



ASSESSMENT & EXAMINATIONS

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NSC 2011 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT	ECONOMICS		
PAPER	1		
DATE OF EXAMINATION:	16.11.2011	DURATION:	3 Hours

SECTION 1:

(General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

SECTION A

It was evident from the marks attained that candidates did not do well in this question paper.

The question paper was more challenging than in previous years. There were however enough questions for the average learner to get good marks. Some candidates due to a

lack of understanding and a lack of learning the basic concepts, performed poorly. The

majority of the questions in SECTION A focus on basic concepts. Since all the answers are

provided, candidates are able to choose the correct answer and obtain high marks from

this section. It is of great concern that learners are still not able to understand the basic

concepts in Economics.

There are a few learners who are confused with the answer sheet in the answer book.

Teachers must either train them in the use of the answer sheet or instruct them not to write

answers on the answer sheet but rather write the answers in the answer book itself.

SECTION B

The answers of candidates to data response questions were very disappointing. Most of

the candidates are not able to understand or interpret the given data. This was applicable to

extracts as well as cartoons. There were a few data response questions that

tested the thinking ability of the learners. It is high time that as teachers we teach our learners how to answer these types of questions.

Calculations were a real challenge for many candidates. Teachers are required to give more

work that requires calculations to remove the feeling that such questions are very difficult.



Ikhus'ela eNingizimu eNingizimu!

SECTION C

There are only a handful of candidates who wrote the 'long questions' using the appropriate structure. It is instructed that an essay question must have an introduction, a body and a conclusion. Teachers are again advised to encourage their learners to write essay questions using the prescribed structure. Most of the learners were not able to write proper essays. Rather they were writing short explanations.

SECTION 2:

Comment on candidates' performance in individual questions
(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question on a separate sheet).

QUESTION 1 SECTION A

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Question 1.1

- ❖ As in previous years, SECTION A helped the majority of the candidates to boost their marks. Even so there are some centres where the candidates find it difficult to differentiate between concepts. E.g. Prosperity and depression or upswing and downswing etc. There are still a large number of candidates who have no knowledge of the basic concepts in economics.

Question 1.2

- ❖ In comparison to the other questions in SECTION A, this was the easiest for most of the candidates. A large number of learners were able to get full marks for this question.

Question 1.3

- ❖ This was the most difficult question in this section. Candidates scored low marks. E.g. The majority of the candidates do not know that 'the portion of an increase in income that is not consumed' – is the marginal propensity to save.

(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

- ❖ In Question 1.1, the learners find it difficult to differentiate between the economic concepts. In Question 1.3, it is because of the fact that they are not able to identify or understand definitions or descriptions of economic concepts.

(a) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers need to emphasise the necessity of learning definitions and descriptions.
When assessments are given it is necessary to include these type of questions in
preparation for the final examination. The format and structure of the assessment
instruments should be the same as that of the final examination
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Most candidates base their answers in this section on a process of elimination.
❖ Some candidates have not prepared for the examinations. This is clear from the fact
that they have given the most unlikely answers.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Teachers need to identify and emphasise all the possible definitions and descriptions.
❖ Educators need to ensure that these types of questions are included in the assessment instruments.
QUESTION 2 SECTION B
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ The performance of the learners was average in this question.
❖ Candidates were not able to answer certain simple basic economic questions.
❖ Calculations were really challenging for most learners.
❖ Question 2.3.3 and 2.3.4 – majority of the candidates got these question wrong.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ Again the problem was the lack of understanding of the definitions and descriptions of economic concepts.
❖ In Question 2.2., candidates were not able to differentiate between community goods and public goods.
❖ In Question 2.4, most of the candidates were not able to interpret the extract or could not find the relation between the question and the extract.
❖ In Question 2.6, the question was on the interaction between the households and the
government, but the majority of the candidates mentioned the role of the households
and the business.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Educators need to use more DATA in their teaching and more DATA RESPONSE
questions which require calculations in their assessment.
❖ Educators need to train learners to answer questions according to the requirements of
the question.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners.
❖ In Question 2.3.1, most candidates were not able to define the balance of payments.
❖ In Question 2.3.2, some candidates even find it difficult to copy figures from the question paper.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Educators need to give appropriate examples to differentiate between community
goods and public goods.
❖ Most of the candidates got confused between 'community goods' which was what was asked and 'public goods' for which they gave examples.
❖ When candidates are asked for their 'own opinion or understanding' they write anything
that comes to their mind, even if it is unrelated to the question.
QUESTION 3
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ Microeconomics is generally a challenging topic for many learners. Most of them
struggled to answer the questions based on micro economics . Most candidates are not able to identify profit maximisation point which is an important aspect of microeconomics.
Graphs are the biggest problem area. Learners are not able to differentiate between
perfect competition and the monopoly.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ E.g. In Question 3.3. candidates were not able to differentiate between the horizontal
D/AR/MR curve in perfect competition and the downward sloping AR/MR curve in the
case of a monopoly. Very few learners were able to identify the graph. Most of them
were not able to understand the question and gave very different answers. A greater
number of learners struggled with cartoons in general. Instead of trying to understand the economic concept in the cartoon, most of them look at it as an
ordinary cartoon.

❖ Question 3.5 – very few learners attempted this question and only a small number of
these were able to obtain marks. It seems that learners are not giving any attention to
the difficult sections of the curriculum statement.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers need to put extra effort into teaching microeconomics especially market
structure with the use of graphs. Learners need to know the shape of the different
curves. E.g. MC, AC, MR, AR etc. Teachers need to use more and more cartoons
from newspapers and magazines. Explain the economic concept behind the cartoon and the meaning and relevance of these cartoons in economics.
Teachers need to emphasise the difficult topics, giving appropriate examples.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Most of the candidates chose not to attempt questions containing any form of graphs.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Avoid using questions in tests or examinations where only examples are asked.
This makes marking very difficult as there is no comprehensive list to use in the
marking guideline.
❖ Refrain from using questions where a learner's opinion or understanding is asked. It
leads to confusion as the marking guideline will never be able to cater for all
opinions.
QUESTION 4
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ This question was relatively easier than other question. In some of the sub
questions
candidates scored full marks. Even in this question candidates were struggling with the
interpretation of the data response questions. Cartoon was again a problem .
. Question 4.4. was answered very poorly. In certain question candidates
have the tendency of picking up specific word from the question without reading the
whole question.

(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ In Question 4.5 candidates picked up words like ‘demand’, ‘growth’ and ‘development’ and they explained the meanings of those words.
❖ In Question 4.6, instead of writing about ‘arguments in favour of free trade’, most of the candidates wrote about ‘arguments in favour of protection’. (They picked up the word ‘arguments’.)
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers need to emphasise the importance of reading the question and understand its meaning and what the question demands from them.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Most candidates who attempted Qn. 4.3.1 referred to South African.... Instead of Southern African And consequently did not attain any marks.
QUESTION 5
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ This was generally the easiest question. However candidates failed to get good marks
For it was once again the interpretation of the data proved problematic. The majority of the candidates are not aware of renewable energy sources.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ In Question 5.3.3 ‘Green Taxes’ – some of the answers were really surprising. It was the first time that we were seeing the term ‘green taxes’.
❖ Question 5.5. was a very easy question where candidates could get marks by listing examples. Most of them failed to write even a single example.
❖ Question 5.6 –Once again candidates did not read the whole question. They read the question up to ‘benefits of tourism’ and wrote benefits of tourism in general without focusing on GDP and employment.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers must devise different methods to force learners to read the whole question before answering it.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ The fact that the word 'tourism' appeared in the question prompted the candidates to Write about anything concerning tourism.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Educators must see to it that they stay in touch with daily economic occurrences and must be conveyed to the learners.
QUESTION 6
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ Generally learners are not comfortable with calculations. It was a challenge for most learners to do the calculations.
❖ The majority of the learners were not able to give a definition of pollution.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ It is once again a case of candidates not wanting to attempt any questions containing graphs or tables.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers need to give more data response questions with calculations. They also need to use newspaper articles or magazines to give examples of pollution and environmental damage.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Many candidates copied numbers from the question paper and many of them got Confused between 'public sector failure' and 'problems in public sector provisioning'.

QUESTION 7 SECTION C
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ Many candidates were able to answer this relatively easily. Nevertheless were a few who did not understand the 'supply reasons' for international trade.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ Most text books mentioned only reasons for international trade not supply reasons of international trade. Teachers are encouraged to use as many text books as possible.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers must refrain from depending on one text book. Teachers must depend on the Exam Guideline to get a clear idea of the importance of each topic.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Learners were able to list supply reasons, but most of them were not able to explain the reasons.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Educators must train their learners to write long questions so that they can obtain some marks in this section.
QUESTION 8
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ This was the most challenging question for most learners. Most of them had little understanding of the graphs. Many of them cannot differentiate between The perfect competitive market and monopoly market.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ It was poorly answered because of the fact that candidates had only a vague idea of the graphs. Most of them drew all the graphs they knew.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Teachers must make an extra effort to teach microeconomics especially graphs.
❖ To make it easier for learners, educators must simplify the teaching of graphs. E.g. when it comes to economic profit / economic loss / normal profit they should focus on the fact that it is the position of the AC curve that differs in each of the graphs.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ If the candidates do not know the answer to a question they tend to write anything related to any concept in the question.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Refer to Qn. 7 (e)
QUESTION 9
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ This question was relatively easy. But as mentioned earlier, candidates who do not read the whole question ended up writing 'leading', 'lagging' and 'coincident' indicators.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ It is now clear that learners do not read the whole question. Instead they pick up word or terms from the question and answer based on those.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ It is mentioned earlier in the report that teachers have to find a method to make our learners read everything before they answer the questions.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Some candidates confused the 'indicators' with the 'features underpinning Forecasting' and explained leading, lagging and coincident indicators.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Refer to Qn. 7(e)
QUESTION 10
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
❖ This was a very easy question. It was the second most popular question. But it was answered poorly. Many learners answered on inflation in general and not 'demand-pull-inflation'.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
❖ Candidates could not differentiate between 'demand-pull' and 'cost-push' inflation
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
❖ Learners must be taught to use the given headings when answering questions.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
❖ Candidates wrote one long essay discussing both topics instead of separating the two topics (causes and consequences)
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
❖ Refer to 7 (e)

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