

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GCE

GCE Economics and Business Studies (Nuffield) (8128/9128)

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General Comments

On the whole the paper worked well with no significant 'good' or 'bad' questions. Candidates often mixed and matched e.g. Q1 and Q4 or Q2 & Q3 depending upon their strengths and weaknesses. The questions seemed to discriminate well, good candidates were able to show good levels of understanding and insight and the weaker were usually able to say something worthwhile. Some candidates spoiled otherwise good papers with a poor response on one question. Reasons for this included misreading the question, giving a prepared answer rather than the one asked for, and gaps in their knowledge and/or understanding. There was little evidence of candidates being unable to complete the paper because of time.

Once again it is worth repeating to centres that preparation for these exams should also include some time spent on exam technique, particularly on understanding key command words in the questions such as 'assess' or 'evaluate'. Many candidates failed to reach their potential as they simply ignored these instructions.

Question 1

- (a)
- (i) Competitive market was too often rearranged as a market that was competitive. We were looking for evidence of rivalrous behaviour.
 - (ii) Brand was often wrongly seen as being the name of a business. Vague notions were often rescued by good examples.
 - (iii) Private limited company was pleasingly well answered.
- (b) A hit or miss question depending upon whether candidates knew how to calculate a profit margin or not. This is a fairly crucial part of module 1.
- (c) Mostly answered with competence although some candidates failed to link a correct diagram to changes in profitability. More depressingly, a significant minority got the Demand and Supply curves the wrong way round. Other diagrams offered included the product life cycle and the business cycle!
- (d) Mostly done well but a surprising number failed to use the evidence to support their arguments.
- (e) There were 4 marks available here for evaluation, many chose to ignore this aspect and were limited to Level 2. On this paper 4 marks can make the difference between grades. Other candidates spoil their answers with unrealistic suggestions.

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