

Scholarship

2013 Assessment Report

Economics

COMMENTARY

This year's paper marked a move away from the previous structure (which included scaffolded short answer questions and an essay) to solely three guided essay questions. Candidates handled the change well with the sole focus on the essay allowing candidates to cover the relevant topics in greater breadth and depth. The use of bullet points to guide candidate responses was effective and something that most candidates will be familiar with from NCEA Economics examinations. These provide a guide for candidates to ensure that they cover each of the key areas needed to produce an effective and literate economic essay.

Questions were all very topical allowing candidates to use their own economic knowledge to add to the information provided in the resource material in developing their responses.

There was some evidence that candidates evaluation skills are improving with some insightful evaluations being produced showing genuine individual thought and economic literacy. Candidates who are unable to evaluate effectively by weighing advantages and disadvantages or different points of view and providing economically justified conclusions, limit their opportunities to gain Scholarship.

Use of economic models to illustrate and support key ideas was often very limited. This is an important component of economic literacy so candidates need to ensure that they accurately integrate economic models into their answers.

It was evident that with the new format candidates had far more time to focus on writing the essay and in fact the number of pages provided per question was often insufficient with many using extra pages. However, use of the planning section provided was highly variable and it is recommended that candidates take the time to plan their essays to ensure that they cover all the key points.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- abstracted and synthesised the resource material into their explanations in a coherent manner that enhanced the quality of their answers
- applied appropriate theory, models and graphs to demonstrate economic literacy
- provided sophisticated, objective economic arguments and evaluative statements which effectively addressed the question and showed independent thought and reflection
- analysed each key point in depth, showing economic literacy, perception and insight into the issue
- wrote answers that were well organised, convincing, relevant and logical
- incorporated their own economic knowledge to enhance their arguments.

SCHOLARSHIP

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship but not Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- competently integrated the resource material into their explanations by using relevant, selected information to support arguments
- effectively applied some economic theory to the scenario provided
- provided logical, objective arguments and an evaluation to address the question
- wrote answers that were coherent, logical and planned

- applied appropriate theory, models and graphs
- addressed most of each question's bullet points, some in depth.

OTHER CANDIDATES

Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship or Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- produced undeveloped discussion and evaluation that lacked depth in terms of explanations of economic theory
- integrated some resource material in their answer but relied excessively on quotes or paraphrasing, rather than providing explanations to build on and extend the information in the resource material
- applied economic theory erroneously
- used models and graphs erroneously or did not use them at all
- produced answers that were incomplete and did not address all the bullet points.