

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2011

GCE

GCE Economics & Business (6EB04/01) Paper 01

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Section A

The January entry for this paper increased by 20% in relation to 2010 indicating a combination of the increasing popularity of this specification and a few more centres taking unit 4 before unit 3. The digital broadcasting topic proved accessible for the vast majority of candidates and a similar mark distribution was seen to January last year.

Again many candidates brought useful newsworthy evidence in from outside the pre-release as things have moved on since the paper was written. Where used in conjunction with the evidence provided, reward was given. Many resources are now available on

<http://twitter.com/ecobusadvisor>

http://community.edexcel.com/business/m/business_gcsegce/default.aspx and Edexcel GCE Business & Economics on Facebook.

Almost all candidates completed the paper in the time allotted, and thankfully, the majority were more willing to cut to the chase and make sound evaluative points on the higher mark questions without repetition. Unnecessarily lengthy answers were thus avoided and it was clear that centres had taken notice of previous advice. It was clear that many centres had made excellent use of the pre-release materials in the classroom, but equally clear that a minority had not. Candidates often need help in analysing information.

Question 1

Most candidates were able to define government intervention. Answers were sometimes vague, but most obtained the second mark by giving a valid example. The weakest reverted to tortology e.g. "Government intervention is when the government intervenes in something".

Question 2

Most candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of free riders and linked this to public goods. Generally candidates gained the two available marks.

Question 3

Candidates either understood public goods or they didn't. The best considered non-excludability and non-rivalry, linking convincingly to iPlayer. The weakest just relied on being in the public sector.

Question 4

Most gained two or three marks by identifying that there would be some substitution, though too many thought the impact would be "huge". The best recognised that the likely impact would be relatively small.

Question 5

The focus of this question was on the likely consequences of technological change. Marks were often thrown away by choosing to focus exclusively on the state of the economy instead or ignoring the fact that ITV and C4 were in “deep trouble” and focusing exclusively on the opportunities technological change offered. Candidates who stuck to the knitting and answered the question as set generally fared well.

Question 6

This was the most likely question not to be attempted. The question often failed to gain high marks throughout. Too few candidates addressed the question in relation to the likely impact of full length programmes on You Tube’s viewing figures, the fact that it is impossible to skip pre-roll advertisements and the opportunities offered by linking niche content to appropriate niche products. Some missed the point that the pre-roll ads were linked to full length features rather than short clips or imagined they could be skipped altogether. Given that by the time the pre-release was available, the You tube experiment was up and running, it was perhaps disappointing that many hadn’t taken a few minutes to have a look at it. The likely pricing of these adverts was often not considered. The weakest chose to ignore the command to discuss the consequences for advertisers and focused on broadcasters instead. The answer does not always simply appear in the text, thinking is needed too at this level.

Section B

The general quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar fell markedly for a sizeable number of candidates. “Could of”, “definatly”, “to much”, “obeisety” and misspelled words from the stem literally littered many otherwise good answers and had to be penalised.

Question 7a

Generally well answered. Good understanding of the concepts was evident and analysis often well developed. The context was in essence well applied throughout and many candidates accessed level 4 by introducing evaluative points which they based on the pre-release material. Arguments against were often half-hearted, but the point was often made that parents actually buy the food. The best thought laterally, by challenging the hypothesis, but not the correlation e.g. it might just be that naturally obese people watch more television.

Question 7b

Knowledge and understanding were evident and the majority of candidates explored the merits of the decision. Evidence of sound evaluation and analysis was seen with some interesting ideas which students supported with relevant material and use of toolkit. Many recognised the absence of Five from the project was its Achilles heel as far as the UK competition authorities were concerned. Better candidates recognised that the decision to block the project would make life difficult for Channel 4 and ITV, though the best identified it was not the role of the CC to counter fair and innovative competition from Sky and Virgin. A popular misconception was that the project itself would create 50 job losses if allowed to proceed. Comparisons with You View (the new name for Project Canvas) and Hulu (Kangaroo’s US equivalent) occasionally demonstrated that some candidates at least had done some further research prior to the examination.

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