PLC



Personalised Learning Checklist

GCE Economics A Level (AQA)

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	Progress
Course content	(please select)
Individuals, firms, markets and market failure	
4.1.1 Economic methodology and the economic problem	
Economics as a social science.	
Similarities to and differences in methodology from natural and other sciences.	
The difference between positive and normative statements.	
How value judgements influence economic decision making and policy.	
People's views concerning the best option are influenced by the positive consequences of	
different decisions and by moral and political judgements.	
4.1.1.2 The nature and purpose of economic activity	
The central purpose of economic activity is the production of goods and services to satisfy needs	
and wants.	
The key economic decisions are: what to produce, how to produce and who is to benefit from	
the goods and services produced.	
4.1.1.3 Economic resources	
The economists' classification of economic resources into land, labour, capital and enterprise,	
which are the factors of production.	
The environment is a scarce resource.	
4.1.1.4 Scarcity, choice and the allocation of resources	
The fundamental economic problem is scarcity and that it results from limited resources and	
unlimited wants.	
Scarcity means that choices have to be made about how scarce resources are allocated between	
different uses.	
Choices have an opportunity cost.	
4.1.1.5 Production possibility diagrams	
Production possibility diagrams illustrate different features of the fundamental economic problem,	
such as: resource allocation, opportunity cost and trade-offs, unemployment of	
economic resources, economic growth.	
Evaluate Why all points on the boundary are productively efficient but not all points on the	
boundary are allocatively efficient.	
4.1.2 Individual economic decision making	
Consumer behaviour	
Rational economic decision making and economic incentives.	
Utility theory: total and marginal utility, and the hypothesis of diminishing marginal utility.	
Utility maximisation.	
The importance of the margin when making choices.	
4.1.2.2 Imperfect information	

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The importance of information for decision making.	
The significance of asymmetric information.	
4.1.2.3 Aspects of behavioural economic theory	
Bounded rationality and bounded self-control.	
Biases in decision making: rules of thumb, anchoring, availability and social norms.	
The importance of altruism and perceptions of fairness.	
4.1.2.4 Behavioural economics and economic policy	
Choice architecture and framing.	
Nudges.	
Default choices, restricted choice and mandated choice.	
4.1.3 Price determination in a competitive market	
4.1.3.1 The determinants of the demand for goods and services	
A demand curve shows the relationship between price and quantity demanded.	
The causes of shifts in the demand curve.	
4.1.3.2 Price, income and cross elasticities of demand	
Be able to calculate price, income and cross elasticities of demand.	
The relationship between income elasticity of demand and normal and inferior goods.	
The relationship between meome clasticity of demand and normal and interior goods.	
The relationship between cross elasticity of demand and substitute and complementary goods.	
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The relationships between price elasticity of demand and firms' total revenue (total	
expenditure).	
The factors that influence these elasticities of demand.	
4.1.3.3 The determinants of the supply of goods and services	
A supply curve shows the relationship between price and quantity supplied.	
Understand that higher prices imply higher profits and that this will provide the incentive to	
expand production.	
The causes of shifts in the supply curve.	
4.1.3.4 Price elasticity of supply	
Be able to calculate price elasticity of supply.	
The factors that influence price elasticity of supply.	
4.1.3.5 The determination of equilibrium market prices	
How the interaction of demand and supply determines equilibrium prices in a market economy.	
The difference between equilibrium and disequilibrium.	
Why excess demand and excess supply lead to changes in price.	
4.1.3.6 The interrelationship between markets	
Changes in a particular market are likely to affect other markets.	
The implications of joint demand, competitive demand, composite demand, derived demand and	
joint supply.	
4.1.4 Production, costs and revenue	
4.1.4.1 Production and productivity	
Production converts inputs, or the services of factors of production such as capital and labour,	
into final output.	

The best force for the first of the first of the first	
The benefits of specialisation and division of labour.	
Why specialisation necessitates an efficient means of exchanging goods and services, such as the	
use of money as a medium of exchange.	
4.1.4.3 The law of diminishing returns and returns to scale	
The difference between the short run and the long run.	
The difference between marginal, average and total returns.	
The law of diminishing returns.	
Returns to scale.	
Analyse the difference between increasing, constant and decreasing returns to scale.	
4.1.4.4 Costs of production	
The difference between fixed and variable costs.	
The difference between marginal, average and total costs.	
The difference between short-run and long-run costs.	
The reasons for the shape of the marginal, average and total cost curves.	
How factor prices and productivity affect firms' costs of production and their choice of factor	
inputs.	
4.1.4.5 Economies and diseconomies of scale	
The difference between internal and external economies of scale.	
Reasons for diseconomies of scale.	
The relationship between returns to scale and economies or diseconomies of scale.	
The relationship between economies of scale, diseconomies of scale and the shape of the long-	
run average cost curve.	
The L-shaped long-run average cost curve. Research how the LRAC is dervided	
The concept of the minimum efficient scale of production.	
4.1.4.6 Marginal, average and total revenue	
The difference between marginal, average and total revenue.	
Why the average revenue curve is the firm's demand curve.	
The relationship between average and marginal revenue.	
The relationship between marginal revenue and total revenue.	
4.1.4.7 Profit	
Profit is the difference between total revenue and total costs.	
The difference between normal and abnormal (supernormal) profit. Show the area of	
profit on a business diagram. Highlight Revenue made minus total costs of production	
The role of profit in a market economy.	
4.1.4.8 Technological change	
The difference between invention and innovation.	
Technological change can affect methods of production, productivity, efficiency and firms' costs of production.	
Technological change can lead to the development of new products, the development of	
new markets and may destroy existing markets.	
Technological change can influence the structure of markets.	
4.1.5 Perfect competition, imperfectly competitive markets and monopoly	
4.1.5.1 Market structures	
The spectrum of competition ranging from perfect competition at one end of the	
spectrum to pure monopoly at the other end of the spectrum.	
Factors such as the number of firms, the degree of product differentiation and ease of	
entry are used to distinguish between different market structures.	

4.1.5.2 The objectives of firms	
The models that comprise the traditional theory of the firm are based upon the	
assumption that firms aim to maximise profits.	
The profit-maximising rule (MC=MR).	
The reasons for and the consequences of a divorce of ownership from control.	
Firms have a variety of other possible objectives. (Illustrate all business objectives in	
diagram form.	
The satisficing principle.	
4.1.5.3 Perfect competition	
The formal diagrammatic analysis of the perfectly competitive model in the short and	
long run.	
The implications of the following for the behaviour of firms and the industry: large	
numbers of producers, identical products, freedom of entry and exit, and perfect	
knowledge.	
Firms operating in perfectly competitive markets are price takers.	
The proposition that, given certain assumptions, relating for example to a lack of	
externalities, perfect competition will result in an efficient allocation of resources.	
4.1.5.4 Monopolistic competition	
The formal diagrammatic analysis of the monopolistically competitive model in the short	
and long run.	
The main characteristics of monopolistically competitive markets.	
Monopolistically competitive markets will be subject to non- price competition.	
4.1.5.5 Oligopoly	
The main characteristics of oligopolistic markets.	
Oligopolistic markets can be very different in relation to, for example, the number of	
firms, the degree of product differentiation and ease of entry.	
Oligopoly can be defined in terms of market structure or in terms of market conduct	
(behaviour).	
Concentration ratios and how to calculate a concentration ratio.	
The difference between collusive and non-collusive oligopoly.	
The difference between cooperation and collusion.	
Evaluate the kinked demand curve model. (Criticise the model)	
The reasons for non-price competition, the operation of cartels, price leadership, price	
agreements, price wars and barriers to entry.	
The factors which influence prices, output, investment, expenditure on research and	
advertising in oligopolistic industries.	
The significance of interdependence and uncertainty in oligopoly.	
The advantages and disadvantages of oligopoly.	
4.1.5.6 Monopoly and monopoly power	
The formal diagrammatic analysis of the monopoly model.	
That monopoly power is influenced by factors such as barriers to entry, the number of	
competitors, advertising and the degree of product differentiation.	
sempenters, activities and the debice of product differentiation	
Evalute the advantages and disadvantages of monopoly. Use real world examples of	
monopoly power in your writing. Interpret the natural monopoly diagram.	
4.1.5.7 Price discrimination	
The conditions necessary for price discrimination.	
The contractions necessary for price discrimination.	

The advantages and disadvantages of price discrimination.	
4.1.5.8 The dynamics of competition and competitive market processes	
Both the short-run and long-run benefits which are likely to result from competition.	
That firms do not just compete on the basis of price but that competition will, for	
example, also lead firms to strive to improve products, reduce costs, improve the quality	
of the service provided.	
The process of creative destruction.	
4.1.5.9 Contestable and non-contestable markets	
The significance of market contestability for the performance of an industry.	
Concepts such as sunk costs and hit-and-run competition.	
4.1.5.10 Market structure, static efficiency, dynamic efficiency and resource allocation	
The difference between static efficiency and dynamic efficiency.	
The conditions required for productive efficiency (minimising average total costs) and	
allocative efficiency (price = marginal cost).	
Dynamic efficiency is influenced by, for example, research and development, investment	
in human and non-human capital and technological change.	
4.1.5.11 Consumer and producer surplus	
Be able to apply these concepts when discussing economic efficiency and welfare issues,	
such as price discrimination and the dead-weight losses associated with monopoly.	
4.1.6.1 The demand for labour, marginal productivity theory	
The demand for a factor is derived from the demand for the product.	
The marginal productivity theory of the demand for labour.	•
The demand curve for labour shows the relationship between the wage rate and	
number of workers employed.	
The causes of shifts in the demand curve for labour.	•
The determinants of the elasticity of demand for labour.	
4.1.6.2 Influences upon the supply of labour to different markets	
The supply of labour to a particular occupation is influenced by monetary and non-	
monetary considerations.	
Non-monetary considerations include job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and working	•
conditions.	
The supply curve for labour shows the relationship between the wage rate and number	
of workers willing to work in an occupation.	
The causes of shifts in the market supply curve for labour.	
4.1.6.3 The determination of relative wage rates and levels of employment in perfectly	
competitive labour markets	
The economists' model of wage determination in a perfectly competitive labour market.	
Role of market forces in determining relative wage rates.	
4.1.6.4 The determination of relative wage rates and levels of employment in	
imperfectly competitive labour markets	
How various factors such as monopsony power, trade unions and imperfect information	
contribute to imperfections in a labour market.	
How, in a monopsony labour market, the employer can use market power to reduce	
both the relative wage rate and the level of employment below those that would exist in	
a perfectly competitive labour market.	

4.1.6.5 The Influence of trade unions in determining wages and levels of employment	
The various factors that affect the ability of trade unions to influence wages and levels of	
employment in different labour markets.	
How wages and employment are likely to be affected by the introduction of a trade	
union into a previously perfectly competitive labour market and into a monopsony	
labour market.	
Review and memorise all labour market diagrams, you need to memorise all of them	
using the diagram booklet provided to you	
4.1.6.6 The National Minimum Wage	
The effects of a national minimum wage upon labour markets.	
The advantages and disadvantages of a national minimum wage.	
4.1.6.7 Discrimination in the labour market	
The conditions necessary for wage discrimination.	
The impact of gender, ethnicity and other forms of discrimination on wages, levels and	
types of employment.	
4.1.7.1 The distribution of income and wealth	
The difference between income and wealth.	
The various factors which influence the distribution of income and wealth.	
The difference between equality and equity in relation to the distribution of income and	
wealth.	
The Lorenz curve and Gini coefficient.	
The likely benefits and costs of more equal and more unequal distributions.	
4.1.7.2 The problem of poverty	
Evaluate economic consequences of policies to reduce income and wealth inequality and	
find some current policies in place by our current government.	
4.1.8 Themarketmechanism, marketfailureandgovernment intervention in markets	
4.1.8.1 How markets and prices allocate resources	
The rationing, incentive and signalling functions of prices in allocating resources and	
coordinating the decisions of buyers and sellers in a market economy.	
The advantages and disadvantages of the price mechanism and of extending its use into	
new areas of activity.	
4.1.8.2 The meaning of market failure	
Market failure occurs whenever a market leads to a misallocation of resources.	
The difference between complete market failure (resulting in a missing market) and	
partial market failure (where a market exists but contributes to resource misallocation).	
How public goods, positive and negative externalities, merit and demerit goods,	
monopoly and other market imperfections, and inequalities in the distribution of income	
and wealth can lead to market failure.	
4.1.8.3 Public goods, private goods and quasi-public goods	
Pure public goods are non-rival and non-excludable and recognition of the significance	
of these characteristics.	
The difference between a public good and a private good.	
Circumstances when a public good may take on some of the characteristics of a private	
good and become a quasi-public good.	

The significance of technological change, eg television broadcasting is now excludable.	
The free-rider problem.	
The tragedy of the commons.	
4.1.8.4 Positive and negative externalities in consumption and production	
Externalities exist when there is a divergence between private and social costs and	
benefits.	
Why negative externalities are likely to result in over-production and that positive	
externalities are likely to result in under- production.	
Why the absence of property rights leads to externalities in both production and	
consumption and hence market failure.	
4.1.8.5 Merit and demerit goods	
The classification of merit and demerit goods depends upon a value judgement.	
Such products may be subject to positive and negative externalities in consumption.	
How under-provision of merit goods and over-provision of demerit goods may also result	
from imperfect information.	
4.1.8.6 Market imperfections	
Why imperfect and asymmetric information can lead to market failure.	
Why the existence of monopoly and monopoly power can lead to market failure.	
Why the immobility of factors of production can lead to market failure.	
4.1.8.7 Competition policy	
The general principles of UK competition policy and some awareness of EU competition	
policy.	
The costs and benefits of such policies.	
4.1.8.8 Public ownership, privatisation, regulation and deregulation of markets	
The arguments for and against the public ownership of firms and industries.	
The arguments for and against the privatisation of state-owned enterprises.	
The arguments for and against the regulation of markets.	
The arguments for and against the deregulation of markets.	
The problem of regulatory capture.	
4.1.8.9 Government intervention in markets	
The existence of market failure, in its various forms, provides an argument for	
government intervention in markets.	
Governments influence the allocation of resources in a variety of ways, including	
through public expenditure, taxation and regulation.	
Governments have a range of objectives and these affect how they intervene in a mixed	
economy to influence the allocation of resources.	
The use of indirect taxation, subsidies, price controls, state provision and regulation, the	
extension of property rights and pollution permits to correct market failure.	
4.1.8.10	
Government failure	
Government failure occurs when government intervention in the economy leads to a	
misallocation of resources.	
Inadequate information, conflicting objectives and administrative costs are possible	
sources of government failure.	

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Governments may create, rather than remove, market distortions.	
Government intervention can lead to unintended consequences.	
The national and international economy	
The National and International Economy	
4.2.1 The measurement of macroeconomic performance	
4.2.1.1 The objectives of government economic policy	
The main objectives of government macroeconomic policy: economic growth, price	
stability, minimising unemployment and a stable balance of payments on current	
account.	
The possibility of conflict arising, at least in the short run, when attempting to achieve	
these objectives.	
4.2.1.2 Macroeconomic indicators	
Data which is a second to we are the week second to be a second to	
Data which is commonly used to measure the performance of an economy, such as: real	
GDP, real GDP per capita, Consumer Prices and Retail Prices Indices (CPI/RPI), measures	
of unemployment, productivity and the balance of payments on current account.	
4.2.1.3 Uses of index numbers	
How index numbers are calculated and interpreted, including the base year and the use	
of weights.	
How index numbers are used to measure changes in the price level and changes in other	
economic variables.	
4.2.1.4 Uses of national income data	
The use and limitations of national income data to assess changes in living standards	
over time.	
The use and limitations of national income data to compare differences in living	
standards between countries.	
The importance of using purchasing power parity (PPP) exchange rates when making	
international comparisons of living standards.	
4.2.2 How the macroeconomy works: the circular flow of income, aggregate	
demand/aggregate supply analysis and related concepts	
4.2.2.1 The circular flow of income	
What national income measures.	
The difference between nominal and real income.	
Real national income as an indicator of economic performance.	
The circular flow of income concept, the equation income = output = expenditure, and	
of the concepts of equilibrium and full employment income.	
The difference between injections and withdrawals into the circular flow of income.	
The effect of changes in injections and withdrawals on national income.	
4.2.2.2 Aggregate demand and aggregate supply analysis	
Changes in the price level are represented by movements along the aggregate demand	
(AD) and aggregate supply (AS) curves.	
The various factors that shift the AD curve and the short-run AS curve.	
The factors which affect long-run AS and distinguish them from those which affect short-	
run AS.	
Underlying economic growth is represented by a rightward shift in the long-run AS	
curve.	
How to use AD/AS diagrams to illustrate macroeconomic equilibrium.	

How both demand-side and supply-side shocks affect the macroeconomy. 4.2.2.3 The determinants of aggregate demand What is meant by AD. The determinants of AD, ie the determinants of consumption, investment, government spending, exports and imports. The basic accelerator process. The determinants of savings. The difference between saving and investment. 4.2.2.4 Aggregate demand and the level of economic activity The role of AD in influencing the level of economic activity. The multiplier process and an explanation of why an initial change in expenditure may lead to a larger impact on local or national income. The concept of the marginal propensity to consume and use the marginal propensity to consume to calculate the size of the multiplier. Why the size of the marginal propensity to consume determines the magnitude of the multiplier effect. 4.2.2.5 Determinants of short-run aggregate supply The price level and production costs are the main determinants of the short-run AS. Changes in costs, such as: money wage rates, raw material prices, business taxation and productivity, will shift the short-run AS curve. 4.2.2.6 Determinants of long-run aggregate supply
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4.Z.Z.6 Determinants of long-run aggregate subbly
The fundamental determinants of long-run AS such as technology, productivity,
attitudes, enterprise, factor mobility, and economic incentives.
The position of the vertical long-run AS curve represents the normal capacity level of
output of the economy.
The importance of the institutional structure of the economy in determining aggregate
supply, such as the role of the banking system in providing business investment funds,
should also be understood.
The Keynesian AS curve.
4.2.3 Economic performance
4.2.3.1 Economic growth and the economic cycle
The difference between short-run and long-run growth.
The various demand-side and supply-side determinants of short- run growth of real
national income and the long-run trend rate of economic growth.
The costs and benefits of economic growth.
<u> </u>
The impact of growth on individuals, the economy and the environment.
The concept of the economic cycle and the use of a range of economic indicators, such
as real GDP, the rate of inflation, unemployment and investment, to identify the various
phases of the economic cycle.
The difference between positive and negative output gaps.
The causes of changes in the various phases of the economic cycle, including both global
and domestic demand-side and supply-side shocks.
4.2.3.2 Employment and unemployment
The main UK measures of unemployment, ie the claimant count and the Labour Force
Survey measure.
The concepts of voluntary and involuntary unemployment.
The terms seasonal, frictional, structural and cyclical unemployment.

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How employment and unemployment may be determined by both demand-side and	
supply-side factors.	
The concept of, and the factors which determine, real wage unemployment.	
The concept of, and the factors which determine, the natural rate of unemployment.	
The consequences of unemployment for individuals and for the performance of the	
economy.	
4.2.3.3 Inflation and deflation	
The concepts of inflation, deflation and disinflation.	
Demand-pull and cost-push influences on the price level.	
Fisher's equation of exchange MV = PQ and the Quantity Theory of Money in relation to	
the monetarist model.	
The effects of expectations on changes in the price level	
The consequences of inflation for both individuals and the performance of the economy.	
The consequences of deflation for both individuals and the performance of the	
economy.	
How changes in world commodity prices affect domestic inflation.	
How changes in other economies can affect inflation in the UK.	
4.2.3.4 Possible conflicts between macroeconomic policy objectives	
How negative and positive output gaps relate to unemployment and inflationary	
pressures.	
Both the short-run Phillips curve and the long-run, L-shaped Phillips curve.	
The implications of the short-run Phillips curve and the long-run, L-shaped Phillips curve	
for economic policy.	
How economic policies may be used to try to reconcile possible policy conflicts both in	
the short run and the long run.	
4.2.4 Financial markets and monetary policy	
4.2.4.1 The structure of financial markets and financial assets	
The characteristics and functions of money.	
Definitions of the money supply and the distinction between narrow money and broad	
money.	
The difference between the money market, the capital market and the foreign exchange	
market.	
The role of financial markets in the wider economy.	
The difference between debt and equity.	
The difference between debt and equity.	
Why there is an inverse relationship between market interest rates and bond prices.	
4.2.4.2 Commercial banks and investment banks	
The difference between a commercial bank and an investment bank.	
The main functions of a commercial bank.	
The structure of a commercial bank's balance sheet.	
The objectives of a commercial bank, ie liquidity, profitability	
Potential conflicts between these objectives. How banks create credit.	
4.2.4.3 Central banks and monetary policy	
The main functions of a central bank.	

That monetary policy involves the central bank taking action to influence interest rates,	
the supply of money and credit and the exchange rate.	
The current objectives of monetary policy set by the government.	
The role of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England (MPC) and how it	
uses changes in bank rate to try to achieve the objectives for monetary policy, including	
the government's target rate of inflation.	
The factors considered by the MPC when setting the bank rate.	
How changes in the exchange rate affect aggregate demand and the various	
macroeconomic policy objectives.	
The monetary policy transmission mechanism, including the relationship between changes in interest rates and the exchange rate.	
How the Bank of England can influence the growth of the money supply.	
4.2.4.4 The regulation of the financial system	
Regulation of the financial system in the UK, eg the role of the Bank of England, the	
Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA), the Financial Policy Committee (FPC) and the	
Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).	
Why a bank might fail, including the risks involved in lending long term and borrowing	
short term.	
Liquidity ratios and capital ratios and how they affect the stability of a financial	
institution.	
Moral hazard.	
Systemic risk and the impact of problems that arise in financial markets upon the real	
economy.	
4.2.5 Fiscal policy and supply-side policies	
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How supply-side policies can help to achieve supply-side improvements in the economy.	
How supply-side policies, such as tax changes designed to change personal incentives,	
may increase the potential output of the economy and improve the underlying trend	
rate of economic growth.	
How supply-side policies can affect unemployment, the rate of change of prices and UK	
external performance, as reflected in the balance of payments on current account.	
The role of supply-side policies in reducing the natural rate of unemployment.	
Free market supply-side policies include measures such as: tax cuts, privatisation,	
deregulation and some labour market reforms.	
Interventionist supply-side policies include measures such as: government spending on	
education and training, industrial policy, subsidising spending on research and	
development. Supply-side policies can have microeconomic as well as macroeconomic effects.	
4.2.6 The international economy	
4.2.6.1 Globalisation	
The causes of globalisation.	
The main characteristics of globalisation.	
The main characteristics of globalisation.	
The consequences of globalisation for less-developed and for more-developed countries.	
The role of multinational corporations in globalisation.	
4.2.6.2 Trade	
The model of comparative advantage.	
The distinction between comparative and absolute advantage.	
The model shows that specialisation and trade can increase total output.	
Other economic benefits of trade, such as the ability to exploit economies of scale and	
increased competition.	
The costs of international trade.	
The reasons for changes in the pattern of trade between the UK and the rest of the	
world.	
The nature of protectionist policies, such as: tariffs, quotas and export subsidies.	
The causes and consequences of countries adopting protectionist policies.	
The main features of a customs union.	
The main characteristics of the Single European Market (SEM).	
The consequences for the UK of its membership of the European Union (EU).	
The role of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).	
4.2.6.3 The balance of payments	
The difference between the current, capital and financial accounts on the balance of	
payments.	
The current account comprises trade in goods, trade in services, primary income and	
secondary income.	
The magning of a deficit and a surplus on the current assessed	
The meaning of a deficit and a surplus on the current account.	
The factors that influence a country's current account balance such as productivity,	1