A Level Economics
Queen Mary's Grammar School

Transition tasks for Year 11 students

(To be completed ready for the start of the course in September)

Summer 2025

Name:

AQA A LEVEL COURSE STRUCTURE

Welcome to Economics at QMGS

A Whirlwind Tour of A-Level Economics
Grab your economic magnifying glass and dive into the world of A-level Economics at Queen Mary's Grammar School!

It's your ticket to understanding how economies shuffle their limited goodies to keep everyone happy. During your time with the department you'll unravel the mysteries of economic head-scratchers faced by individuals, companies, and governments on all levels—local, national, and global—and explore the many ways to solve them.

In this 2 year economic escapade, you'll delve into microeconomics, figuring out how tiny decisions create big ripples, the thrill of competition, the quirks of markets, and the dance of income and wealth distribution. Meanwhile, you'll zoom out with macroeconomics to see how our economy fits into the global jigsaw, the shockwaves of financial markets, and the epic saga of international trade.
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If you are keen to know the full detail of what we will cover the AQA specification can be found at the link below.

AQA A Level Economics Specification

Future Adventures and Careers
An A-level in Economics is your golden ticket to university courses in economics, business, or finance. The skills you pick up will be your trusty sidekick, no matter your academic quest. Career-wise, you might leap into the heart of banking or finance, armed with insights into the economic forces shaping everyday life. Or, you might embark on a totally different adventure, equipped with sharp analytical skills and a knack for evaluation—skills that'll serve you well, wherever your journey takes you!

Transition Tasks
This document unveils a collection of enlightening activities designed to prepare you for your A Level studies in Economics. We anticipate that all students will have completed these tasks in readiness for the commencement of Year 12, as they will provide you with a solid foundation in the essence of the subject and the key aspects we will begin to explore in the Autumn term.

Your economics teachers eagerly await the pleasure of welcoming you to the department in September.

Mr. P. Sunley
Head of Economics

WHAT IS ECONOMICS?

FILL IN THE BLANKS

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Use the words provided at the end of the passage to help you fill in the blanks below:

Economics is a _____ science. Economists study how people make decisions, the impact of these decisions and government _____ that might get better outcomes – this is the "social" part. It is called a science because economists have _____ that they test against evidence. Economists study the _____ individual people make, the decisions made by groups of people in firms and _____, and they look at the impacts right up to the level of whole economies or groups of economies.

One important idea in economics is "scarcity". This means there is not enough for everyone to have _____ they want. This is why decisions or _____ must be made. A decision to spend money on one thing means something else has been given up. Economists call this an opportunity ____. For example, governments must decide how much to spend on healthcare and how much to spend on education. They cannot increase both without having an impact elsewhere. Perhaps spending on transport will have to be cut or research into _____ energy. Or perhaps _____ will have to increase. Whatever is decided there will be impacts and sometimes the outcomes will be better and sometimes they might not.

Economics is always in the news. For example, the speed with which prices have been increasing compared with ____ increases has led to a cost-of-living _____. Economics helps us explain why some prices have risen so fast (it is called _____ when prices overall are rising), the impacts this has and what can be done about it. But economics is not an exact science and the inflation that started in ____ was difficult to forecast and has been difficult to control.

All the theory you will learn in economics is applied to the _____. This is one thing that makes economics so interesting and relevant. The better and wider your real-world knowledge then the more _____ you will find the subject.

ever ything	theories	crisis
policies	renewable	inflation
choices	interesting	social
industries	real world	2021
wage	taxes	decisions
cost		

MICROECONOMICS & MACROECONOMICS

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Economists often split the subject into microeconomics and macroeconomics – you will study both as part of your A level. Micro and macro are closely related, but it will be very helpful if you can tell them apart.

Microeconomics is when we study the behaviour of individuals and businesses up to the level of individual industries. Macroeconomics looks at whole economies or groups of economies such as the EU or the eurozone. Sometimes macroeconomics will look at the whole world (ie the global economy).

Look at the examples below and see if you can add them to the correct column in the second table.

UK electric vehicle market	Global inflation	Price of UK produced butter	UK unemployment rate
Impact of a sugar tax	A trade deal between the UK and Australia	The impact of increasing income tax	Impact of an ageing population
Over-consumption of unhealthy food	An energy price cap	Minimum price for alcohol	The impact of a country joining the EU
The impact of using more soya for biofuels	Why some countries grow much faster than others	How much IT specialists are paid	Impact of governments spending more than they get in tax

Microeconomics	Macroeconomics

YEAR 12 ECONOMICS INDUCTION ACTIVITY

THINKING LIKE AN ECONOMIST

ECONOMIC MODELS AND ASSUMPTIONS

One of the best ways of making sure you enjoy economics is to understand how economists think.

Economics is a very logical subject, and this is one reason it is such a valuable subject to study. Economists are very good at looking at a problem or a scenario and thinking about the related impacts and issues, as well as any possible solutions. Economists are very good at explaining ideas clearly and in simple terms.

One thing that economists do is to use "economic models" to help their thinking. You will have used models in other subjects at GCSE, for example in science. Models are simplified versions of the world, and are usually based on a number of assumptions. An assumption is something we take to be true, even if it doesn't perfectly match the 'real world'.

Note down some assumptions from models you learned about in your GCSE subjects, and write down how these assumptions were helpful.	
In economics, we often assume that firms want to maximise their profits and that people make decisions that maximise their satisfaction (we call this 'utility'). How realistic do you think these assumptions are?	

In A level Economics, the models we use almost always involve diagrams. You will see very quickly how useful they are and how often you use them. If you are interested, you can find out more here

Using economic models in exam answers is a great way to get marks too!

QUANTITATIVE SKILLS

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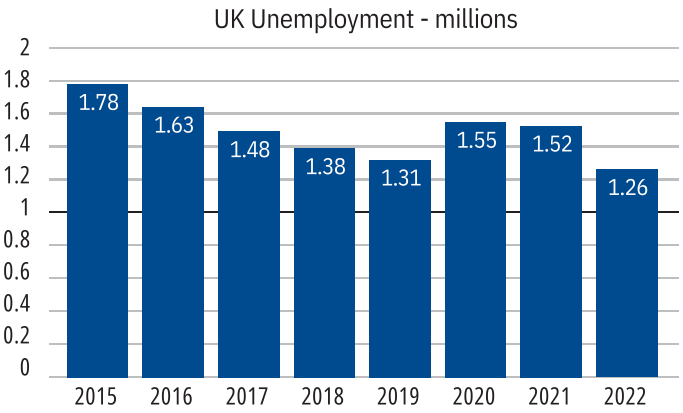
A minimum of 20% of the marks in A level Economics come from quantitative skills. None of these skills are particularly difficult (that is, you don't need more maths skills than you did for GCSE maths) but you do need to be sure you will not lose marks unnecessarily. Some of these quantitative skills are:

Calculatingand interpreting percentages, percentage changes, and percentage point changes	Calculating and interpreting ratios and fractions	Interpreting a range of data charts and graphs	Calculating means and quantiles
Manipulating data to take into account changes in the price level (ie 'nominal to real' conversions)	Calculating and interpreting a simple statistic called an 'index number'	Using a range of economics formulae to carry out calculations	

Particularly common types of questions ask you to work out a percentage change and an average. Look at the chart below which shows the number of people unemployed in the UK. Economists say a person is unemployed if they are available for work but do not have a job.

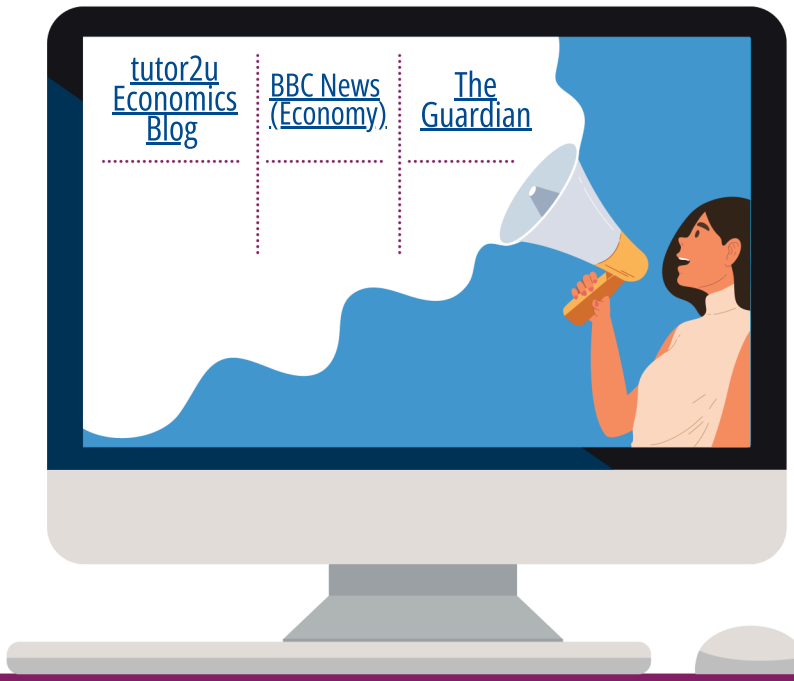


Try these calculations:

1. The percentage change in unemployment between 2020 and 2022
2. The mean level of unemployment across the period shown
3. The median level of unemployment across the period shown.

STORIES IN THE NEWS

Take a look at some of these websites and find 2 economic related stories that interest you.
(see the links in the computer screen image below)



Story 1: Provide a link/URL to the story. What can you understand already? What do you hope studying economics will help you understand in the future in relation to this story? Why did you choose this story? Add your thoughts in the space below:

Story 2: Provide a link/URL to the story. What can you understand already? What do you hope studying economics will help you understand in the future in relation to this story? Why did you choose this story? Add your thoughts in the space below:

What other websites or sources of information (eg podcasts, books, TV shows etc) can you find that will provide you with reliable information? Add them below: