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Examiners' report

GCSE

ECONOMICS

OCR Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Economics

J205

For first teaching in 2017

J205/02 Summer 2025 series

Version 1

Contents

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate responses is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from Teach Cambridge.

Please note: OCR Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Economics (J205) will no longer be funded in Wales for new learners after **30 September 2026**. Please check the Qualifications in Wales portal (QiW) for more information.

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Paper 2 series overview

This is the Examiner's Report for Paper 2, National and International Economics. It is pleasing to note that a substantial number of candidates were able to use economic concepts to write coherent chains of reasoning. There was also a notable effort by candidates to use the data and context provided within the question paper.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• demonstrated good quantitative skills and selected the correct data to manipulate • drew accurate diagrams and identified which curve to shift • developed good chains of reasoning that linked back to the question set • wrote evaluative points that linked back to the previous point i.e. matching pairs • discerned meaning from the data • focused on the requirements of the question, e.g. writing about benefits rather than problems • wrote clearly with logical chains of reasoning.	• omitted key symbols such as 'millions' or £ signs • drew incomplete or inaccurate diagrams • wrote a summary of previous points in the conclusion • rewrote substantial parts of the data without analysing it • wrote answers that did not address the question • did not use correct economic terminology such as deficit or surplus • lacked focus and clarity in their writing.

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Section A overview

Section A of this paper had 20 multiple-choice questions and was intended to examine Assessment Objective (AO) 1 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues and AO2 - Apply knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues to a variety of contexts. Overall, candidates found the multiple-choice questions accessible, and marks gained here contributed well to their total mark. Given the range of topics covered and differing skills tested, these marks were a positive reflection of preparation for the paper. It is worth reminding candidates that they should try not to leave any MCQs blank and must clearly cross out unwanted answers.

Question 1

1 A government increases its budget deficit.

What is the **most** likely cost of this decision?

An increase in:

A debt interest

B exports

C government spending

D unemployment

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A common misconception was that government spending was a cost, rather than the debt interest arising from the deficit.

Question 2

2 The claimant count:

A cannot be used to measure the rate of unemployment

B includes people receiving jobseeker's allowance

C measures the different causes of unemployment

D uses the CPI to measure the level of unemployment

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates identified the correct answer (B).

Question 3

3 What is the **most** likely cause of structural unemployment?

A Different jobs are available in the summer

B High levels of occupational immobility

C Increased migration into the country

D The closure of some discount food stores

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A relatively common misconception was candidates selecting answer 'D', rather than 'B'.

Question 4

4 How might an increase in interest rates affect the economy?

A Decrease unemployment

B Improve price stability

C Increase economic growth

D Increase inflation

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates identified the correct answer (B).

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Question 5

5 A consumer is planning a holiday.
They found a villa that cost €3480 when the exchange rate was £1 = €1.20.
By the time they booked the villa the exchange rate had changed to £1 = €1.16.

What happened to the Sterling price of the villa for the consumer?

A Decreased by £400

B Decreased by £139.20

C Increased by £100

D Remained unchanged

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (C).

Question 6

6 What is the most likely cost of globalisation for consumers in developed countries?

A Dominant global brands

B Higher prices

C Increased immigration

D Lower prices

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A common misconception was increased immigration was a cost of globalisation, rather than the more likely negative impact of dominant global brands (A).

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Question 7

7 The UK government sets an inflation target.

What might happen if inflation is above this target?

Interest rates will:

A decrease to discourage saving

B decrease to encourage more investment

C increase to discourage consumer spending

D increase to encourage more borrowing

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (C).

Question 8

8 What is **not** a purpose of government spending?

A To ensure everyone has access to health services

B To increase the welfare of the population

C To maintain a balanced current account

D To reduce inequality in the distribution of income

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (C).

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Question 9

9 An individual's only source of income has risen in nominal value but fallen in real value.

As a result, the individual will

A be unable to buy all the same products

B decide to save more of their income

C have less money to spend

D not have to pay as much direct tax

Your answer [ ] **[1]**

A common misconception was that individuals will have less money to spend, rather than their ability to spend will fall.

Question 10

10 The government spends £50bn on a new railway line linking some of the country's largest cities.

Why is this an example of a supply side policy?

A Journey times will be improved for people travelling to work

B Many construction companies will achieve greater profits

C The £50bn could have been used to reduce the level of direct taxation

D There will be an increased demand for imported building materials

Your answer [ ] **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (A).

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Question 11

11 The table shows the growth in GDP for a country from 2021 to 2024.

	Annual growth in GDP
2021	2.7%
2022	–1.4%
2023	2.3%
2024	1.8%

Which statement is correct?

A The country was in a recession in 2024

B The level of employment is likely to have fallen in 2022

C The level of GDP was at its highest in 2021

D The level of output fell between 2023 and 2024

Your answer **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (B).

Question 12

12 What is **not** a cost of unemployment for individuals?

A Loss of self-esteem

B Lower standard of living

C Higher direct taxes

D Waste of labour resources

Your answer **[1]**

There was a wider spread of answers by candidates here indicating that they may have not fully understood that the question was about finding the answer that impacted the whole of the society/economy, rather than the individual.

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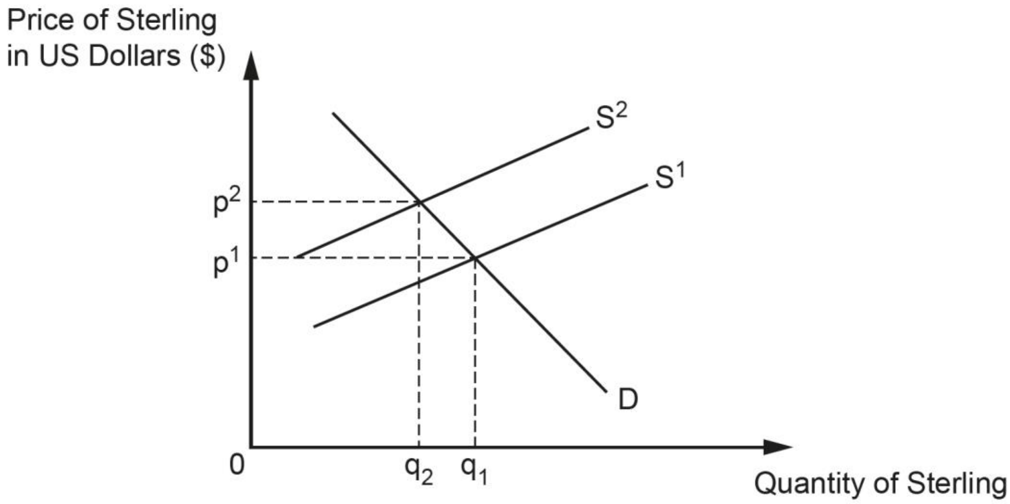
Question 13

13 The diagram shows the supply and demand for Sterling (£) when priced in US dollars ($).



What might cause the Sterling to US Dollar exchange rate to increase from p^1 to p^2?

A Incomes of US consumers increase

B Less imports are bought from the US

C The UK becomes more attractive for foreign investment

D UK goods become more desirable to US consumers

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

This question had a wide range of answers, rather than the correct one which is the impact of a change on the value of the pound.

Question 14

14 How can fiscal policy be used to achieve economic growth?

A A decrease in government spending to achieve a budget surplus

B An increase in interest rates will encourage households to save

C Improved education standards will increase the supply of labour

D Lower levels of taxation will encourage more household spending

Your answer ☐ **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (D).

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Question 15

15 An increase in a country's level of international trade will **most** likely benefit producers because

A better quality finished goods will be available

B prices will be lower due to increased competition

C there will be a greater choice of goods and services

D there will be a larger market for buying inputs

Your answer **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (D).

Question 16

16 What is a definition of price stability?

A A sustained rise in the general price level

B GDP per capita increases gradually

C Inflation remains constant

D Prices increase at an acceptable low rate

Your answer **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (D); however a common misconception was 'C' which is incorrect because inflation could be constant at a very high rate and thus not stable prices.

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Question 17

17 A country is seeking economic growth by investing in renewable wind energy.

This has led to an increase in energy prices and more noise for households living close to the wind farms.

How will this affect the sustainability of these households?

	Economic sustainability	**Social sustainability**	**Environmental sustainability**
A	Decrease	Decrease	Increase
B	Decrease	Increase	Increase
C	Decrease	Increase	Decrease
D	Increase	Decrease	Increase

Your answer **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (A).

Question 18

18 VAT on most food products is 20%. VAT on fresh fruit is 8%.
A household spends £400 on food products and £50 on fresh fruit.

What is the total household spend once VAT is added?

A £84

B £484

C £534

D £576

Your answer **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (C).

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Question 19

19 A more uneven distribution of wealth will be caused by a reduction in

A interest rates

B property prices

C taxes on inheritance

D wage increases

Your answer [ ] **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (C).

Question 20

20 The USA, Canada and Mexico have worked together to reduce import and export taxes.

They have also established some common employment regulations.

This is an example of a

A current account surplus

B free trade agreement

C monetary policy

D negative externality

Your answer [ ] **[1]**

A significant proportion of candidates correctly identified the correct answer (B).

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Section B overview

Section B allowed for a good coverage of the specification and gave candidates the opportunity to develop arguments within a set context yet draw on their own knowledge of economics. For analytical 6-mark questions more candidates were able to link their chain of reasoning to the question asked. Evaluation continues to be a skill that needs developing in broader terms, with candidates attempting evaluation without linking to the previous point, or when attempting to write a conclusion writing a summary of previous points rather than a judgement. Calculation skills tended to be sound, and candidates were generally very good at attempting to answer the question set. Some answers to the longer answers were highly impressive, demonstrating good structure and clear chains of reasoning.

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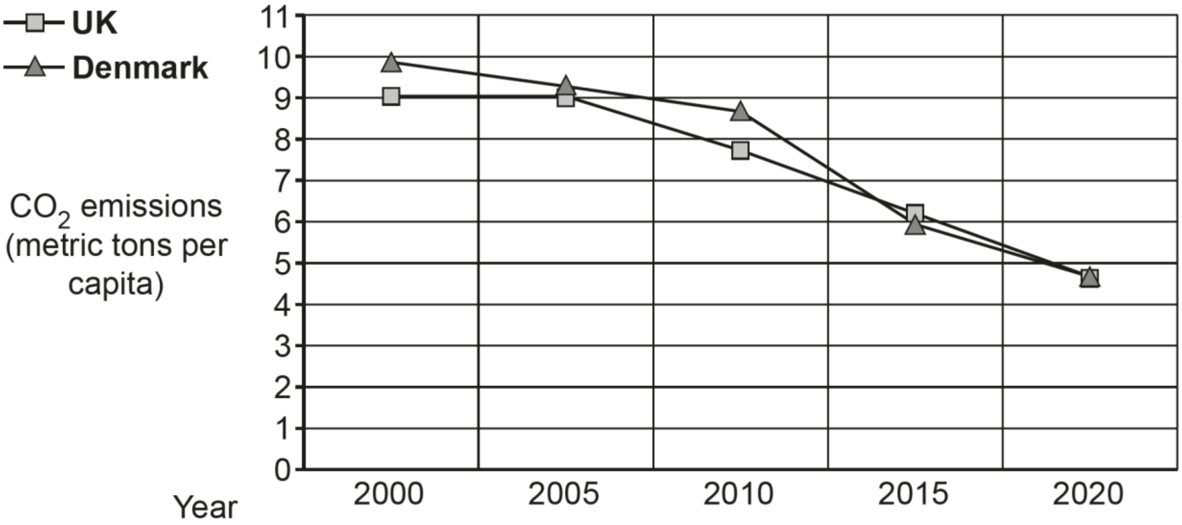
Question 21 (a)

21 Extract 1
Externalities and Government Policies

Carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions, which arise from the use of petrol, cause climate change. The emissions have a harmful effect on those who are not using cars, which is a negative externality that impacts a third party.

An indirect tax on petrol should reduce the use of petrol and its emissions. However, when demand for a good is price inelastic, the change in quantity due to a tax or subsidy is less than when demand is price elastic.



The UK government provides a subsidy for the public provision of vaccines. Until measles vaccinations began in 1968, there were around 500,000 cases of measles every year and many deaths.

The UK's vaccination coverage rate for measles has grown from 81% in 2004 to over 91% in 2023. There have been almost no deaths, therefore, from measles since 2013.

(a) Using **Extract 1**, explain which country's CO_2 emissions fell most between 2000 and 2020.

....

....

....

.... **[2]**

This question was generally well answered, although some candidates incorrectly gave the UK as an answer because emissions started lower in 2000. Also, some candidates did not compare the two countries in some ways.

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Question 21 (b)

(b) Using **Extract 1**, calculate the UK's total CO_2 emissions in **2000**, when the population was 58.89 million.

Show your working.

Answer .... **[2]**

Assessment for learning

When teaching quantitative skills, make sure students regularly include the full units of measurement.

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Question 21 (c)

(c) Using **a diagram**, analyse how an indirect tax might have led to a change in CO_2 emissions in the UK between **2000** and **2020**.

....

....

....

....

....

.... **[6]**

Many candidates were able to draw an accurate diagram and write an analysis that drew on the context and impact of taxation. Candidates generally had a very good understanding of the implications of inelastic price elasticity of demand.

Misconception

The most common misconceptions were that indirect taxes would cause demand to shift. Also, several candidates were using a macroeconomic diagram with AD, AS, price level and output which is incorrect.

Assessment for learning

It is recommended that students have as many opportunities as possible to practise using a diagram to analyse the impact of a change in a market whether due to government policy such as taxation/subsidy or exchange rates.

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Question 21 (d) (i)

(d)
(i) State **two** goods or services with positive externalities, other than vaccinations.

1 ....

2 .... **[2]**

This question was answered very well with a wide array of relevant goods and services offered.

Question 21 (d) (ii)

(ii) Explain why governments often give subsidies for the public provision of vaccinations.

....

....

....

.... **[2]**

Most candidates could demonstrate why vaccinations are useful, but did not explicitly state or explain how subsidies work.

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Question 21 (d) (iii)*

(iii)* Evaluate the benefits of a government policy to subsidise vaccinations.

Use the information given in **Extract 1** and your own knowledge.

....

....

....

....

....

.... **[6]**

A significant proportion of candidates understood the impact of a subsidy and benefit of vaccinations. There were several candidates who either wrote a point about a negative impact or wrote an evaluative point that did not 'pair' with the point before.

Misconception

Evaluation is awarded for making a judgement or writing an evaluative point that matches with the preceding point. There are several examples in the mark scheme. A common error was that candidates would analyse a benefit such as improved living standards/output in the economy and then attempt evaluation by writing that there is an opportunity cost of government spending without linking this argument to how it would lower the potential gains to living standards/evaluation.

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Exemplar 1

in extract 1 it states that the coverage rate ~~sto~~ for measels has grown from 81% in 2004 to over 91% in 2023. ~~A~~ This means that there are less sick people within an economy which puts less strain and pressure on healthcare services for example the NHS. Consequently, this grants herd immunity where there are less transmissions of disease, as a result of vaccinations, for example measels. Therefore, this increases social sustainability as it increases the standard of living.

However, the ~~success of~~ effectiveness of government policies to subsidise vaccinations is limited due to opportunity costs. More precisely, government expenditure on vaccinations rather than education limits the skill set within an economy. This means that ~~a~~ job-finders will have difficulty finding work. As a result, this decreases the productive potential.

Overall, I believe government policy to subsidise vaccinations have been more positive due to factors such as herd **[6]**
immunity. ~~overall~~ ultimately it depends on the amount of time and money the government spends on vaccinations.

ultimately

As can be seen in this exemplar, there is a very reasonable analytical point about vaccines leading to greater social sustainability. The following point is developed with regard to limiting future productivity which is not matched to the point before and therefore not evaluative. There is a reasonable judgement at the end and sound use of the data. This therefore receives Level 2 (3 marks).

Question 22 (a)

22 Extract 2
Current Account and the UK Economy

The UK records a current account deficit every year, because total UK spending is greater than its GDP. The UK has to borrow by attracting investment and lending from overseas. Such investment is often accompanied by new technologies.

UK current account data	2012	2017	2022
Trade in goods (£ million)	–112603	–139822	–219291
Trade in services (£ million)	95657	111897	151339
Income flows (£ million)	–15960	–22407	12682
Transfers (£ million)	–21000	–22419	–23026
Current account balance (£ million)	–53906	–72751	–

The UK's total trade deficit in goods and services has widened between **2012** and **2022**, from £16946 million to £67952 million. The different trade balances for goods and for services reflect different resources held by the UK and its trading partners. Since about 1990 the UK has developed resources that are more suitable for exporting services. German workers continue to be highly efficient in producing manufactured goods such as pharmaceuticals and cars.

The UK imports goods from Germany, Japan and the USA, which are the sources of significant direct investment into the UK economy. The UK depends upon investment from overseas to finance its current account deficit. Such foreign investment in the UK is larger than UK investment abroad, partly due to English being widely used in business. The UK's Income account is usually in deficit because of significant outflows of investment income.

(a) Using **Extract 2**, calculate the current account balance in **2022**.

Show your working.

Answer .... **[2]**

This question was generally well answered, although a significant number of candidates did not include the £ sign or millions.

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Question 22 (b)

(b) Using **Extract 2**, state the differences in the trends in the trade in goods **and** in the trade in services between 2012 and 2022.

....

....

....

.... **[2]**

Many candidates wrote about the trade in goods and/or services increasing. This is not what the data shows, it is the deficit or surplus.

Assessment for learning

It is recommended that students are encouraged to use key terms such as deficit or surplus when referring to the current account or trade flows and that there is a focus on the implications of a 'net value' i.e. that international trade reflects exports and imports.

Question 22 (c)

(c) Using **Extract 2**, analyse how changes in the UK economy have led to an increasing current account deficit.

....

....

....

....

....

.... **[6]**

The question requires that candidates focus on reasons for the change in values and analyse these with respect to changes in UK trade flows. Candidates who scored lower marks mostly rewrote the information in the case study with no analysis.

Misconception

A common misconception is confusion between the trade balance and government finances. Several candidates wrote about the need to increase taxation to pay for the deficit. Some candidates confused the impact of investment flows on the Balance of Payments.

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Exemplar 2

A current account deficit is when the sum value of exports of goods and services and income inflows and transfers into the country is less than the sum value of imports of goods and services and income outflows and transfers out of the country. The UK is a developed economy that is not suited to manufacturing, due to high labour wages and lower labour productivity. This has meant that the UK must import many of its goods whilst exporting very little goods, which has led to a growing trade deficit in goods, reaching £-219,291 million in 2022.

Furthermore, the deficit caused by transfers has also been slowly growing, reaching £-23,026 million in 2022. The UK gives aid to many less developed countries, but receives practically none, which contributes to this net outflow of transfers. **[6]**

This exemplar is an excellent example of how a candidate selects information (a movement away from manufacturing) explains why this has occurred and then how it has increased the deficit on current account.

Question 22 (d) (i)

(d)
(i) State **two** kinds of services that the UK exports.

1 ....

2 .... **[2]**

This question was generally answered well with two services identified. Some unrewarded answers were ambiguous or unclear such as 'workers' and some referred to goods.

Question 22 (d) (ii)

(ii) Explain **one** reason why there is significant investment from overseas into the UK.

....

....

....

.... **[2]**

Many candidates identified a reasonable reason but did not explain it. A further common error/misconception was between exchange rates and interest rates.

Question 22 (d) (iii)*

(iii)* Evaluate the importance of the balance of payments on current account to the UK economy.

Use the information given in **Extract 2** and your own knowledge.

....

....

....

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....

.... **[6]**

The question requires that candidates evaluate the effect of a net deficit on the UK economy. There are substantial clues in the data (although these should be developed, rather than rewritten). Some candidates wrote with regards to the impact of a surplus which was acceptable.

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Question 23 (a)

23 Extract 3
Development in Tanzania and Globalisation

	1990	**2000**	**2010**
GDP per capita (US$)	539	552	794
Government expenditure on education (% of GDP)	2.14	3.00	4.54
Primary school enrolment (% of age group)	52.04	53.53	92.20

The above table shows that government spending on Tanzanian schools and teachers affects the number of children attending school. As a result, the adult literacy rate (the percentage of adults who can read and write) has increased from 68% in 2010 to 82% in 2021. The benefits of an educated population, which leads to a more productive workforce, is also demonstrated by the increase in GDP per capita.

Higher GDP per capita is not only due to education, but also to globalisation. Investment by Chinese multinational companies in Tanzanian industries has helped to increase and diversify its trade. The Tanzanian economy is now less dependent on the widely fluctuating prices of primary agricultural products. Moreover, there is a greater variety of job opportunities.

	2010	**2015**	**2020**
GDP per capita (US$)	794	929	1 028
Exports of goods (US$ million)	4051	4834	6061
E.g. Agricultural raw material exports (% of total)	5.59	3.37	3.30
Imports of goods (US$ million)	8060	14768	8517
E.g. Manufactured imports (% of total)	60.47	42.07	72.32

(a) Using **Extract 3**, calculate the average GDP per capita in US dollars during the period **1990** to **2010**.

Show your working.

Answer .... **[2]**

This question was very well answered, however some candidates selected data from the incorrect years.

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Question 23 (b)

(b) Using **Extract 3**, explain **two** measurements of education for economic development.

1 ....

....

2 ....

.... **[2]**

This was a well answered question, with many candidates selecting appropriate measures for development.

Question 23 (c)

(c) Using the information in **Extract 3**, analyse how an increase in the number of children attending primary school affects the GDP of a country.

....

....

....

....

....

.... **[6]**

Many candidates clearly identified elements from the data such as education leading to higher productivity and/or quoting statistics, then developing a coherent chain of reasoning that analysed how this is likely to impact upon GDP. Candidates who scored less well, quoted the data and noted correlation, without analysing the economic logic of how education could lead to changing GDP.

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Question 23 (d) (i)

(d)
(i) Explain why **GDP per capita** could be used as a measure for development in a less developed country.

....

....

....

.... **[2]**

Most candidates understood that GDP per capita indicates an 'average' income and linked it to living standards.

Misconception

A common misconception is confusion between GDP per capita as an average and wealth or income distribution which is a different concept. Furthermore, some candidates believed GDP per capita was by household, family or region.

Question 23 (d) (ii)

(ii) State **two** benefits of globalisation for Tanzanian **producers**.

1 ....

2 ....

[2]

This was broadly a well answered question where candidates could identify two benefits to producers. Some candidates wrote about benefits to the economy in general or other stakeholders which was not awardable.

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Question 23 (d) (iii)*

(iii)* Evaluate the benefits of globalisation for **workers** in Tanzania.

Use the information given in **Extract 3** and your own knowledge.

....

....

....

....

....

.... **[6]**

Many candidates found this question very accessible and could equate globalisation with having potential benefits to workers. Some candidates did not have matching evaluative points or summarised previous points in a conclusion so did not score as highly with regards to evaluation as possible. Also, some candidates wrote about different stakeholders such as the government or problems rather than benefits and thus did not fully address the requirements of the question.

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Exemplar 3

Globalisation may be beneficial for workers in Tanzania as it may lead to an increase in geographical mobility. Due to more international trade occurring, workers are able to move to other countries (possibly for a better quality of life or for a holiday, benefitting them due to "Chinese multinational companies in Tanzanian industries which may helped to increase and diversify its trade". However, globalisation may not be beneficial as due to a larger access to global markets for producers, this can lead to workers being put at risk to falls in global demand which could lead to structural unemployment. Furthermore, this structural unemployment can lead to a skills mismatch meaning Tanzania's workers will also have to retrain into another industry, taking up a large amount of time.

This exemplar is a good example of a candidate developing a sensible, analytical point (about standards of living), but not then evaluating it with a matching point (now writing about structural unemployment). Furthermore, it is framed as a point about the disadvantages of globalisation which is not what the question is asking.

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