

FINAL HONOUR SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS, AND ECONOMICS (PPE): INTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORT

2012

This report is in three sections: Part A – Statistics, etc; Part B – Chair's Comments; and Part C – Internal Examiners' Comments.

PART A – STATISTICS, ETC.

[**Note:** in contrast with previous reports, this one omits statistics for the number of candidates and the percentage class distributions *by combination offered*. These are now laborious to compile, and of much reduced significance given that the different first-class threshold for tripartite candidates has been long abandoned, and that the structure of PPE has become so fluid (e.g. Politics/Economics candidates can add in a Philosophy paper).]

1. Class distribution of FHS candidates (% of all candidates in brackets)

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
I	47 (19.2%)	57 (24.9%)	54 (22.7%)	70 (29.0%)	45 (18.3%)	49 (18.8%)	53 (19.6%)	51 (18.3%)
II.1	188 (76.7%)	160 (69.9%)	171 (71.8%)	164 (68.0%)	192 (78.0%)	196 (75.4%)	199 (73.4%)	210 (75.5%)
II.2	9 (3.7%)	11 (4.8%)	13 (5.5%)	7 (2.9%)	9 (3.7%)	15 (5.8%)	17 (6.3%)	17 (6.1%)
III	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Honours Pass	0	1 (0.4%)						
Unclassified	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 (0.7)	0
Fail	1 (0.4%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	245	229	238	241	246	260	271	278

The average marks were (2011 figures in brackets): for all scripts, 64.7 (65.1); for Philosophy, 64.6 (65.6); for Politics, 65.1 (65.2); for Economics, 64.2 (64.7).

The standard deviations were (2011 figures in brackets): for Philosophy 6.1 (5.5); for Politics 4.9 (4.9); for Economics 7.4 (7.4).

2. FHS percentage class distributions by sex

	2012		2011		2010		2009		2008		2007		2006	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
I	20.5	16.4	23.0	27.2	27.1	14.9	35.7	19.4	20.3	15.0	24.5	11.5	22.8	12.4
II 1	75.9	78.5	70.6	68.9	69.5	75.9	62.2	76.5	75.8	81.7	70.7	81.4	69	80.2
II 2	3.6	3.8	5.6	3.9	3.3	9.2	2.1	4.1	3.9	3.2	4.8	7.1	8.2	7.4
III	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
Hons Pass	0	0	0.8	0										
Fail	0	1.3												

In 2012, 79 (32.2%) of candidates were female (12.8% fewer than in 2011). The average mark for female candidates was 63.8, though this rises to 64.4 if the candidate who failed is excluded. (The 2011 figure was 65.1.) The average mark for male candidates was 65.1 (65.2). The standard deviation for female candidates was 8.2 – a figure increased by the failed candidate – and for male candidates 6.2.

3. Numbers offering each paper in the FHS and Pass School of PPE

Philosophy	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
History of Philosophy	63	71	76	74	75	79	73	96
Knowledge & Reality	38	17	19	32	22	29	85	77
Ethics	155	139	140	153	157	147	156	175
Philosophy of Mind	14	8	10	17	22	7	16	29
Philosophy of Sci. & Psychology	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	4
Philosophy of Sci. & Social Sci.	6	9	4	11	7	3	8	11
Philosophy of Religion	32	30	34	29	41	26	35	39
Philosophy of Logic	12	20	7	7	6	15	4	16
Aesthetics	22	14	12	18	24	23	24	35
Medieval Philosophy: Aquinas	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Philosophy of Kant	6	5	8	10	8	6	5	6
Post-Kantian Philosophy	19	11	13	16	22	21	20	18
Plato	56	51	47	59	62	53	11	19
Aristotle	30	35	25	35	32	34	3	5
Frege, Russell & Wittgenstein	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	1
Later Wittgenstein	16	4	6	9	12	8	16	9
Formal Logic	3	3	1	5	1	4	7	5
Philosophy of Mathematics	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
Philosophy of Science	2	2	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Philosophy of Cognitive Science	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jurisprudence	7	9	9	7	10	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thesis in Philosophy	4	5	7	5	1	3	6	11

Politics (no. of which were HP candidates included in brackets)	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Comparative Government	78 (7)	103 (20)	98 (10)	103 (20)	99 (14)	93 (25)	109	96
British Pol & Gov since 1900	47 (12)	73 (18)	82 (15)	74 (17)	76 (23)	65 (18)	58	56
Theory of Politics	109 (23) (38 Phil)	167 (27) (47 Phil)	174 (25) (39 Phil)	179 (23) (36 Phil)	165 (18) (38 Phil)	158 (25) (36 Phil)	155 (44 Phil)	172 (33 Phil)
Modern Brit. Gov & Pol.	14 (2)	27 (4)	29 (4)	17 (3)	20 (4)	22 (5)	21	26
Gov. & Pol. Of the USA	24 (3)	34 (12)	45 (8)	35 (7)	30 (4)	27 (5)	38	37
Russian Gov. & Pol.	2 (0)	15 (2)	10 (1)	10 (4)	11 (3)	16 (3)	8	13
Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa	42 (4)	44 (10)	38 (3)	42 (11)	24 (5)	28 (5)	33	11
Politics in Latin America	14 (0)	16 (1)	18 (2)	13 (3)	18 (5)	14 (3)	14	17
Politics in South Asia	13 (5)	20 (4)	12 (2)	17 (4)	9 (1)	14 (1)	13	13
Politics in the Middle East	38 (9)	38 (9)	45 (7)	32 (12)	52 (13)	51 (13)	28	34
IR in the Era of 2 WWs	19 (1)	25 (5)	17 (2)	23 (1)	31 (1)	30 (2)	29	26
IR in the Era of the Cold War	34 (4)	63 (6)	51 (9)	49 (6)	69 (8)	70 (7)	57	72
IR (core)	143 (24)	166 (42)	163 (33)	150 (25)	195 (43)	164 (45)	160	167
Plato to Rousseau	29 (4)	24 (1)	30 (4)	44 (7)	34 (3)	27 (2)	21	34
Bentham to Weber	29 (5)	30 (6)	35 (4)	33 (5)	37 (6)	33 (5)	35	30
Marxism	15 (4)	15 (5)	9 (2)	24 (3)	18 (1)	17 (1)	13	18
Soc. Theory	21 (1)	10	10 (1)	11	14 (1)	5	22	8
Soc. of Industrial Societies	4	2	14 (3)	7	5	8 (1)	11	9
Political Sociology	71 (12)	77 (17)	69 (11)	79 (14)	59 (12)	46 (9)	73	68
Brit. Soc in the 20 th C.	Abolished	11 (4)	14 (1)	15 (6)	12 (4)	9 (1)	19	14
Gov. & Pol. of Japan	1	4	5	2	2 (1)	2 (1)	5	2

Social Policy	14 (2)	29 (4)	24 (2)	19 (1)	15 (3)	13 (1)	20	22
Politics of China	24 (3)	18 (2)	13 (2)	22 (4)	20 (1)	19 (1)	18	20
Quantitative Methods in Politics and Sociology	4	3	7	1	2	4	5	N/A
The Politics of the EU	8 (1)	9	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Politics in Europe	15	23 (4)	11 (1)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Politics in Russia & the Former Soviet Union	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Supervised Dissertation in Politics	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Thesis in Politics	30 (13)	35 (13)	29 (8)	37 (14)	34 (19)	24 (18)	19	33

Economics	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Quantitative Economics	151	135	139	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Macroeconomics	151	135	139	147	144	166	167	175
Microeconomics	151	135	139	147	144	166	167	175
Macroeconomics (old regs)	N/A	1	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Microeconomics (old regs)	N/A	1	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Microeconomic Theory	28	20	14	16	9	18	21	11
Money & Banking	19	6	20	18	9	0	0	14
Public Economics	37	32	36	40	31	35	39	52
Economics of Industry	17	12	21	25	23	30	27	31
Labour Economics & Industrial Relations	11 (3 Pol)	13 (4 Pol)	14 (5 Pol)	24 (7 Pol)	20 (5 Pol)	24 (6 Pol)	31 (8 Pol)	16
International Economics	20	21	27	25	39	43	55	29
Command & Transitional Economies	5	6	7	7	9	12	15	9
Economics of Developing Countries	32	45	47	54	51	48	52	56
British Economic History	18	15	15	13	10	15	19	8
Econometrics	23	28	24	23	26	22	28	10
Comparative Demographic Systems	5 (3 Pol)	1 (1 Pol)	11 (3 Pol)	2 (1 Pol)	8 (2 Pol)	6 (2 Pol)	9 (1 Pol)	7 (2 Pol)
Economics of OECD Countries	6	6	8	0	19	23	28	29
Game Theory	37	27	27	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mathematical Methods	16	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Finance	15	9	9	23	10	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thesis in Economics	0	1	2	1	3	2	2	4

The total number of papers (including the supervised dissertation/thesis options) provided in the 2012 Final Honour School of PPE was: 66 (Philosophy 21; Politics 27; Economics 18).¹

4. Approximate percentages of papers sat in each branch (FHS plus Pass School)

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Philosophy	31.8	22.3	20.8	25.8	26.0	24	24.1	24.8
Politics	40.9	44.0	44.4	44.6	45.1	46	45	45.8
Economics	27.3	33.7	34.8	29.6	28.9	30.1	30.9	29.4

5. Supervised Dissertation and Thesis titles

Supervised Dissertations in Politics (0)

None has been on offer since Schools 2005.

Theses in Philosophy (4)

- Is the Socratic fallacy a problem for Plato?
- How should we understand the good person?
- How Kantian is 'Justice as Fairness'?
- Conceivability and possibility

Theses in Politics (17)

- The Politics of London's Skyscrapers: What institutional changes and political relationships explain the sudden expansion of tall building construction in London after 2000?
- Understanding proposals for "Ethnic Federalism" in Nepal: Lessons from Ethiopia and India
- Intra-party accountability in the Liberal Democrat party in local government
- Split ticket voting in Australian federal elections
- Small arms and security in the republic of Georgia after the Rose Revolution
- Between the occident and the orient: Australian identity construction under Keating and Howard
- Dictator or dictation-taker: assessing the influence of the secretary-general of the United Nations
- The devil is in the detail: Evaluating George W. Bush's labelling of middle eastern actors as 'evil'
- Why 'Free' and why now?- An appraisal of the limits to patch dependancy policy analysis and the role of the Conservative party in explaining the development of 'free schools' in England

¹ All Theory of Politics is here attributed to Politics and all Labour Economics and Comparative Demographic Systems to Economics. The same is true for the figures given in the following table.

- What is the significance of the institutionalisation of the guiding principles on internal displacement in the pact on security, stability and development in the great lakes region?
- To what extent were the tax measures in the 1979 UK Budget Gladstonian?
- The theatrical public sphere
- To what extent did Vice President Johnson influence President Kennedy's decision to have America send a man to the moon?
- Theories of collective responsibility and the financial crisis
- Is Sisterhood Global? Feminism and Women's Organisation in Ghana
- Gender, Culture and decision making in liberal multicultural states
- The right to fail: A case study in American Liberalism

[The 13 Politics theses submitted in the FHS of History and Politics were:

- *B.F. Skinner's relationship to determinism*
- *The speaker as political leader: The nature and use of power by speakers Albert and O'Neill*
- *Indian territorial designs on German East Africa, 1917-1921*
- *From Malta to the International Tribunals: What has determined the success of international legal instruments on genocide?*
- *Internal and external sources of state building: A distinction too far? The process of American Expansion 1823-1848*
- *Why leaders deceive: Dictators versus Democrats*
- *The problematica of self-presentation: Politics, sexuality and fashion in women's movements in Britain.*
- *Tensions between direct democracy and the protection of fundamental rights in Switzerland*
- *What are the experiential causes of participation in the Finnish Global Warming Movement?*
- *Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain 1908-1910*
- *Can market socialism better be understood as a 'neo-republican' rather than 'socialist' theory?*
- *Can Liberal political theories of justice accommodate people with disabilities?*
- *What influences the ability of electoral management bodies to deliver a credible electoral process? Evidence from Ghana and Kenya.]*

Theses in Economics (0)

PART B – CHAIR’S COMMENTS

1. Personnel

(a) Internal Examiners:

This year there were 14 such examiners (two fewer than in 2011):

Philosophy: Ursula Coope, Antony Eagle, and Joseph Shear (convenor);

Politics: David Anderson, Richard Caplan (convenor), Martin Ceadel (chair), Edward Keene, Kalypso Nicolaidis, Gwendolyn Sasse, and Adam Swift (deputy chair);

Economics: Sudhir Anand, Simon Cowan (convenor), Peter Eso, and Sujoy Mukerji.

Philosophy and Economics had each reduced their examiners by one; but Politics retained its usual number in order to cover the various strands within the subject, particularly for paper vetting.

(b) External Examiners

All three from 2011 carried on: Prof. Derek Matravers (Open University: Philosophy);

Prof. Mark Wickham-Jones (Bristol: Politics); and Prof. Robin Naylor (Warwick:

Economics). They reviewed question papers, attended the Second Marks Meeting on the morning of Thursday 5th July 2012 (after which they took away scripts of borderline or problematical candidates the internal examiners wished them to look at) and the Third (and final) Marks Meeting on the morning of Monday 9th July 2012.

(c) The PPE Administrator was Wendy Wilkin.

2. Examination Organization.

(a) Economics: the weighting of the three compulsory papers at 2/3 of a normal paper was retained. Thanks to the efforts of the Economics convenor and others, the Quantitative Economics and Mathematical Methods papers were this year set in such a way as to recognize the full ability range,

(b) Mark-It Software: this functioned satisfactorily, although the PPE administrator’s request for the final print-out to show each candidate’s initial-mark ceiling and floor (as well as agreed-mark average) was not implemented.

3. Classification boundaries and mark distributions:

Class boundaries remained unchanged in 2011. The proportion of Firsts dropped slightly after three years in which it had been high by historical standards. Unusually, there was a failure.

4. Conventions.

The PPE Committee had made two innovations for Schools 2012.

- (i)** It instructed the two markers of each script, after independently submitting a ‘blind’ initial mark, to confer and wherever possible produce an agreed mark.
- (ii)** As a result of uncertainty about how this agreed-mark system would work in practice, the PPE committee ruled that candidates whose agreed or third-read

marks placed them within 1% of a class borderline (e.g. in respect of the First-class borderline of 67.8, all those with an average established mark of between 66.8 and 68.8) should not be classified without further consideration. There turned out to be 40 such candidates on the First/2.1 borderline, and 9 on the 2.1/2.2 borderline – 20% of the total. In duly giving such consideration to these 49, the examiners looked particularly for cases where the initial marks had been particularly discrepant, but could find few of these. They drew the external examiners' attention to the 49 candidates; but recommend that the 1% unclassified band be abolished in future.

5. Examining and Marking

At one stage, 2012 had looked set to be organizationally an *annus horribilis*: the experienced PPE administrator had left for a deserved promotion; the designated Chair of Examiners (David Robertson) fell ill and had to be replaced by someone who had not examined recently; a possible security breach caused by the inadvertent use of a networked printer necessitated the precautionary re-setting of 17 Politics papers at a very late stage; and agreed marks were being attempted for the first time.

In the end, all went even more smoothly than in recent years: the setting and vetting of the revised Politics papers was tackled with rigour and efficiency; the examination (which again took place from Monday of 5th Week until Friday of 7th Week of Trinity Term) passed off without incident; examiners and assessors produced satisfactory distributions of marks; the new PPE administrator worked tirelessly; out of 1,960 scripts, agreement was reached on all but 9 (involving four pairs of markers); and in these few cases third reading worked efficiently. All examiners and assessors deserve credit; and special recognition should be given to the Economics convenor, Simon Cowan, and the Politics external, Mark Wickham-Jones.

The only administrative problem concerned the intermediating roles played by the Philosophy Faculty and Economics Department between their markers and the PPE administrator. Because it deals with so many final honour schools, Philosophy has its own deadlines and procedures, which make it harder for the PPE chair or administrator to contact examiners directly; this year, moreover, it was slow in delivering some PPE marks and scripts. Likewise the format in which some Economics assessors sent in their marks via their department created extra work for the PPE administrator. For the future, the PPE administrator and Chair of Examiners should be able to communicate with all PPE markers more easily.

However, if mark-delivery deadlines can be met, there is a strong case in future years both for shortening the time external examiners are asked to spend in Oxford and for bringing forward the production of a class list.

A second problem noted by the examiners was the likelihood that candidates who on account of special needs are allowed to type their scripts now have an advantage over the majority that is still required to write manually. This is because the present generation of examinees has grown up using laptops, and can produce more words than those handwriting – especially where they also receive extra time, on account of (e.g.) dyslexia.

6. Candidates with special circumstances

Preliminary consideration of candidates offering evidence via the Proctors that their performance may have been adversely affected by medical or other factors was carried out by the Chair, Deputy Chair, and Convenors before the Second Marks meeting on Thursday 5th July 2012.

7. Top performances and Prizes

There were some outstanding finalists in PPE this year. The top First was obtained by Benjamin Zelenka Martin (BNC); the second-best by James A.H. Bridges (St John's); and the third-best by Alexander Barrett (Exeter).

The Gibbs Prize for the best Philosophy performance in the Honour School of PPE was awarded to Vicente Solera Deuchar (Balliol).

The Gibbs Prize for the best Politics written papers in the Honour Schools of PPE and History and Politics was awarded to Sylvia Bishop (PPE: Herford), with the *proxime* award shared between Alexander Barrett (PPE: Exeter) and Jeremy Bowles (PPE: St John's).

The Gibbs Prize for the best Politics thesis or supervised dissertation in the Honour Schools of PPE and History and Politics was awarded to Benjamin Woolgar (PPE: Balliol); no *proxime* award.

The Hicks and Webb Medley Prize for the best overall performance in Economics in the Honour Schools of PPE and History and Economics was shared among James A.H. Bridges (PPE: St John's), Michael Webb (PPE: Balliol), and Benjamin Zelenka Martin (PPE: BNC).

The John Hicks Foundation Prizes for Economics in the Honour Schools of PPE and History and Economics were awarded as follows:
for the best performance in Microeconomics: Benjamin Zelenka Martin (PPE: BNC);
for the best performance in Macroeconomics: shared among James A.S. Bridges (PPE: Merton), Adam Laphorn (PPE: University), Molly Scott (PPE: University), and Benjamin Zelenka Martin (PPE: BNC);
for the best performance in Quantitative Economics: shared between Sam Donald (PPE: New College) and Michael Webb (PPE: Balliol).

(The George Webb Medley Undergraduate Thesis Prize for the best Economics thesis in the Honour Schools of PPE, History and Economics, and Engineering and Management was not awarded.)

PART C – INTERNAL EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

PHILOSOPHY: see separate report covering all Honour Schools involving Philosophy.

POLITICS:

[Comments of the Politics Convenor (Richard Caplan):

We owe an enormous debt to Martin Ceadel for agreeing to serve as Chair when David Robertson was forced to step down on account of illness; and I am also very grateful to David for his service in trying circumstances. Wendy Wilkin, the new Administrator of Politics and PPE Examining, is also to be commended for her tireless efforts in this challenging transitional period. I am also grateful to Maria Moreno and Kimberly Adams in the DPIR for their invaluable assistance throughout the examination process.

Notwithstanding the recommendation of my two predecessors that the teaching panels assist the Convenor by taking on the task of identifying suitable assessors, the practice has not been adopted by all panels. Given the size of the department and the wide-ranging expertise of its members, it is not possible for the Convenor to identify suitable assessors in every subject area. It would be helpful, therefore, if all the panels would contribute to this process. A great effort was made this year to ensure that marking loads were equitable, especially with regard to the very popular papers. I am extremely grateful to those individuals with no formal examining obligations who kindly agreed to serve as assessors so as to alleviate the burden on their colleagues. An induction session was again held this year for assessors, both new and old, in advance of the examinations. The reaction to the session was very positive and I would recommend that this practice be institutionalized. It has also been suggested that assessors of large papers might find it useful to meet to discuss the examination questions with an eye to reducing disparities that may arise in the markings of these scripts.]

201 Comparative Government

In all 78 candidates sat this paper and, as in recent years, the standard of the answers was generally very high. Many students showed excellent knowledge of the main theoretical approaches and empirical literature. Most competently defined key concepts and gave careful and considered responses to the question. A few candidates, however, seemed to reproduce tutorial essays on the general topic rather than developing a specific response to the question in hand. While most candidates engaged thoughtfully with large-n evidence, a minority was still resistant to considering and weighing it. An encouragingly large number of candidates gave thought to methodological issues and reflected on the limits of inference from any given piece of evidence. This is a very welcome change. A small and enterprising subset of candidates also engaged with empirical evidence drawn from outside the US and Western Europe, which often made for richer, better informed answers.

An indication of the popularity of each question is given in brackets.

1. Presidentialism-Parliamentarism (High). This was a question on which equally good essays came to diametrically opposed conclusions. A central challenge of this question was to delimit early on which outcomes were being considered. Weaker candidates opted either for the effects of these regime types on democratic stability or for policy outcomes without explaining why.
2. Legislatures (Low). This question required candidates to assess existing typologies in light of the key sources of heterogeneity among legislatures and their consequences for the role and function of the legislature. Better candidates developed a yardstick they could apply to assess the usefulness of typologies.

3. (a) Party systems importance of number of parties as opposed to programmatic competition (Low). This topic begs the question “Important with respect to what?”. It required candidates to evaluate relative importance of these two dimensions of party system variation in illuminating a potentially broad range of interesting outcomes discussed in the literature: governments, policy, party-voter linkages, and the nature and quality of representation and accountability etc. Better answers delimited and discussed key outcomes which are affected by these two dimensions of party system variation. Some candidates drew interesting comparisons between the party systems of Western Europe and Latin America or Africa, which allowed them to explore the effects of very high and very low levels of party system fragmentation and clientelistic (as opposed to programmatic) competition. (b). Cartel party (Medium): Better answers analyzed the observable implications of cartel party theory (state funding, reduced voter-party linkages etc.), and probed how far they are borne out empirically, drawing on evidence not just from Europe but also beyond to analyze under what conditions cartel parties are more or less likely to emerge.
4. Judicialization (High): This was a popular question, and most candidates who attempted it were able to rank and evaluate the relative importance of a favourable constitution, judicial activism and other factors that drive judicialization. Some of the best answers identified the behaviour of politicians as key contributing factor although the question was silent on this.
5. (a) and (b). Policy networks (Low) and Interest Groups (Low): These questions attracted very few answers. Candidates who attempted them struggled with structuring and presenting a strong overall argument. Most ended up being rather free-floating answers not sufficiently rooted in the relevant literature and empirical examples.
6. Electoral reform, the electoral formula and access to the party label and ballot rank (Medium): This question invited candidates to analyze what electoral reformers might set out to achieve, and how party systems, political competition and party-voter linkages are affected by the electoral formula, access to the party label and ballot rank. Most candidates tackled this question from a normative perspective, very few considered under what conditions politicians and parties might consider altering the electoral formula, ballot access or access to the party label.
7. Federalism (Medium): Most answers to this question were well informed. Many candidates noted that different formative circumstances mediate the effect of inequality and divergent factor endowments on the choice of federal institutions. Candidates also generally understood that the development of federal institutions depends on the manner in which party systems and, indeed, the institutions themselves mediate interregional inequality, factor endowment and ethnic heterogeneity. A small minority of candidates did not appear to know what factor endowments are.
8. (a) Transitions to democracy (High): This question was very popular and attracted strong answers. Candidates generally knew the literature very well and noticed that the question proposes a false dichotomy and that inequality and international factors affect transitions in part because they shape elite strategies. (b.) Democratic consolidation (Medium): Answers to this question were often rather weak. Much of the literature that candidates were required to comment on in order to answer this question well is quantitative, and a surprisingly large number of candidates attempting this question had only a vague grasp of that work.

9. New Public Management (Low): Answers to this question varied in quality from thin final answers relying more on assertion than argument to more substantial and nuanced analyses. A few candidates evidently drew on their economics knowledge to construct an answer, which is of course creditable and in the proper spirit of PPE. But in general the comparative knowledge shown was quite limited and for some reason none of the answers showed any knowledge of the main comparative book on the subject – by Pollitt and Bouckaert, which is starred on the reading list – which would have given the candidates much more material in developing their arguments.
10. Rational Choice Theory (Low): Candidates disagreed in their responses to this question - some were critical of rational choice, others noted its contributions. But all candidates who wrote good answers to this question shared a good understanding of the development of theory in comparative politics, and the role of rational choice within it.

202 British Politics and Government since 1900

1 (13 answers). Some clear and powerful essays arguing on each side of the question. The question provoked clearly contrary views, often indicating wide reading. In the best answers the arguments of authors were scrutinized, and usually to good effect. The question did not pre-suppose any particular line, and good candidates developed their own accordingly. A well answered question.

2 (2 answers) No comment.

3 (option I 8 answers; option II 13 answers). This was a government question, clearly stated in the title. Some weaker answers however treated it entirely as politics. This was especially so when discussing the second world war, when candidates tended to write about the rise of Labour and the 1945 election, sometimes wrongly thought that Keynes and Beveridge were part of the government, and, in a few cases, simply wrote an essay on 1945-51. The answers on the first world war, although fewer in number, were often stronger, partly because candidates set themselves more direct targets. A few showed considerable knowledge about particular changes in government (for example, how the Ministry of Munitions functioned) and why these changes withered, or were abolished afterwards. Three claimed the contrary – that methods of and assumptions about government changed permanently and used the work of government departments in the inter-war years to substantiate their claims.

4 (16 answers) The question had no ‘end date’ and so allowed candidates to range freely through the twentieth century and (in a few cases) beyond. Several answers were excellent – well structured, thematic and peppered with telling examples. Most other answers were at least good. It was clear that this question posed a challenge which strong candidates relishes, and weaker candidates avoided altogether. According to candidates variously, the Labour party were never attached to socialism (or, yes it was). Socialism was unsuitable to British conditions (yes it was). The trade unions ensures that socialism failed (no they didn’t, it was the fault of Labour in office). Socialist rhetoric harmed Labour because it allowed the Conservatives to tar Labour – ‘the red menace’. No one in Britain understood what socialism was (yes they did, they feared it). This was an impressive set of essays which left examiners pondering what the right answer might be.

5 (4 answers) Nearly all answers said that the conservatives were beneficiaries of women’s enfranchisement. Less was claimed for women themselves, and answers tended to crowd into events before the mid 1930s.

6 (1 answer) No comment.

7.(24 answers) Affluence was examined by most candidates, although only alluded to by others. Some challenged the notion that affluence alone explained Conservative electoral success, other reasons being suggested. A more generous interpretation to the Conservatives was to identify how the party had changed since the 1930s, either because of the war, or to accommodate with the work of Attlee's governments. A few essays were disappointing because, although they contained much of the basic, familiar material, the word 'affluence' was simply tagged onto the essay in the introduction and the conclusion.

8 (4 answers) Answers laid blame on trade unions, but showed little knowledge of government strategy, or other influences acting on governments. Factual information was weak (for example incomes policies, mixing up events of the winters of 1973-4 with 1978-9). No candidate challenged the question.

9 (2 answers).

10. (32 answers) the most answered question. Essays ranged from the excellent to the very weak, the former sophisticated, the latter sometimes ill-informed and prejudiced. The word 'innovative' was subjected to widely different interpretations. Most candidates thought that the governments were innovative, at least under Thatcher, but then not under Major. However, many plainly knew little about events after 1990 – or if they did, they kept it to themselves. Innovative was often applied to trade union legislation, council house sales and privatization although curiously the poll tax (surely innovative) was rarely mentioned. Some essays argued against 'innovative' quite convincingly, stressing traditional Conservative values such as property ownership, lowering direct taxation and nationalism, and pointing to strands of Conservative thought which had only ever reluctantly accepted full employment and (as one put it) 'the quasi-socialism of Macmillan and his sort.' Taken overall, students were familiar with authors' debates, and many constructed clear cases of their own.

11 No answers

12 (20 answers) The quotation produced several thoughtful analyses, some disputing that Labour had ceased to be 'New'. Those who did accept the quotation sensibly put at least some of Labour's woes down to the financial crisis, and a few made strident remarks about Labour's foolishness in assuming that financial institutions would ever support it in extremis (1931, 1967 and 1976 popped up here) This was the only question on the paper to attach a name directly to a quotation, and the quotation itself enraged a few candidates; 'patronising', 'supercilious' were amongst the responses. Blair may have been the main architect of New Labour, but several candidates held him largely responsible for its decline too, (the Iraq War often being mentioned). Most essays were nuanced, only a few descending into polemic. Unlike some questions on the paper, this was one for which candidates were well prepared, and about which they clearly wanted to write. The standard was high.

13 (2 answers) Candidates ignored coalitions.

203 Theory of Politics

As usual, there was a general tendency to fail to retain attention on the specific question throughout the answer. Many scripts used their introduction to address the question directly, only to deviate from it in subsequent paragraphs. Weaker scripts generally seemed to invoke points of analysis independently of one another whereas better scripts offered a stronger structure of argument. There was a high level of uniformity between answers. Nearly all candidates are well prepared with a repertoire of stock positions and points, gleaned mainly from textbooks and lectures, which they manage to some extent to orient to the question put. Candidates are generally unprepared or unwilling to engage in much independent critical analysis of the concepts, the arguments, or the intellectual

problems posed. Those who seemed to be thinking for themselves, making but going beyond the familiar moves while retaining focus and control of their answers, did very well. This means that candidates, for instance, who answered the question on ‘neutrality’ did very little to analyse that concept, turning the question instead to one about the freedom of the individual; candidates who answered the question on majoritarianism didn’t notice the significance of ‘decision procedure’; candidates did nothing with the concept ‘political’ in the obligation question beyond proposing the lecturer’s (I’m guessing) argument that legal obligation is political. Candidates often failed to tackle both ‘arms’ or components of a question - for instance a good many candidates wrote about what the industrious might owe to the lazy, but not to the reckless (and one the other way around). Similarly, a number of answers to the obligation question were fairly stock responses to a question about whether we had an obligation to obey the law, and not about what political obligations citizens might have in general. Several candidates failed to clearly structure their answers, though there were notable exceptions who managed to produce excellent work in the conditions.

1. *Does democracy require majority-rule as a decision procedure?* A fairly popular question. Many candidates saw this as their opportunity to make general points about deliberative v aggregative conceptions of democracy. Candidates largely failed to distinguish the conceptual relation of majority-rule to democracy and the substantive question of whether the best forms of democracy involve majority-rule.
2. *“Poverty restricts freedom, disability does not.” Do you agree?* A very popular question not well answered for the most part, though most were familiar with the stock point that property rights are upheld by law. A surprisingly large number of candidates either agreed with the statement or argued that both/neither restrict freedom – relatively few argued that either could represent restrictions on freedom depending on further factors. Many insisted that the constraints on the poor were ‘human’ or ‘social’ while those on the disabled were ‘natural’, missing the extent to which it is the interaction of natural capacity and human or social decision (e.g. construction of buildings, or jobs) that affects the options available to the naturally impaired.
3. *EITHER: Do the industrious owe anything to the lazy or the reckless?* A fairly popular question producing a broad spectrum of quality in answers, the weaker ones answering only with respect to the lazy or the reckless rather than both. Most took the opportunity to offer general discussions of luck egalitarianism. A large number of candidates simply assumed the lazy and reckless to be in relevantly similar positions with respect to the industrious. Stronger answers reflected on possible different explanatory factors for industriousness, laziness and recklessness.

OR: What should egalitarians believe? Again fairly popular and again a wide range in the quality of answers. Weaker ones tended to offer a general discussion of luck egalitarianism and the weakest took this as an excuse to discuss the metric of equality. Better answers either discussed the leveling down objection or contrasted the luck egalitarian view with status or relational views of equality. The distinction between telic and deontic forms of egalitarianism was sometimes introduced, though very few of the candidates that did so seemed to understand it.

4. *“Legislation by representatives is a form of aristocracy.” Do you agree?* Very few takers for this question. Those who answered it did not handle the concept of ‘aristocracy’ well.
5. *Does the claim that gender is socially constructed help the feminist?* This ‘feminism question’ with no obvious stock answer had few takers. The weakest

answers did not know what ‘socially constructed’ meant. The best reflected on the different ways in which the claim might ‘help’.

6. *“Socialism and liberalism can be rendered compatible only by abandoning the essence of each”*. Discuss. Another non-standard question, this time requiring candidates to talk about two ‘isms’ at once, proved unpopular. Some clearly answering out of desperation talked almost entirely about one or the other but the few with the resources to discuss both produced some very good answers.
7. *Should minority groups have cultural rights?* A fairly popular question. The better answers managed to distinguish between rights for minority groups and rights specific to members of minority groups. Candidates tended to offer unnuanced ‘yes’ or ‘no’ conclusions. The weakest candidates wrote down anything they knew about rights.
8. *“Citizens have political obligations, but the obligation to obey the law is not one of them”*. Do you agree? A very popular question answered by many keen to offer standard general discussions of possible grounds for the obligation to obey the law. Better answers tried to explain why the obligation to obey the law was indeed a political obligation, though often in a handwaving way suggesting they were regurgitating something from a lecture rather than something they really understood. Disappointingly few explored in any detail what other political obligations there might be (e.g. to engage in civil disobedience?).
9. *How can we tell when people are subject to power?* Not a popular question. Most candidates invoked Lukes and answers often focused primarily on a discussion of when people are subject to power rather than the issue of ‘how we can tell’ that they are subject to it. The best answers challenged the framing of the question.
10. *Can conservatives offer coherent criteria for evaluating political options?* A tricky question with correspondingly few takers and generally poor answers: little reflection on what might count as ‘coherent criteria’ and rarely any discussion of the difference between philosophical conservatism and political conservatism.
11. *Should political theorists be realistic?* Not a popular question but this was generally answered very well – perhaps the best of all the question - with those choosing it showing good knowledge of the literature and control of the issues. There was some good discussion of why being realistic might be thought to be a good thing and on the whole answers came to balanced conclusions on the basis of interesting and coherent arguments.
12. *“The principles of justice that apply within nation-states are different from those that apply between them.”* Discuss. This fairly straightforward question proved relatively popular and generally attracted solid answers. Most candidates offered a general discussion of associative v non-associative views of principles of justice, while better answers distinguished between different bases for affirming global principles of justice. There was, however, little reflection on possible differences between principles of ‘justice’ and other normative principles. Weaker candidates seeing the word ‘justice’ chose to write down what they knew about Rawls.
13. *Should the state try to be neutral with respect to its citizens’ views about how they should live their lives?* A mix of answers though overall this was answered better than other questions. Weaker answers neglected ‘try’ and discussed the impossibility of neutrality in abstract terms. Better answers tried to get to grips with the motivation for trying to be neutral. The best tied this to a reflection on the unique role of ‘the state’.

204 Modern British Politics and Government

16 candidates sat the paper. There were some well informed and analytically-strong scripts ; and only a very small number of poor ones. Most candidates had taken advantage of the classes to engage with the documents. Our major criticism is that candidates still tend not to think in terms of major issues of governance raised by the paper. They might also now start to move away from the comfort zone of the literature on the Blair/Brown years and think more about the post-2010 period: there were, for example, no takers for question 4, on coalition government, where innovations like the impact of the referendum on AV and the , publication of the Cabinet manual might have been discussed.

1. (5 answers) Most candidates could discuss the details of several individual constitutional changes, but some thought that was enough. The best answers considered how far these changes moved the UK out of the particular slot in comparative analytical frameworks that the Westminster model has occupied in political science literature.
2. (6 answers) There were some reasonably competent answers though few candidates linked the Wright reforms back to earlier efforts to strengthen the House of Commons or explored how far they represented a change of direction.
3. (12 answers) Many answers saw this as an opportunity to write about the general issue of House of Lords reform rather than to address the issue of whether expertise really was the most valuable asset of the Lords and how it would be affected by a switch to election.
4. No takers
5. (1 taker)
6. (7 takers) This question (which had been extensively covered in the classes) was competently done and most candidates could provide both a rich discussion of the 2000 PPERA legislation and subsequent efforts at reform, and cogent reasons why further reform might be difficult. However, few candidates were able to say what the reforms had achieved or how to evaluate success.
7. (5 takers) There were a number of competent answers to this question. Most candidates were able to analyse the diverse objections to the content and effect of the 1998 Act and many were able to evaluate the likelihood of further change.
8. (3 takers) The answers were effective explorations of why central-local relations in the United Kingdom are so unstable, and how, in the absence of any genuine consensus about the role of local government, central government's priorities dominate the agenda.
9. (1 taker)
10. (5 takers) Candidates found this question hard. Few answers discussed the detailed strengths and weaknesses of devolved government, linked that assessment to SNP appeal or sought to assess the success of devolution in other parts of the UK notwithstanding the Scottish experience.
11. No takers
12. (3 takers) The answers to this question were thorough and candidates were able to deploy a range of arguments about the changing role of judges.

205 Government and Politics of the US

There were a few really outstanding scripts and a number of highly competent ones. There were few really weak ones. That said, some students taking this paper do need to work on answering the whole question, not just that part of it that fits most closely with their tutorial work; and as ever the best answers were those which combined detailed empirical knowledge with critical analysis of relevant literature. Notably, the

answers outside the core institutional topics (President, Congress, Court) seemed generally somewhat better.

1 (1 taker for Either, 14 for Or) It was surprising that so few candidates chose to engage with problems of the contemporary Senate; on the House candidates generally dealt well with the history of partisanship in the House, although some were weaker on the question of the legislative role (either of the House or of the party leadership).

2 (4 takers) Some showed no knowledge of what a Super PAC was, which reduced their ability to draw conclusions from their importance.

3 (9 takers) Weaker answers focussed largely on talking about exceptionalism and too often recycling essay material, though there were some good answers which engaged fully with the question and showed substantial knowledge of the literature and its application to American history and politics as well as with the issue of religion.

4 (4 takers) A surprisingly low popularity for the Supreme Court question, perhaps because of the difficulty in establishing what constitutes a constitutional vision.

Answers divided between those which showed very thoughtful engagement with the question based on detailed knowledge of the subject, including conservative approaches to the role of the Court and those which were rather superficial and under-informed.

5(10 takers) Weaker answers showed little engagement with the question and wanted to discuss Neustadt at length, although there were some very strong answers which showed both a knowledge of the constitutional arguments about presidential power and knowledge of its exercise.

6 (12 takers) This deceptively straightforward question received some very good answers able to explore the complexity of American federalism with detailed examples.

7 (1 taker)

8 (11 takers) Most coped well with this question, although some had difficulty perceiving that anyone might think partisan polarization might have occurred more quickly.

9 While very dependent on a small range of sources, the answers to this question were informed and thoughtful.

10 (2 takers)

11 (7 takers) Some ignored the word “healthcare”, but the best answers were insightful on both presidential-congressional relations and on the specific problems that healthcare legislation has faced.

12 (No taker)

13 (1 taker)

206 Politics in Europe

Overall the answers to this paper were good, though two out of fifteen came rather worryingly close to the 2i/2ii borderline. Five scripts were very good, and one of these was outstanding. There were no serious methodological inadequacies. There is a lot to cover in the course: to do really well candidates need not only the discrete bundles of detailed scholarly articles that come with weekly tutorials, but also a wider knowledge of Europe in its historical context. They also need to develop a sharp eye for what on the one hand unities Europe, and on the other differentiates its different sub-cultures. It is worth developing that understanding not only to do well in the examination, but for its own sake. Question-by-question observations (with numbers of takers per question in brackets) are as follows:

1. *Why are so many European party systems showing much increased levels of fragmentation?* (1)
2. *'An electorally attractive leader is an increasingly short-term asset to governments in contemporary European politics.'* Discuss in relation to any ONE European country. (0)
3. *Why are minority governments more common in some European countries than others?* (5) Answers were of varied quality. Since much of the literature takes its cue from Scandinavia, it is difficult to answer the question well without some understanding of Scandinavian political culture, (one candidate nevertheless tried to). There were some excellent answers, however, showing clear understanding of the conditions that create and sustain minority governments.
4. *What, if anything, is still different between east and west European party systems?* (5) A challenging question that required historical perspective, and a capacity to decide how to interpret the terms in the question (in particular what differentiates "east" and "west" European party systems in an earlier period, and what if any aspects of this differentiation have changed). Some candidates tended to take refuge in a limited range of specialist literature focused essentially on central European party systems, and when they did, they clearly failed to set the problem in a wider context.
5. *Do the problems of European social-democrat parties lie mainly in organisational implosion or in the diversification of its traditional electorate?* (3) The topic of social democracy usually attracts a larger number of questions than it did this year. Two candidates had obviously read the subject inside out and had an outstanding grasp of the subject matter, using the empirical detail in the scholarly literature to deal extremely well with the two dimensions which were combined in this year's question.
6. *How have Europe's Christian-democrat parties been affected by value-change among European electorates?* (2) Both solid answers.
7. *How consistent are the factors explaining support for radical right parties across different European electorates?* (9) As last year, many takers for this popular topic. Almost all were good or very good. The literature is well-developed, and most candidates were reasonably familiar with it.
8. *What factors explain how coalitions are formed in European democracies?* (6) Generally good-quality answers. Most candidates had enough examples to illustrate their generalisations and propositions, and most knew some of the specialist scholarly literature. Given that it is possible to write forever on this topic, it was important for candidates to give themselves enough time to think through the organisation of their argument. Some did this well, but not all.
9. *To what extent is King's model useful for understanding executive-legislative relations in Europe?* (8) Candidates had some contrasting views on this question, but most tackled it well.
10. *'Parties have less control over cabinet politics in semi-presidential states'.* Discuss. (1) No comment is appropriate given that only one candidate attempted this question.
11. *Why do multi-party parliaments tend to have strong committees?* (0)

12. *Assess the strengths and weaknesses, as a contribution to good governance in Europe, of ONE of the following: judicial review, territorial devolution, referendums.* (4) Answers were spread across all three sub-topics, and in general were well-informed, but did not always focus on the issue of the contribution to “good governance”.
13. *‘The global financial crisis has been more electorally damaging to the right than the left.’ Discuss with reference to any ONE OR MORE European countries.* (1).

207 Politics in Russia and the Former Soviet Union

This paper was set for the first time, and taken by six PPE candidates. The overall quality of the scripts was good. Most candidates produced comparative answers and made interesting connections with the broader political science debates. There was one first and five upper seconds. Frequency of responses: low (up to 3), high (more than 3).

1. *Was Mikhail Gorbachev’s perestroika a democratic transition?* (low) Answers were good on Gorbachev’s reforms and made reference to the debates in the secondary literature. There was however little discussion of the concept of transition.
2. *Can the emergence of national movements in the late Soviet Union be best explained in terms of the actions of self-interested elites?* (none)
3. *“Typologies that classify hybrid regimes but stop short of testing their propensity for democratic change contribute little to our understanding of post-Soviet politics.” Discuss.* (none)
4. *Why have presidential systems of government been preferred to parliamentary systems in most post-Soviet countries?* (low) Stronger answers discussed a range of theories – cultural, economic, electoral - that have been put forward to account for the preference for presidentialism in the former Soviet Union. They also supported their discussion with good comparative examples.
5. *What are the main differences in the purpose of elections across the Former Soviet Union and how do they impact on the behaviour of voters, candidates and incumbents?* (none)
6. *Account for the weakness of post-Soviet party systems.* (none)
7. *“Ethnic nationalism is a relatively insignificant source of conflict in post-Soviet states and societies.” Discuss.* (none)
8. *To what extent does an understanding of clan loyalties help to explain the political dynamics of Central Asian societies?* (none)
9. *“Politics is powerfully shaped by the resource curse in the Former Soviet Union.” Discuss.* (high) Candidates used good comparative examples from the region and engaged with the broader scholarly debate on the resource curse and its consequences.
10. *To what extent can governmental corruption in the Former Soviet Union be accounted for by the tolerance that citizens developed for irregular practices in Soviet times?* (1)
11. *Have foreign developmental aid programmes proved more effective than political aid programmes in shaping the political evolution of post-Soviet states?* (low) The better answers critically assessed the theoretical distinction between developmental and political aid and questioned its usefulness in assessing the effectiveness of programmes in the post-Soviet context.

12. *How important was election fraud relative to other factors in accounting for the occurrence and divergent outcomes of colour revolutions across the Former Soviet Union?* (high) Most candidates answered this question. Answers were good in citing the relevant scholarly literature. The better scripts used detailed empirical examples from different cases to support their arguments.

208 Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa

There were 46 candidates across PPE (42) and History and Politics (4). The exam paper comprised 12 questions, including 4 of the 'either-or' variety. While there was a reasonably even spread of answers, students were more likely to tackle the questions on civil conflict (Q12; 17 responses), the nature of the state (Q6; 20 responses), natural resources (Q1; 19 responses), and ethnicity and political violence (Q3b; 19 responses). There were, in contrast, very few students who responded to the questions on trade unions and religion (2 and 3 responses, respectively). The overall standard was very good: the set of scripts were solid and often very impressive. Most students demonstrated a clear understanding of core concepts, excellent empirical depth, and a marked ability to develop (and sustain) a persuasive argument. There were few factual mistakes.

Comments on questions that drew more than half-a-dozen answers:

Q1 (19): Students drew heavily (and proportionately) on the 'rentier' state literature, which provided a firm theoretical platform. Strong answers showed knowledge of the classic as well as more modern literature. A precise definition of 'political development' facilitated a good argument – mostly by allowing students get closer to the conditions that mediate the influence of natural resources. Students struggled to make useful empirical comparisons across time and cases; more fluent answers dwelt on a single case.

Q3b (19): The majority of students provided a thoughtful response to the question, picking apart successfully the tricky terminology of the question. Strong answers went beyond theories of ethnic identity to provide a mechanistic account of how, and under what conditions, other (more proximate) factors interact with ethnicity to increase the likelihood of violence.

Q6a (9): Most students were able to cover the literature satisfactorily. Quite a few responses included an insightful and often sophisticated critique of the theory of neo-patrimonialism, though not a single student (perhaps unsurprisingly) was able to include any sustained analysis of Cabral and the PAIGC.

Q6b (11): As with the first option of Q6, most students were able to provide a clear account of the literature. There were some excellent responses, based on analysis of term limits and electoral institutions.

Q7b (11): Strong answers were able to go beyond a descriptive account of (economic) adjustment to account for (political) determinants of variation in implementation.

Q8 (15): While most responses dealt reasonably well with 'the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS', there was a disappointing tendency to reduce the determinants of government policy to varying degree (and, supposedly, types) of 'political will'. The most convincing candidates tend to be those who are able to go beyond asserting that political will is important to systematically discuss the sorts of factors that shape political will.

Q11 (9): Too many candidates failed to distinguish between party dominance in authoritarian states, on one hand, and democratic states, on the other. Strong candidates were able to define dominance, identify relevant cases of dominance, and provide a sharp theoretical account of the conditions under which party dominance endures (or, conversely) erodes. A handful of students provided a very impressive review of topical issues, such as the electoral success of Michael Sata in Zambia.

Q12 (17): In spite of the tendency to rely on a straw man (usually Kaplan) to persuade the reader, most responses possessed both theoretical and empirical fluency.

209 Politics in Latin America

There were 14 candidates who overall produced a very impressive set of scripts, reflecting a strong cohort whose hard work yielded some excellent results. There was a good spread of answers, although none opted for questions 5 (development of party systems) and 9 (media and democratization). However, references to parties and party systems and the media did appear in some of the other answers (related to populism or to Chávez's leadership in Venezuela). Like last year, the largest proportion of candidates (ten of fourteen) chose to answer the question on populism, followed by the questions on Chile as a model of democracy and on the rule of law (seven and six respectively). Most candidates were able to display good empirical knowledge of a wide range of Latin American countries in relation to the topics under examination.

1. (four takers) A set of uneven answers, with the best being able to unpack the question intelligently and critically relate the extent to which a 'democratic past' could be linked to some of the successful cases today..
2. (six takers) Generally good, solid answers, exploring the various variables in the question. Weak answers did not offer a working concept of the rule of law and neglected one of the variables under examination.
3. (four takers) All good answers. Best script examined a wide range of cases in relation to the theoretical discussion.
4. (three takers) All solid answers, combining well theoretical and empirical knowledge.
5. (no taker).
6. (ten takers). A combination of excellent, good and weak answers, reflecting the overall results of this paper. Best scripts offered an initial brief discussion of the definition of populism and compare and contrast different experiences. The notion of 're-emergence' of populism in individual countries could have been overall tackled with more sophistication.
7. (four takers). Overall solid answers. Although the class on 'ethnic politics' was centred on Bolivia, most were able to widen their analysis to include a wide range of empirical cases.
8. (one taker)
9. (no taker)
10. (seven takers) The second most popular question. Some excellent answers. Best scripts unpacked the question intelligently, offering an criteria to judge the notion of 'model of democracy' and placed the Chilean case comparatively
11. (three takers) A combination of very good and weak answers. The best script looked at both dimensions of the question: the leadership role in enhancing and undermining democracy, and offered other comments beyond leadership to explain democratic outcomes.

210 Politics in South Asia

Thirteen PPE candidates sat this exam, with a good spread of marks. As is to be expected, the highest scoring script went well beyond standard answers, was deeply based in the secondary literature and had a creative take on each topic. Questions 6 and 7 on the politics of caste and Hindu nationalism in India were the most popular, being each answered by seven candidates. A comparative question on democracy in India and

Pakistan was answered by six students, and one on media in India by five. Country-specific answers were more popular than comparative ones.

211 Politics in the Middle East

47 students (38 in PPE, 9 in HP) sat this paper, and received a good spread of marks. As in the past, there were some acute imbalances in the range of questions attempted by finalists. Questions 5 and 1 were attempted by 38 and 23 candidates respectively. The former was the question on rentierism. The fondness of the students for this topic seems to reflect confidence in a question on this subject being a sure bet to come up in Finals, and the opportunity (presumably for PPEists) to mix theory and empiricism in the answer. The latter question was on colonialism, and is more of a gamble for students. There is always a question on the topic, but there is more opportunity for variety. At the other end of the spectrum, Questions 4 and 10 were only attempted by one candidate each. It was a surprise that more did not attempt the former, a straightforward question on state/tribe relations, but dressed up slightly differently. The latter, a question on nationalism, would have been gift for anyone revising the strong country cases of Iran, Israel or Turkey. This suggests that students tend to prepare for thematic questions rather than country related questions. There was once again a reluctance to answer on leadership-related questions (possibly because of the absence of a good regional textbook on the subject). The comparative Hashemites question was a fresh one, but may have cut across a tendency not to revise Iraq and Jordan together.

212 International Relations in the Era of the Two World Wars

20 candidates (19 PPE, 1 HP) took this paper. Overall, the quality was fairly good, with the majority of the upper second class answers in the top half of that range. The best answers were well in command of the material and developed vigorous, theoretically informed arguments; the major flaw in weaker scripts was a basic lack of historical knowledge.

1. *'In 1914, Germany was an insecure country trying to survive.' Does it therefore bear any responsibility for the outbreak of the First World War?* This was the most popular question on the paper, attracting 13 answers, four of which were very good. The rest were generally solid, but there were a couple of weaker essays. The better answers were able to examine several aspects of the causes of the war, while still retaining a focus on the central issue of German security and responsibility.

2. *Did the Locarno Conference undo the damage caused by Wilsonian idealism in the Versailles Treaty?* There were seven answers to this question, and with one exception they were generally good. The better answers made strong analytical connections between Locarno and Versailles; the weaker ones tended to discuss each almost in isolation, and some were unable to go into sufficient detail on the Locarno Conference. Very few answers showed enough depth on the treatment of central and eastern Europe.

3. *What was Soviet foreign policy trying to achieve, and did it succeed?* This was a reasonably popular question, with six answers. A couple were excellent, with real depth of understanding. It was a fairly wide-ranging question, and the weaker questions tended to get stuck in overly detailed discussions of the very early period of Soviet foreign policy.

4. *Why did the new states in central and eastern Europe find it so difficult to cooperate with each other during the inter-war period?* There were only two answers to this question, both showing deep knowledge of the region.

5. *'The League of Nations failed because Britain and France were unable to work together effectively.' Discuss.* This was another very popular question, with twelve answers. The level was generally quite solid, but too many answers fell into the temptation

of writing general answers about the failure (or otherwise) of the League, without considering the specific focus proposed by the question. There were, however, a few excellent answers that handled Franco-British relations with real precision.

6. *In what ways, if at all, was Japanese imperialism different from western imperialism?*

Only one candidate attempted this question.

7. *Were problems in managing the inter-war international economy the result of a lack of hegemonic leadership, or just of bad policies?* There were two answers, both of which were very good and showed ability to marry the theoretical dimensions of the question to detailed empirical analysis.

8. *Could the years after 1918 be called 'Britain's moment in the Middle East'?* This question attracted three answers, which were a mixed bag: one excellent, one good, and one very weak. The issue here seemed mainly to come down to mastery of the empirical material.

9. *What, if anything, better describes US foreign policy after 1920 than 'isolationist'?*

This was a reasonably popular question, with nine answers. They were generally of high quality: nearly everyone engaged directly with the question of how to interpret the broad character of US policy, with some interesting reflections on ideas such as unilateralism. The best answers also had real depth of knowledge about US foreign policy across the entire period to support their interpretation.

10. *Did countries pursue policies of appeasement because it was in their interest to do so, and were those policies successful?* There were three answers to this question, one of which was extremely weak; the others were alright but not outstanding. Candidates seemed to find difficulty in identifying reasons why one might see appeasement as in the national interest.

11. *Which of the combatants in the Second World War had learned most from the lessons of the First World War?* Only one candidate attempted this question.

12. *Does the interwar period support the view that the balance of power was the fundamental logic of international relations?* Only one candidate attempted this question.

213 International Relations in the Era of the Cold War

38 candidates (34 PPE, 4 HP) took this paper. Although there were some excellent scripts, overall the quality of answers was disappointing, with many rather undistinguished narrative essays, of which those at the weaker end lacked real empirical depth or detail. The stronger answers were much more analytical, and were better at using insights from international relations theory to explain or interpret the international politics of the Cold War period.

1. *'Stalin's consistently poor judgement constituted the most important reason why superpower relations deteriorated as sharply as they did between 1945 and 1953.'* Do you agree? This was the most popular question on the paper: it was attempted by 25 PPE candidates, and 2 MHP candidates. Naturally there was quite a wide variation in the quality of the answers, but generally it was very solidly handled, and there were several very high quality answers. The best ones went beyond fairly obvious ways of tackling the question (such as comparing systemic and individual levels of analysis; or orthodox, revisionist and counter-revisionist histories) and focussed very directly on explaining Stalin's key foreign policy decisions in detail, and interpreting their consequences.

2. *What were the main continuities and discontinuities in Soviet external policy under Malenkov, Khrushchev, Kosygin, and Brezhnev?* There were only two answers to this question: one from PPE and one from MHP. They varied dramatically in quality. Perhaps most candidates were scared off by the wide range of knowledge demanded by the question.

3. *What were the main continuities and discontinuities in American external policy under Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter?* Another reasonably popular question (12 PPE answers; 2 MHP) and generally quite well-answered, although very few were of first class quality. The breadth of the question clearly posed problems for many candidates, either pressing them towards a rather superficial narrative in order to cover the ground, or leading to answers that missed crucial points, often because they were too focussed on the earlier period.
4. *Why were Cold War tensions increasing so alarmingly at the beginning of the 1980s yet diminishing so significantly at the end of that decade?* The second-most-popular question: 22 PPE and 2 MHP answers. Again, with so many takers, there was a very wide range in quality, with several poor answers that often failed properly to address the issue of the 'Second Cold War', and in some cases seeming to produce pre-prepared answers on Gorbachev and the end of the Cold War. But there were also several very high-quality answers that not only displayed an impressive range of knowledge across the whole period, but also were able to harness it to sharp lines of argument.
5. *'Beijing always had a more stable relationship with Washington than with Moscow.' Discuss this judgment on Chinese foreign policy from 1949 to 1990.* 13 PPEists and all 4 MHP candidates answered this question. This question drew a lot of very good answers, and only a couple of poor ones; candidates were generally able to see quickly to the point of the question, and the best ones showed really detailed knowledge, particularly regarding Sino-Soviet relations. The weaker answers tended to take it as a straightforward question about the phases of Chinese foreign policy.
6. *How far can decolonization be explained by the changing economic interests of west European states? Ten answers, all from PPE candidates.* One answer was very good, and one was very weak (appearing to lack basic knowledge); the rest were reasonably solid essays, albeit more towards the lower end of the 2i range. One persistent problem was a failure to lay out in detail how metropolitan powers' economic interests were changing: answers very often framed that aspect of the question in extremely narrow or superficial ways.
7. *'Initially a military and ideological asset; latterly a political and economic embarrassment.' Discuss this assessment of the utility to the Soviet Union of its 'camp' in eastern Europe.* There were five answers to this question (all PPE). One was extremely good, showing a detailed knowledge of the historical literature and producing a very vigorous argument. The others were less in command of the material, but all were reasonably solid.
8. *Can the Arab states of the Middle East claim any external-policy achievements during the Cold War?* Again, five answers from PPEists. The range of quality here was very wide, and several candidates seemed confused about what might be meant by the external policy achievements of Arab countries.
9. *'The problem was always to reconcile Europeanism with Atlanticism.' Discuss this proposition with reference to **EITHER** France **OR** West Germany **OR** both.* There were three answers to this question (all PPE). They were patchy in quality, and the weaker ones were confused and superficial, including one candidate who was unable to spell Charles de Gaulle's name, which did not inspire confidence.
10. *In which period of the Cold War did Japan promote its national interests most effectively?* Only one candidate (PPE) attempted this question.
11. *Assess the interplay between regional and Cold War dynamics in the international relations of south-east Asia between 1945 and 1990.* No taker.
12. *Can realism explain the process of European integration in this period?* Six candidates answered this question (5 PPE and 1 MHP). One answer was excellent,

demonstrating an impressive grasp of general international relations theories and the ability to apply them in an historical analysis of European integration. The other answers were quite a bit weaker, with some concentrating on rather tangential issues, such as expansion rather than integration per se.

214 International Relations

167 students (143 from PPE, 24 from HP) took the paper, making it the most popular Politics paper. The overall standard was very good. As with last year, at the top end the answers were impressive, combining theoretical sophistication with detailed empirical knowledge and fluency of analysis. That said, many candidates also gave generic answers instead of focusing on the specific themes raised by the questions.

1. *What, if anything, does Waltz's neo-realism add to classical realism?* This was one of two most popular questions. As expected, students went for the easy summary of neo-realism. Good essays included a historical perspective and an assessment of the classical realism.
2. *'The insights of the English School combined with an ambiguous ontological claim.' Is this a fair judgment on constructivism?* This was to test the best students and was understandably the least popular question. Some students had a hard time assessing the "ambiguous ontological claim" although they usually did justice to the English school.
3. *How far do domestic politics explain foreign policy? Answer with reference to ONE or MORE states since the Cold War.* A relatively easy yet not popular question. Students fell too easily in the trap of describing a complex domestic politics (eg EU or US) without much theory.
4. *Since the end of the Cold War is there any evidence that international law has influenced the behaviour of states?* A popular question which allowed some students to shine by outlining the different modes and extent of "influence". The word "any" in the question tempted some candidates to offer only a single convincing piece of evidence of influence.
5. *'The UN Security Council veto serves only to protect the interests of the permanent members of the Council.' Do you agree?* A popular question which allowed for clear distinction of those who were able to show both the limits of the statements in terms of voting patterns, the ways in which serving the interests of the PM served the organization AND the kind of distortions that this involved.
6. *What have been the consequences of NATO's expansion since the end of the Cold War?* A question requiring knowledge which some takers evidently lacked.
7. *'The current crisis in the European Union exposes the limitations of theories of integration.' Discuss.* Relatively popular; but few takers were able to apply current theories to the crisis.
8. *'Since the end of the Cold War conflict has been about identity more than about ideology or economics.' Do you agree?* The most popular question, yet often answered only partially with regards to either economics or ideology. Good answers were able to tackle the inter-relationships between the three concepts and the political manipulations of identity issues for economic or ideological ends.
9. *Is it possible to liberalize international finance and trade while retaining effective sovereignty?* A sophisticated IPE questions which was surprisingly popular. Good answers showed the two sides of the question including the ways in which states themselves control patterns of liberalization.
10. *'Nationalism is a problem for international order only when demands for national self-determination are suppressed.' Discuss with reference to the post-Cold-War*

era. Although this was a relatively popular questions, its circumvallated wording made it the hardest to address. A few managed to disentangle its threads and to land on the alternatives to suppression short of NSD, while also stressing the ills of nationalism when not suppressed. The stronger answers disaggregated NSD goals allowing for an “under what conditions” type of answer.

11. *‘In a globalized world, security is indivisible.’ Discuss.* A clear distinction between students who addressed the security dilemma and the paradigm of security communities and those who did not. Many students simply listed the new kinds of security laundry list.
12. *“‘Soft power’ can never count as true ‘power’.” Do you agree?* Many nice essays, the best of which problematized “true” power. Weaker answers merely regurgitated Nye.

215 Political Thought: Plato to Rousseau

Superficially this might seem to have been a challenging paper, although there were plenty of opportunities for students who had read the texts to use their knowledge, with a bit of thought. It drew some strong scripts, although few were really outstanding. Candidates often showed a good knowledge of the texts, and sometimes demonstrated awareness of disputes in the critical literature. But the responses to the questions were not always as sharply targeted as the questions required. Answers on Plato often ignored or marginalized the request that the political implications of the cave be discussed – too many were clearly drawing on more philosophical aspects gleaned from their work on the Plato paper. And few showed much sophistication in the interpretation of Plato’s purposes in sketching the ideal state. Aristotle answers were often better on teleology than on identifying the issues relating to the plausibility of his political theory (again, a function of relying too much on having studied the ethics). Aquinas remains a minority interest. The Machiavelli question tended to reveal that people read *The Prince* more than the *Discourses*, despite the rubric. The Hobbes question on absolute sovereignty separated those who had thought about sovereignty from those who hadn’t; and the Locke answers were good in broad outline, but very few made much use of the implicit analogy with property. Montesquieu drew few answers, and Hume only a few more (of a good standard), while the answers on Rousseau often showed only a little more sophistication than a good prelims script. Of the comparative questions: answers on liberty were disappointing given recent literature; answers to the legislator were balefully ignorant; people seemed not to have thought about what the end or point of politics might be (odd for PPEists); and no one took up the challenge of commerce (odd for PPEists). And few answers on utopian texts were very inspired, either on criteria, or with respect to the material referenced.

216 Political Thought: Bentham to Weber

Overall, the performance on this paper was satisfactory. Weaker scripts typically suggested limited direct familiarity with the set texts, and failed to focus on the precise question asked (preferring instead to rehearse general descriptive accounts of the prescribed authors). Better scripts typically revealed first hand familiarity with, and sophisticated understandings of, the set texts, together with an ability to engage with the arguments of the prescribed authors at a high level.

1. *What explains the development of Bentham’s political thought towards ‘radicalism’?* [2 answers]
2. *What is the role of the state in Saint-Simon’s ‘industrial society’?* [3 answers]
3. *It is obviously inconsistent of Tocqueville to regret the passing of aristocratic society and to celebrate the arrival of the democratic society that replaced it.’ Is it?* [17]

answers] This was a very popular question. Weaker scripts treated it as an opportunity to rehearse broad descriptive accounts of *Democracy in America*. Better scripts engaged with the question, and recognised that Tocqueville considered that some aristocratic goods could be replicated in democratic society. Surprisingly few candidates considered the possibility that Tocqueville viewed some aristocratic goods as simply unavailable in democratic society.

4. *EITHER: 'John Stuart Mill's description of himself (in the Autobiography) as a "socialist" of sorts is simply baffling.' Discuss. [8 answers]* Some weaker candidates seemed baffled by the question as well as by Mill's self-description. However, a few of the better scripts made intelligent observations about the historical meaning of the term 'socialism', and made appropriate links with the set texts. The very best scripts revealed accurate and relevant knowledge of texts in which Mill had most directly discussed his views about socialism. *OR: Do Mill's essays on the 'Spirit of the Age', 'Bentham', and 'Coleridge', help us to understand his argument in On Liberty?* [5 answers] Again, weaker candidates struggled to reveal much knowledge of Mill's essays, let alone knowledge that might have enabled them to answer the specific question asked. Both of the Mill questions this year proved difficult for those candidates whose knowledge of Mill was largely restricted to *On Liberty*, especially if that knowledge had developed little since they had studied that text for Prelims.
5. *What is the role of 'civil society' in Hegel's account of the rational state?* [15 answers] This was a popular question, although the resulting Hegel exegesis was not all of a high standard and there was a tendency to spend too much time introducing Hegel's system before getting to the precise question asked. Candidates tended to overestimate the individualistic and purely economic character of civil society, not always realising that civil society in the *Philosophy of Right* includes the administration of justice as well as the 'police' and corporations. Knowledge of these latter institutions was often weak or even non-existent.
6. *What, on Marx's account, will motivate the proletariat to bring about communism?* [13 answers] Another popular question, although many struggled with the precise question being asked. Candidates tended to rehearse pre-packaged material on the theory of history or the critique of capitalism in general, rather than engage with the motivation of this specific class to bring about this specific end. Not all candidates recognised that a reason for criticising a society might not be the same thing as a motivation for an individual agent to change it for another (one might, for instance, think capitalism is exploitative without thereby being automatically motivated to revolutionary action to bring about communism).
7. *How does Durkheim envisage the 'pathological' forms of the division of labour being overcome?* [7 answers] Not all candidates elucidated adequately all the dimensions of Durkheim's account of the pathological forms of the division of labour. Weaker accounts tended to restrict themselves to brief discussions of 'anomie'. Better candidates not only enumerated the various threads in Durkheim's account of the 'pathological' forms, but also considered the role of occupational groups and the state in Durkheim's developing view of how to achieve the optimal degree of social solidarity.
8. *Weber is best thought of as a sophisticated apologist for capitalism, who associates the market with rationality and rejects any interference with private property.' Discuss. [15 answers]* This was a popular question, and one which elicited some good answers. Better scripts typically recognised Weber's complex and often critical assessment of rationality, and were able to identify occasions on which he had

endorsed some limited ‘interference’ with the interests of private property (for example, in criticising the Junkers seasonal use of Polish workers).

9. *‘Nineteenth-century theories of history leave little, if any, room for genuine human agency.’ Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO of the authors you have studied for this paper.* [8 answers] This was a reasonably popular question, and many candidates chose, plausibly enough, to challenge the claim of the quotation in the question. Answers typically revealed some good knowledge of particular authors, but were often hampered by inadequate attempts to unpack what ‘genuine human agency’ might mean (references to ‘determinism’ and ‘autonomy’, for example, do not get us very far unless those terms are themselves explained with clarity and precision).
10. *‘Religion is typically viewed as an erroneous and primitive belief system that will slowly but surely disappear as society progresses.’ Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO of the authors you have studied for this paper.* [8 answers] This was a reasonably popular question, and there were some good answers here. Most candidates sensibly disagreed with the generalisation offered, and many of them showed a good understanding of their chosen authors’ treatment of the topic. Good answers wrestled with all parts of the quotation, including the idea of a ‘primitive’ belief system and of ‘slow but sure disappearance’.
11. *‘The relation between gender differences and the distribution of political rights remained a marginal and little-discussed topic in the nineteenth century.’ Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO of the authors you have studied for this paper.* [2 answers]
12. *‘It is hard not to suspect that the idea of “community” is used, either unreflectively, or emotively to induce support for the social and political arrangements that the author happens to favour.’ Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO of the authors you have studied for this paper.* [1 answer]

217 Marx and Marxism

Overall, the performance on this paper was satisfactory. Weaker scripts typically failed to focus on the precise question asked, and contained rather limited knowledge of the writings of Marx, Engels, and later Marxists. Amongst these scripts there was an over-reliance on undigested and irrelevant material from lectures or secondary reading. Better scripts were tightly focused on the question, demonstrated more sophisticated and accurate understandings of the relevant texts, and engaged critically with the arguments of the prescribed authors.

1. *EITHER: Is Marx better thought of as a Hegelian, or as a critic of Hegel?* [5 answers] This was a popular question. Better answers recognised the dangers of a false opposition here, since Marx might be *both* a ‘Hegelian’ in some sense, and a critic of some elements of Hegel’s thought. Weaker accounts tended to offer less accurate accounts of Hegel’s thought, and put much emphasis on a ‘dialectical method’ without much clarification of what that ‘method’ or its being ‘dialectical’ might consist in. *OR: Is there a coherent and defensible account of ‘dialectic’ in Marx’s writings?* [no answer]
2. *‘Marx’s insistence on the tendency of the forces of production to develop throughout history remains the most obscure and unsatisfactory part of his theory of history.’ Discuss.* [8 answers] This was a very popular question. There were some clear and sophisticated accounts of Marx’s theory of history, but too many candidates wrote about the theory in general and failed to engage with the precise question being asked. Better answers focused on the tendency of the productive forces to develop, and recognised that the so-called ‘development thesis’ might be conceptually clear without being empirically plausible.

3. *Does Marx's critique of capitalism depend on his account of exploitation?* [5 answers] This was a popular question. Weaker answers tended to talk rather vaguely about Marx's many criticisms of capitalism (its involving alienation, injustice, exploitation, irrationality, and so on). Better responses gave more precise accounts of his understanding of exploitation, and addressed the issue of what 'depend' might mean here.
4. *Does Marx define ideology in terms of its origins, its function, something else?* [2 answers]
5. *How plausible is Marx's denial that alienation is an inevitable feature of all industrial societies?* [8 answers] This was a very popular question. Many of the answers addressed the substantive issue of whether Marx's confidence that communism, in particular, could be an industrial society *and* a society without alienation was well founded. Some of the better answers sought to unpack the different threads in Marx's account of alienation, and suggested that the idea of an industrial society without particular aspects of alienation was more plausible in some cases than in others.
6. *EITHER: Is Marx's reluctance to discuss the nature of communist society justified?* [3 answers] There were some clear and cogent responses to this question. However, not all candidates recognised that Marx might have had a number of different reasons for not wanting to discuss the nature of communist society. There was no uniform view about whether his reluctance was justified, but some spirited defences of different verdicts on this issue. *OR: Is Marx's critique of utopian socialism convincing?* [3 answers] There were some clear and accurate accounts of Marx's critique of utopian socialism. However, weaker answers did not appear to recognise that some knowledge of the views of the utopian socialists themselves was needed if one was to address fully the persuasiveness, or otherwise, of Marx's critique.
7. *Is Marx's belief that the state will 'wither away' in communist society consistent with his hostility towards anarchism?* [7 answers] This was a popular question. There was some good analysis of the fate of the post-revolutionary polity in Marx's writings (and how state-like or not such a polity might plausibly be). However, familiarity with Marx's critical engagement with various kinds of anarchists (for example, Stirner, Proudhon, and Bakunin) was not much in evidence.
8. *Why was Marx so quick to brush aside questions of moral principle?* [6 answers] This was a popular question. Weaker answers rehearsed an overview of the general relation between Marx and morality (or his views on the injustice, or otherwise, of capitalism). Better answers engaged with what it might mean to brush questions of moral principle aside, why Marx might have been thought to have done that, why he might *want* to have done that, and also questioned whether, being precise, Marx had actually done that.
9. *'Bernstein's ethical views, his reformism, and his criticism of Marx, form a coherent and indissoluble whole.' Discuss.* [4 answers] There were some clear and accurate summaries of Bernstein's various views. However, not all answers adequately addressed the question of whether the identified elements of his thought were 'indissoluble' (capable of being separated from each other) or not. For example, few contained serious consideration of whether one might embrace, say, Bernstein's critique of Marx, without being committed to his 'reformism'.
10. *Does Luxemburg's critique of Lenin's account of the party depend on her claim that we do not yet know how to construct a communist society?* [2 answers]
11. *Why does Trotsky maintain that Stalinism and Fascism, despite a deep difference in their social foundations, are similar phenomena?* [No answer]
12. *'Gramsci's great discovery was the density and complexity, the sheer sturdiness, of bourgeois civil society.' Discuss.* [4 answers] Knowledge of Gramsci's writings was rather varied, but there were some accurate and sophisticated answers to the question. Some

candidates suggested, plausibly enough, that whilst the quote captured something that Gramsci believed, it did not precisely identify his ‘great discovery’ (which, on some accounts, lay rather in his use of ‘hegemony’ to explain some of that sturdiness, at least of civil society in the ‘West’).

218 Sociological Theory

There were twenty-three PPE candidates for this paper (plus one from History and Politics). Quality ranged from good (upper second class) to outstanding (first class). The best scripts demonstrated impressive breadth of reading and depth of analysis. The most popular questions were on the micro-to-macro link (Q1, answered by 12 candidates), social norms (Q3, 10 candidates), falsification and rational action theory (Q8, 13 candidates), and social networks and the labour market (Q11, 10 candidates). Seven answers were offered on collective action problems (Q6), and three each for questions 4, 10 and 12 (respectively on gender inequalities, the social construction of knowledge, and individual autonomy). Questions on functional explanations (Q2), ethnicity (Q5) and the state (Q7) were each answered by one student only. Although the spread of answers is comparatively good, the assessors wished that responses had been more even, and hope that in future tutorials will be provided on the least “popular” topics.

219 The Sociology of Industrial Societies

There were only 4 candidates for paper 219, yet a fair range of questions was attempted. There were no conspicuously weak performances and no outstanding performances. As usual the main fault was not paying sufficient attention to the exact question asked.

220 Political Sociology

As mentioned in last year's report, candidates for this paper typically show a good knowledge of the literature but often fail to focus on the question set. Sometimes irrelevant pieces are cited; and it appears that some candidates prioritize the citing of a wide range of literature over the constructing of a thorough argument in response to the question. Often part of the problem could have been remedied by taking the time to explain how the material being discussed was relevant to the question. It would also be good to see more discussion of what kind of research would be ideal for a direct answer to the question even if the perfect study does not exist. Showing awareness of what kind of information is needed to answer the question is better than writing only on the indirect evidence with no indication of the strength of the evidence.

Specific comments on select questions which saw common problems are as follows.

1. *The decline in class voting in Western democracies is mostly the result of the decline in class identification. Discuss.* The large majority of candidates reasonably concluded in favour of explanations focused on political supply, but the better answers also discussed the research on class identification and the mechanism by which it might affect class voting.
2. *Why are some people more hostile to immigrants than others?* Answers to this question were generally on the weak side, with some of the worst assuming that variation in support for extreme-right parties could be taken as a simple proxy for hostility to immigrants. Even some of those answers which showed a good knowledge of the literature on anti-immigrant sentiment often needed to do more to explain the implications of interpersonal variation, even if this meant acknowledging that some of the conclusions required viewing temporal and cross-national differences as interpersonal.
3. *How stable are gender gaps in political behaviour?* Candidates answering this question tended to show a very good knowledge of the literature on the reading list but

often failed to link it adequately (or at all) to the question. In particular some paid no attention to the issue of stability and change over time, and some wrote about attitudes and representation without attempting to link these to behaviour. It was also surprising that little mention was made of dramatic but basic trends over several decades such as the rise in the number of women putting themselves forward for election.

4. *What is nationalism?* Most candidates concentrated on the traditional questions of ethnic versus civic nationalism and modernity. Better answers also addressed the various different forms or manifestations such as ideology, social movement, and popular sentiment.

5. *'The effects of religion on electoral behaviour in Western democracies operate entirely through liberal-authoritarian attitudes.'* Discuss. Surprisingly few answers distinguished between denominational and devotional differences and it is especially hard to explain the former with respect to liberal-authoritarian issues alone.

6. *Is education a better explanation for postmaterialism than affluence?* Answers to this question generally showed a good knowledge of postmaterialism but varied in the quality of discussion of the evidence on explanations. A number of candidates incorrectly assumed that education levels were a straightforward reflection of the level of affluence and tried to argue that affluence was the main cause but it operated partly through education. Better answers discussed the levels of analysis issue (e.g. societal versus individual-level affluence). It would have been nice to have seen candidates drawing a clearer distinction between the concept of postmaterialism and what the survey question actually measures.

7. *Do repertoires or traditions of protest help explain social movement success or failure?* There were some very creative answers to this question, but surprisingly few mentioned Tarrow.

8. *What does network analysis tell us about political elites?* (No comment.)

9. *'History is more important than contemporary public opinion for understanding the differences between welfare states in high-income democracies.'* Discuss. Answers to this question tended to show high levels of knowledge, but few discussed the question of the extent to which forms of welfare state depend on very specific and historically contingent patterns of party support and coalitions.

10. *Who does the media influence?* Grammatically, it would have been preferable if the question had started with 'whom' rather than 'who'. A number of candidates said nothing about what kinds of people were influenced (or not) but discussed the nature of the influence. The better answers discussed Zaller and considered the effects on politicians as well as on citizens.

11. *Are revolutions best understood by comparison with others?* The better answers to this question considered different kinds of understanding and discussed the issues considered by Skocpol and Geddes.

12. *Why are there so few Muslim democracies?* The best answers to this question pieced together research on religion and on democratisation.

223 The Government and Politics of Japan

Only one student took this paper.

224 Social Policy

16 candidates (14 PPE; 2 HP) took this paper, and were generally of a high standard. There was a relatively even spread of questions attempted, with the most popular being two from the later stage of the course that deals with specific topics: question 2 (about rationing in the National Health Service) and question 3 (about whether education is at the

core of the welfare state); and two, question 9 (on welfare regime typologies), and question 12 (on the changing role of the state in the welfare state) taken from the introductory section of the course that introduces students to social policy/welfare state concepts. At least one candidate attempted each of the twelve questions this year, apart from question 10 (about the implications of personal problems becoming social problems), which is about the principles of social policy analysis, forming a quarter of the compulsory introductory part of the curriculum and often the most challenging topic for students. Other less popular questions included those on family policy, the environment and homelessness. The most popular questions were: 2. Is rationing of health care inevitably the central feature of a health service that is free at the point of use, such as the National Health Service in Britain? (8); 3. 'Education is at the core of the welfare state.' Discuss. (8); 9. Welfare regime typologies have been used for social policy analysis for the last few decades. Are they still useful in today's complex world? (8); 12. 'It is not the volume so much as the form of state involvement that has changed over the past three decades in UK social policy.' Do you agree? (7)

This year most of the answers were both intelligent and well-informed; many candidates clearly had a capacity for analytical thinking, as well as being knowledgeable about the topic they were addressing. Top quality scripts put forward coherent arguments, which were grounded in relevant literature and which investigated central debates about important concepts and discussed policy design and implementation issues. Well-structured arguments which engaged directly and critically with the content of the question were particularly valued by the assessors.

However, some answers appeared to be addressed to the question that candidates would prefer to have been asked, rather than the actual question on the exam paper, which always repays careful reading and does not always receive it. For example, in some questions some, or most, candidates overlooked certain words that conveyed the core of the meaning of the question, and therefore wrote either a more general or a more specific answer than was intended by the wording. Generally, there were some gaps in evidence, with certain areas commonly lacking across scripts. However, the bulk of the answers to questions, as is evident from the assessment below, displayed a thoughtful approach to analysing key conceptual and practical issues of recent UK social policy set in historical and international context.

226 Quantitative Methods in Politics and Sociology

Frequencies for questions answered for the 4 scripts: Q1: 4; Q2: 0; Q3: 0; Q4: 0; Q5: 1; Q6: 1; Q7: 0; Q8: 4; Q9: 4; Q10: 0; Q11: 2; Q12: 0. The overall standard was not terribly high. From Section A, all candidates chose question 1 instead of question 2. As has been noted before, answers to the Section A question tended to be much more variable than those for the Section B essay questions. Good answers to question 1 were ones that attempted to provide some sensible commentary on the meaning of the results, rather than mindlessly recite statistical formulae. Answers to the Section B questions were generally okay. The worst-answered question was 8. Most candidates seemed to miss the important point about internet polls being based on panels. This means the pollsters have an accurate record of past vote which is used to weight the sample.

227 Politics in China

This year, candidates produced a strong range of answers on a variety of questions on Chinese politics. There were strong answers on marketization vs privatization in China, and the best ones showed an understanding of how the two terms do not necessarily relate to the same thing. Some fine answers also addressed the topic of whether China was a

regional or global power although some of the less strong answers were marked by a certain amount of hedging on the question. There were good answers on Taiwan and Hong Kong (the former in particular), a welcome sign that the politics of China are understood in a wider sense. Questions on religion and nationalism, which were attempted by relatively few candidates just a few years ago, have now become staples; perhaps an indication of the growing importance of these topics. There were fewer answers than in previous years on the Mao era. The topic of “rule of law,” which has become a key issue in the understanding of Chinese politics, was not addressed by many candidates, though the answers that were given were generally strong. In general, answers reflected detailed and conscientious reading and thoughtful understanding of some often rather unfamiliar issues. The best answers tended to have a familiarity with the key literature and authors, and could articulate the points of debate relating to the issue in question. Less strong answers tended to deploy information, or summaries of topics, but not to engage with the argument requested. Overall, however, this was a strong group of papers.

228 The Politics of the European Union

There were 9 candidates. The overall standard was reasonably good. Candidates’ choices were concentrated on a small number of questions, however, and most of the answers tended to stick to identifiable arguments between named scholars, and to operate at a fairly high level of generality. It is obviously highly desirable to be familiar with the main beacons in the scholarly literature, but it was a shame that rather few candidates managed to convey much capacity to relate the generalisations and abstractions from this literature to the choice that real actors (especially real national actors) make in real-world situations. This came out notably in the question on regulatory activity and how to subject it to democratic control and accountability. This question was attempted by two-thirds of the field, and most candidates rehearsed Majone’s claims about the inappropriateness of democratic control in areas of regulatory activity, and provided a suitable critique, but were unable to relate this general argument to real interests, or sectors in which regulation occurred: the words “agriculture”, “state aids”, “public procurement”, “environment” etc were almost entirely absent from the six answers to this question. At times, the examiners were worried candidates might not really understand what can be at stake in EU politics. Answers to the question about theories of integration had this quality in even larger measure, though the abstract nature of the literature in this area certainly makes it particularly difficult to avoid. Question 5 was the third most popular question and here answers varied. One or two simply rehearsed a tutorial essay on the Court of Justice. One or two tried to provide a fuller answer by grappling not only with how much legitimacy the ECJ might enjoy to tackle such a high-politics issue as budget-deficit control, but also how practical it might be. The only other questions to attract more than two takers were 6 (dealt with sensibly and competently) and 9 (where candidates did not display much familiarity with the circumstances in which monetary union was born). Overall distribution of answers by question: 1 – 6; 2 – 1; 3 – 0; 4 – 2; 5 – 4; 6 – 3; 7 – 6; 8 – 0; 9 – 3; 10 – 2; 11 – 0; 12 – 0.

ECONOMICS:

300 Quantitative Economics

This report covers all candidates from all FHS’s who sat the examination in TT2012. After allowing for withdrawals there were 249 candidates for this paper (91 E&M, 8 H&E and 150 PPE). The summary statistics for the distribution of agreed marks are as follows:

Percentiles	Smallest		
1%	30	0	
5%	42	7	
10%	46	30	Obs 249
25%	58	33	Sum of Wgt. 249
50%	66		Mean 63.95181
	Largest		Std. Dev. 13.16266
75%	74	84	
90%	79	84	Variance 173.2557
95%	82	85	Skewness -1.097321
99%	84	88	Kurtosis 5.589946

The distribution of agreed marks by Class was as follows:

class	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
-----+-----			
1	95	38.15	38.15
2.1	74	29.72	67.87
2.2	48	19.28	87.15
3	22	8.84	95.98
pass	8	3.21	99.20
fail	2	0.80	100.00
-----+-----			
Total	249	100.00	

This paper continues to discriminate between well-prepared candidates and the less well-prepared. Consequently a large proportion of candidates were able to do very well with 38% achieving a 1st and a further 30% getting 2.i's whilst, as in previous years, there was also a significant number of candidates who managed to do very badly. Overall, the paper did not seem to raise any major issues however the Assessors and Examiners noted the following points – some of which have been raised in previous years.

- Once more, very few candidates attempted Q5 (Applied Macro). Remains a great shame and the Assessors, Examiners and the course Convenor would like to reiterate their encouragement to candidates and their tutors to give this part of the course its due weight in their studies and in their exam preparation.
- As in previous years many students failed to give clear explanations/commentary alongside their calculations. This is regrettable in two ways: firstly it makes the answers rather superficial and prevents candidates displaying the full breadth and depth of their knowledge; secondly where the calculations went awry it made it difficult for the Assessors to know whether the candidate really knew what they were doing and to award marks accordingly. Both of these problems cause candidates to either lose, or fail to pick up marks.
- When asked to comment on regression output there was a tendency for candidates to focus their discussion on the economic and policy significance of the coefficients and to ignore the evidence on their statistical significance. The best answers showed a balance of both.
- There was some reliance on regurgitation of generally accurate but largely irrelevant material. There were examples of this in the answers to most questions but prime amongst these were Q1(or) which focussed squarely on poverty analysis yet provoked

a number of answers which discussed inequality measures in detail without mentioning poverty.

- A number of candidates chose to answer Q1(d) without using the LATE framework as directed by the question and instead described the standard linear regression treatment of IV. The Assessors would remind candidates of the importance of answering the question.

301 Macroeconomics

The overall standard of the scripts for this paper was very good and the examiners felt that the technical knowledge shown by candidates was better than in recent years. Some candidates fell into the trap of writing too much for section A questions (worth one third of the overall marks) and then running out of time for the section B questions. This tends to limit the overall mark achieved by candidates.

The strengths and weaknesses of candidates' answers on a question by question basis are discussed in the remainder of this report.

Question 1 (medium-run effects of a positive trade shock). A common mistake for this question was to ignore the instruction in the question that the ERU curve is vertical and to instead use the more common negatively sloped ERU curve. Only the best candidates used the vertical ERU curve and pointed out that the trade shock shifts out both the AD and BT lines by an identical vertical distance such that at the new medium-run equilibrium the real exchange rate is appreciated but trade is balanced due to the effects of larger export quantities being offset by the appreciation. Weaker candidates shifted only the AD line, or shifted both the AD and BT lines but were vague on the size of the BT shift and the final outcome for the trade balance at the new equilibrium point.

Question 2 (conditions for real interest rate parity). Candidates demonstrated knowledge of the UIP condition in nominal and real terms but were often less clear than they might have been on how these concepts relate to the question. The better answers were clear at the outset that real exchange rate stability is necessary for real interest rate parity and provided some justification for real exchange rate stability.

Question 3 EITHER (unexpected demand shock under alternative specifications of the Phillips curve). This question was well answered. Candidates were clear on the differences in the time paths for inflation under adaptive expectations and the New Keynesian Phillips Curve and often reproduced the diagram on this comparison that is in the lecture slides. Only the very best candidates provided some intuition/justification for the size of the initial jump in the inflation rate under the New Keynesian Phillips Curve.

Question 3 OR (determinants of inflation bias). A number of candidates struggled with the meaning of macroeconomic parameters in this question and simply provided a standard exposition of the inflation bias. Candidates receiving higher marks for this question explained (using either maths or a diagram and in some cases both) how the size of inflation bias varies with the excess output target, the slope of the Phillips curve and policy-maker preferences. Some candidates also tried to relate the bias to the policy-maker discount rate.

Question 4 (beta and sigma convergence). Most candidates were able to provide good definitions of convergence concepts, though many were less clear than they might have been in explaining that under beta convergence growth is negatively related to income per capita at the start of an observation period (as opposed to simply the average level of income per capita). Only the best candidates explained that beta convergence need not imply sigma convergence (since estimated beta convergence does not rule out catching up and overtaking) whereas sigma convergence does imply beta convergence under standard assumptions. Weaker candidates showed a lack of familiarity with the relevant concepts

and often tried to define beta convergence as unconditional convergence and sigma convergence as conditional convergence.

Question 5 (Ricardian Equivalence). The majority of candidates were able to see through the challenge to Ricardian Equivalence offered in the question (governments setting their fiscal plans only to the end of the Parliament) and noted that rational consumers would save the tax cut to pay the tax liability that must be imposed by some future government. Some candidates noted that if plans for tax repayments are left unspecified by the current government then there may be uncertainty over whether debt is to be repaid via future tax rises or future government spending cuts and that this distinction matters for current expenditure and its response to the tax cut. Surprisingly, many candidates relied on a verbal explanation for the basic Ricardian Equivalence point rather than explaining the concept using the budget constraint and other tools set out in the lecture slides.

Question 6 EITHER (importance of flat labour supply curves to New Keynesian sticky price theories). Most candidates provided very clear explanations of the private benefit to firms of price adjustment and how this declines with a flatter marginal cost curve (and hence a flatter labour supply curve) and then explained how RBC theory generates an elastic labour supply curve. Candidates had less to say on alternative explanations for flat labour supply. Some cited a flat WS curve but were not explicit about reasons for trade unions imposing a flat WS curve, e.g. trading a real wage premium for real wage stability.

Question 6 OR (RBC theory and the elasticity of labour supply). Drawing on the lecture slides most candidates produced solid RBC expositions using the model Euler equations to discuss the effects of a technology shock. The advantages for RBC theory of greater female participation in the labour market were clear to candidates, but, disappointingly, few candidates tried to challenge standard thinking here. Only the very best candidates pointed out that rising female participation may cause the elasticity of female labour supply to converge on that for males, e.g. due to stronger income effects for leisure as female earnings increase.

Question 7 (impact of a rise in government spending). This question appears to have taken candidates by surprise. There were relatively few answers and most of them contained quite basic mistakes. For instance, several candidates failed to recognise part (i) as the standard balanced budget multiplier. In part (ii) very few candidates saw that the multiplier would still be unity in the inter-temporal set-up because the fall in the marginal propensity to consume that limits the second round effects of the rise in government spending is offset by a smoothing of the accompanying tax liability across several periods. In part (iii) many candidates stated that inflation would rise and real interest rates would fall but then failed to link this to a rise in current period consumption (due to standard inter-temporal substitution effects). Similarly, the open economy consequences of a fall in the real interest rate often contained errors.

Question 8 (interpreting movements in the Phillips curve). This was well answered. Almost all candidates acknowledged an upward shift of the short-run Phillips curve and most cited potential causes of such a shock. The very best answers noted a simultaneous negative IS shock that leaves the optimal policy response unclear – it could be that policy-makers have not increased interest rates in response to the rise in inflation because the output loss from a negative IS shock predicts future inflation stabilisation. Candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge of recent UK macroeconomic history.

Question 9 (central bank loss functions, inflation targets and price path targets). Candidates' answers covered a wide range of possible explanations for the absence of explicit output targets in most countries. These included the idea that output is not a choice variable for monetary policy in a natural rate model and the challenges in measuring output, especially relative to inflation. For the second part of the question most

candidates produced standard analysis of the advantages of a price path target at the zero lower bound for interest rates. Only the best answers provided a discussion of the disadvantages of price path targets.

Question 10 (macroeconomic imbalances in the Eurozone). This question elicited some very good answers. Most candidates used the Swann diagram to good effect in the first part, showing how a rightward shift of the AD line induced problems of trade deficits and uncompetitive real exchange rates in many countries. For the second part of the question candidates noted that a counter-cyclical fiscal policy should have been used to offset excessive private debt in Southern Europe and excessive private saving in Northern Europe. Candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge of the issues and analysis relating to the recent macroeconomic problems in Europe.

Question 11 (catch-up growth and technology absorption). This question produced solid answers though many candidates could have done more to distinguish themselves. For the first part of the question most candidates used a standard growth model to make the point that the technological leader would diverge unless there is some mechanism for technology transfer, but few noted that even given such a mechanism the most likely outcome is convergence in growth rates but not in income levels (assuming that technology cannot diffuse instantly). For the second part of the question most candidates highlighted the key role of absorptive capacity, but only the very best answers had specific examples of policies that had worked in practice, most candidates simply made vague statements about improving skills/education.

302 Microeconomics

Overall statistics: average mark 64.3, standard deviation 6.5.

Part A

1. One-person economy (31% answered, average 50.5, std dev 20.4) Answers to this question were weak on average. While most were able to calculate the marginal rates of substitution and transformation, and to show that the given allocation was efficient, many found the general equilibrium aspects of the question more difficult.
2. Externality (66% answered, average mark 64.3, std dev 18.1) This question had two people, both with quasi-linear utilities. One caused a negative externality that affected the other. A surprisingly large number of candidates mechanically differentiated the externality-generator's utility function (which was always increasing) without imposing the constraint that there was a maximum feasible level of the externality (which was the optimum for the generator). In general, though, even if the first part was not correctly solved most candidates were able to solve the structured problem when the agents acted competitively and property rights were specified, and made appropriate comments about take-it-or-leave-it offers and the Coase theorem.
3. Iterated deletion of dominated strategy; collusion and repetition (75% answered, average mark 68.9, std dev 13.1) This was well done in general. Most knew what iterated deletion of strictly dominated strategies is and how to apply it. The second half required candidates to consider collusion in a repeated prisoner's dilemma: while most understood the issues the calculation of the critical discount factor proved more problematic. Many presented the equation that defines the critical value without explaining how they obtained it.
4. Risk attitudes, risk sharing, risk pooling, stochastic dominance (71% answered, average mark 62.7, std dev 11.7) Most were able to show that the agent is risk averse

and to draw the relevant diagram. Fewer were able to use the same diagram to show that risk sharing would be beneficial: all that needed to be shown was that the risk-sharing allocation lies on the chord connecting the two allocations on the indifference curve and thus, by risk aversion, is better than either allocation on the indifference curve. Part (c), covering risk pooling, was more difficult. Many did not calculate the payoffs in the three possible outcomes correctly (often forgetting that the proceeds would be shared). The best candidates worked out that the payoffs with risk pooling had the same mean but a smaller spread than the payoffs without risk pooling.

5. Principal-agent tradeoffs (55% answered, average mark 65.4, std dev 10.8) The question did not require calculations, though many chose to solve a fully specified model. Instead what was expected was good knowledge of the economics underlying a standard principal-agent model and of the key results. Full marks in the final part required recognition of the fact that it may not be optimal to require high effort when effort is observable. Most focussed only on the (standard) case where high effort is optimal in both the observable and unobservable cases so there is an agency cost.

Part B

6. Factor price equalisation (17% answered, average mark 65.3, std dev 8.3). The question asked whether the fact that workers were reluctant to move across borders in the EU explains why factor prices are not equal. Most candidates appropriately noted that factor mobility is not necessary for factor price equalization and gave a good description and discussion of the factor price equalization theorem of international trade theory.
7. Public goods and information (63% answered, average mark 63.8, std dev 4.6). This was by far the most popular of the essay questions. Most explained what a public good is, characterized a Pareto optimal allocation with a public good (the Samuelson rule), and the problem that private information causes in trying to implement a Lindahl equilibrium. Some also discussed Clarke-Groves-type taxes. Some chose to cover the Weitzman “prices-v-quantities” model, which was not strictly speaking relevant as the question was about *privately held information*.
8. Horizontal mergers (20% answered, average mark 65.3, std dev 7.3). Good answers covered the Williamson trade-off between cost efficiency and market power, considered the effects of mergers in standard oligopoly models and addressed the possibility that a merger might make collusion more likely.
9. Expected utility foundations (30% answered, average mark 63.7, std dev 6.2). The best answers discussed the axioms underlying EU theory, especially the independence axiom, and mentioned anomalies such as the Allais paradox. Several, though, had clearly never heard of the axiomatic framework and instead gave rather circular answers of the form: “it is reasonable to maximize utility, when there is risk we use expected utility, so it is reasonable to maximize expected utility”. Some of these also covered the St Petersburg paradox and showed how expected utility is used in insurance problems, which were not wrong but did not get to the heart of the question.
10. Signalling (40% answered, average mark 65.1, std dev 7.0). This was a question on job market signalling, based around the idea that Mozart had moved to Vienna, hoping for a job, but had not contacted the emperor. The idea was that Mozart was playing hard

to get and therefore signalling his quality. There were some excellent discussions of signalling and some good attempts to apply the standard model to the particular situation of the question. At least one candidate thought that the fact that Mozart was waiting for the emperor to call him meant that the emperor would telephone.

11. Cournot, Stackelberg, comparative statics (40% answered, average mark 65.6, std dev 6.5). This was the problem question. It was highly structured (for example part (b) had eight different sub-questions, one of which had three parts), and covered Cournot and Stackelberg duopoly equilibria with linear demand and different marginal costs. Knowledge of the envelope theorem would also have helped, though it was not essential for answering the question. Some candidates tried to do very large amounts of calculation when a simpler answer, with an overview of the problem, was required, and failed to notice that the solutions to part (a) could help with part (b).

303 Microeconomic Theory

Statistics from 42 candidates (28PPE, 14 E&M).

All: 32% (70s), 35% (60s), 23% (50s), 10% (40s and 30s).

Part A

1. Popular question (90% take-up). Well answered, with four answers scoring 80 or more, with most answers scoring in the 60s, with an overall average of 63.
2. Popular question (95% take-up). Very well answered, with about half scoring 70 or more, with an overall average of 69.
3. Quite popular question (70% take-up). Poorly answered, with only one answer scoring above 70, and most answers scoring in the 30s.
4. Less popular question (42% take-up). Not that well answered, marks ranging from 70 down to 40, with an average of 57.

Part B

5. Most popular question (71% take-up). Reasonably well answered, with the vast majority getting marks in the 60-75 range.
6. Popular question (57% take-up). Well answered, with a quarter scoring 70 or more, and a quarter scoring below 60. Quite a discriminating question.
7. Least popular question (6% take-up). There were no good answers to the question.
8. Popular question (64% take-up). Generally well answered, but with a good spread of marks.

304 Money and Banking

The overall standard of the scripts for this paper was very good. Candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge of theory and the applied/policy literature. All but one of the questions elicited at least one answer, with questions 2 EITHER and 4 (section A) and 7 EITHER (section B) being amongst the most popular.

The strengths and weaknesses of candidates' answers on a question by question basis are discussed in the remainder of this report.

Question 1 (New Keynesian models and inflation persistence). Most candidates produced a solid exposition of the material from the textbooks and concentrated on the Taylor model as an example of a model in which anticipated changes in monetary policy do not induce sluggish adjustment of the inflation rate. Similarly, most candidates presented a version of the Fuhrer-Moore model in which anticipated monetary policy changes can induce inflation persistence, but only the best candidates had a clear explanation of the mechanics of that model and the limitations of the maintained assumptions in that approach.

Question 2 EITHER (sovereign default and bank lending). This question elicited some excellent answers. Most candidates highlighted the close link between sovereigns and their banks and the role that national regulators have played in fostering this link. Candidates discussed the impact of default on bank capital, the external finance premium for bank funding and bank loan supply. Other candidates noted the possibility of a narrow lending channel operating if fears over bank solvency (post sovereign default) induced bank runs that reduced the liquidity of banks. Candidates showed excellent knowledge of recent events in the Eurozone and the slow credit crunch that has taken hold as a result.

Question 2 OR (special role of bank reserves in the lending channel). This question attracted fewer answers but those candidates who did attempt it discussed relevant material. Most answers argued that deposits must be backed by reserves and then discussed why it is that deposits represent the cheapest source of funding for banks and that any loss of deposits tends to raise the average cost of bank funds and hence the price of the loans that they can offer.

Question 3 (the Cagan model and the funding of an increased fiscal deficit). Most candidates noted that the validity of the statement in the question depends on whether a country starts to the left or right of the turning point for the long-run (equilibrium) seigniorage revenue function. The more probing answers analysed the foundations for a distinction between short-run and long-run revenue functions and hence the basis for different revenue responses across time horizons.

Question 4 (practical relevance of the Rogoff and Walsh models of central banks). This was a popular question and candidates produced accurate versions of the Rogoff and Walsh solutions to inflation bias. A number of candidates made the point that the Rogoff model predicts a negative association between central bank independence and inflation, which is observed in the data, but also a positive association between central bank independence and output variance that appears not to be observed in the data. The Walsh contracts solution to inflation bias was criticised on the grounds that the incentive structures facing central banks do not appear to depend on Walsh-style contracts.

Question 5 (yield curve inversion). Candidates discussed a wide range of possible explanations for inversion of the yield curve, including the possibility of a shift in long-run inflation expectations (the Ellingsen and Soderstrom/Romer and Romer argument), the possibility of preferred space investors who locate at the long end of the yield curve and force down yields at that point and possible shifts in the term premium for long-dated assets. However, there were few truly comprehensive discussions, and many candidates failed to highlight which of the proposed explanations were consistent with the Expectations Hypothesis and which were not.

Question 6 (explaining the monetization of a barter economy) elicited a small number of answers but the candidates who attempted the question showed a good appreciation of the key features of the historical experience with monetization of a barter economy. Candidates highlighted the key role of the state in backing a fiat money and argued that models such as that due to Kiyotaki and Moore place relatively little emphasis on this role for the state.

Question 7 EITHER (combining credit easing with quantitative easing). This proved to be a very popular question and candidates typically approached it by defining quantitative easing and highlighting its limitations should investors be reluctant to rebalance their portfolios towards private sector assets and then arguing that some form of credit/qualitative easing, whereby central banks purchase or take as collateral private sector assets, could increase policy effectiveness in such circumstances. The best answers challenged the idea that credit/qualitative easing would boost aggregate demand, citing a reluctance to spend on the part of firms and households, and discussed risks to central

banks accepting private assets on their balance sheets, e.g. exposure to losses in the event of default.

Question 7 OR (unconventional monetary policy and the credibility/transparency of central banks). This proved much less popular than 7 EITHER. On the credibility of central banks, candidates discussed the inflation threat from quantitative easing should policies to unwind QE take effect only slowly or partially, and offered good discussions of the factors that might impede the exit from QE and so create the risk of excess inflation due to too much money in circulation. The transparency part of the question was less well covered. Candidates did not offer detailed discussions of how central banks justify the scale/objectives of quantitative easing – central banks have been criticised for a lack of clarity on these points.

Question 8 (risks from extended lender of last resort function). The answers to this question cited the moral hazard associated with central banks entering the frame as a source of liquidity for a larger group of financial intermediaries for an extended period. There was also discussion of possible losses at central banks should relatively risky collateral return a capital loss. However, in doing this some candidates confused extended liquidity provision by the central banks with the related but distinct programme of quantitative easing addressed in question 7.

Question 9 (capital requirements and financial stability). This question elicited relatively few answers. Candidates were aware of the basic trade-offs at stake – the gains from better capitalized banks in the long-run versus the costs of a reduced supply of credit in the short-run. But more nuanced issues such as the wisdom of common international capital standards given the differences in what national regulators count as capital were neglected, as was the question of whether capital standards should vary pro-cyclically. Very few candidates touched on the details of the recent Vickers commission report and how those proposals may overcome some of the basic trade-offs associated with capital restrictions.

Question 10 (problems with empirical studies of monetary policy). This was a very unpopular question and was typically very badly answered. Candidates often chose to illustrate their answers using empirical papers on Taylor rules (in which monetary policy is the dependent variable) rather than empirical studies in which monetary policy was an explanatory variable.

Question 11 (Federal Reserve interest rate projections). This was a straightforward question and generally well answered. Candidates discussed the importance of the central bank guiding private expectations over future monetary policy and noted that interest rate forecasts might be interpreted as a clearer signal to the private sector than are simple statements and press releases concerning the direction of future monetary policy. Some candidates displayed excellent knowledge of recent Federal Reserve decisions and criticisms of them, for instance the Fed has been criticised for releasing individual FOMC member forecasts (highlighting disagreements between members) rather than a consensus forecast.

Question 12 (inflation as a fiscal phenomenon). This question was not attempted by any candidate.

305 Public Economics

42 candidates took the paper. 36 PPE, 6 E&M. The answers were generally of satisfactory quality demonstrating a sound grasp of the relevant theory and awareness of empirical evidence.

Q1: 3 attempts.

Q2: 29 attempts. This was a relatively straightforward optimal income tax question. Good answers showed awareness of the modelling choices underlying the Mirrlees-Vickrey

approach, accurate account of the logic of the Seade-Mirrlees no distortion result, and the more recent developments as outlined in the Mirrlees Review.

Q3: 20 attempts. Commodity tax question. Good answers were clear on the basic mathematical model and the effects of alternative assumptions of income tax treatments.

Q4: 2 attempts.

Q5: 12 attempts. Good answers not only outlined institutional details and policy, but also attempted to relate these to lessons from theoretical OLG models.

Q6: 2 attempts.

Q7: 19 attempts. Almost all answers focused on the UK system. Good answers included Rothschild-Stiglitz type formal arguments but also showed institutional knowledge.

Q8: 27 attempts. This was a straightforward education question. Most students answered the question: "Tell me anything you ever learned about education." which was unfortunately not the question asked. Good answers channelled the education knowledge along the question asked and discussed, e.g., the difference in who makes the decision; potential of commuting; the effect of competition on schools vs. universities; externalities of school and university education; private returns to school and university education.

Q9: only 4 attempts.

Q10: 8 attempts. A difficult political economy questions as it required thinking about the assumptions of the textbook model. Consequently, it was often not answered well. Good answers discussed, e.g., that many times there are only two candidates (UK, US), often one policy variable is indeed very important or several policy variables can be subsumed under one combined policy variable. On the other hand, even with only two candidates, the possibility to abstain from voting can have effects. A Hotelling model of two vs. three candidates could have been mentioned.

306 Economics of Industry

34 students took the paper, split equally between PPE and E&M. 26% achieved a first class score, 67% an upper second, and the remainder a lower second class score. The answers were judged to be of a better than usual standard this year. The best students combined intuitive answers with the ability to demonstrate the intuitions more formally, backed up by evidence where available. The most popular questions were:

Q2 (25 attempts). Collusion. Generally well answered. Those who could combine intuition and formality in their arguments had the best scores.

Q3. (18 attempts). Entry accommodation. The better answers drew comparisons between the price setting and quantity setting cases. Extra credit was available for those who could derive and explain the taxonomy of business strategies properly.

Q5 OR (14 attempts). Price discrimination. The quality of answers varied. The best were able to explain intuitively and clearly why 3rd degree price discrimination could have ambiguous effects on welfare.

Q6 (9 attempts) Advertising. The better candidates made an effort to answer the question, rather than merely putting down the main models.

Q10 (13 attempts). Vertical. Generally well answered.

307 Labour Economics and Industrial Relations

This paper was sat by 28 candidates, 14 from PPE and 14 from Economics & Management. It was an unusual year. Whilst just 2 candidates achieved marks below 60 (and one of these only marginally), it was disappointing that only four candidates scored above 70. In other words, mostly solid performances but very little that was outstanding. All questions were attempted with the exception of 4a (the impact of low skilled immigration), 11 (human resource management), 12 (intergenerational patterns of

earnings) and 13 (employers' associations). The most popular questions were 4b (discrimination), 5 (why people join unions) and 1a (UK national minimum wage). Also well subscribed were 8 (training subsidies), 7a (rates of return to higher education) and 3 (seniority pay).

The better candidates showed a good mastery of the central theory and knowledge of the important empirical and historical material. The main deficiency, even in the better scripts, was a failure to use imagination or intellectual initiative. Too often candidates seemed to be attempting to replicate tutorial essays, rather than engaging with the particular nuances of the exam questions.

Comments on the more popular questions:

Question 4b (Discrimination). Most candidates exhibited an understanding of the relevant models of discrimination, but the weaker ones failed to evaluate the relative importance of those models where informational asymmetries played a central role. Although most candidates were familiar with the standard decomposition of earnings into discrimination and average characteristics, there was relatively little reference to the empirical literature about this.

Question 5 (Why people join unions). Generally candidates displayed a good knowledge of the main approaches, but few managed to systematically use a theoretical approach to explore country differences.

Question 1a (National Minimum Wage). Answers were generally very good on employment effects, but most were less convincing on any positive effects or on placing minimum wage legislation in the broader context of labour market policy.

Question 8 (Training subsidies). Most candidates were familiar with the range of standard arguments for and against subsidies, but weaker answers failed to display any depth of analysis – for example an answer might mention distributional (second chance) arguments but not go on to explore what conditions were needed to ensure that distributional aims were fulfilled. The better answers established a strong theoretical framework (such as the Steven's model or, less frequently, the low-skill equilibrium framework) and linked it directly to the question.

Question 7 (Rates of return to higher education). Some good answers but too many failed to distinguish sufficiently clearly between private and social returns.

Question 3 (Seniority pay). Some very good answers to this question.

308 International Economics

39 candidates sat the paper (20 PPE, 18 E&M, 1 H&E). The average grade was 66.9, with 11 scripts at or above 70, 25 in the 60s, and 3 in the 50s. In general the paper was well-answered. The paper contained twelve questions, four of which were either-or, and thus was relatively generous. All questions were answered. The most popular were Q3 (Infant-industry and other arguments for protection, $n = 22$), Q10 (currency crisis model, $n = 19$), Q5 (preferential trade agreements, $n = 16$) and Q4 (explanations of trade between developed countries, $n = 14$). The best answers showed sophistication in using the models, and critical awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of particular models. In addition good answers used empirical evidence where appropriate. Questions that were relatively long, or that required detailed application of particular models, were less popular.

309 Command and Transitional Economies

Eight candidates sat this paper, five from PPE, two from E&M, and one from History & Economics (one registered candidate withdrew from the examination). The general standard was very good. The average of the eight exam marks was 67 and there were three First Class scripts and five in the Upper Second classification. Candidates were balanced

in their choices of questions related to command economies and attempts at reform (Q 1-4) and the economics of transition (Q 5-10). Candidates answered 10 of the 13 questions on the exam paper (not Q2 Either on technological innovation, Q4 on the second economy, or Q10 Either on the global financial crisis). Two of the questions were explicitly about the economy of China: Q7 Either (one answer) and Q10 Or (two answers). Candidates made use of economic concepts and simple models (on average 1 diagram and 2 equations per script) and demonstrated a reasonably good grasp of the facts and sources (on average 25 statistics and 11 sources cited per script). Top marks on answers were achieved by candidates who addressed fully the questions posed and wrote answers that demonstrated knowledge of the relevant issues derived from material covered in lectures and tutorials. The distribution of answers by question was as follows: Q1, 3; Q2 Either, 0; Q2 Or, 1; Q3, 2; Q4, 0; Q5, 4; Q6, 5; Q7 Either, 1; Q7 Or, 3; Q8, 2; Q9, 1; Q 10 Either, 0, Q10 Or, 2.

310 Economics of Developing Countries

Fifty candidates took this paper with 8 achieving marks of 70% or more. Six candidates got marks between 58% and 54%, with 54% being the lowest mark. In general, the paper was well done. The most popular micro questions were Q5 on microcredit organisations, Q3 on education, Q2 on rural-urban migration and income inequality, and Q8 on fertility. The most popular macro questions were Q7(O) on foreign aid, Q6(E) on total factor productivity and growth, and Q7(E) on capital flows to poor countries. Only two questions were not attempted – Q6(O) on debt and growth, and Q9(O) on macroeconomic adjustment.

In general, candidates did attempt to answer the question that was asked. There were some excellent scripts showing knowledge of both theory and empirical information and relating the one to the other. The weaker candidates trotted out models that they had learned but which were not directly relevant to the question asked. Such models included the Solow growth model and the Eswaran-Kotwal model. There was also sometimes excessive reliance on rather dated theory, notably concerning rural-urban migration and international trade, where an appreciation of more recent developments in economic geography would have been welcome.

311 British Economic History since 1870

The exam was taken by 48 students this year, as compared with 39 last year. These 48 students were divided into 19 from Economics & Management, 8 from History & Economics, 2 from Modern History, and 19 from Phil, Politics & Econ. This is a promising increase, though it looks as though enrolment has dropped for next year. The exam was purposefully designed so that some questions would be more popular than others. The breakdown of answers by question was:
Q1 – 34; Q2 – 30; Q3 – 21; Q4 – 12; Q5 – 3; Q6 – 0; Q7 – 6; Q8 – 16; Q9 – 0; Q10 – 10; Q11 – 6.

Questions 1 and 2 worked well. They were broad questions with moderate difficulty, and so they attracted a large number of answers with a wide range of quality. Question 3 did not work well, as many students who answered it chose to write about the downsides of the interwar gold standard, which was not what the question asked. Question 4, though less popular, worked well, since requiring students argue the more difficult side of an issue can sort out which ones know the material better. Even though Question 5 was covered in the lectures and more than one reading, it was not generally well answered. Question 6 was expected not to attract many answers, and it did not.

Question 7 was effective at sorting out the students who had done the relevant readings and those who had not. Question 8 was moderately popular, straightforward, and generally well answered. Questions 9 and 10 were both less popular than expected; these were intended to be open-ended "softball" questions that would let students bring in their most preferred material from different eras covered by the course. Students seem to prefer answering questions that are more narrowly connected to the readings and lectures, and which more closely resemble their tutorial essays. Question 11 referred to one specific Tomlinson article. Most students took an alternative interpretation of this question that was fair given its wording, but which left them largely unable to answer the part of the question about the effects of decline narratives on British policy. 23% of exams received a score 70 or above, and 2% received a score 59 or below. This is in line with previous years.

314 Econometrics

46 students took the exam, half of them from PPE and half from E&M. The overall performance was very good: 30% (70s-80s), 52% (60s), 13% (50s), 4% (40s). The average mark was 65%. Most students answered Q8 and Q9, none answered Q2 or Q6. The performance per question is as follows:

Students did quite well on the essay questions 1 and 3. Performance on question 5 was the weakest, typically due to a poor understanding of the identification conditions. Performance on question 4 was OK on average, but had the highest variance. Students did very well on questions 7 and 9, and they excelled on question 8 (average mark 80%), partly because it was somewhat easier than the rest of the questions.

315 Comparative Demographic Systems

Overall mean 64.0; Essay mean 62.0; Quantitative mean 67.9

Q.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A.	5	2	2	0	9	5	5	1	11	3	8	9
mean	59	62	55	-	60	62	62	71	65	73	65	68

There were 20 candidates, 3 from PPE (Politics), 5 from PPE Economics, 11 from Economics and Management and 1 from History and Economics. The overall average was 64, the same as the previous two years. In this examination candidates are required to answer three questions of equal weighting. There were two 'classic' essay questions and one further question which requires both a quantitative demographic analysis and a series of short comments which test the candidate's ability to interpret and contextualise the results. In that question, 65% of the marks are given for the quantitative answers and 35% to comments on the significance of the results and other tests of demographic understanding. As usual the average mark and standard deviation of the quantitative answers was higher than for the essay answers. Among the three PPE Politics candidates, the average mark was 72 and all three secured First-class marks. In PPE Economics, the average mark was 66 and only candidate secured a first-class mark although one other was very close. There was also one 2.2 mark. In Economics and Management the average was 61. No candidate was awarded a first-class mark and four were awarded a 2.2 mark. In view of the relatively small numbers of candidates from each degree, comments about individual questions are given for all degrees together. In the essay questions the favourite topic was Q9 (on international migration, 11 responses). On the whole the answers were good and some showed impressive knowledge of the diversity of migration patterns to, and from specific countries. The best answers were able to give data on migration flows, showed understanding of the importance of policy in the migration process and discussed the demographic, economic and social consequences of migration in a variety of countries.

Question 5 (on population growth / population ageing) was also popular (9 answers) but was much less well done. Too many candidates failed to read the question and provided what seemed to be pre-prepared routine essays devoted to population ageing. In particular, these more generic responses neglected to deal with the co-existence of ageing with population growth in other parts of the world. Few candidates understood that a population could experience growth and ageing at the same time, and the benefits of ageing in the form of the demographic bonus tended to be overlooked. Questions 1, 6 and 7 (on population projections, population policies and the mortality transition respectively) each attracted 5 answers. Answers to questions 6 and 7 were mostly quite good. Answers to question 1 were disappointing. No candidates showed any knowledge about the United Nations population projections and how they are produced, or of the relative variability of the different components of population change. Answers tended to avoid the broader picture, turning into discussions of fertility or mortality trends with very little technical understanding.

Among the quantitative questions, questions 11 (a comparison of Russian and English mortality data) and 12 (a Chinese dataset for fertility analysis and projection) proved almost equally popular with 8 and 9 answers respectively. The two-part question 10 had only three takers. Overall, there were two particularly weak answers (third-class mark) but others scored particularly highly. Such high marks in these quantitative questions can only be obtained if candidates not only perform the calculations well but also show knowledge of the populations involved and the demographic and wider significance of the data and of their results.

316 Economics of OECD Countries

There were 24 candidates (15 E&M (16 originally; 1 withdrawn); 3 H&E; 6 PPE). The overall standard of scripts was good. Many students were able to make good use of theory to support their arguments and provide country-specific examples. Many candidates displayed a good knowledge of the empirical literature. Some candidates made very good use of the Tables provided.

Question 1 on the Golden Age was a very popular answer. It was attempted by 16 candidates. Weaker answers gave a description of the Golden Age with little reference to the “social pacts”.

Question 2 on Global Imbalances was answered by only 2 candidates.

Question 3 on the Exchange Rate Mechanism, had some very good answers. Those candidates showed good knowledge of the system and made good use of theory to support their arguments. Four students attempted it.

Question 4 on Unemployment was the most popular question. Eighteen students attempted it. The weaker answers focused on labour market institutions and failed to analyse any specific shocks. The oil price shocks of the seventies were the most popular example given by the candidates. Better answers discussed a variety of shocks that hit the OECD over the last 40 years.

Question 5 either on Inflation targeting was answered by two candidates.

Question 5 or on Financial Stability and Central Bank Independence was attempted by three candidates. Weaker answers showed difficulties with the definition of financial stability.

Question 6 on US fiscal policy was attempted by 3 candidates. Weaker answers failed to discuss well the differences in the macroeconomic environment.

Question 7 on productivity in the US and Europe was answered by four candidates.

Weaker answers failed to discuss differences in productivity in the service sector, which was the focus of the question.

Question 8 on the Euro Zone was a popular question and generated some very good answers. Nine candidates attempted it.

Question 9 was not attempted by any candidate.

Question 10 on the ageing of the population in Japan was a popular answer. Ten candidates answered it.

Question 11 on Japan's labour market institutions was answered by two candidates.

318 Finance

Exam results were very strong. Results were particularly good in the quantitative section of the exam (Section B), with most students choosing to answer question 7. Only a few students chose to answer question 6 in this section, and the results of those who tried this question were generally weaker. Very few students chose to answer two quantitative questions. Section A results were also solid across all questions. In general the good results obtained seem to be a consequence of two factors: well prepared students and a relatively easy exam (some of the questions were relatively easy and unsurprisingly students were inclined to choose those questions).

Specific comments about the questions in Section A:

Question 1 was relatively easy, the only recurring mistake observed is that many students failed to notice that two stocks with equal variance and perfectly positively correlated will necessarily have identical betas. This means that when trying to answer part (d) of the question it was a mistake to attribute the discrepancy in returns to differences in systematic risk.

Question 2, was not necessarily an easy question but there were not many systematic mistakes. Not many people chose to answer this question.

Question 3 was also an easy question and one of the most favoured by students in section A. Most of them did very well, and most of the variation in marks came from part (c). While most answers correctly pointed out to portfolios of puts being more valuable than a put written on the portfolio (S&P500) there was considerable variation in the quality of the explanation of why this is the case.

In Question 4 the most problematic part of the question seems to have been part (d). Most answers here missed the fact that although the merger may result in lower borrowing costs, this does not imply that the cost of capital for the combined entity will now be lower as the assets of each of the initially distinct entities will not be there to back the debt of both original companies. If anything what the merger will achieve is a transfer from equityholders to debtholders.

Question 5 was another question where students tended to do well. Perhaps the most common mistake, in part (b), was that students often failed to notice that the presence of personal taxes per se is not enough to erode the corporate debt tax shield. What is required is that the personal tax rate on interest income be larger than the effective personal tax rate on equity income (a blend of the tax on dividend income and capital gains).

Question 6 proved to be one of the most difficult questions in the exam and one of the less chosen ones. Most students made mistakes in the valuation of the project. Given the nature of the project, and the information provided, the easiest method to work with was the adjusted present value method (APV), this was even hinted in the question, yet many students chose to use the WACC or flow to equity methods (FTE) and inevitably encountered problems in coming up with the right discount rate to discount the project cash flows.

Question 7 was the most popular question in the exam. Most of those who chose this question did very well in parts (a), (b) and (c), and if anything they only encountered problems in part (d), where even when they correctly pointed out that the reason why

American calls written on non-dividend payment stocks are not worth more than their European counterparts is because it is never optimal to exercise these calls earlier most of them failed to explain convincingly why this is the case.

319 Game Theory

67 students sat the examination. One student handed in a blank worksheet. For the remaining 66 students, the average mark was 64%. There were 16 first-class scripts, 39 upper second-class scripts, 10 lower second-class scripts and 1 third-class script.

Question 1: 26 students attempted this question. The answers to this question were generally good. Some students struggled to apply the notion of weak dominance in part (b). In part (d), most students were not able to show satisfactorily that there could be no mixed-strategy equilibrium: a simple argument showed that the highest choice that is ever chosen with positive probability must be dominated.

Question 2: 43 students attempted this question, to mixed (worse than average) results. Most noticed that the normal form is 2×4 and found all equilibria (not just the ones in pure strategies). Part (c) proved difficult; very few candidates noticed the equivalence of pure-strategy equilibria in the imperfect-observation, sequential game with those in the simultaneous-move version. Nevertheless, many candidates made good progress on part (d).

Question 3: 16 students attempted this question. The answers were generally quite good. Only a handful of students were able to give nice examples of applications of psychological games in part (a).

Question 4: 51 students attempted this popular question, but performance was lower than average. Almost all the answers simply assumed that the equilibrium must be symmetric in part (a), but symmetric games can have asymmetric equilibria in general. Few students clearly explained the link between rationalizability and the iterated deletion of strictly dominated strategies. The discussion in part (c) of what rational players might do was generally poor: a good answer might have discussed the problem with coordinating on an asymmetric equilibrium in a one-shot game or the question of why firms would be willing to randomise in exactly the right way when indifferent to get the mixed-strategy equilibrium to work.

Question 5: Almost all candidates (65 in all) attempted this question, and the distribution of marks (64% average, wide variation in marks) reflected this. In part (a), some candidates did not derive the minmax values but simply asserted them. In parts (c)-(d), the key insight (which eluded about half of the candidates) was that asymmetric punishment can support the greatest joint payoffs in all periods but the last one. Part (e) went well.

Question 6: Only 7 candidates attempted this question, to somewhat better than average results. Part (a), which directly builds on literature covered in a lecture, went generally very well.

Question 7: 19 candidates attempted this question, to average results. Most identified the number of states correctly, but then did not compute transition probabilities carefully and precisely. Some students simply used the replicator dynamic instead of the one specified in the question. Part (e) went generally well, irrespective of prior mistakes.

Question 8: 39 candidates attempted this question. The solutions were generally quite good, in particular, parts (a)-(c) went well. Some candidates struggled with explaining the intuition for the results, in particular in part (d), where, as the discount factor increases, B becomes inclined not to offer an offer acceptable to S in period 1 for two distinct reasons (S requires more compensation, and B's own continuation value from being rejected also increases in δ).

320 Mathematical Methods

41 candidates sat the paper, of whom 16 were PPE students, 1 H&E and 24 E&M. The paper set this year was deliberately redesigned from last year's, with the early part(s) of each question being bookwork or a straightforward example. The strategy seems to have been successful in that the paper was more discriminating, and there were many excellent performances. There was, however, still a worrying tail of very poor performances, suggesting that some candidates were very unwise to have chosen the paper. This year there was no notable difference in performance between PPE and E&M candidates.

Statistics: ~12% (80s), ~24% (70s), ~24% (60s), ~20% (50s), ~7% (40s), ~7% (30s), ~5% (20s) .

Comments on Individual Questions (with minimum, average, and maximum mark awarded).

1 .Calculus (10 attempts; 25%, 54%, 80%).

Answers to this question were on the whole reasonably good. Most candidates forgot the remainder term of a Taylor series in part (a) and were rather too informal in part (b).

2. Calculus/Differential Equations (6 attempts; 5%, 23%, 60%) . This question seemed to attract weaker candidates. Part (I) was quite easy, though many candidates may have been put off by the picture. Part (II) was quite hard (overambitious?) and answers were on the whole poor.

3.Differential Equations (39 attempts; 20%, 62%, 95%) Candidates found this question quite straightforward and it was on the whole answered well.

4. Calculus (27 attempts; 15%, 48%, 85%). This question was on the whole answered poorly. Parts (b) and (c) were not hard but how to apply the implicit function theorem was evidently not well understood by many candidates.

5. Calculus (35 attempts; 10%, 61%, 95%). This was a straightforward question and was on the whole answered well. Weaker candidates mishandled or forgot about complementary slackness.

6.Probability (26 attempts; 15%, 67%, 95%) . This was quite an easy question and produced many high-scoring answers. A surprisingly large number of candidates had difficulties in remembering some basic definitions.

7. Probability (22 attempts; 20%, 62%, 95%). This was on the whole answered well.

8. Linear Algebra (40 attempts; 10%, 64%, 100%). This was a straightforward question and answers were on the whole good, although quite a number of candidates had the matrix transposed in part (c.i).

[Martin Ceadel, Chair FHS PPE Examiners 2012: 25/09/12]