. The candidate then compares company objectives with those of co-operatives, charities and public sector organisations. This would be worth a high Level 3 mark at this point.

The candidate then provides some balance to the response by introducing the possibilities of corporate social responsibilities for the private sector company and commercial targets for the public sector organisation. These factors are well explained and result in a final mark of 16 (Top Level 4).

The reason why this response did not achieve a Level 5 mark was because it lacked detail on different objectives in the private sector with no consideration of either revenue or sales maximisation. The final reference to profit satisficing and divorce of ownership and control could have developed these points.



Make sure you start your answer by directly addressing the question. A question like this one requires you to consider a range of possible objectives. As the statement refers to how objectives can vary, your evaluation will be based on how objectives may be similar.

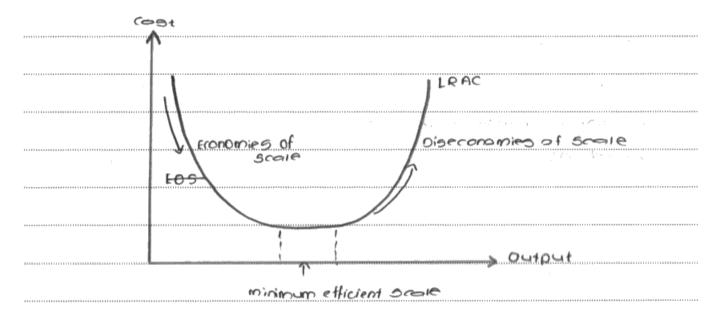
Question 2x

There was a significant variation in the quality of answers to this question. The stronger responses focused on the main thrust of the question, namely whether or not a large firm can *maintain* its cost advantages as it grows. Candidates were able to draw upon their understanding of economies and diseconomies of scale and go beyond this to consider issues such as variations in the minimum efficient size, natural monopolies and government competition policies. Such a response, often with appropriate and accurate diagrams, typically scored a high Level 4 or Level 5 mark.

Those candidates who performed less well discussed economies of scale at some length or framed their answer in terms of advantages of large firms compared with small firms. This meant that the answer was unlikely to score anything more than a mid-level 3 at best. This illustrates the essential point, that candidates must read each question very carefully.

Yes, large firms can benefit from cost advantages compared to small firms, as it helps the tallowing could be some of the advantages.

Firstly, large firms from exposit economies of scale which is the falling of average costs due to the exponsion of the scale of operations for an instance, purchasing economies of scale helps to buy row materials in bulk, Mater ports eisk bearing economies of scale is also achieved as large firms get have a large product portfolio for an example, for TATA, if the fail they have rehicles and even thirts the which doesn't make them dependent on one product.



The diagram above shows the when cost falls pronomies of scale is achieved and large firms rould reduce costs such as bank loan intresté as financial economies of scale 4 is achieved and the banks will allow low intrest loans as they company is large enough to pay back the debts.

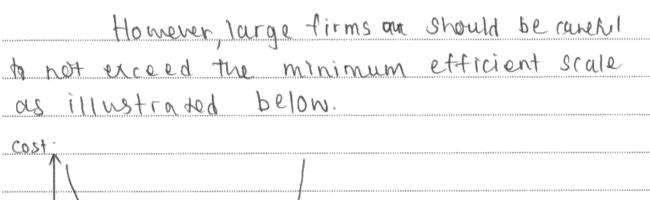
transfer secondly, large tims could outsaurce their praduction into countries with law praduction rosts Spare such as, cheap bour and more capacity, for an example, Apple is one products are designed in california but it's been assembled in china this could result in low production costs and labour which is a cost advantage of Apple, when CO315 tacto15 91 production such as land is the aper than less costs for the firms to operate and then therefore rould earn high profits but be this could result in mistakes be occured therefore a good training should be given to the labour which

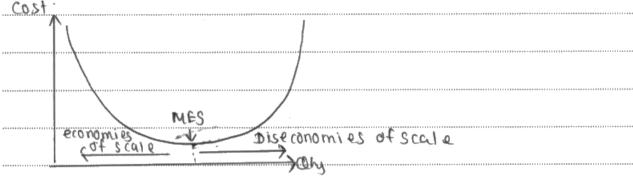
will cause the stims film to spend maney,

further, large firms could be already famous Macdonals, K+C are large flims such as located all actions the globe and this may advertising and marketing costs 100 have 40 advertise cause com firms. This rould also already know the se be an a cost advantage but some countries could have different cultures or beleifs which may the time to develop special products, such as,



The response starts reasonably well by identifying economies of scale and illustrating the concept with a good diagram. Development occurs with some analysis of financial economies of scale, low cost locations and savings on advertising and marketing costs. If this standard was maintained, but not improved upon for the remainder of the answer, this would achieve a high Level 3 mark.





Once a firm exceeds the minimum efficient lew!

of output, their ameto long run average costs will

start rising. for example, a company like Apple

which has sales outless and production facilities

all over the world might not be able to manage

all of ils outlets. There might be so coordination

and control problems due to over expanding. Therefore

it is very important that large firms to do make

since they expand only until it is efficient.

This proves that even large firms cannot continue

growing endlessly. They have to stop act one

paint.

Another way that large companies can

Another way their large companies can maintain their cost advantages is by autsourling and off shoring. For example, or part of Applis production process takes place in China. This is because the unit tabant costs in China are

more cheaper than elsewhere Lange firms
have the capacity to off-shore because they
can research whout the best places to locate
and they can afford to do such a startup in
a fereign country. Furthermore governments
which welcome FDI win be willing to get
a reputed country like Apple or General Motor
to have a point of their production iprocess in
Their country.



This section of the candidate's answer focuses on the main issues of the question. A good example is used to discuss why a large firm, (in this case Apple), may not be able to maintain its cost advantages. If this standard had continued over the remainder of the answer the mark would be a high Level 4 and potentially a Level 5.



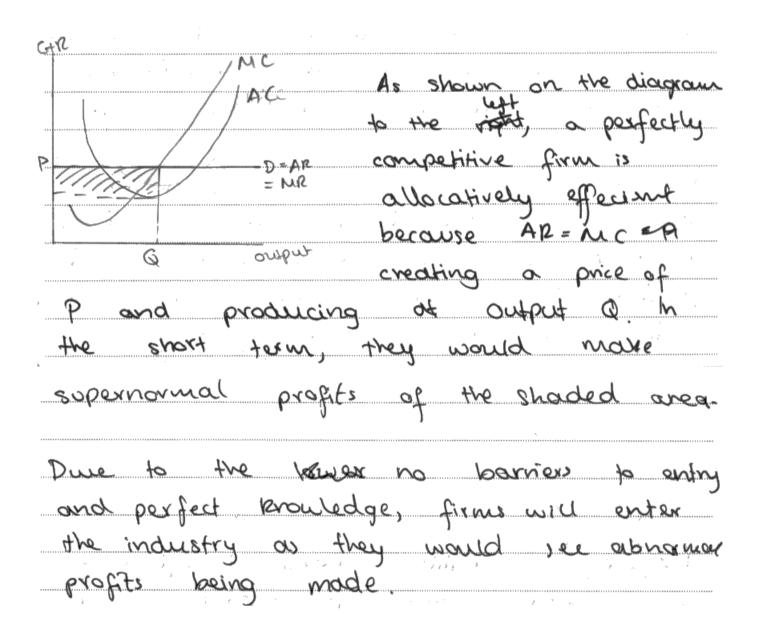
Make sure your answer really focuses on the question. In this case, you would need to consider why large firms may or may not be able to maintain cost advantages. Think about factors which can work in their favour and also those factors which might work against them. This is *not* an advantages and disadvantages of large firms question.

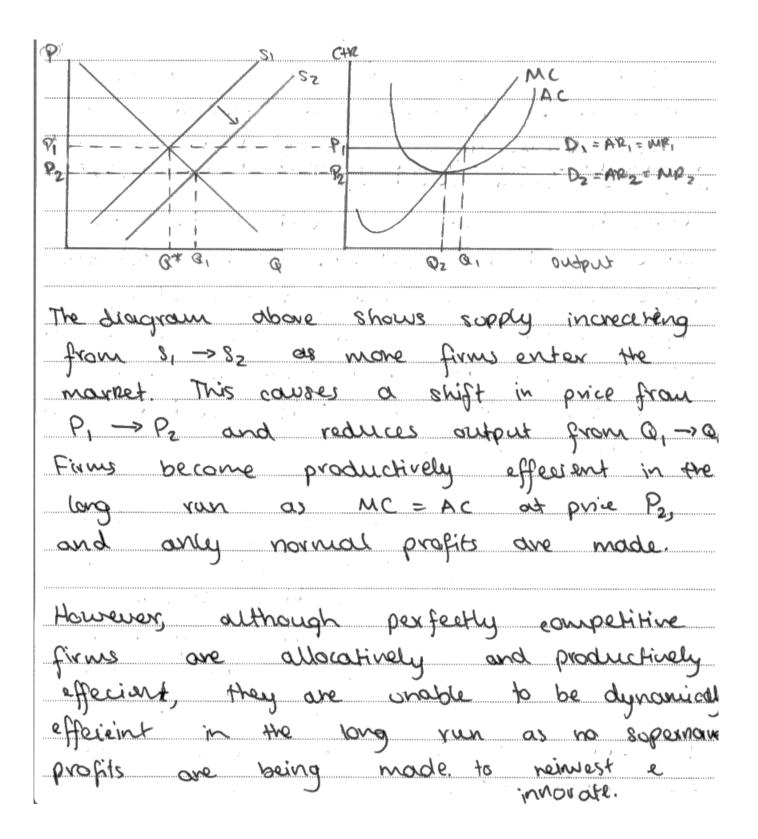
Question 3x

There were a number of very sound answers to this question. Good quality responses were able to apply their economic theory of perfect competition and monopoly effectively. In such cases, diagrams were accurately drawn and labelled, with the analysis focusing on issues of contrasting efficiencies in the two markets. High Level 4 and Level 5 answers considered, in some depth, the issue as to whether perfectly competitive markets will always be more efficient, discussing issues of dynamic efficiency and minimum efficient scale.

Candidates who performed less well often drew inaccurate diagrams and were unclear on the concepts of productive and allocative efficiency in particular.

Centres need to advise their candidates about the importance of knowing the market model diagrams and how types of efficiency can be illustrated with diagrammatic analysis.





However, monopolies are able to be dynamically effecient as large supername profits are being made. This means reinvest to innovate new they can products and give higher quality and larger rangety of products to consumers which increases consiner welfare. Profits one shown by He shaded Although monopolies are not productively effecient they are soid to have lower costs in comparison to perfectly competitive firms because they can take advantage of porchasing, marketing fechinal, financial and risk bearing economies of salle. This would reduce average costs as costs online perfectly competitive LRAC firms, they have enough output to achieve more economies of scale (Minimum efferent scale, Mes on diagram) Mes



Having correctly defined both markets in the previous paragraph, the candidate correctly shows the short run profit maximising output for a perfectly competitive firm. This would have been further improved if allocative efficiency had been labelled on the diagram. No mention is made of productive efficiency at this juncture. The long run diagrams are correctly drawn and the analysis of perfect competition is sound. A correct point is made about dynamic efficiency. This would represent a low level 3 response at this point.

A correct diagram and analysis of static efficiencies for monopoly followed.

The second clip shows that the candidate considered concepts of dynamic efficiency, economies of scale and minimum efficient scale for a monopolist. This moved the quality of the response into high Level 4.



Make sure your diagrams are accurately drawn and relevant. Use correct labelling and appropriate annotation. Provide analysis to accompany your diagrams.

Question 4y

There was a clear division between those candidates who had read the question carefully and those who had not.

Sound responses discussed how a range of government measures might improve a country's *international* competitiveness. For example, a response which analysed the potential impact of policies aimed at export industries, developing education and skills and subsidising firms seeking overseas markets would potentially be in Level 4 or Level 5. Higher level responses also offered valid evaluation in terms of the possible limited impact of such measures and constraints on government (e.g. financial, exchange rate system).

Less successful responses identified a range of government measures but provided tenuous links as to how these might affect international competitiveness. Such a response would not attain anything above a mid-level 3 mark.

International competitiveness (IC a country tostign mar gov can promote IC ountry is too by cost of produce pass those prices by decreasing. ASLL to stheir goods are elastic, the rice in nevenue as in the forige mark way, gov can

currency reserves. This will me increase the supply of domestic currency is the marked their value will fall. This will result is a domestic goods becoming cheaper in the foreign market. As a result. demand for exports will rise this will booking inere increase exports which will increase revenue for businesses in the country. They'll be able to earn higher profits, thees making them more competitive in the international market. Another measure, which gov can take to improve IC of the countries is by using protectionism measures, This will enable demestic businesses to taceless competition and give them a higher chance to grow Furthermore, it also ensures the growth of infant industries within the economy Hence, it will result in domistic businesses belog becoming larger This may enable than to achieve higher economies of scale and thus reduce cost. tence, the "Unout became more competitive in the international more market.

ingrease accessability to education, healthcare by imple training progra and knowledge a of reduce health issues, wh Lecreage absenteeism. Hs Cabour become more skilled their occupational produce white ADD FIGUR



The response starts with a correct definition of international competitiveness. The following two paragraphs are very sound and focus on the question. Good analysis of both subsidies and exchange rate manipulation within the context of export-oriented businesses. Protectionist measures are discussed in relation to enabling infant industries to grow, rather than simply reducing imports and improvements to education and health are linked to improvements in overseas markets at the conclusion of that paragraph. At this point the response is a low Level 4.

The evaluation which followed discussed the drawbacks of the measures in a general sense without considering why they might not lead to improvements in international competitiveness. The final mark was Level 4, 15 marks.



If you attempt a question which is asking about the *effectiveness* of government measures, your evaluation needs to focus on what might make the measures *less* effective.

In this question you could discuss, for example, the limitations facing a government when trying to lower its exchange rate; the price elasticity of demand for exports; the time lag for more long-term measures such as infrastructure, investment in education and health services.

Question 5 (a)

Two knowledge marks were awarded for a correct definition of predatory pricing with a brief development. A number of candidates provided an incorrect definition, often confusing predatory with limit pricing.

Up to two application marks were awarded for appropriate use of the extract and/or for providing examples where predatory pricing may occur.

Question 5 (b)

The best responses were able to draw accurate diagrams which showed the shut-down point in both the short run and the long run. This then enabled candidates to make a clear distinction between online services, which may be able to survive in the short run because at least AVC was being covered, and those which could not survive. The high quality answers used the context effectively and were able to make valid evaluative comments.

By contrast, some candidates clearly struggled to produce an appropriate diagram, but many were still able to gain both KAA and evaluation marks for other parts of the response.

Question 5 (c)

Successful answers made the link between a product differentiation strategy and a potential increase in profit. The purpose of the strategy is to (amongst other things), raise demand, increase sales and encourage consumer brand loyalty (less elastic demand). The best responses recognised this and used the context of the Spanish tuna market to analyse these issues.

Evaluation involved turning the tables and considering why the strategy may not work. Factors such as increased costs, consumers not switching, highly competitive market (availability of substitute goods) were relevant here.

It is important to note that candidates could justifiably restructure their response so that the emphasis was focused on why the strategy may *not* be effective.

Weaker responses provided a very descriptive answer covering several different forms of product differentiation without considering the economic concepts involved in the question. Something as basic as increased demand and a rightward shift of the AR curve, (in context), would have represented a qualitative improvement in some cases.

Question 5 (d)

Sound responses focused on the potential benefits to *consumers* from lower prices. As with all other questions, economic concepts are central to forming a quality answer. Analysis of consumer surplus, more income available for savings and greater impact on low income earners were the types of concepts which could be applied to this question.

Less successful responses did not focus on consumers and tended to discuss the impacts on the firm.

Evaluation marks were awarded to those candidates who considered why benefits may not apply or may be short-lived. For example, by considering the effects of predatory pricing, the possible reductions in quality or standards of service.

With reference to extract 1, some 'Some Arms choose to use predatory pricing'. Therefore prices of products are & lowered Significantly to drive out competition. Hence as proces are low fire consumer would have access to cheap products, thereby increasing pro Consumer suplus. Consumer surplus is the difference in what consumers are willing to pay and What they actually pay, The following diagram Mustra les consumer surplus. With reference to extract 2, 'A subway tuna sandwick and drink on the food app Eleine, is priced 9 your juan including delivery, compared to 31 yuan at the nearest Subway shop! As price are fur lower than at the Swbway & tore shop consumers satisfaction is mu high as Ele me delivers as well. Therefore they ex have a large benefit of ordering from the Site rather than having to go to the shop. Brother benefit to the consumers of a firmle decision to lower prices is that consumers feel they have got their value for money and It increases consumer welfare affordability for low income earners, Therefore Standard of living

for these low income earners increase as they have more disposable income,

However, with reference to extract x, 'In the long run consumers may suffer if prices rise again once competitions are eliminated from the market'. Therefore in the long run consumers will most likely suffer high prices once again as competitors are likely to be unable to compete with the low prices. Hence the benefits to reduction in price will be short lived.

prices are reduced as the firms evold revenue would fall: Therefore quality of products and investment in research and alevelopment would also fall and as a result consumers would a suffer from foor quality products and those of which could be outdated as the research and development has ceased due to the low propular. Hence consumer satisfaction would be diminished.



This is a very good answer. The candidate starts by discussing the benefits of predatory pricing to the consumer and introduces the concept of consumer surplus.

The second paragraph references inclusion of delivery charges (standard of service), increased consumer satisfaction is identified and there is good use of context. At this point KAA is worth 6 marks.

A further benefit is developed in relation to value for money and affordability. This represents a Level 3 KAA response.

The evaluation comments are both sound and well developed.

This response attained the maximum 12 marks.



In Section B keep your answers succinct and to the point. Make relevant use of the information provided. Make sure you include at least two developed evaluation comments (but no more than three).

Question 6 (a)

Two knowledge marks were awarded for a correct identification of oligopoly plus a brief definition of oligopoly.

Application marks were awarded for using the data from the pie chart.

A significant majority of candidates were able to gain 3 or 4 marks on this question.

Question 6 (b)

Captulay larger firms tig Kom Supon

Amoron e Ocado ho will be competitive our online groceries & home may capture the maket she die to convinience e ease.



The response shows an understanding of contestable markets. Good use is made of the information with regard to growth of "smaller" supermarkets and the growth of online shopping with a reference to changing market share. The quality of analysis places this at the top of Level 2 KAA.



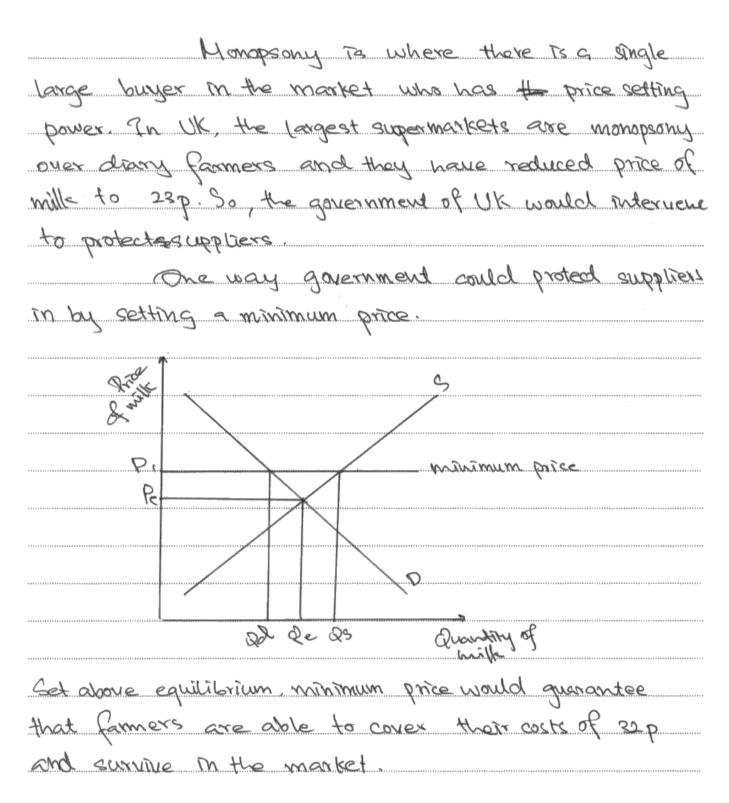
In order to score Level 3 KAA marks, be sure to apply your understanding of economic concepts using the information provided.

In this answer, a more detailed consideration of the possible reduction of sunk costs and changing consumer shopping habits (more elastic demand) would have moved this answer into Level 3.

Question 6 (d)

The more successful candidates were able to select two or three appropriate government measures which could potentially benefit UK dairy farmers. Policies such as minimum price legislation, subsidies and reducing monopsony powers of large supermarkets were amongst the most relevant. Sound evaluation was based on considering why these measures may not be particularly effective e.g. powerful monopsonists, higher prices to consumers.

The less successful candidate tended to identify more policies, some of which would not be relevant in this situation (e.g. local sourcing) and provided little in the way of analysis.



The government could also aim to increase
the condestability and competitiveness of the supermanke
helustry. Purs can be by subsidising new firms to
More finns in supermarket industry would mean that
monopsony power of large supermarkets reduce and
dramy farmers can sell 4 to other supermentels et
hther price.
Also, the UK government can take action
against Tesco and other firms for engaging m
price war Fining and Jailing will discourage these
firms from lowering prices and so & milk farmers
prices will increase and their producer surplus
would rise.
However, the benefits for suppliers
depend on government ability to control large
agamarkets. Pesco and others have high market
share and turnover, and so, government may not
be able to control their actions.
Moreover, setting the minimum price
can lead to surplus milk Supermarkets would not
demand at higher prices and may switch to abroad
milk producers So, milk farmers in UK are not able to
sell milk and their nevenues are not increased
Lastly, action against Tesco may be short
I wand and they will engage in other unfair practices

in long run. So, suppliers may have to suffer

agath.



This is an example of a sound response. Three relevant measures are identified and analysed in some depth. This is worthy of a Level 3 KAA mark.

The candidate makes three separate evaluative comments, all of which have some merit. Top evaluation marks were awarded.



Make sure when answering a question about government measures you only select those measures which you think are going to be appropriate. Avoid choosing all of those which you can remember in the hope that some will be correct.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure that you read each question very carefully before starting your answer.
- Draw and label your diagrams accurately.
- Make sure that your diagram(s) is relevant and appropriate.
- Include evaluation comments in all of your answers apart from Section B part (a).
- Do not copy out large sections of the extracts in Section B. If you do copy a small part of the extract use quotation marks.
- Your analysis in Section B needs to be in context, so use the information as directed by the question.

Grade Boundaries

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