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Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

Predictability of the National Senior Certificate Examinations
Economics Report
DBE & IEB

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
MCQ	Multiple Choice Question
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
SACAI	South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SAGs	Subject Assessment Guidelines

Section 1: Overview of the subject

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) defines Economics as the study of how individuals, businesses, governments, and other organisations allocate scarce resources to satisfy unlimited human needs and wants. Since resources are limited while human needs and wants are unlimited, societies must make choices about how best to allocate available resources. These decisions seek to achieve outcomes that are efficient, equitable, and sustainable. Consequently, Economics focuses not only on the production and consumption of goods and services but also on the allocation and management of resources to promote long-term economic well-being.

A central aspect of Economics is understanding how scarce resources can be allocated efficiently to meet competing needs. Learners are introduced to concepts such as scarcity, opportunity cost, and prioritisation, which explain why certain choices are made over others. In addition, Economics examines the functioning of an open economy through the concepts of monetary and real flows, illustrating how goods, services, and money move between households, firms, and the government. These concepts highlight the interdependence between production, consumption, and exchange.

Market analysis forms another important component of the subject. Learners develop an understanding of demand and supply principles to explain price determination and use cost and revenue analysis to evaluate production decisions. These concepts provide insight into the functioning of markets and the achievement of market equilibrium. Beyond market dynamics, Economics explores broader issues such as economic growth, economic development, and the fair distribution of income and wealth. Learners are encouraged to engage critically with issues of human rights, social justice, poverty alleviation, and inequality, fostering an understanding of economic transformation within society.

Economics also equips learners with a specialised vocabulary that enables them to communicate economic concepts effectively and participate in informed discussions and debates. Through the application of economic principles, learners are encouraged to make responsible and accountable decisions in real-life contexts.

Furthermore, they develop analytical and problem-solving skills by collecting, interpreting, and evaluating economic data, enabling them to draw informed conclusions about production, consumption, and exchange.

The subject further emphasises the role of institutions at local, national, and international levels in shaping economic outcomes. Learners examine how governments, public institutions, businesses, and international bodies influence economic outcomes, particularly within the South African context. In addition, Economics develops learners' ability to interpret economic events and anticipate future trends. By understanding current developments and forecasting possible outcomes, learners are better equipped to respond to economic challenges and opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

This background underscores the importance of ensuring that Economics assessments evaluate these skills holistically and are both valid and fair. Accordingly, this report presents the detailed findings of an evaluation of the predictability of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) Economics examination papers administered between 2022 and 2024. The findings are analysed by examinable topic in accordance with the CAPS and the IEB Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAGs). The report concludes with topic-specific recommendations for the DBE and the IEB, respectively.

Section 2: Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design based on document analysis to examine the predictability of the DBE and IEB examination papers from 2022 to 2024. Document analysis was considered appropriate because the study relied on pre-existing materials, enabling the subject experts to systematically analyse examination papers and marking memoranda. Purposive sampling was used to select ten high-enrolment subjects from the DBE and IEB. The South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) was excluded due to the similarity of its examination guidelines to those of the DBE. Economics was selected as one of the high-enrolment subjects included in the study.

Data were collected through a comprehensive analysis conducted by a subject expert, who reviewed all relevant examination papers and marking memoranda across the three-year period using evaluation tools grounded in content and construct validity. The conceptual framework underpinning this study is discussed in detail in the *NSC Predictability Overview Report*. The subject expert examined each examination item, compared trends across the three years, and assessed alignment with the CAPS and the Abridged CAPS topics. A structured Microsoft Word-based evaluation instrument, comprising tables and thematic questions, guided the analysis. The instrument facilitated a systematic evaluation of topic coverage, item types, cognitive skills assessed, and mark allocation, thereby enabling a comprehensive assessment of examination predictability. The thematic questions are discussed in detail in the predictability of the *NSC Predictability Overview Report*.

Section 3: Findings from the Evaluation of the DBE and IEB Question Papers

This chapter presents detailed findings arising from the evaluation of the DBE and IEB National Senior Certificate (NSC) Economics Paper 1 and Paper 2 examinations. The findings are based on a systematic analysis of examination papers administered between 2022 and 2024 and provide an overview of patterns related to examination predictability.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which the upward trend observed in learner performance in the NSC examinations reflects genuine improvements in learner competence or whether it may, in part, be attributed to increasing levels of predictability in examination design. By analysing selected subjects across three consecutive examination cycles, the study sought to generate evidence-based insights to inform and strengthen Umalusi's quality assurance and standardisation processes. In doing so, the study also aimed to contribute to broader scholarly debates on the validity, fairness, and integrity of high-stakes examination systems.

The findings are presented separately in Sections IIIA and IIIB for the DBE and IEB, respectively, and for each examination paper. They are organised according to the thematic questions contained in the evaluation instrument, which are discussed in detail in the research design section of the *NSC Predictability Overview Report*.

For each topic, the findings are summarised in tables and accompanied by a discussion structured around six themes: topic coverage, content coverage by subtopic, topic weighting, item types by subtopic, subtopic–skill pairing, and scenario–subtopic–skill pairing.

The analysis of these themes is presented in Sections a to f for each table. It evaluates the extent to which the components reflected in each table contributed to the predictability of the topics assessed in the Economics Paper 1 and Paper 2 final examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Before presenting the findings, each of the six themes is defined in Sections a to f below. These definitions apply to the analysis of both Paper 1 and Paper 2 across the two assessment bodies.

a. Topic coverage

The topics prescribed for examination of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) subjects are outlined in Section 4 of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) or the Abridged CAPS. These guidelines seek to ensure alignment between the examination and the intended curriculum. The analysis of topic coverage focused on the frequency with which each topic was examined over the three-year period, specifically identifying any emerging patterns that may have contributed to the predictability of topic selection.

b. Content coverage

This section examined the extent to which specific content areas or subtopics within the selected topic have been assessed over three years. By analysing the frequency and repetition of subtopics in the final examination question papers, the aim was to determine whether any patterns of content selection have emerged that may contribute to the predictability of the question paper.

c. Weighting of the topic

This section explored the distribution of mark allocation or weighting assigned to the selected topic over the three-year period. By analysing whether the marks allocated to this topic have remained consistent, increased, or decreased across examination cycles, the aim was to determine the extent to which predictable emphasis may have emerged.

d. Variation in item types

To evaluate the extent to which question design contributed to the predictability of examination papers, it was essential to examine how specific item types have been used to assess a given topic over time. This included analysing the variety of item types employed (such as multiple-choice questions [MCQs], essays, calculations, and practical scenarios), the distribution of marks allocated to each type, and the variation in difficulty levels and cognitive demands. Additionally, the use of command words, terms that guide the expected cognitive response, can influence a question's predictability. This section examined these dimensions over the three-year period to identify patterns that may signal repetition or predictability.

e. Topic and skill pairing

To evaluate the predictability of examination question papers, it was crucial to examine how specific cognitive skills have been paired with particular topics over time. Consistent assessment of the same skills, such as interpretation, calculation, analysis, or explanation, when linked to a specific topic across multiple years, may signal a recurring pattern, potentially leading to predictability. Conversely, variation in skill pairing seeks to ensure a more comprehensive assessment of the intended learning outcomes. This section explored the extent to which skill demands associated with this topic have remained consistent or varied across the past three years and determined whether such patterns suggest predictability in assessment design.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

Some examination questions use scenarios, visual stimuli, or real-life contexts to test skills within a topic. The variety or repetition of such contexts over multiple years can influence the anticipation of question types. Consistent use of similar scenarios may contribute to predictability, whereas diverse and novel contexts encourage more profound understanding and critical thinking. This section explored how the contextual framing of questions for each topic has evolved over the past three years and sought to determine whether predictability patterns existed.

3.1: ECONOMICS PAPER 1

This section presents an analysis of the final examination question papers for Economics Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.1.1–3.1.16.

Table 3.1.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability of the Circular Flow topic on DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Circular Flow Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Circular Flow							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Circular Flow:** Types of	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		consumer goods					
		Flows in the Circular Flow: Money flow		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Gross national product		Match items (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concepts of basic and market prices		Short response (2 marks)	L1	L1	Understanding concepts of basic and market prices
				Source based: Circular Flow diagram	L1–L3	L1–L3	
		Multiplier		Value of multiplier (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Leakages		Leakages (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Autonomous consumption		Short response (2 marks)	L2	L2	Understand the concept of autonomous consumption
		Savings and its importance		Short response (2 marks)	L2	L2	Understand the importance of savings

		Multiplier		Calculation (4 marks)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge (Calculation of a multiplier)
		Economic participants		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L2	L3	Knowledge and understanding of economic participants
2023	√	Circular Flow	24				
		Value of marginal propensity to consume		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Autonomous consumption		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Leakages		One word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Factors of production		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Methods to calculate GDP		Circular Flow: Table on National Account (10) Short response (1 mark)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L3 L2	Interpret the graph

		Taxes on products		Short response (1 mark)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Subsidy on product		Short response (definition) (2 marks)	L1	L2	Understand the concept of subsidy on a product
		Preparing national accounts		Short response (2 marks)	L1	L2	Understanding the importance of preparing national accounts
		GVA at basic prices		Long response (4 marks)	L3	L3	Calculation of GVA at basic prices
		Sectors of the economy		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L3	L3	Logical thinking
2024	√	**Circular Flow:** Money markets	**26**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Moving averages		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Circular Flow		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Methods of calculation of GDP		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Understand GDP and how to calculate GDP
		Effect of competition on aggregate supply		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Understanding how competition may impact the aggregate supply in the economy
		Multiplier		Graph on multiplier Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L3 L1	Interpret the graph
		Participants of two-sector model		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Autonomous consumption		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understand concept autonomous consumption
		MPS versus multiplier (Relationship)		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Understand multiplier and MPS

		Calculation of national income		Long response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge – calculate change in national income
		Effects of injections on SA's economy		Long discussion (Paragraph) (8)	L3	L3	Logical thinking

Table 3.1.1 presents a comparative overview of the Circular Flow topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.1 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Circular Flow topic was assessed consistently across all three years from 2022 to 2024. The topic appeared every year and formed part of the Economics Paper 1 examination question papers. The observation indicates that several questions on the topic "Business cycle" were assessed more frequently in Section B. In contrast, few were assessed in Section C, which included only a structured-response item. There was no exact repetition or verbatim of the same core content of the topic, which would have led to unacceptable predictability of the examination question paper. This consistent inclusion reflects an alignment with the CAPS and Abridged Section 4 identifies the Circular Flow of income as a core concept underpinning macroeconomic understanding. This assessment frequency suggests acceptable predictability, as learners are expected to engage with this topic in their everyday lives.

To maintain this acceptable predictability, DBE examiners should continue to assess the Circular Flow annually while ensuring variation across all aspects of the topic.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicated the same content areas in the Circular Flow topic repeated across the three years. The repetition areas were injections and leakages, the multiplier effect, and methods of calculating gross domestic product. While this reflects comprehensive CAPS alignment, repeated assessment of the same subtopics may lead to unacceptable predictability. However, across the three years, there was no clear explanation or inclusion of factors related to financial or foreign markets in the model. While the reasons why leakages reduce the Circular Flow and injections increase it were omitted over the three-year period, the distinction between real and money flows was omitted. The continued variation in the item types, such as shifts from diagram interpretation to calculations and conceptual explanations, reduced the risk of unacceptable predictability. Therefore, it is recommended that these omitted parts of the Circular Flow also be examined in the future to ensure full content coverage.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals a slight variation in the weighting assigned to the topic: 24, 24, and 26 marks were awarded in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The analysis reveals that mark allocation for Circular Flow has remained consistent over the past three years. The MCQs were allocated 2 marks, match the item 1 mark, and one-word answers were allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. The data and/or source-based items and scenarios were allocated 10 marks, while the paragraph or long response items were allocated 8 marks over the three-year period. This relatively stable allocation of marks suggests a predictable emphasis on the topic; however, such predictability is acceptable as it aligns with the CAPS guidelines and ensures consistency across examination cycles. The DBE is encouraged to maintain this balance while varying internal mark distribution across subtopics.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the assessment included MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match the item, and one-word answers, with MCQs normally allocated 2 marks and match the item and one-word answers allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period; yet this included an unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks for MCQs. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation.

Furthermore, preserve balance between recall, application, and evaluation. There was no structured response item type over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, matching items, and one-word items were always L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the topic "Circular Flow" has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic ranged from L1 to L3, and the interpretation of graphs was allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over the three-year period. This demonstrates that a wide range of question categories was used across subtopics. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied,

with the result that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable. The evaluation indicates that variation of item types was used to assess the Circular Flow topic over the three-year period. These included objective items, short, structured questions, diagram and table-based interpretation, calculations, and paragraph responses. While the same general item types were used every year, the way they were used to examine the topic varied. The levels of difficulty and cognitive demand ranged from basic recall to application and calculation. This variation limited the extent of predictability. To reduce the predictability of the examination question paper, the DBE could vary command words and integrate unfamiliar data sets.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence of a consistent pairing of calculation and application skills with the multiplier and GDP-related subtopics. Interpretation skills were used to assess diagrams and tables, while explanation skills on concepts were required in the paragraph responses item types. Although this pattern reflects CAPS compliance, it may contribute to unacceptable predictability. To address this predictability, DBE could use conceptual understanding of the Circular Flow by using directive words such as "evaluate" or "analyse" in the question types.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that similar scenarios and real-life contexts were used across the three years, including Circular Flow diagrams, national accounts tables, and multiplier graphs. While the formats remained familiar, the data and item numbering varied; this supported the understanding of Circular Flow concepts rather than rote learning. This approach demonstrates acceptable predictability of the examination question paper. DBE should continue to vary scenarios and real-life contextual framing of the examination question paper while simultaneously maintaining these academic practices.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Circular Flow topic

Table 3.1.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Circular Flow Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in topic coverage.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Use varied directive command words and real-life contexts in assessing the Circular Flow topic.
Use a wider range of Circular Flow emphasis.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability in content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Continually assess all aspects of the subtopic in varied ways, unlike the preceding year.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use varied directive command words, scenarios, and real-life context in framing the item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting

The analysis reveals a slight variation in the weighting assigned to the topic: 24, 24, and 26 marks were awarded in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. This relatively stable allocation of marks suggests a predictable emphasis on the topic; however, such predictability is acceptable as it aligns with the CAPS guidelines and ensures consistency across examination cycles. The DBE is encouraged to maintain this balance while varying internal mark distribution across subtopics.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
The DBE is encouraged to maintain this balance while varying internal mark distribution across subtopics.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintain a balance in topic coverage while varying internal mark distribution across subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No significant unacceptable predictability of item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
To reduce the predictability of the examination question paper, the DBE could vary command words and integrate unfamiliar data sets.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use a variation of scenarios and updated economic data in the framing item types in the examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
No significant unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
The DBE should continue using calculations, interpretation, and explanation skills.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Variation of directive words used in the framing of item types and real-life context.

Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
DBE should continue to vary scenarios and real-life contextual framing of the examination question paper while simultaneously maintaining these academic practices.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use of up-to-date data and real-life context in the framing of item types.

Table 3.1.3 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Business Cycles topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Business Cycles Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Business Cycles							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Business Cycles:**	**43**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Open market transaction					
		Keynesian approach		Match item (1))	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Features underpinning forecasting		Structured response: Essay (40 marks) Longer response (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (learners to unpack features relating to forecasting)
		Challenges of economic recession		Longer response (paragraph discussion) (Essay) (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (learners' logical reasoning on how the recession impacts the economy)
2023	√	**Business Cycles:** Types of Business Cycles	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Monetarist approach		Match (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Composite indicators		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Demand and supply policies (1 mark)		Graph on demand and supply policies (new economic paradigm) Demand and supply policies (1 mark)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L3	Interpret graph
		Monetary policy		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of Business Cycles (2 marks)		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the concept of Business Cycles
		Effects of competition to stimulate aggregate supply		Short response item (2)	L2	L3	Understanding effects of competition
		Demand and supply policies		Longer response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding demand and supply-side policies
		Impact of fiscal policy on Business Cycles		Longer response (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of

							how fiscal policy can impact the Business Cycles of the economy)
2024	√	**Business Cycles:** Leading indicators	**22**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Moving averages		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Efficiencies (Pareto efficiency)		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Causes of a business cycle (exogenous causes)		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning (Understanding how exogenous factors cause Business Cycles
		Contraction phase		Table on Business Cycles of SA Short response (1 mark)	L1 – L 2 L1	L1 – L 2 L1	Interpret a graph
		Turning points of Business Cycles		Short response (1 mark)	L2	L1	Factual recall

		Concept of amplitude		Short response (2 marks)	L2	L1	Understanding of the concept of amplitude
		Trend line		Short response (2 marks)	L2	L2	Understanding the trendline in the economy
		Influence of recession on households		Longer response (4 marks)	L2	L2	Understanding the effect of the recession

Table 3.1.3 presents a comparative overview of the Business Cycles topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.3 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic Business Cycles was examined consistently across all three examination years from 2022 to 2024. The core subtopics of the Business Cycles were assessed across the three years. The topic appeared every year in Economics Paper 1 and formed part of the Economics final examination question paper. The consistent inclusion of core subtopics reflects compliance with the CAPS, which identifies Business Cycles as a compulsory topic for the Economics final examination question paper. The regular appearance of the topic suggests an acceptable level of predictability, as learners can reasonably expect it to be examined every year. The observed predictability is not considered a serious matter, as it supports curriculum coverage and fairness across the three

years of examinations. To maintain this acceptable predictability, the DBE should continue to assess Business Cycles annually while varying the focus within the topic.

b. Content coverage

The findings demonstrate that the same content areas in the Business Cycles topic were repeatedly assessed across the three years. These included the phases of the business cycle, concepts such as amplitude and trend line, forecasting, and the effects of economic recessions. Government intervention and demand and supply-side policies were also assessed. Although the repeated assessment of these core concepts may contribute to acceptable predictability, this repetition is acceptable and consistently aligns with CAPS requirements. Variation in specific item types, such as conceptual understanding, graph interpretation, and economic analysis, reduced the likelihood of rote learning. Overall, content coverage was acceptably predictable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals noticeable variations in mark allocation. The Business Cycle topic received higher marks when included as an essay question, whereas lower marks were observed in 2023 and 2024 when the topic was assessed through structure and source-based questions. The Business cycle topic was allocated 43, 24, and 22 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The MCQ, match-the-item, and one-word-answer item types were allocated 2, 1, and 1 mark, respectively, over the three-year period. The paragraph or long response items were allocated 8 marks, whereas the source-based and scenario item types were allocated 10 marks, with 40 marks allocated for the essay questions. These cycles occurred across the three years. In 2022, the variation in the allocation of marks reduced predictability of mark emphasis and encouraged full learner preparation. The fluctuation is regarded as good assessment practice and should be maintained to avoid predictable weighting patterns.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the assessment included MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match-the-item, and one-word questions: normally, match-the-item and one-word answers were allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period, but this year an unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks was given to MCQs. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation.

Furthermore, preserve balance between recall, application, and evaluation. The structured response item type (i.e., essays) was allocated 40 marks over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, matching items, and one-word items were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Across the three years, the distribution of cognitive levels in the Business Cycles assessment has been consistent, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic ranged from L1 to L3, and the interpretation of graphs was allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over the three-year period. This demonstrates that a wide range of question categories was used across subtopics. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, with the result that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable.

The evaluation indicates that a variety of item types were used to assess Business Cycles across the three examination years. These included MCQs, match-the-columns items, one-word responses, graph and table interpretation, structured questions, and essays. While similar item types appeared each year, their applications and complexities varied. The levels of difficulty ranged from lower-order recall to higher-order analysis and evaluation. This variation in item types and cognitive demand reduced unacceptable predictability. As observed, the use of similar item types without verbatim copying is considered acceptable for the predictability of the examination question paper. The continued rotation of item formats and command words is recommended to sustain balanced assessment.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that explanation and analytical skills were consistently paired with the Business Cycles topic. Learners were required to explain phases of the cycle, analyse graphs, interpret economic trends, and discuss the effects of recessions. Evaluative skills were assessed, particularly when essay questions were used. Although some consistency in skill pairing was observed, this compliance reflects the inherent nature of the topic and the CAPS expectations. The inclusion of higher-order skills reduced predictability and promoted deeper understanding. Therefore, this skill pairing was observed as acceptable.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that a variety of scenarios and contexts were used to frame the Business Cycles examination item types. These included business cycle graphs, real-world recession contexts, and policy-related scenarios. While the use of graphs remained a common feature in the assessment of the topic, the contextual details and data varied across the years. This variation in scenario framing supported conceptual understanding rather than memorisation and reduced predictability. There was no exact repetition of scenarios or real-life contexts used in the framing of item types, which would have resulted in unacceptable predictability. DBE should continue to incorporate varied and current economic contexts to enhance authenticity.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Business Cycles topic

Table 3.1.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Business Cycles Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No significant, unacceptable predictability was identified in the assessment of Business Cycles across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
The DBE should continue to assess Business Cycles annually while varying the focus within the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was no significant unacceptable predictability identified in content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Variation in specific item types, such as conceptual understanding, graph interpretation, and economic analysis, reduced the likelihood of rote learning. Overall, content coverage was moderately predictable but acceptable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continued variation in the use of concept-based item types, in the interpretation of graphs, and in the analysis of the economic effects of business cycle phases can limit the likelihood of rote learning.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting

There was a noticeable variation in the allocation of marks. The Business Cycle topic received higher marks when included as an essay question, whereas lower marks were observed in 2023 and 2024 when the topic was assessed through structure and source-based questions.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
The fluctuation is regarded as good assessment practice and should be maintained to avoid predictable weighting patterns.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue the variation in the allocation of marks for the topic, as this will enable learners to be fully prepared and avoid a special focus on a specific content area.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was unacceptable predictability in item types, as none were repeated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
The continued rotation of item formats and command words is recommended to sustain balanced assessment.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continual rotation and variation of item formats, and the use of varied directive command words in the framing of item types are recommended.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
There is no unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Continue using varied skill-pairing as observed over the three-year period.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

The continual use of varied skill-pairing can maintain topic-skill pairing that does not lead to a predictable examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
The DBE should continue to incorporate varied and current economic contexts to enhance authenticity.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continual use of varied scenarios in the framing of item types will support conceptual understanding and reduce memorisation of content.

Table 3.1.5 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Macroeconomics topic for DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Macroeconomics Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Macroeconomics							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

				per content area/subtopic	**examine the subtopic**		
2022	√	**Public Sector:** Community goods	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Medium Term Expenditure Framework		Match (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Pareto efficiency/ allocative efficiency		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Macroeconomic objectives of the Public Sector		Short response (2 marks)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Marginal tax rate		Source based: Table on tax rates Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L3 L1	Interpretation of source material
		Income tax system (1 mark)		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Interpretation and application of knowledge

		Concept of fiscal policy (2 marks)		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of fiscal policy
		Effect of high tax rates		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand taxation
		Calculation of income tax		Longer response/ calculations (4)	L2	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculation of income tax payable
		Public Sector provisioning		Paragraph (Long response (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners to unpack the reasons why Public Sector fail to provide services)
2023	√	Public Sector Laffer curve	**44**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual reasoning
		Accountability		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual reasoning
		Debt forgiveness		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual reasoning

		Objectives of the Public Sector		Structured response Essay (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of the government ensures effective functioning of the entire economy)
		Impact of privatisation of state-owned enterprises on SA economy		Longer response Essay (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of how the disposal of Public Sector will impact the economy)
2024	√	**Public Sector**	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
				Match (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
				One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Reasons for Public Sector failure		Extract on Public Sector failure Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L2	Interpret source material
		Levels of governance		Short response (1)	L2	L1	Factual recall

		Concept of accountability		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understand concept accountability
		Effects of Public Sector failure		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding Public Sector failure
		Importance of imposing taxes		Longer response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding the importance of imposing taxes
		Public Sector provisioning		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L4	L2	Logical reasoning (Showing understanding of why the Public Sector fail to provide goods and services to the society)
		Macroeconomic objective of equity		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Understanding macroeconomic objectives of the Public Sector

							(Understand equity)

Table 3.1.5 presents a comparative overview of the Macroeconomics topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.5 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The analysis indicates that the Public Sector topic was examined consistently across the three examination years from 2022 to 2024. The topic appeared every year in Economics Paper 1 and formed an integral part of the Macroeconomics section in the examination question paper. This consistent assessment of the topic demonstrates strong compliance with the CAPS, which prescribes the Public Sector as a compulsory topic. The regular inclusion of the Public Sector indicates acceptable predictability, as learners are expected to prepare for this topic each year. This predictability is justified by the importance of the topic in developing an understanding of government intervention and Public Sector finance in the economy.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that similar content areas within the Public Sector topic were repeatedly assessed across the three years. These included the composition of the Public Sector, the objectives and functions of government, Public Sector failure, reasons for government intervention, and fiscal policy instruments such as taxation and government expenditure. The evaluation highlights that the macroeconomic objectives, the Laffer curve, and Public Sector provision appeared frequently across the three years; however, the context was varied. Thus, it reveals acceptable predictability, as no similar or exact word repetition or verbatim copying was observed. While the repetition of assessing the core content areas may contribute to acceptable predictability, it reflects strict

adherence to the CAPS requirements. Variation was evident through the framing of the questions, with some years focusing on conceptual explanations and others emphasising application and analysis. Overall, content coverage was considered moderately predictable but acceptable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the allocation of marks to the Public Sector topic remained relatively consistent across the three years, with only minor variations. The topic was allocated 24, 44, and 24 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. This substantial increase in mark allocation of 20 marks in 2022 from 24 to 44 in 2023 was a result of a structured response item type, i.e., an essay assessed in 2023. The observation again displayed a significant decrease of 20 marks in 2024 from 44 in 2023 to 24. The MCQ, matching items, and one-word items were allocated 2, 1, and 1 mark, respectively, over the three-year period. The paragraph or long responses were allocated 8 marks, while the sources or scenario-based item types were allocated 10 marks over the three-year period. The assessed structured response item, i.e., essay, was allocated a maximum of 40 marks over three years. This trend demonstrates consistent weighting of the topic, indicating acceptable predictability in the examination question paper. This consistency further suggests a stable emphasis on the topic within the Economics Paper 1 examination question paper. Although predictable, this consistency in mark allocation is regarded as acceptable, as it ensures fairness and standardisation across examination cycles. The assessment body should maintain this consistency while varying the internal distribution of marks across different subtopics.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a wide range of item types was used to assess the Public Sector topic across the three years. These included MCQs, match-the-columns items, one-word responses, structured questions, source-based questions, and essays. The evaluation indicates that the Public Sector assessment included MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application.

There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match items, and one-word items: MCQs were normally allocated 2 marks and match items, and one-word items were allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period, yet this included an unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks to MCQs. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation.

Furthermore, preserve balance between recall, application, and evaluation. The structured response item type (i.e., essays) was allocated 40 marks over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, matching items, and one-word items were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. This demonstrates that a wide range of question categories was used across subtopics. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, so that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable. Continued use of varied item formats is recommended to maintain a balanced assessment of the topic and to reduce excessive, unacceptable predictability.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence of a consistent pairing of explanatory and analytical skills with the Public Sector topic. Learners were expected to explain concepts such as public goods and government objectives, analyse causes and consequences of Public Sector failure, and evaluate the effectiveness of government intervention. Although some repetition in skill pairing was observed, this alignment reflects the CAPS expectations and the nature of the topic. The inclusion of evaluative tasks, particularly in extended response questions, reduced predictability and promoted critical thinking. Therefore, the skill pairing was considered acceptable.

f. Scenario framing of items

The patterns observed indicate a variety of real-life and policy-related scenarios were used to frame Public Sector questions. These included budget statements, taxation extracts, government spending tables, and case studies on service delivery and Market Failure. While similar types of stimuli were used each year, the contexts and data sets differed. This approach supported the application of economic knowledge to real-world situations and limited rote learning. Therefore, scenario framing was considered acceptable and effective.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Macroeconomics topic

Table 3.1.6 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Macroeconomics Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability was identified in the assessment of the Public Sector over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
DBE should continue to assess the Public Sector each year, varying the focus within the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability was identified in content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Variation in specific item types, such as conceptual understanding, graph interpretation, and economic analysis, reduced the likelihood of rote learning. Overall, content coverage was moderately predictable but acceptable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continued variation in the use of concept-based item types, in the interpretation of graphs, and in the analysis of the economic effects of the business cycle phases can reduce the likelihood of rote learning.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was a noticeable variation in the allocation of marks. The Public Sector topic was awarded higher marks when included as an essay question, whereas lower marks were observed in 2023 and 2024 when the topic was assessed through structure and source-based questions.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
The fluctuation is regarded as good assessment practice and should be maintained to avoid predictable weighting patterns.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Continue the variation in the allocation of marks for the topic, as this will enable learners to be fully prepared and avoid a special focus on a specific content area.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was no unacceptable predictability in item types as there was no repetition of item types over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
The continued rotation of item formats and command words is recommended to sustain balanced assessment.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continual rotation and variation of item formats, and the use of varied directive command words in the framing of item types are recommended.
Identified unacceptable predictability topic–skill pairing
There is no unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Continue using varied skill-pairing as observed over the three-year period.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The continual use of varied skill-pairing can maintain topic-skill pairing without leading to a predictable examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
DBE should continue to incorporate varied and current economic contexts to enhance authenticity.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Continual use of varied scenarios in the framing of item types will support conceptual understanding and reduce memorisation of content.

Table 3.1.7 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability in the Foreign Exchange Markets topic for DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Foreign Exchange Markets Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Foreign Exchange Markets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	Foreign exchange markets: Current account	**24**	MCQ (2 marks)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Unrecorded transactions		Match (1 mark)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Terms of trade		Short response (2 marks)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Exchange rate		Source based: Graph on Foreign exchange market Short response (1 mark)	L1–3 L1	L1–L3 L2	Interpret the graph
		Exchange rate system		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Devaluation of a Currency		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand concept of devaluation
		Benefit of surplus on current account		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding surplus of BoP
		Benefit of increased demand for the US dollar on the value of the rand		Long response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding exchange rates
		Correction of BoP		Long response (8)	L4	L3	Higher order thinking and application of

							knowledge (learners to show understanding of the correction of BoP deficit)
2023	√	Foreign exchange markets Revaluation	**23**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Managed/controlled floating exchange		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Export value		Graph on SA's Trade Balance Short response (1)	L1 – L3 L1	L1 – L3 L2	Interpret graph
		Financial account of BoP		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Trade balance		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand concept of trade balance
		Electricity shortage on export volumes		Short response (2)	L2	L3	Understanding the impact of electricity

		Correction of BoP deficit by SARB		Long response (4)	L3	L3	Understand how to correct BoP
		Effects of specialisation on international trade		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L3	L3	Logical thinking and application of knowledge
		Demand factors for imports		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
2024	√	Foreign exchange markets: Terms of trade	**44**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Special drawing rights		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Dumping		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Reasons for international trade		Structure response Essay (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (learners to unpack features relating to forecasting)

		Impact of a weaker rand on SA's economy		Longer response (paragraph discussion) (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (learners' logical reasoning of how recession impacts the economy)

Table 3.1.7 presents a comparative overview of the Foreign Exchange Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.7 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The analysis revealed that Foreign Exchange Markets was examined consistently across the three examination years from 2022 to 2024. The topic appeared every year in the Economics Paper 1 examination question papers. This consistent inclusion indicates alignment with the CAPS, which prescribes Foreign Exchange Markets as a compulsory topic. The regular assessment of Foreign Exchange Markets indicates acceptable predictability, as learners are expected to prepare for it each year. This predictability is justified by the importance of the topic in developing an understanding of international trade, currency determination, and Balance of Payments dynamics.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicated that similar content areas within the Foreign Exchange Markets topic were assessed repeatedly across the three years. These included the demand and supply of foreign exchange, equilibrium exchange rates, currency appreciation and depreciation, factors influencing exchange rates, and the effects of exchange rate fluctuations on the economy. The core content of terms of trade and Balance of Payments correction appeared more frequently across the three years, however, in varied ways. Although the repetition of core concepts may contribute to acceptable predictability, this reflects adherence to the CAPS requirements. Variation was evident in the focus of questions, with some years emphasising graphical interpretation and others focusing on explanation and application. Overall, content coverage was considered acceptably predictable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis showed that the allocation of marks to Foreign Exchange Markets remained relatively consistent across the three years, with only slight variation. The topic was allocated 24, 23, and 44 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. There was a significant increase in the weighting of the topic in 2024, by 20 and 21 marks from 2022 and 2023, respectively. The MCQ, matching-item, and one-word questions were all allocated 2, 1, and 1 mark, respectively, over the three-year period. There was an allocation of 8 marks for a long paragraph discussion item type over the three-year period, while the source-based or scenario-based item types were allocated a maximum of 10 marks, with a structured response item (i.e., essay) allocated 40 marks. The observed fluctuation in the weighting, particularly the increase in 2024, is attributed to the topic being assessed with a structured response item (i.e., an essay) in 2024; otherwise, there was a consistent allocation of marks, showing acceptable predictability in the examination question paper. The consistency evaluated suggests a stable emphasis on the topic within the Economics Paper 1 examination question paper. Although predictable, mark allocation is considered acceptable because it ensures fairness and consistency across examination cycles. The assessment body should maintain this approach while varying the internal distribution of marks across different subtopics.

d. Variation in item types

A wide range of item types was used to examine Foreign Exchange Markets across the three years. The evaluation indicates that the assessment included MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match items, and one-word items, with MCQs normally allocated 2 marks and match items and one-word items each allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation.

Furthermore, preserve balance between recall, application, and evaluation. The structured response item type (i.e., essays) was allocated 40 marks over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match-the-item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. This demonstrates that a wide range of question categories was used across subtopics. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, so that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable.

Although there was repetition of item types in trade and the correction of Balance of Payments, this pattern was viewed as acceptable, as there was no verbatim repetition of the same question assessed in previous years. The cognitive demand ranged from lower-order recall to higher-order application and analysis. This variation in item types and difficulty levels limited the extent of unacceptable predictability. Continued rotation of item formats and directive command words is recommended to sustain balanced assessment.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings indicated a consistent pairing of interpretative and analytical skills with the Foreign Exchange Markets topic. Learners were expected to interpret demand and supply curves, analyse causes of exchange rate movements, and explain the effects of appreciation and depreciation on imports, exports, and inflation. Although some repetition in skill pairing was evident, this alignment reflects the inherent nature of the topic and CAPS expectations. The inclusion of analytical and application-based tasks limited predictability and promoted conceptual understanding. Therefore, the skill pairing was considered acceptable.

f. Scenario framing of Items

The analysis revealed that a variety of up-to-date economic scenarios and data sources were used to frame the item types for Foreign Exchange Markets questions. These included exchange rate graphs, Balance of Payments extracts, trade-related scenarios, and currency movement tables. While similar types of stimuli were used across the years, the data sets and contexts differed. This approach encouraged learners to apply economic principles to real-world situations rather than rely on memorisation. Therefore, scenario framing was considered acceptable and effective.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Foreign exchange markets topic

Table 3.1.8 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Foreign Exchange Markets Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability was identified in the assessment of Foreign Exchange Markets over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
The DBE should continue to maintain an annual assessment of Foreign Exchange Markets in line with the CAPS.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability was identified in content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Variation in specific item types, such as conceptual understanding, graph interpretation, and economic analysis, reduced the likelihood of rote learning. Overall, content coverage was moderately predictable but acceptable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continued variation in the use of concept-based item types, in the interpretation of graphs, and in the analysis of the economic effects of business cycle phases can limit the possibility of rote learning.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting

There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks on the topic Foreign Exchange Markets.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Continue varying the distribution of marks within subtopics.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue the variation in the allocation of marks for the topic, as this will enable learners to be fully prepared and avoid a special focus on a specific content area.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was no unacceptable predictability in item types as there was no repetition of item types over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
The continued rotation of item formats and command words is recommended to sustain balanced assessment.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continual rotation and variation of item formats, and the use of varied directive command words in the framing of item types is recommended.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
There was no unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Continue using varied skill-pairing as observed over the three-year period.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The continual use of varied skill-pairing can maintain topic-skill pairing that does not lead to a predictable examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

There was no unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
DBE should continue to incorporate varied and current economic contexts to enhance authenticity.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continual use of varied scenario in the framing of item types will support conceptual understanding and reduce memorisation of content.

Table 3.1.9 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Economic Pursuits topic in DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Economic Pursuits Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Economic Pursuits							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	Protectionism and free trade:	**34**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Africa Growth and Opportunity Act					
		Diversification		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Dumping		One word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Forms of economic integration		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Methods of export promotion		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of methods of export promotion)
		International trade policy		Cartoon on International Trade liberalisation Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L2 L1	Interpreting graph
		Acronym WTO		Short response (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall

		Import substitution		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of the concept import substitution
		Importance of infant industries		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Understanding the importance of infant industries
		Benefit of free trade		Long response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding free trade and its benefit in the economy
2023	√	Protectionism and free trade: Quotas	**43**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual reasoning
		Economic union		Match item (1)			Factual recall
		Export promotion as SA's international trade policy		Structured responses Essay (Longer detailed response Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of export promotion as

							SA's international trade policy.
		SA's benefits on various protocols		Longer response (paragraph discussion – Essay) (10)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of the SA's benefits on various protocols)
2024	√	Protectionism and free trade: Concept of protectionism	**23**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Boycotts		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		SADC countries		Short responses (2)	L1	L2	Factual recall
		Advantages of import substitution		Paragraph (Long responses (8)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of Protectionism and Free Trade

		Trade restriction measures		Cartoon on International Trade restrictions Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L2 L1	Interpretation of a cartoon
		WTO as organisation that removes trade restriction		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Embargo		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Understanding concept of embargo
		Importance of protecting infant industries		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand importance of protectionism
		Benefit of specialisation		Longer response (4)	L3	L2	Understand benefits of specialisation

Table 3.1.9 presents a comparative overview of the Economic Pursuits topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.9 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that, from 2022 to 2024, Protectionism and Free Trade were consistently examined as part of the Economic Pursuits topic. The topic appeared every year and aligned with the CAPS, which identifies international trade and government intervention as essential areas of study for Grade 12 learners. Although the consistent assessment suggests a degree of predictability, the observed predictability is considered acceptable given the importance of trade policy for understanding economic decision-making and global integration.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that the topic received full coverage over the three-year period in the Grade 12 final examination question papers. The content assessed over the three-year period focused on key areas, including definitions of Protectionism and Free Trade, methods of protection (tariffs, quotas, subsidies, embargoes), and arguments for and against protectionism. The core content of export promotion and the protection of infant industries was frequently examined over the three-year period in varied contexts. Since these content areas appeared repeatedly, variation was observed in the depth and application of questions. Some years emphasised theoretical understanding, while others required application to South African or global trade contexts. Therefore, the repetition of core content without exact or similar verbatim matches suggests acceptable predictability in the examination question paper and is CAPS-compliant.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was allocated 34, 43, and 23 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The allocation of marks to Protectionism and Free Trade remained relatively consistent across the three examination years. Marks were typically awarded through short questions, structured responses, and, occasionally, essay questions. The MCQ, matching items, and one-word answers were allocated 2, 1, and 1 mark, respectively, over the three-year period. The long response or paragraph discussion items were

allocated 8 marks across the three years, with the source-based and the structured response items allocated 10 and 40 marks, respectively. This stable weighting indicates a predictable emphasis; however, it is justified given the subtopic's significance within Economic Pursuits. Variation in question format and mark allocation helped limit excessive predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the assessment of Protectionism and Free Trade included MCQs, short answers, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match items, and one-word items: MCQs normally allocated 2 marks, while match items and one-word items each allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation.

Furthermore, preserve balance between recall, application, and evaluation. The structured response item type (i.e., essays) was allocated 40 marks over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match-the-item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation of item types was allocated to L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated to the difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated to L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated to L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, matches, one-word, source-based, data responses, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult,

thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demand should be continually adjusted so that the predictability pattern that is not easily recognisable. Although similar item types appeared every year, differences in command words, cognitive demand, and context limited predictability. The variation in item types was therefore adequate and appropriate, and deemed acceptable and predictable.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the Protectionism and Free Trade topic was consistently paired with explanation, analysis, and evaluative skills. Learners were expected to explain trade concepts, analyse the impact of protectionist measures, and evaluate trade policies. The skill pairing observed aligns with the CAPS expectations. While some repetition occurred, the inclusion of higher-order skills reduced predictability and promoted critical thinking.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed reveal that questions were framed using real-world scenarios such as trade agreements, import restrictions, and international competition. Cartoons and policy extracts were commonly used. Although similar stimulus formats were used across years, the contexts varied sufficiently to prevent rote learning. Scenario framing was effective, appropriate, and relevant to the examination questions assessed.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Economic Pursuits topic

Table 3.1.10 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Economic Pursuits Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified in topic coverage.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Examiners continue rotating contexts, increase evaluative questioning, and use contemporary trade examples.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was no unacceptable predictability in content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Continue rotating scenarios and real-life contexts and increase the number of evaluation questions. Additionally, use a variety of contemporary examples.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue varying and rotating scenarios and real-life contexts in the framing of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was no unacceptable predictability in topic weighting, as the topics were allocated differently across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Variation in question format and mark allocation will help limit excessive predictability.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use a variety of item types, changes in format, and mark allocation in future examinations.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types

There was no unacceptable predictability on item types in the DBE examination question papers.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Variation of item types and the use of varied scenarios and real-life contexts are recommended.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Using varied item types, changing scenarios, and real-life contexts annually will reduce the likelihood of predictable question papers.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing was identified across the three years of examinations.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Continue to include higher-order skills to decrease predictability and promote learners' critical thinking.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Vary skill-topic pairing annually to limit the predictability of a question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None; a variety of sources, such as cartoons and policy extracts, were commonly used.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue using up-to-date scenarios across content such as trade agreements, import restrictions, and international competition, in varied contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Incorporating content such as up-to-date trade agreements, import restrictions, export promotion campaigns, and international competitiveness of countries across varied contexts will reduce the predictability of a question paper.

Table 3.1.11 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Economic Growth and Development topic in DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.11: Findings on the Predictability of the Economic Growth and Development Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Economic Growth and Development							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	Economic growth and development: Land restitution	**43**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		North-South divide		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		SA's growth and development policies and strategic initiatives since 1994		Structured response Essay: Long detailed response (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Learner's understanding of SA's growth and development

							policies and strategies)
		How SA use supply side measures to promote economic growth and development		Long detailed response (Paragraph) Essay (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of how supply measures can be used to promote economic growth and development
2023	√	Economic growth and development: Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Capital formation		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Economic growth		One Word (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Manufacturing		Short responses (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (AGOA)		Cartoon on SA's growth and development policies Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L3 L1	Interpret a cartoon
		Concept of economic growth		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of economic development		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of economic development
		Business efficiency using taxation		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand the use of tax on businesses
		Implementation of BBBEE		Long response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding BBBEE
		Impact of low economic growth on SA economy		Paragraph (Long responses (8)	L4	L3	Application of knowledge
2024	√	Economic growth and development: Per capita GDP	**44**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		National Development plan		Match (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Labour-intensive industries		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Demand side approach in promoting economic growth and development		Structured response Essay Long detailed response (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Understanding of demand side approaches in promoting economic growth and development
		The importance of promoting small businesses for SA's economy		Long detailed response (Essay) (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Ability to analyse the importance of promoting small businesses in SA)

Table 3.1.11 presents a comparative overview of the Economic Growth and Development topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.11 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Economic Growth and Development topic was consistently examined across the years 2022 to 2024. The topic appeared every year in the Economics Paper 1 examination question paper under the Economic Pursuits topic. The examination paper frequently included topics such as economic growth and development, along with methods to improve them. This indicated strong alignment with CAPS, which requires learners to understand both growth measures and broader qualitative development outcomes. The regular assessment of this subtopic shows acceptable predictability. Given its important role in explaining differences in living standards and long-term economic progress, the consistent inclusion of economic growth and development is justified and appropriate.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that key aspects of Economic Growth and Economic Development were repeatedly assessed over the three-year period. These included definitions and differences between growth and development, indicators of growth and development, causes of low levels of development, and strategies to promote development, such as education, infrastructure development, and industrialisation. Although the content areas appeared regularly, variation was observed in the examination of these areas. Some years focused on conceptual distinctions and definitions, while others emphasised application through South African and global development challenges. This variation reduced the likelihood of memorisation learning. Overall, content coverage was acceptably predictable and aligned with the CAPS requirements.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that 44, 24, and 44 marks were allocated to economic growth and economic development. Thus, it remained relatively stable across the three examination years. The MCQ, match-the-item, and one-word items were allocated 2, 1, and 1 mark, respectively, over the three-year period. The source-based and the paragraph or discussion items were allocated 10 and 8 marks, respectively, while the structured response item, i.e., essays, were allocated 40 marks across the three years. The subtopic consistently accounted for a substantial portion of marks, particularly when assessed through structured questions and essays. While this stable allocation of marks suggests a predictable emphasis, it is acceptable given the subtopic's importance in achieving curriculum outcomes. Internal variation in mark distribution and question format helped limit excessive predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a wide range of item types was used to assess economic growth and economic development. These included MCQs, match-the-columns items, one-word responses, structured questions, paragraph responses, essays, and data-response questions based on development indicators. Lower-order items assessed knowledge of definitions and concepts, while higher-order questions required analysis, comparison, and evaluation of development strategies. The evaluation further indicates that the assessment of Economic Growth and Development, using MCQs, short answers, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays, varied across the three years. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application.

There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match items, and one-word responses, with MCQs normally allocated 2 marks and match items and one-word responses allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation. Furthermore, preserve balance between recall,

application, and evaluation. The structured response item type (i.e., essays) was allocated 40 marks over the three-year period. The difficult levels for MCQ, matching items, and one-word items were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated to the difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, so that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable. This variation in item types and cognitive demand reduced predictability and supported comprehensive assessment.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence of a consistent pairing of explanatory, analytical, and evaluative skills in the assessment of the subtopic. Learners were expected to explain the differences between growth and development, analyse the causes of underdevelopment, interpret development data, and evaluate strategies to improve living standards. Although some repetition in skill pairing was observed, the alignment demonstrates the conceptual depth of the subtopic and the CAPS expectations. The inclusion of higher-order evaluative questions reduced predictability and promoted critical thinking. The topic–skill pairing was therefore considered acceptable.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed reveal a variety of scenarios and data sources used in the framing of item types for economic growth and development. These included GDP trends, poverty and inequality statistics, human development indicators, and case studies related to developing economies. While similar types of data were used across years, the contextual nature of the item types and emphasis varied. The approach to framing item types encouraged learners to apply economic knowledge to authentic situations rather than memorise content. Therefore, scenario framing was effective and aligned with sound assessment practices.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics and Economic Growth and Development topic

Table 3.1.12 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics, Economic Growth, and Development Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability was identified in the assessment of economic growth and economic development.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Continue regular assessment of economic growth and development in line with the CAPS. Rotate emphasis between theory-based item types and real-world application of knowledge in the assessment of the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in content coverage.

Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Continue varying how the topic content is assessed using varied scenarios and real-life contexts.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use of varied ways of assessing the topic and contexts used in assessing the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was no serious, unacceptable predictability in the topic weighting, as the topic was allocated a substantial number of marks, particularly since it was assessed as an essay in 2022 and 2024.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Applying internal variation in mark distribution and question format will help reduce predictability.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balancing the lower-order recall with higher-order analysis and evaluation item types in the examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was no unacceptable predictability in the identified item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
The use of variation in item types and cognitive demand is recommended as it will reduce predictability and support comprehensive assessment.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balancing lower-order recall with higher-order analysis and evaluation item types will reduce the predictability of examination question papers.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
No significant unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
The inclusion of higher-order evaluative questions will decrease predictability and promote critical thinking.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
There should be a balance between lower-order recall and higher-order analysis and evaluation item types, as they will reduce predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Use updated development data and relevant South African case studies in the framing of the item type in the examination question paper.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The use of up-to-date data resources and relevant South African case studies will not yield a predictable question paper.

Table 3.1.13 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Industrial Development Policies topic in DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.13: Findings on the Predictability of the Industrial Development Policies Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Industrial Development Policies							
Year	**Topic examined**	**Content area/subtopics**	**Overall weighting**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short**	**Level of difficulty**	**Cognitive level per item**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	(✓) or not examined (X)	covered, including mark allocation	of the topic in marks	answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	per item type used to examine the subtopic	type used to examine the subtopic	
2022	√	**Industrial Development Policies**	**24**				
		Mining and agritourism		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		National Research and Development Strategy		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Corridor		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Regional Development Policies in terms of international benchmark		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning) (Learners' understanding of methods of export promotion)

		National Industrial Policy Framework		Extract on Industrial Development in SA Short response (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L2 L1	Interpreting graph
		Incentives to promote Industrial development		Short response (1)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of SEZs		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of the concept SEZs
		Effect of International oil price on industrial development		Short response (2)	L3	L3	Understanding the importance of infant industries
		Rural Infrastructure development		Long response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding free trade
2023	√	Industrial Development Policies	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		National Industrial Policy Framework (NIPF)		Match (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		National Research and Development Strategy (NRDS)		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Integrated Manufacturing Strategy and Industrialisation		Short responses (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		National Industrial Policy Framework		Extract on Foreign Direct Investment Short response (1)	L1 – L3 L1	L1 – L3 L1	Interpret source material
		Incentives to promote Industrial development		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of SEZs		Short response (Description of concept (2)	L2	L2	Understand concept of SEZs
		Effect of international oil price		Short response (2)	L3	L3	Understand international trade

		on industrial development					
		Rural Infrastructure development		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge
		SA's endeavours on regional development		Paragraph (Long response) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of SA's endeavours on regional development
2024	√	Industrial Development Policies	**23**				
		Good governance		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Spatial Development Initiatives		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		BBBEE on promotion of industrial development		Short responses (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Integrated Manufacturing Strategy (IMS)		Extract on SA's Industrial Development Strategies Short response (1)	L1 – L3 L1	L1 – L3 L1	Interpret source material
		Development of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC)		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of duty-free incentives		Short response Description of concept (2)	L2	L2	Understand duty-free incentives
		Corridors in promoting regional development		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand regional development
		Benefit of National Research and Development Strategy to SA businesses		Short response (4 marks)	L3	L3	Understanding and application
		Challenges of promoting Industrial development		Paragraph (Long responses) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Understanding of Industrial

							Development Policies in SA)

Table 3.1.13 presents a comparative overview of the Industrial Development Policies topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.13 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Industrial Development Policies topic was consistently examined across the years 2022 to 2024 as part of the Economic Pursuits topic in the Economics Paper 1 examination question paper. The topic appeared every year, either as a separate topic or paired with other questions on economic growth and development. This consistent inclusion demonstrates strong alignment with the CAPS requirements. The regular assessment of Industrial Development Policies suggests a degree of predictability. However, this predictability is considered acceptable, as the subtopic plays a critical role in understanding government strategies aimed at promoting industrialisation, employment creation, and economic growth in South Africa.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that the core contents of Industrial Development Policies were repeatedly assessed across the three years. These included the objectives of industrial development, the local industrial sector, beneficiation, industrial incentives, special economic zones (SEZs), and the role of government in supporting manufacturing and value addition. Although these content areas appeared consistently, variation was found in the depth and focus of the assessment task. Some examinations emphasised policy objectives and theoretical explanations, while others focused on the application and evaluation of the effectiveness of specific

policies within the South African context. This variation in item types and contexts reduced the likelihood of rote learning. Overall, content coverage was predictable, but acceptable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was allocated 24, 24, and 23 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively, and remained relatively stable across the three examination years. The MCQ, match item, and one-word were all allocated 2, 1, and 1 mark, respectively, while the paragraph discussion item type and the source-based were allocated 8 and 10 marks, respectively, over the three-year period. The topic contributed a meaningful number of marks, particularly because it was assessed as an essay. While this stable weighting suggests predictable emphasis, it is shown by the importance of Industrial Development Policies in achieving economic growth and development objectives. Internal variation in mark distribution across questions helped limit predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a variety of item types were used to assess Industrial Development Policies across the three years. These included MCQs, match-the-columns items, one-word responses, structured questions, source-based questions, and extended responses. Policy extracts, case studies, and data on industrial initiatives were commonly used as stimuli. The evaluation further demonstrates that the assessment of Industrial Development Policies included MCQs, short answers, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match items, and one-word items, with MCQ normally allocated 2 marks and match item and one-word items allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period, and a very unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks for MCQs.

The data responses were consistently allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. The continued variation in item types and mark allocation is recommended to preserve balance among recall, application, and evaluation. There were no structured response item types, i.e., essays, over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQs, match-the-item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The cognitive demand assessed in the item types ranged from lower-order recall to higher-order analysis and evaluation. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, with the result that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence of a consistent pairing of explanatory, application, and evaluative skills with Industrial Development Policies. Learners were expected to explain policy objectives, apply their knowledge to South African industrial contexts, and evaluate the effectiveness of government intervention strategies in promoting industrial development. Although some repetition in

skill pairing was evident, this alignment reflects CAPS expectations and the applied nature of the subtopic. The inclusion of evaluative tasks reduced predictability and encouraged higher-order thinking. Therefore, topic-skill pairing was considered acceptable.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed reveal that a range of real-world South African scenarios were used in the framing of item types for the topic Industrial Development Policies. These included references to special economic zones, local industrial development initiatives, manufacturing strategies, and government incentive programmes. While similar policy themes were used across the years, the specific contexts and examples differed. The use of varied scenarios in the framing of item types encouraged learners to apply economic principles rather than memorise content. Therefore, scenario framing was effective and aligned with sound assessment practices.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Industrial Development Policies topic

Table 3.1.14 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.14: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Industrial Development Policies Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability was identified in the assessment of Industrial Development Policies.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage

Maintain a regular assessment of the topic Industrial Development Policies in line with the CAPS. Continue using varied contexts and policy examples related to the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Increase the use of evaluation item types of questions on the effective use of policies to promote industrialisation.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue to use updated South African industrial policy data.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in topic weighting.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Internal variation in mark distribution across questions will help limit predictability.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue maintaining the approach on how marks are allocated and distributed across the subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in the identified item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Continue balancing conceptual understanding item types with evaluation item types in the examination question paper.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintain variation in the format and cognitive demands of the item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing

There was no significant unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
The inclusion of evaluative tasks will reduce predictability and encourage higher-order thinking.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The use of variation in item format and cognitive demands in the examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of the identified items.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Balance conceptual explanation with application and evaluation.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The use of varied contexts and policy focus in the framing of item types.

Table 3.1.15 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic for DBE Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.15: Findings on the Predictability of the Economic and Social Performance Indicators Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Economic and Social Performance Indicators							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and**	**Level of difficulty per item**	**Cognitive level per item type**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)		topic in marks	marks allocated per content area/subtopic	type used to examine the subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	
2022	√	Social and economic indicators	**24**				
		Infant mortality rate		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Repo rate		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Employment rate		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Urban migration		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Negative growth rate		Graph on SA's Quarterly Labour productivity growth rate Short response item (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L2 L1	Interpret graph
		Institution publishing economic indicators		Short response item (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Concept of social indicators		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understand concept of social indicator
		Labour productivity in businesses		Short response item (2)	L3	L2	Understand labour

							productivity on businesses
		Improving labour productivity		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Learners' understanding of labour productivity
		Demographic indicators of population growth and life expectancy		Long response item (paragraph) (8)	L3	L3	Understand labour productivity
2023	√	Social and economic indicators: Urbanisation	**24**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Consumer price index		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Prime rate		Short responses (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Public Sector services		Short response item	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Foreign trade indicators		Paragraph (Long responses (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning (Learners' understanding of foreign trade indicators)

		Population dynamics (Demographics)		Graph on Population Demographics of SA Short response item (1)	L1–L2 L1	L1–L3 L3	Interpret source material
		Economically active population		Short response item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Life expectancy		Short response item (2)	L2	L1	Understand concept of life expectancy
		Malnutrition and child mortality rate		Short response item (2)	L2	L3	Understand social indicators of malnutrition and child mortality
		Population growth on the business or government (4)		Short response item (4)	L2	L3	Understand the importance of population size to government and businesses
2024	√	Social and economic indicators:	**24**				
		Life expectancy		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Urbanisation		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Employment rate		One Word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Percentage labour productivity		Short responses (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Percentage labour productivity		Graph on SA's Labour Productivity Short response item (1)	L1–L3 L1	L1–L2 L1	Interpret source material
		Productivity indicator		Short response item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of economic indicator		Short response item (2)	L2	L2	Understand concept of economic indicator
		Importance of access to healthcare to labour		Short response item (2)	L2	L2	Understanding and application of knowledge
		Impact of a decrease in labour productivity		Short item types (4)	L3	L2	Understanding and application of knowledge
		Social indicators related to nutrition		Paragraph (Long responses) (8)	L2	L3	Logical reasoning (Understanding of social

							indicators related to nutrition)

Table 3.1.15 presents a comparative overview of the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.15 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic was consistently examined across the years 2022 to 2024 as part of the Economic Pursuits topic in Economics Paper 1. The subtopic appeared yearly, either as a separate focus item or incorporated into questions on economic growth and development. The consistent assessment of the topic continually demonstrates strong alignment with the CAPS requirements, which emphasise the importance of measuring economic performance and social well-being. The regular assessment of the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic suggests an acceptable level of predictability. Given the role of indicators in evaluating economic progress and quality of life, the continued assessment of this subtopic is justified and appropriate.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that important economic and social performance indicators were repeatedly assessed across the three years. These included gross domestic product (GDP), GDP per capita, Human Development Index (HDI), Gini coefficient, poverty rates, employment and unemployment indicators, and other measures of living standards. In some instances, the limitations of using GDP as a sole indicator of development were also assessed. The evaluation demonstrated frequent changes in labour productivity, life

expectancy, urbanisation, and urban migration over the three-year period. Although this core content appeared regularly, there was variation in the depth and focus of the assessments. Some examination item types focused on definitions and the interpretation of indicators, while others required comparisons, analyses, or evaluations of the effectiveness of different indicators. This variation reduced the likelihood of prioritising and spotting learning. Overall, content coverage was acceptably predictable and compliance with the CAPS requirements was acceptable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic was allocated 24 marks consistently across the three examination years. The MCQs were allocated 2 marks, while the match-the-item and one-word item types were each allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. The source-based and long response or paragraph item types were both allocated 10 and 8 marks, respectively, over the three-year period. The subtopic generally carried moderate weighting, often assessed through structured questions, data-response items, or paragraph responses. Although stable weighting suggests a degree of predictability, it is acceptable given the subtopic's importance for understanding economic performance and development outcomes. Variation in question format and in the distribution of internal marks helped reduce excessive predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a variety of item types were used to assess economic and social performance indicators. These included MCQs, match-the-columns items, one-word responses, structured questions, source-based questions, and extended responses. Policy extracts, case studies, and data on industrial initiatives were commonly used as stimuli. The evaluation further demonstrates that the assessment of Industrial Development Policies included MCQs, short answers, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application.

There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match the item, and one-word items, with MCQ normally allocated 2 marks and match item and one-word items allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period.

The data responses were consistently allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. The continued variation in item types and mark allocation is recommended to preserve balance among recall, application, and evaluation. There were no structured response item types, i.e., essays, over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match-the-item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The cognitive demand assessed in the item types ranged from lower-order recall to higher-order analysis and evaluation. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, with the result that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence of a consistent pairing of interpretative and analytical skills with this subtopic. Learners were expected to interpret statistical data, analyse trends in graphs, compare indicators, and evaluate the usefulness of different measures for assessing economic and social performance. Although some repetition in skill pairing was evident, this alignment reflects the subtopic's data-driven nature and the CAPS expectations. The inclusion of analytical and evaluative tasks reduced predictability and promoted higher-order thinking by learners. Therefore, topic-skill pairing was considered acceptable.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed reveal that a variety of real-world data and contexts were used in the framing of item types for economic and social performance indicators. These included South African socio-economic statistics, international comparisons, and development-related case studies. While similar types of data were used across the years, the specific indicators and contexts varied. The strategy used encouraged learners to apply economic knowledge to authentic situations rather than memorise content. Therefore, scenario framing was effective and aligned with sound assessment practices.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic

Table 3.1.16 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.16: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Economic and Social Performance Indicators Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No significant, unacceptable predictability in topic coverage was identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain a regular assessment of the Social and Economic Performance Indicators topic in line with the CAPS.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
No significant unacceptable predictability in content coverage identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Increase the number of evaluation item types in the assessment of the topic to reduce the likelihood of a predictable question paper.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance the use of factual recalling, interpretation, and evaluation item types in the examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
No significant unacceptable predictability on topic weighting.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Variation in question format and internal mark distribution will help reduce excessive predictability.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use of varied scenarios and real-life contexts. Additionally, the format of item types will reduce the likelihood of a predictable question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was no significant unacceptable predictability in item types identified over the three-year period.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Continue with the variation in item types and cognitive demand to eliminate unacceptable predictability and support a balanced assessment task.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use of variation in item types, varied scenarios, and real-life context in framing item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
No significant unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
The inclusion of analysis and evaluation item types in the examination question paper will reduce predictability and promote higher-order thinking by learners.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balancing of factual recall with interpretation and evaluation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no significant, unacceptable predictability in the scenario-forming of items over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Increase the use of evaluative questions comparing different indicators.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintaining a variation in question format and contextual framing.

Conclusions

Based on the evaluation, the DBE examination question papers for Economics Paper 1 over the past three years were generally of good quality and consistent in format and structure. The predictability in the structure and format of the examination question paper is acceptable. There was minor repetition of item types across the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demand was evenly distributed, and examiners used a variety of scenarios and real-life contexts in framing item types. As a result, there was minimal unacceptable predictability of the examination question papers over the three-year period. However, the comparability identified in the appearance and sequencing of topics across the examination question papers should be avoided to minimise the risk of future predictability.

3.2: ECONOMICS STUDIES PAPER 2

This section presents an analysis of the DBE final examination question papers for Economics Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.2.1–3.2.12.

Table 3.2.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Perfect Markets topic in DBE Economics Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Perfect Markets Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Perfect Markets							
Year	**Topic examined**	**Content area/subtopics**	**Overall weighting**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short**	**Level of difficulty per**	**Cognitive level per item type**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	(✓) or not examined (X)	covered, including mark allocation	of the topic in marks	answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	item type used to examine the subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	
2022	✓	**Perfect markets**	**46**				
		Shut down		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Implicit costs		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Long run		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Average costs		One-word item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Diseconomies of scale		One-word item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Short-run equilibrium positions using graphs (*economic profit, economic loss* and *normal profit*) in a		Long detailed response items (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning

		perfect market.					
		Advantages of perfect competition as a market structure.		Long detailed response (Essay) (10)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
2023	✓	**Perfect markets**	**26**				
		Supply curve (MC)		Short response (Identify) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret graph
		Output decision		Short response (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Marginal revenue		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understand the concept of marginal revenue
		Output decision		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge
		Total revenue		Calculation (4)	L3	L3	Application of Calculating Total revenue

		Role of Competition Commission and Tribunal		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Profit maximisation graph		Long response (Drawing, labelling and explaining a graph) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	**Perfect markets**	**36**				
		Price taker		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Average variable costs		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Short run		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Implicit costs		One word item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Examples of businesses under perfect market		Short response (Naming) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Graphic representation of the relationship		Long response (Drawing, labelling and explaining a graph) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning

		between TC, FC and VC graph					
		MC curve		Short response (Identify) (1)	L2	L1	Interpretation of graph
		Nature of product of a perfect market		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Marginal revenue		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding concept of marginal revenue
		Demand curve of a perfect market		Short response (2)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge
		Short economic loss and long-run normal profit		Short response (4)	L4	L3	Application of knowledge and interpretation of a graph.
		Anti-competitive behaviour		Long response (Essay)(10)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning

Table 3.2.1 presents a comparative overview of the Perfect Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.1 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Perfect Markets topic was examined consistently across 2022, 2023, and 2024. Each year included questions on cost structures, equilibrium positions, and profit maximisation. The frequent assessment of the topic suggests a predictable pattern; however, given the importance of Perfect Markets in the CAPS, predictability is acceptable. It is recommended that rotational assessment on this core content: marginal revenue, shutdown point, and profit maximisation across all examination phases will be a solution to avoid predictability.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate recurring concepts such as shutdown point, implicit costs, marginal revenue, diseconomies of scale, and profit maximisation graphs. While repetition was evident, variation in depth (from factual recall to extended essays) reduced the likelihood of rote learning. Increasing the integration of applied and evaluative questions, and maintaining variation in framing, allows for a balanced predictability.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that allocation of marks on the Perfect Markets topic ranged from 26 marks (2023) to 46 marks (2022), with 36 marks in 2024. This fluctuation demonstrates moderate variation, but overall stable emphasis. Predictability is acceptable. Maintain weighting but vary distribution across item types to avoid predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the assessment included MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and extended essays. Lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQs, match items, and one-word items, with MCQs normally allocated 2 marks and match items and one-word items allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period, except for an unusual allocation of 4 marks to MCQs in 2024. The data responses were consistently allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. The continued variation in item types and mark allocation could preserve balance among recall, application, and evaluation. The structured response item type (i.e., essays) was allocated 40 marks over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQs, matching items, and one-word items were always at L1, while economic concepts were allocated to L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated at L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated at difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. Consequently, anticipating specific item types is difficult, thus reducing the predictability of the question paper over the years. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands should be continually varied, so that the predictability pattern is not easily recognisable.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills consistently paired with Perfect Markets included factual recall, graph interpretation, revenue calculation, and logical reasoning. While repetition was evident, evaluative tasks promoted higher-order thinking. Increase the variation by pairing with synthesis and comparative analysis tasks.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that questions for the topic were framed using graphs, tribunal contexts, and real-world applications of profit maximisation. Variation in scenarios encouraged application rather than memorisation. Continue integrating diverse, contemporary scenarios into the framing of item types in the examination question paper.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Perfect Markets topic

Table 3.2.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Perfect Markets Topic Paper (2)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was no unacceptable predictability in topic coverage, as the topic was assessed annually in compliance with the CAPS.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain the rotational emphasis across all the subtopics in the Perfect Market.

Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was limited, unacceptable predictability in content coverage, as repetition of some core perfect market content, such as the shutdown point, marginal revenue, and profit maximisation, was observed, but with varying depth and framing.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Continue varying the framing and cognitive level of questions assessing recurring subtopics to avoid a predictable question paper.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The continuous, full coverage of the topic, using varied scenarios, graphs, and application-based item types to assess it.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was no unacceptable predictability in topic weighting, as the weighting fluctuated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Retain the overall weighting of the topic but vary the distribution of marks across the item types.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use a variety of item types in combinations.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was repetition and use of the same graph-based and essay item types in some years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Change format and structure of item types and directive command words in the framing of item types.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue combining recall, interpretation, and evaluation items.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
There was a repetition of similar skills paired in the recall and interpretation of graphs.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
There should be an increase in the use of evaluation and comparative skills to avoid unacceptable predictability of the question paper.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotation of skills to be assessed every year.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items, as there was a variation in the use of graphs and real-life market contexts.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue with the variation of scenarios and real-life contexts in the framing of item types.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintaining a variation of scenarios and real-world market examples.

Table 3.2.3 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Imperfect Markets topic in DBE Economics Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Imperfect Markets Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Imperfect Markets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	**Imperfect market**	**35**				
		Imperfect market structures (Monopoly/oligopoly/monopolistic)		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Long-run profit of oligopoly		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Oligopoly		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Types of collusion		Short response (Naming items) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Non-price strategy		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Interpret cartoon

		Examples of monopolistic competition		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of patent		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understand concept of patent
		Monopoly price versus monopolistic price		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand pricing in a monopolistic market
		Benefits of product differentiation		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding the benefit of product differentiation
		Actions of firms in the oligopoly markets		Long detailed response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Understanding oligopoly
		Loss minimising point		Short response (Identifying from a graph) (1)	L2	L2	Interpret graph

		Product nature of monopoly		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of natural monopoly		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understand concept of natural monopoly
		Monopoly long run profit		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding long run monopoly profit
		Calculation of economic loss		Short response (Calculation) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – calculating economic loss
2023	✓	**Imperfect market**	**44**				
		Duopoly		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Monopoly		One word item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Non-price competition strategies		Short response (Naming item) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Comparing imperfect market structures (monopolistic and oligopoly)		Structured response item – Long detailed response (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Negative effect of collusion in the economy		Structured response item – Long detailed response (Essay) (10)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	**Imperfect market**	**43**				
		Natural monopoly		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Patent		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Examples of non-price competition		Short response (Identifying from the source) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret source material
		Long run profit of monopolistic competition		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of monopolistic competition		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding concept of monopolistic competition

		Role of advertising		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understanding the role of advertising in the market
		Monopoly profit versus monopolistic competition		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge
		Oligopoly market structure		Structured response item Essay – Long detailed response (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning

Table 3.2.3 presents a comparative overview of the Imperfect Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.3 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that Imperfect Markets were examined annually from 2022 to 2024, covering monopolies, oligopolies, monopolistic competition, and collusion. The consistent assessment and inclusion of Imperfect Markets in the examination question paper reflect compliance with the CAPS. Predictability is acceptable. Rotational emphasis across subtopics to balance content coverage in the examination question paper.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that a repeated assessment of concepts included collusion, patents, monopolistic pricing, non-price competition, and oligopoly behaviour. Variation was observed in the depth of the item types used in the assessment, with some years focusing on definitions and others on extended essays. Increase the number of evaluation item types for policy effectiveness. Maintain variation in framing of the item type in the examination question paper.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the allocation of marks on the Imperfect Markets topic ranged from 35 marks (2022) to 44 marks (2023), and 43 marks (2024). The MCQs were allocated 2 marks, while match-the-item and one-word items were each allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. The paragraph discussion and source-based items were allocated 8 and 10 marks respectively, whereas the structured response item, i.e., essay, was allocated a maximum of 40 marks over the three-year period. This stable emphasis reflects importance. The predictability is acceptable. Maintain the allocation; however, vary the distribution of marks across item types.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the topic was assessed using MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and essays. Higher-order items that required evaluating collusion and comparing market structures were also included in the assessment of Imperfect Markets. The evaluation further indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQ, match the item, and one-word items: MCQ normally received 2 marks, and match item and one-word items received 1 mark each over the three-year period, with an unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks for MCQ. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. It is encouraged to continue varying item types and mark allocation.

Furthermore, preserve balance between recall, application, and evaluation. There was no structured response item type over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match the item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were allocated L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated at L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated to the difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the topic has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years.

The recommendation is that the assessment body should continue to vary item types and mark allocations to reduce the predictability of the examination question paper.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills used in assessing item types in Imperfect Markets included recall, interpretation, application, and evaluation. The structured responses in the essays required learners to apply logical reasoning and analyse oligopoly behaviour. The DBE examiners should increase variation by pairing with synthesis and comparative analysis.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that cartoons, policy extracts, and real-world examples of collusion and advertising were used to frame the item types for Imperfect Markets. The use of varied real-life contexts promoted the application of knowledge and insight. The recommendation to the assessment body is to continue integrating diverse and contemporary scenarios.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Imperfect Markets topic

Table 3.2.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Imperfect Markets Topic Paper (2)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was no unacceptable predictability in the topic coverage, as the topic was consistently assessed as prescribed.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Continued variation in item types, scenarios, and real-life contexts in framing items is recommended for future examinations.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was a repeated assessment of collusion and pricing strategies noted, but it remained acceptable.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Continue varying item types and using varied scenarios and real-life context.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Use varied item types, scenarios, and real-life contexts, such as regulation, advertising, and competition policy, to frame the items.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was comparability in the allocation of marks between 2023 and 2024, but the varied item types introduced unpredictability into the examination question paper.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There is no need to change the mark allocation, but item types should be varied.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintain weighting but vary the internal mark distribution across item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was no unacceptable predictability on item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Continue varying item types, scenarios, and real-life contexts in the framing of items.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue varying item types, scenarios, and real-life contexts in the framing of items.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Acceptable repetition of analytical and evaluative skills was observed.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Increase evaluation and synthesising of policy-related skills.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The use of comparison of market structure analysis.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no unacceptable, predictable scenario framing of the observed items.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue with variations in scenario framing for items such as cartoons, extracts, and policy contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use a variety of scenarios and maintain a comparative market analysis to avoid predictable examination question papers.

Table 3.2.5 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Market Failure topic in the DBE Economics Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Market Failure Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Market Failure							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Market Failure	**34**				
		Inefficiency		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Missing markets		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Cost-benefit analysis		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Minimum wage		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Market price		Short response (Identifying from a graph) (1)	L2	L3	Interpret graph
		Product with maximum price		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Minimum price		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept minimum price
		Levying taxes on demerit goods		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the importance of taxes on demerit goods
		Influence of maximum price on the economy		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding the effect of minimum wage

		Effects of negative externality on the market		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Interpretation and application of knowledge
		Merit goods		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Causes of Market Failure		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Understanding of Market Failure and its causes
2023	✓	Market Failure	**37**				
		Positive externality		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Black market		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Merit goods		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Maximum price/price ceiling		One word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Levying of taxes on demerit goods		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Percentage minimum price increase		Short response (Identifying from the source material (1)	L1	L1	Interpret graph

		Factors affecting quality of labour		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of Market Failure		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the concept of Market Failure
		Imperfect market and government intervention		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Higher-order thinking
		Effects of minimum wage on employers		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge
		Effect of subsidies on producers		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Redress methods to redistribute wealth		Short response (Naming) (2)	L1	L1	Factual response

		Cost benefit		Short response (Identifying from a graph) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret graph
		Social benefits		Short response (Naming item) (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of social costs		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of social costs
		Reasons for conducting cost-benefit analysis		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understand the benefit of cost-benefit analysis
		Calculate cost-benefit ratio		Short response (Calculations) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating ratio of cost benefit analysis
2024	✓	**Market Failure**	**35**				
		Direct control		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Minimum price		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Community goods		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Minimum wage		One word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Importance of cost- benefit analysis		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Marginal private benefit curve		Short response (Identifying from a graph) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret graph
		Negative externality		Short response (1)	L3	L2	Factual recall
		Concept of externality		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L3	L2	Understanding concept of externality
		Social efficiency		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Understanding concept of social efficiency
		Ways to encourage consumption of merit goods		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge
		Lack of information versus		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning

		allocation of resources					
		Inefficiences		Short response (Naming item) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Maximum price graph		Long response (Drawing, labelling, and explanation of a graph) (8)	L4	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and labelling of a graph

Table 3.2.5 presents a comparative overview of the Market Failure topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.5 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that Market Failure was examined consistently across 2022, 2023, and 2024, covering core content such as inefficiency, missing markets, externalities, minimum wage, and government intervention. Predictability acceptable. The assessment body should increase the rotational emphasis across subtopics to balance coverage.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate key concepts such as merit goods, demerit goods, maximum and minimum prices, taxation, and cost-benefit analysis were repeatedly assessed throughout the examination question paper. The assessment body should use variation in framing and the depth of examination item types to reduce memorisation and spot learning. Predictability was moderate but acceptable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that Market Failure was allocated a steady mark across the three years (34–37 marks). The MCQ items were allocated 2 marks, while the match-the-items and one-word items were each allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. The paragraph discussion item types were allocated 8 marks, while source- or scenario-based item types were allocated 10 marks. The consistent emphasis shows its importance in policy-related economics. Predictability was acceptable.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the Market Failure topic was assessed using MCQs, short-answer questions, graph interpretation, structured questions, and essays. Higher-order item types, requiring the application of knowledge to interpret graphs and evaluate government interventions, were also used to assess the core content of the topic.

The evaluation indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQ, match the item, and one-word items: MCQ normally received 2 marks, and match the item and one-word items received 1 mark each over the three-year period, with an unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks for MCQ. The data responses were always allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type. The continued variation in item types and mark allocation could help preserve a balance between recall, application, and evaluation. There was no structured response item type over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match the item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were allocated L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated at L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated to the difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the topic has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, Economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. Variation in item types reduced predictability.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that skills paired with Market Failure in the assessment of core content included factual recall, interpretation of graphs, application of knowledge, and evaluation of policy impacts. Predictability was acceptable, with evaluative tasks promoting higher-order thinking.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that the scenario framing of item types on Market Failure includes graphs, wage policies, taxation of demerit goods, and subsidies. Variation in contexts across years encouraged application rather than memorisation. Scenario framing was effective.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Market Failure topic

Table 3.2.6 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Market Failure Topic Paper (2)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was no unacceptable predictability in topic coverage, as the topic was assessed every year as prescribed in the CAPS.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Rotate emphasis across externalities, price controls, and government intervention.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
The minimum wage and price control question was repeated.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Vary the item types used to assess reappearing subtopics.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use of different policies and real-life economic contexts will prevent the predictability of a question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability in topic weighting was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Use the current allocation of marks.

Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Vary the distribution of marks across the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Repetition of some graph-based item types was observed in the examination question papers across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Alternation between data-response item types and evaluation item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Repetitive use of skills, such as interpretation and application, was observed in the assessment of the topic across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
There should be an increase in the number of evaluation and judgement item types to avoid a predictable question paper.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The use of some policy-related item types, particularly on the regulation of the markets.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items as varied acceptable scenarios and real-life contexts were used in the framing of item types.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue with the use of varied scenarios and real-life contexts in the framing of item types.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Sustainability in the use of real-life contexts.

Table 3.2.7 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Inflation topic in the DBE Economics Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Inflation Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Inflation							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Inflation**	**36**				
		Stagflation		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Open market transaction		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Demand pull inflation		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Types of consumer inflation		Short response (Naming item) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Base year		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Interpret source material
		Institutions that control inflation		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Hyperinflation		Short response (description of concept) (2)	L1	L1	Understanding concept of hyperinflation
		Importance of measuring inflation		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the importance of measuring inflation
		Calculate inflation rate		Short response (Calculations) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge –

							Calculation of inflation rate
		Effect of an increase in price		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
		Effects of a decrease in interest rates		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Understanding inflation
		Causes of cost push inflation		Short response (Identifying from a graph) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret a graph
		Measuring inflation		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of inflation		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of inflation
		Effect of a decrease in price on producers		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Application of knowledge

		Measures to combat inflation		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding policies to curb inflation
2023	√	**Inflation**	**33**				
		Repo rate		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Producer price index		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Weighted index		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Hyperinflation		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Core inflation		Short response (Naming item) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of administered inflation
		Institution determining interest rate		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Interpret a graph
		Monetary policy instruments		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Administered-price inflation		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of the concept administered-price inflation
		Benefits of inflation		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding benefit of inflation to debtors
		Impact of oversupply of money		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge
		Consequences of inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Logical thinking
		Inflation targeting		Long response (paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical thinking
2024	√	**Inflation**	**36**				
		Inflation targeting		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Deflation		MCQ (2)	L 1	L1	Factual recall
		GDP deflator		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Demand-pull inflation		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Types of consumer inflation		Short response (Naming item) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Impact of inflation to consumers		Short response (Identifying from a cartoon) (1)	L2	L1	Interpret cartoon
		Inflation control		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Stagflation		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understanding concept of stagflation
		Impact of inflation on taxpayers		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understanding inflation
		Natural disaster versus inflation		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge
		Causes of demand-pull inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning

		SARB role in controlling money supply (Open money transaction)		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Measures to combat inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning

Table 3.2.7 presents a comparative overview of the Inflation topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.7 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that as a prescribed topic, Inflation was consistently examined across the three years in Paper 2. The item types assessing the topic included definitions, related items, causes of inflation, effects, and policy responses to inflation. The frequent assessment of the topic suggests a predictable pattern of inclusion; however, given the importance of inflation in both micro and macroeconomic contexts, predictability is acceptable. Continued rotational emphasis across subtopics (e.g., demand-pull versus cost-push inflation, measurement methods, policy interventions) could help avoid a predictable examination question paper.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate recurring concepts over the three-year period, including definitions of inflation, types of inflation (demand-pull, cost-push), measurement using the CPI, effects on households and firms, and government policy responses. While these concepts appeared every year, there was variation in the depth to which they were covered: some years emphasised factual recall, while others required application to South African contexts or evaluation of policy effectiveness. The assessment body should increase integration of applied and evaluative questions, such as analysing inflation trends using real data. Maintain variation in framing to balance predictability.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that Inflation was allocated moderate marks across the three years, typically 36, 33, and 36, respectively. The MCQ items were allocated 2 marks in 2022 and 2023, and 4 marks in 2024. The match-the-item and one-word-answer questions were allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period. There was an allocation of 8 marks for paragraph discussion items in 2022, whereas 16 marks were allocated for the same item type in 2023 and 2024, respectively. The source or scenario-based item types were allocated 10 marks over the three-year period. This consistent emphasis shows its importance in CAPS outcomes. Predictability is acceptable, although variation in mark distribution across item types reduced the predictability of the question paper. The DBE should maintain a moderate allocation of marks but vary the distribution across essays, structured questions, and data-response items.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the topic assessment included MCQ, short-answer, structured, and graph-interpretation items. Lower-order items tested recall of definitions and types, while higher-order items required learners' analysis of inflation causes, evaluation of policy responses, and interpretation of CPI data. The evaluation further indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-

order items required logical reasoning and application. There was a slight variation in the allocation of marks for MCQ, match the item, and one-word items, with MCQ normally allocated 2 marks and match item and one-word items allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period, and a very unusual allocation of approximately 4 marks for MCQ. The data responses were consistently allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type.

The continued variation in item types and mark allocation could help preserve the balance between recall, application, and evaluation. There was no structured response item type over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match the item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were allocated L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated at L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated to the difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the Inflation topic has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1, whereas data responses for this topic have been distributed across L1, L2, and L3, with graph interpretation allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated, and L2 and L3. The evaluation and the observed pattern reveal that MCQs, match-the-item, one-word, source-based, data-response, economic concepts, and paragraphs or long responses were used over three years. The DBE should continue to vary item types and mark allocations. Preservation of a balance between recall, application, and evaluation is also vital.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills assessed in the inflation assessment included factual recall (definitions and types), interpretation (graphs and CPI tables), application (effects on households/firms), and evaluation (policy effectiveness). While repetition was observed, evaluation item types promoted learners' higher-order thinking. The assessment body should attempt to

increase variation by pairing inflation with synthesis tasks, such as comparing inflation trends across countries or linking inflation to unemployment.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that the scenario framing of the item types included CPI data, inflation rate statistics, graphs, and policy extracts. While similar scenarios were used annually, the specific contexts varied (e.g., South African inflation trends and global oil price shocks). This variation encouraged learners to apply knowledge rather than memorise content. The assessment body should continue integrating diverse and contemporary scenarios, using updated South African and international inflation data.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Inflation topic

Table 3.2.8 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Inflation Topic Paper (2)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified, as the topic was consistently assessed over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage

Rotational emphasis across the causes of inflation, effects of inflation, measurement of inflation, and policy issues of the curbing of inflation in item response types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Repetition of item types in the inflation types was observed over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Increase application and data response item types to counter a predictable question paper.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use real-life contexts, up-to-date data, and case studies.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was no unacceptable predictability in topic weighting over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain a moderate allocation and distribution of marks across topics.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Vary the allocation of marks on calculation and essay item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was notable repetition on the structured and essay item types.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Vary the format and the use of directive command words.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balancing the recall and application of knowledge item types and evaluation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Increase the use of synthesis and comparison item types.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The linking of inflation with other indicators such as interest rates, unemployment, and money supply.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items, as there was variation in the scenarios and real-life contexts used.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue the use of varied scenarios and real-life contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Continue using tables, graphs, cartoons, diagrams, extracts, and a picture to frame concepts on inflation over the past three years. There was variation in the scenarios used to examine inflation over the three-year period.

Table 3.2.9 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Tourism topic in DBE Economics Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Tourism Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Tourism							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Tourism**	**32**				
		Eco-tourism		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Domestic tourism		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Transit tourism		One word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Benefit of tourism		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall

		Cultural tourism		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Interpret source material
		Heritage sites		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of tourism		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of tourism
		Tourism growth in South Africa		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the importance of tourism growth
		Crime effect on tourism		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding the effect of crime on tourism
		Reasons for growth of tourism		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
		Impact of tourism on the environment		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
2023	√	**Tourism**	**44**				

		Cultural tourism		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		World Heritage sites		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Indigenous knowledge system		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Effects of tourism		Structured response item (Long detailed response) (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Tourism profile to promote tourism Structures response item		Structured response item (Long detailed response (10)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	√	**Tourism**	**34**				
		Minimum length of tourism		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Outbound tourism		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Indigenous knowledge system		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Taxes on tourism		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Foreign tourists arrival		Short response (Identifying from a cartoon) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret cartoon

		Environmental World Heritage Sites		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Domestic tourism		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understand concept of domestic tourism
		Effects of a weaker rand on tourists		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Understanding the effect of a weaker rand on foreign tourism
		Promotion of tourism in SA		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge
		Negative impact of tourism		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning
		Eco-tourism		Short response (Identifying from an image/picture (1)	L1	L2	Interpret image or picture.
		Institution promoting tourism in South Africa		Short response (1)	L1	L2	Factual recall

		Paleo tourism		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of paleo tourism
		Impact of tourism on households		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the impact of income levels on tourism
		Reasons for lack of tourists in certain areas		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge

Table 3.2.9 presents a comparative overview of the Tourism topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.9 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Tourism topic was consistently examined in Economics in Paper 2 across the three-year period. Each year included questions on the role of tourism in economic development, its contribution to GDP, employment creation, and foreign exchange earnings. The frequent reappearance of the topic suggests a predictable pattern of inclusion, but given the importance of tourism in South Africa's economy, predictability is acceptable. The assessment body should consistently rotate emphasis across subtopics (e.g., domestic vs international tourism, tourism policies, sustainability issues) to avoid excessive predictability).

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate the repeated appearance of concepts, including the economic importance of tourism, challenges facing the tourism sector (such as infrastructure, safety, and global shocks), and government strategies to promote tourism. While these concepts appeared every year, variation was observed in the depth of the item types, with some years emphasising factual recall of tourism's role, while others required the application of knowledge to South African contexts or the evaluation of policy effectiveness. Increase integration of applied and evaluative questions, such as analysing tourism's resilience to global crises. The assessment body should maintain variation in framing to balance predictability.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that Tourism was allocated 32, 44, and 34 marks across the three years, respectively. The MCQs were allocated 2 marks, while match-the-item and one-word answers were allocated 1 mark over the three-year period. There was an allocation of 8 marks for paragraph discussion items, and source or scenario-based item types were allocated 10 marks over the three-year period. The structured response item (i.e., the essay) was allocated 40 marks.

Tourism carried a moderate weighting across the three years, typically ranging from 25 to 35 marks. The stable emphasis shows the importance of the topic in the CAPS outcomes. Predictability is acceptable, although variation in mark distribution across item types reduced the predictability of the examination question paper. The assessment body should continue to maintain a steady allocation of marks but vary the distribution across essays, structured questions, and data-response items.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that Tourism was assessed using MCQs, short answers, structured questions, data-response items, and essays. Lower-order items tested recall of tourism's role, while higher-order items required analysis of tourism's impact on GDP, evaluation of

government strategies, and interpretation of tourism statistics. The evaluation further indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was consistency in the allocation of marks for MCQ, match the item, and one-word items, with MCQ normally allocated 2 marks and match item and one-word items allocated 1 mark each over the three-year period. The data responses were consistently allocated a maximum of 10 marks over the three-year period, with 8 marks allocated for a long response or discussion item type.

The continued variation in item types and mark allocation could help preserve the balance between recall, application, and evaluation. There was no structured response item type over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match the item, and one-word item types were always at L1, while economic concepts were allocated L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the Tourism topic has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1 and L2, whereas data response for this topic has been between L1 and L2, with interpretation of source materials allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3, while the structured response items were allocated L3. The assessment body should continue to vary item types and mark allocation while preserving a balance among recall, application, and evaluation.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence of a consistent skills pairing of factual recall (definitions and contributions), interpretation (statistics and graphs), application (effects on employment and GDP), and evaluation (policy effectiveness) in assessing the Tourism topic. Repetition was observed in the assessment of the topic; however, evaluation item types promoted learners' higher-order thinking.

The assessment body should increase variation by pairing tourism with synthesis tasks, such as comparing tourism's role across sectors or linking tourism to Environmental Sustainability.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that the scenarios and real-life contexts used in the framing of item types for Tourism included tourism statistics, government policy extracts, and real-world contexts such as South Africa's international tourism trends, domestic tourism campaigns, and global shocks (e.g., pandemics or economic downturns). While similar types of scenarios were used every year, the specific contexts varied. The variation in the use of scenario and real-life contexts encouraged learners to apply knowledge rather than memorise content. Continue integrating diverse and contemporary scenarios, using updated South African and international tourism data.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Tourism topic

Table 3.2.10 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Tourism Topic Paper (2)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was acceptable predictability in the topic coverage identified in the DBE examination question papers over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There should be a rotational emphasis across domestic, international, and sustainable tourism.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was a noticeable and unacceptable pattern in the tourism content covered over the three-year examination period; however, this did not have a serious impact on the final examination results.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Repetition of item types in future examination question papers should be avoided, and the use of a variety of item types is recommended.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Variation in the use of scenarios, real-life context, and the sustained use of a combination of item formats would continue to make the examination question papers unpredictable over the years.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting

No unacceptable predictability in topic weighting was identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Continue maintaining the mark allocations across the item types over the three-year period.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The alternation between structured and essay item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
There was an observed repeated use of some essays over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Increase in the use of data-response and scenario-based item types in the examination question paper.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Varied item types and sustain mixed item formats.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
The evaluation indicated comparable repetition in the skills-to-subtopic pairing across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Increase the use of evaluation and comparison of item types in the assessment of the topic.

Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Link tourism to other topics, such as Environmental Sustainability.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was no unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items as examiners used tables, graphs, cartoon, diagrams, extracts, and a picture in framing concepts on the Tourism topic over the past three years. There was variation in the scenarios used to examine tourism over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue using different scenarios and real-life contexts to examine tourism over the three-year period.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
DBE examiners should use tables, graphs, cartoons, diagrams, extracts, and a picture to frame concepts on the Market Failure topic over the past three years. There was variation in the scenarios used to examine tourism over the three-year period.

Table 3.2.11 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Environmental Sustainability topic in DBE Economics Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.11: Findings on the Predictability of the Environmental Sustainability Topic for the DBE Economics Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Environmental sustainability							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Environmental sustainability**	**47**				
		Preservation		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		International agreements on Environmental Sustainability		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Pollution		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Global warming		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Conservation or Environmental Sustainability		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Measures to ensure Environmental Sustainability		Structured response item – Long detailed response (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Successes of international agreements on climate change		Structured response item – Long detailed response (Essay) (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
2023	√	**Environmental sustainability**	**38**				
		Millennium Development Goals		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Environmental Sustainability		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Deforestation		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Marketable permit		One-word (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Effects of air pollution		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall

		International agreement on chemical waste		Short response (Identifying from the extract) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret source material
		International measures on climate change		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of global warming		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of global warming
		Hazardous waste on environment		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of hazardous waste
		Failure of international measures to reduce effects of climate change		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding international measures on climate change
		Impact of climate change		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning

		Failure of market to sustain the environment		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Incentives to privately care for the environment		Short response (Identifying from a cartoon) (1)	L1	L1	Interpret a cartoon
		Environmental tax		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Environmental conservation		Short response (description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of conservation
		Role of education on the environment		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the role of education on the environment
		Subsidy to ensure Environmental Sustainability		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge
2024	√	**Environmental sustainability**	**44**				
		Deforestation		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Conservation		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall

		Renewable resources		Match item (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Government measures for a sustainable environment		Structured response item – Long detailed response (Essay) (30)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		International measures to reduce environmental problems		Structured response item – Long detailed response (Essay) (10)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning

Table 3.2.11 presents a comparative overview of the Environmental Sustainability topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.11 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Economics final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that Environmental Sustainability was examined consistently across the three years in Economics Paper 2. Each year, questions on the role of sustainability in economic development, the impact of economic activities on the environment, and government interventions to promote sustainable practices were included in the assessment. This frequency suggests a predictable pattern of inclusion; however, given the importance of sustainability in the CAPS and its relevance to South Africa's socio-economic context, predictability is acceptable. The assessment body should rotate emphasis across subtopics (e.g., renewable energy, pollution control, sustainable resource use, green policies) to avoid excessive predictability.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate a repetition of concepts, such as definitions of sustainability, examples of sustainable practices, environmental challenges (pollution, deforestation, climate change), and government strategies (environmental taxes, regulations, and incentives for renewable energy) used to examine the Environmental Sustainability topic. While these concepts appeared every year, variation was found in the depth of the item types, with some years emphasising factual recall and others requiring application to South African contexts or evaluation of policy effectiveness. The assessment body should increase integration of applied and evaluative questions, such as analysing the effectiveness of South Africa's environmental policies. Maintain variation in framing to balance predictability.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that Environmental Sustainability was allocated 47, 38, and 44 marks across the three years, respectively. The MCQs were allocated 2 marks only in 2024, while 4 marks in 2022 and 2023. The match the items were allocated 2 marks across the two years, 2022 and 2024, with no question in 2023. The one-word item was allocated 1 mark in 2022 and 2023, with no question on this level in 2024. There was an allocation of 8 marks for paragraph discussion items only in 2023, and source or scenario-based item types were allocated 10 marks only in 2023.

Therefore, because the topic was assessed twice in 2022 and 2024 using structured response items, each allocated 40 marks, there was no further assessment of the topic using source- or scenario-based item types. Environmental Sustainability carried moderate weighting across the three years, typically ranging from 25 to 35 marks. The stable emphasis reflects the importance of the topic in the CAPS outcomes. Predictability is acceptable, although variation in mark distribution across item types helped limit excessive predictability. The DBE should maintain weighting but vary distribution across essays, structured questions, and data-response items.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation included MCQ, short-answer, structured, data-response, and essay questions. Lower-order items tested recall of definitions and examples, while higher-order items required analysis of environmental challenges, evaluation of government strategies, and interpretation of sustainability data. The evaluation further indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was consistency in the allocation of marks for MCQ, match the item, and one-word, with MCQ normally allocated 2 marks and the unusual allocation of 4 marks in 2022 and 2023, respectively, while match the item was also allocated an unusual 2 marks in 2022 and 2024; lastly, one-word allocated 1 mark each in 2022 and 2023.

In 2023, data responses were allocated a maximum of 10 marks, with 8 marks for a long response or discussion item type. Two structured response items were assessed in 2022 and 2024, each with an allocated mark of 40. The continued variation in item types and mark allocation could help preserve the balance between recall, application, and evaluation. There was no structured response item type over the three-year period. The difficulty levels for MCQ, match-the-item, and one-word item types were consistently at L1, while economic concepts were assigned L2. The data response item types were allocated easy, moderate, and difficult levels, with few at the very difficult level. The interpretation item types were allocated L1, while the analysis and evaluation item types were allocated to the difficult and very difficult levels across the three years.

Over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the Environmental Sustainability topic has been consistent across L1 to L3, with very few items at L1 and L2. Economic concepts were consistently allocated L1–L2, while data response for this topic has been between L1 and L2, with interpretation of source materials allocated L1 across the three years. Discussion or longer response item types were allocated L2 and L3, whereas the structured response items were allocated L3. The assessment body should continue to vary item types and mark allocations. Preserve the balance between recall, application, and evaluation.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the consistent skills paired with Environmental Sustainability included factual recall (definitions and examples), interpretation (statistics and graphs), application (effects of policies on sustainability), and evaluation (effectiveness of interventions). Some item types were repeated, particularly the essay; however, the evaluation item types promoted learners' higher-order thinking. DBE should increase variation by pairing sustainability with synthesis tasks, such as comparing environmental policies across countries or linking sustainability to economic growth.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that scenario and real-life contexts used in the framing of item types included environmental statistics, government policy extracts, and real-world contexts such as renewable energy initiatives, pollution control measures, and climate change impacts. Although similar types of scenarios were used annually, the specific contexts varied. This variation encouraged learners to apply knowledge rather than memorise content. The assessment body should continue to integrate diverse and contemporary scenarios, using updated South African and international environmental data.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the DBE Economics Environmental Sustainability topic

Table 3.2.12 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 DBE Economics Environmental Sustainability Topic Paper (2)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was an unacceptable predictability in the topic coverage identified in the DBE examination question papers over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There should be an alternating sequence of subtopics on pollution, conservation, and sustainable development.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Some environmental policies were repeated, and externalities were observed.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
There should be a variation in item types and cognitive demand levels.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use up-to-date environmental issues and case studies to assess the topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
There was limited unacceptable predictability in most items used over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting

Increase the number of scenario-based and evaluation item types in the examination question paper.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The linking of the Environmental Sustainability topic and the economic decision-making process.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
The evaluation indicated limited, unacceptable predictability in item types across the three years, with particular emphasis on Section C, where questions were repeated in 2022 and 2024.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Increase the use of scenario-based and evaluation item types in the assessment of the topic.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Variation in the use of scenarios and real-life context should continue, and diverse assessment formats should be maintained to make the examination question paper unpredictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
The evaluation indicated comparable repetition in the skills-to-subtopic pairing, particularly across the three years for all item types.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Variation of item types used to assess the topic and increase higher-order evaluative skills.

Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Variation in the use of scenarios and real-life context and link the topic to the economic decision-making process.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
There was acceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items, particularly given the items' repeated use across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
There should be a continued use of varied scenarios and real-life environmental contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use a variation of contemporary and real local scenarios.

Conclusions

Based on the evaluation of the DBE examination question papers, Paper 2 for the past three years was of a good quality. Some item types were repeated over the three-year period. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands were evenly distributed. The examiners used a variety of scenarios and real-life contexts in framing the item types, and the predictability of the examination question papers was acceptable. The comparability identified in the appearance and sequencing of topics in the examination question papers must be avoided.

3.3: ECONOMICS PAPER 1

This section presents an analysis of the IEB final examination question papers for Economics Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.3.1–3.3.11.

Table 3.3.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability of the Circular Flow topic in IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Circular Flow Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Circular Flow							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Circular Flow**	**37**				

		Concept of Circular Flow		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Intermediate goods		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Multiplier effects		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating multiplier
		Methods of calculating GDP		Short response (1)	L1	L2	Factual recalling
		Residual items		Short response (description of concept) (Definition) (2)	L3	L2	Factual recalling
		Calculating GDP		Short response (Calculation) (2)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Calculations
		Constant and current prices		Short response (distinction of concepts) (4)	L2	L2	Understanding of concept constant and current prices

		Interpretation of Circular Flow diagram		Short item types (2)	L2	L2	Interpretation of a graph
		Drawing and labelling of diagrams (Circular Flow)		Short response (Labelling of graph) (3)	L2	L2	Application of knowledge – labelling of diagram
		Leakages and injections		Short item types (Naming item) (4)	L2	L2	Factual recalling
		Base year in calculating GDP		Short item types (Identifying from the source – table) (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Real GDP (calculation)		Short response (Calculation) (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculations of real GDP
		Nominal GDP (Calculation)		Short response (Calculation) (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculations of nominal GDP

		Economic growth (Calculation)		Short response (Calculation) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculation of economic growth rate
2023	√	Circular Flow	**24**				
		Methods of calculating GDP (Income methods)		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Types of consumer goods		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Flows in the Circular Flow		Short response (Naming item) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Participants of the Circular Flow		Short response (Identify from the source) (4)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of Gross		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall

		Domestic Product					
		Current prices		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Calculation of constant prices		Short response (Calculation) (6)	L2	L2	Application of knowledge – calculate constant prices
		Calculation of GDP growth rate		Short response (Calculation) (2)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating GDP growth rate
		Comparison of economic growth rate of countries		Short response (2)	L4	L3	Application of knowledge
2024	√	Circular Flow	36				
		National Accounts Conversions		MCQ (3)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge – Calculations GDP at market price

		Leakages and injections		MCQ (3)	L3	L 3	Application of knowledge – Calculation of injections
		Labelling of Circular Flow diagram		MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Application of knowledge – Labelling of graphs
		Changes in inventories and GDP at market prices		Short response (Description of concept) (4)	L1	L1	Understanding of economic concept – changes in inventories and GDP at market prices
		Calculation of Gross Capital Formation		Short response (Calculation) (3)	L1	L1	Application of knowledge – Calculations of gross capital formation
		GDP at market prices		Short response (Calculate) (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – calculation of GDP at market prices

		Calculation of Economic growth rate		Short response (Calculations) (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculations
		Multiplier effect		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of economic concept – multiplier
		Multiplier		Short response (Calculation) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculations of multiplier
		Impact of MPC on multiplier		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding of MPC and multiplier

Table 3.3.1 presents a comparative overview of the Circular Flow topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.1 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Circular Flow topic was assessed over the three-year period. The consistent assessment of the Circular Flow topic across all three years indicates a high level of acceptable predictability. As a core subtopic in Macroeconomics, central to national accounts and GDP analysis, the regular inclusion of this topic aligns with the CAPS expectations. However, repeated annual assessments without omitting the Circular Flow topic may increase learners' ability to anticipate its appearance. The

assessment body could rotate emphasis by integrating Circular Flow concepts into broader Macroeconomics questions rather than treating them as a separate focus area.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that the Circular Flow topic was fully assessed over the three-year period. The content areas assessed included core contents such as the concept of Circular Flow, types of consumer goods, multiplier effects, methods of calculating GDP both at basic and market prices, residual items, constant and current prices, drawing, labelling and interpretation of the Circular Flow diagram, leakages and injections, real and nominal GDP, flows in the model, participants in the Circular Flow, national accounts conversions, and calculations of economic growth rate.

Further revelation indicates that the following core contents were repeated across the three years: GDP (nominal, real, and constant prices) each year; the multiplier effect and calculations in 2022 and 2024; Circular Flow diagrams and flow each year; leakages and injections in 2022 and 2024; and national accounts components, such as GDP inventories, primarily in 2024. GDP-related calculations and diagram interpretation appear more frequently than other subtopics; this suggests a patterned focus on quantitative and diagrammatic elements of the Circular Flow. The repeated assessment of similar subtopics increases acceptable predictability, particularly for well-prepared learners who are also well-grounded in GDP calculations and diagrams as focus areas. The assessment body could maintain content validity by ensuring a balanced representation of conceptual, analytical, and applied subtopics each year.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was allocated 27, 24, and 24 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The allocation of marks fluctuates significantly, with a significant drop in 2023 followed by an increase in 2024. There was a variety of item types used to assess

the Circular Flow topic, including MCQs, interpretation of source materials, short objective item types, calculations of GDP, identification of core aspects from the source materials, and even drawing, labelling, and interpretation of the Circular Flow diagram over the three-year period. MCQs were allocated 7, 4, and 9 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively.

The calculation item types were allocated 12, 8, and 17 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively, while concept-related items were allocated 12 marks across the three years, with 24 marks allocated for naming, identifying from source materials, and interpretation. It is also revealed that the labelling of the graph was allocated only 3 marks across the three years. There was variation in the item types and the marks assigned to them. Variation in mark allocation reduces predictability, as learners cannot reliably predict year-to-year mark allocations. The assessment body should avoid fixed, repeated allocation bands that could encourage strategic spotting preparation.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the topic was assessed using MCQs, calculations (GDP, multiplier, and injections), interpretation and labelling of diagrams, completion of tables, and short conceptual explanations. Although calculations and diagrams were used as assessment tools every year, the format, the marks allocated, and the difficulty levels varied each year. The evaluation further indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application.

There was inconsistency in the allocation of marks for MCQ, match the item, and one-word, with MCQ normally allocated differently over the three-year period, but 20 marks were allocated for MCQ across the three years at a constant difficulty of L1 to L3, and a cognitive demand of L1 to L3 across the three years. Calculations of GDP were allocated differently across the three years, with a combined total of almost 37 marks across the three years. The level of difficulty for the calculations remained stable at L3, with its cognitive demand levels at L3. The short response items, such as naming, identifying, and labelling, were also allocated differently across the three years, with a combined total of almost 24 marks at constant difficulty levels (L1–L4). The cognitive demand levels for

these item types were stable at L1 to L3 across the three years of assessment. The assessment of the topic, as measured by its cognitive demands and difficulty levels, ranged from L1 to L3, with an increase in the application and interpretation of item types. There was an acceptable predictability, but sufficient variation in difficulty, command words, and mark allocation which reduced spot learning. The assessment body should continue to vary command words such as calculate, interpret, explain, and analyse.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the topic was assessed using the following topic-skill pairing: factual recall, calculations, interpretation, and application of knowledge. Although calculations and interpretation occurred more frequently than others, different subtopics were paired with different skills across the years. The topic-skill pairing demonstrated acceptable ability in the examination question paper. The assessment body should increase variation by pairing calculations with evaluation or explanation item types in the examination question paper.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that the scenarios and real-life contexts used in the framing of item types for the topic included Abstract national accounts data, Circular Flow diagrams, hypothetical GDP tables, and economic indicators without fixed real-world repetition. The scenarios were functional rather than narrative and were not recycled verbatim across the three years. The conceptual framing indicated acceptable predictability, as there was no repetition of real-life scenarios that were frequently used to assess the topic. The assessment body should continue to maintain diagram-based assessment while varying economic settings.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Circular Flow topic

Table 3.3.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Circular Flow Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
An acceptable level of predictability in topic coverage was identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Rotational emphasis among subtopics to reduce and avoid content predictability in the question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
An acceptable level of predictability in content coverage was identified over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotational emphasis among the subtopics to reduce and avoid content predictability in the examination question paper.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Introduce under-assessed areas (qualitative analysis, policy evaluation).
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None, as mark allocation fluctuated every year.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Keep variation, avoid fixed mark allocation.

Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Randomly vary weighting within guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Yes, diagrams and calculations every year.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Diversify formats (essays, case studies, scenarios)
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Moderate GDP consistently paired with calculations.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair calculations with evaluation/explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No, as contexts varied, not recycled.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue varying contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintain diagram-based but diversify economic settings.

Table 3.3.3 summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Business Cycles topic in the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Business Cycles Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Business Cycles							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Business Cycles:**	**11**				
		Turning points of the Business Cycles		MCQ (2)	L1	L2	Interpretation of a graph
		Open market transactions		MCQ (3)	L1	L1	Understanding of the concept of open market transactions
		Business Cycles indicators		Short responses (6)	L3	L3	Understanding of economic concepts – leading

							and lagging indicators
2023	√	**Business Cycles**	**25**				
		Amplitude		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Phillips curve		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Understanding of the concept Phillips curve
		Policies to smooth Business Cycles		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Factual recall
		Diagram of Business Cycles		Long response (Drawing and labelling of a graph) (7)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and labelling of a diagram
		Business Cycles indicators		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding of economic concepts – leading and lagging indicators

		Causes of a business cycle (exogenous and endogenous factors)		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L3	L3	Understanding exogenous and endogenous causes of Business Cycles
2024	√	**Business Cycles**	**36**				
		Indicators		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Features of Business Cycles		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Factual recalling
		Concepts of Business Cycles		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of the concept of Business Cycles
		Phases of a business cycle (recession)		Short response (description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of the concept recession
		Leading indicators		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recalling

		Leading indicators		Long response (Analysing) (4)	L4	L3	Interpretation of graphs
		Importance of economic forecasting		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Understanding forecasting
		Phillips curve		Match item (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of Phillips curve
		Extrapolation		Short response (description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of the concept of extrapolation
		GDP concepts		Short response (description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of the concept of GDP
		Expansionary fiscal policy (demand and supply graph)		Long response (Drawing, labelling and explanation of a graph) (12)	L4	L3	Application of knowledge-drawing, labelling and interpretation of a demand and supply graph to show effects of

							expansionary fiscal policy

Table 3.3.3 presents a comparative overview of the Business Cycles topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.3 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Business Cycles topic was examined across the three years. The consistent assessment of the Business Cycles topic across the three-year period demonstrates a high level of acceptable predictability and is aligned with the CAPS. However, annual assessment without rotational emphasis may allow learners to anticipate its inclusion with certainty. To avoid the examination question paper becoming overly predictable, the assessment body could connect Business Cycle concepts to broader macroeconomic or policy-based questions rather than treating it as a single sectional topic.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate a frequent appearance of the following topics over the three-year period: Business Cycle diagram (2023 and 2024), leading and lagging indicators (across the three years), Phillips curve (2023 and 2024), concepts and phases of Business Cycles, particularly in 2024, monetary policy and causes of Business Cycles in 2023, and forecasting and extrapolation in 2024. The observed pattern is that indicators and business cycle diagram-based item types appeared more frequently than causes and policy-related aspects of the business cycle. The pattern was specifically found in the visual interpretation and identification item types. The repetition of indicators and business cycle diagrams demonstrated moderate predictability, particularly regarding diagram-based

item types in the examination question paper. The assessment body could reduce the predictability of the question paper by ensuring a balance and equal representation of conceptual, analytical, and knowledge-based application item types.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was allocated 11, 25, and 36 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. There was a substantial increase in the allocation of marks from 2022 to 2024, with notable fluctuations. A variety of item types were used to assess the Business Cycles topic, including MCQs, interpretation of source materials, and short objective items, over the three-year period. MCQs were allocated 4, 8, and 4 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The short response item types were allocated 6, 4, and 2 marks across the three years, respectively, with concept-related item types allocated 8 marks only in 2024. The long response or paragraph discussion item types were allocated 6 and 4 marks only in 2023 and 2024, while the drawing and labelling of the diagram were allocated 7 and 12 marks only in 2023 and 2024. Variation in mark allocation reduced predictability, as learners could not reliably anticipate the marks assigned to each item type for the Business Cycles topic. The variation in mark allocation was a good practice; therefore, the assessment body should continue to use it.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the Business Cycles topic was assessed using a variety of item types, including short conceptual questions, diagram drawing, labelling and interpretation, table-based indicator analysis, source-based interpretation, and higher-order evaluation items. Although diagrams were assessed more frequently than others, the nature of the questions varied across the years. The difficulty levels ranged from L1 to L4, with the cognitive demand centred around recall rather than interpretation and analysis. The evaluation further indicates that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. There was an inconsistency in the allocation of marks for MCQs, short responses, concepts, paragraph discussion, and the drawing and labelling of the diagram. MCQ was allocated differently over the three-year period as 4, 8, and 4 marks across the

three years at a constant difficulty of L1 to L3 and a cognitive demand L1 to L3 across the three years. There was an inconsistency in the mark allocation for the short response item, with the difficulty levels and cognitive demands ranging from L1 to L3 to L1 to L2, respectively. As concepts were only assessed in 2024 with an allocated mark of 8, the difficulty level was L2, while the cognitive demand level was L1.

The paragraph discussion items were allocated a total of 10 marks between 2023 and 2024, with difficulty levels ranging from L3 and L4 and cognitive demand at L3. Drawing and labelling of diagrams totalled 19 marks between 2023 and 2024, with difficulty levels ranging from L3 and L4 and cognitive demand at L3. There was acceptable predictability in item format, but varied in task demand, difficulty levels, and mark allocation, thus reducing spot learning. The assessment body should maintain variation in command words.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the following skills were paired with Business: factual recall, interpretation, application, and evaluation. Although interpretation occurred frequently, it was paired with different subtopics, which increased the complexity over the years. There was moderate variation in topic-skill pairing, leading to low predictability of skill demands. The assessment body should assess explanations for indicator-based item types in the examination question paper.

f. Scenario Framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate that the scenarios and real-life contexts used in the framing of item types for the topic included abstract business cycle diagrams, indicator tables, South African economic indicators, and forecasting and extrapolation contexts. The scenarios and contexts were centred around generic diagrams and applied national economic scenarios. The scenario and real-life contexts used showed low predictability because they were not repeated. The assessment body should continue integrating the topic with real-world economic conditions.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Business Cycles topic

Table 3.3.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Business Cycles Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation of subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
None.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Continue variation of examined subtopics.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting

None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain a balanced allocation of marks across subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Continue combination of item types and scenarios for framing.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Maintain variation of topic-skill pairing.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Pair with evaluation tasks.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue using diverse contexts.

Table 3.3.5 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Public Sector topic in IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.5: Findings on the Predictability of Public Sector Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Public Sector							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	√	**Public Sector**	**21**				
		Macroeconomic objectives of the Public Sector		MCQ (3)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Macroeconomic objectives of the Public Sector		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Understanding of the concept of economic growth, inflation, and unemployment
		Budget deficit		Short response (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall

		Government budget		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Sources of state revenue		Short response (3)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Laffer curve		Short response (Drawing and labelling a curve) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Drawing and labelling of a Laffer curve
2023	√	**Public Sector**	**20**				
		Medium Term Budget Policy Statement		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		SA's income tax system		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Concept of budget deficit		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Reasons for a budget deficit		Short response (2)	L2	L3	Higher order thinking

		Impact of budget deficit in the economy		Short response (2)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge
		Types of taxes		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual Recall
		Impact of taxes on the budget		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Understanding the impact of increased taxes
2024	√	**Public Sector:**	**26**				
		Macro-economic objectives of the Public Sector		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Types of public goods		MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Income tax system		Match item (2)	L1	L2	Factual recall
		Privatisation		Match item (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Laffer curve		Short response (Drawing and labelling of a graph) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge, Drawing and labelling of a Laffer curve

		Direct and indirect taxes		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understanding concept of direct and indirect taxes
		Global credit ratings agencies		Short response (1)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Examples of global ratings agencies		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Effects of global ratings on SA's economy		Long response) Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L 3	Understanding credit rating

Table 3.3.5 presents a comparative overview of the Public Sector topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.5 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Public Sector topic was consistently examined across the three years. The consistent assessment of the Public Sector across the three-year period indicates a high level of acceptable predictability. Given the vital role the topic plays in macroeconomic management, budgeting, taxation, and service delivery, its regular assessment aligns with the CAPS requirements. However, annual repetition of the topic in assessments may allow learners to anticipate its possible availability in future examination

question papers. The assessment body should, at times, connect Public Sector concepts with other Macroeconomics or policy-based item types.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that the Public Sector topic was fully assessed over the three-year period. The content areas assessed included core contents such as the concept macroeconomic objectives of the Public Sector, budget deficit, government budget process, sources of state revenue, Laffer curve, medium term budget policy statement, SA's income tax system, reasons for a budget deficit and its impact, types of taxes, public goods, privatisation, and global credit ratings and the examples and their effects on SA's economy. The analysis further demonstrates the macroeconomic objectives of the Public Sector in 2022 and 2024, budget deficit and surplus in 2022 and 2023, income tax system in 2023 and 2024, Laffer curve in 2022 and 2024, state revenue (sources and taxes) across all three years, and credit ratings (Moody's) in 2024 only.

The observed pattern reveals that revenue, taxation, and budget-related content appeared more frequently than government expenditure-related aspects, suggesting a greater emphasis on fiscal instruments rather than addressing all Public Sector functions. The repetition of these aspects of the Public Sector suggests moderate predictability, particularly on fiscal policy content. The assessment body should maintain content validity by ensuring broad representation of the Public Sector's role and its challenges in Public Sector provisioning.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the Public Sector topic was allocated 21, 20, and 26 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The analysis further demonstrates the variety of item types used to assess the Public Sector over the three-year period, including MCQs, interpretation of source materials, and short objective items. MCQs were consistently allocated 3, 4, and 5 marks in 2022, 2023, and

2024, respectively. The short response item types were allocated 4, 6, and 4 marks across the three years, respectively, with concept-related item types allocated 2, 2, and 3 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively.

The long response or paragraph discussion item types were allocated a stable 8 marks across the three years, with the drawing and labelling of the diagram allocated 4 marks consistently in 2022 and 2024; there was a rare occurrence of match item types in 2024, allocated only 4 marks. The observed trend shows exact mark fluctuations and how the Public Sector consistently carries a substantial share of marks, indicating stable importance. The relatively stable marks allocation suggests acceptable predictability, as learners can expect this topic to be meaningfully assessed but not more dominant. The assessment body should avoid consistent use of extended higher-order item types rather than similar subtopics.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the topic was assessed using a variety of item types, including short factual recall questions, diagram drawing and labelling (Laffer curve), evaluation and analytical essays, application-based policy questions, and source- or context-based questions. The evaluation further reveals that lower-order items tested recall, while higher-order items required logical reasoning and application. The allocation of marks for MCQs, short responses, concepts, paragraph discussion, and drawing and labelling of the diagram remained consistent. MCQs were consistently allocated 3, 4, and 5 marks across the three years at a constant difficulty of L1 and L2 and a cognitive demand of L1 and L2 across the three years. Their allocation for the short response item remained constant, while the difficulty levels and cognitive demands ranged from L1 to L3 and L1 to L3, respectively. The mark allocation for concepts also remained consistent, with the distribution of difficulty levels at L2 and cognitive demand levels at L1 and L2. The paragraph discussion items were allocated a constant 8 marks across the three years, with difficulty levels at L3 and cognitive demand also at L3. Furthermore, the drawing and labelling of the diagram were consistent with the marks allocated, the difficulty levels, and the cognitive demands.

The rare occurrence of matching items was allocated 4 marks at difficulty L1, while cognitive demand ranged between L1 and L2 only in 2024. Although the Laffer curve was repeatedly assessed through diagram-based questions, other subtopics were assessed through a range of formats, including evaluation and application tasks. The level of cognitive demand accompanying the assessment of the topic ranged from L1 to L3, while the difficulty levels ranged from L1 to L4, with higher-order evaluation on budget credit and credit ratings item types. There is little predictability in item types; however, variation in format and cognitive demands leads to lower predictability. The assessment body should maintain a combination of factual recall, analysis, and evaluation item types.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the topic was assessed using item types, including factual recall (definitions and concepts), application (diagram construction and tax impact analysis), interpretation (policy outcomes and fiscal effects) and evaluation (impact of credit ratings and tax increases. Although other topics were assessed using application skills, others showed increasing variation in skill demand; thus, the skill-to-topic pairing showed a moderately predictable pattern, particularly for diagram-based subtopics, but overall was acceptable. The assessment body should continue increasing the proportion of evaluation- and judgment-based item types in the examination question paper.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate that the scenarios and real-life contexts used in the framing of item types on the Public Sector topic included South African fiscal policy, budget deficits and taxation, credit ratings agencies (e.g., Moody's) and public revenue instruments. The contexts used centred on generic fiscal concepts and on national and global contexts. The scenario and context

in the framing of item types displayed a low-predictability question paper, as there was no verbatim of the context. The assessment body should continue using real-world institutions to ensure a valid and credible assessment.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Public Sector topic

Table 3.3.6 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Public Sector Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Yes, this topic was consistently examined over the three-year period.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Rotate the emphasis and integrate into broader fiscal/economic policy.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Taxation and government spending were repeated.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotate subtopics (public goods, efficiency and corruption impacts).
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Balance conceptual and applied knowledge.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid fixed mark allocation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Short answers dominated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of the item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
The topic was often paired with factual recall or application.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
The topic must also be paired with evaluation or explanation skills.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue using diverse contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use applied/narrative scenarios.

Table 3.3.7 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Foreign Exchange Markets topic in the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Foreign Exchange Markets Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Foreign Exchange Markets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	**Foreign exchange markets**	**33**				

		Concept of foreign exchange		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Understanding the concept of foreign exchange
		Demand and supply for foreign exchange		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Interpretation of a graph (demand and supply graph for exchange rate)
		Demand for foreign exchange		MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Understanding foreign exchange rate
		BoP accounts (current account)		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of concept
		Terms of trade		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of concept
		Calculation of trade balance		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Impact of BoP surplus on the economy		Short response (4)	L4	L3	Understanding of surplus
		Financial account		Long detailed response (Paragraph discussion) (15)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning and judgement

2023	✓	Foreign exchange markets	**48**				
		Foreign exchange reserves		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Demand for foreign exchange rates		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Higher order thinking
		Calculation of BoP		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Calculating balance of the financial account
		Appreciation and depreciation of a currency		MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of appreciation and depreciation of currency
		Concept of balance of payment		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding economic term BoP
		Concept of current account		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L3	L2	Understand concept of current account
		Calculation of trade balance		Short response (Calculation) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating trade balance
		Calculation of current account balance		Short response (Calculation) (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating current account balance

		Currency appreciation and depreciation		Short response (4)	2	L2	Understand appreciation and depreciation
		Types of exchange rates: free floating and managed floating exchange rates		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Reasons for international trade		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (12)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	**Foreign exchange markets**	**31 marks**				
		Global stock exchange markets		MCQ (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Sections of the current accounts		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Effects of changes in exchange rates		MCQ (3)	L2	L1	Understand exchange rates

		Sections of the Financial accounts		Long detailed response (12)	L2	L2	Logical reasoning
		Exchange rates systems		Short response (12)	L3	L2	Understanding foreign exchange rates systems

Table 3.3.7 presents a comparative overview of the Foreign Exchange Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.7 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Foreign Exchange Markets topic was examined across the three years. The consistent occurrence of the topic in the assessment over the three-year period revealed a high level of acceptable predictability, aligning with the CAPS requirements. However, repeating the assessment of the topic over the years may enable learners to predict its presence in the examination question paper. The assessment body should maintain an acceptable predictability by varied cognitive demand across subtopics.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that the foreign exchange market was fully examined across the three years with an inclusion of the following core content: concepts of foreign exchange, demand and supply for foreign exchange, BoP accounts, terms of trade, calculation of trade balance, BoP surplus and its economic impact, foreign exchange reserves, calculations of BoP, appreciation and depreciation of currencies, concept current account, calculation of current account balance, types of exchange rates, reasons for international trade, global exchange markets, effects of changes in exchange rates, and sections of the financial account of the BoP.

The analysis further demonstrates exchange rate systems (free-floating, managed, and fixed) across all three years, appreciation and depreciation of the rand across all three years, demand and supply curves for foreign exchange in 2022 and 2023, effects of exchange rate changes on imports and exports in 2022 and 2024, Balance of Payments links in 2024, and foreign exchange transactions in 2023. The exchange rate systems and the appreciation and/or depreciation of a currency appeared more frequently than others, indicating a prioritisation and stronger emphasis on the topic. Moderate predictability was observed, particularly in exchange rate systems and currency exchange. The assessment body should ensure that the topic is not a stand-alone, but integrated with Balance of Payments.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was moderately allocated 33, 48, and 34 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The analysis reveals that the foreign exchange market was allocated 33, 48, and 34 marks across the three years, respectively. The MCQ items were allocated 8, 11, and 7 marks across the three years, respectively. The short response items were consistently allocated 6, 2, and 4 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. Assessment of concepts was consistently allocated 4 marks only in 2022 and 2023, while long response items received a slight, inconsistent allocation of 15, 20, and 12 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The

observed allocation of marks demonstrates relative stability across the three years. The stable allocation of marks suggested an acceptable predictability. The assessment body should maintain moderate fluctuations in the allocation of marks to reduce the predictability of examination question papers.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that, over the three-year period, the distribution of cognitive levels for the Foreign Exchange Markets topic in MCQs has remained consistent across L1 to L3. The distribution of difficulty levels for short response items has remained consistent, ranging from L2 to L4, with cognitive demand at L2 to L3. There was a consistent distribution of difficulty levels for the assessment of concepts for two consecutive years, i.e., 2022 and 2023, at L2 to L3, while cognitive demand levels remained at L2. The long response item types were inconsistent in their allocation of marks and difficulty levels, ranging from L2 to L3, while cognitive demand levels were also at L2 and L3. Calculations were only assessed in 2023, at L3, for both difficulty and cognitive demand. Although diagrams appeared frequently, the assessment tasks differed in terms of drawing, interpretation, and application of knowledge. The difficulty levels ranged between L1 and L4, while cognitive levels were between L1 and L3. There was acceptable predictability in the format of items; however, there was variation in cognitive demand. The assessment body should continue varying diagram-based tasks in the examination question paper.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the following skills were paired with the topic: knowledge and understanding (definitions and systems), interpretation (graphs and scenarios), application (impact on trade and economy), and basic analysis (cause-and-effect relationships). This topic-skill pairing showed moderate variation and indicated low-to-moderate predictability. The assessment body should increase higher-order skills by including evaluation item types in the examination question paper.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate that the following scenarios and real-life contexts were used in the framing of item types for the topic Foreign Exchange Markets: South African rand movements, import and export scenarios, foreign exchange market diagrams, and trade-related economic conditions. The use of these scenarios in the framing of item types displayed low predictability, leading to fair assessment. The assessment body introduced international comparative contexts into the examination question paper to reduce overly predictable examinations.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Foreign Exchange Markets topic

Table 3.3.8 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Foreign Exchange Markets Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
The topic was examined annually across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Topics should be rotated and integrated into trade/globalisation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Exchange rate calculations were repeated.

Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotate subtopics (currency speculation and policy impacts).
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance conceptual and applied knowledge.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation in weighting of questions in this topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Calculations dominated assessment across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Topic was paired with factual recall/application across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue to use diverse contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use real-world case studies.

Table 3.3.9 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Protectionism and Free Trade topic in IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Protectionism and Free Trade Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Protectionism and Free Trade							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	**Protectionism and free trade**	**21**				

		Types of tariffs		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Causes of international trade		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding international trade
		Reasons for trade protection policies		Long detailed response (15)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning and judgement
2023	✓	**Protectionism and free trade**	**25 marks**				
		Trade agreements – preferential trade agreements		MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		SA's trading partners		Short response (4)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Benefits of international trade for SA's economy		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L3	L3	Understanding international trade

		Methods of export promotion		Short response (6)	L2	L2	Understanding export promotion
		Impact of export promotion policy on SA's economy		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	**Protectionism and free trade**	**21 marks**				
		SA's trade protocols		MCQ (3)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		AGOA		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Members of AGOA		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Trade impact of non-existence of AGOA		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding the impact of AGOA
		BRICS and its member countries		Short response (1)	L2	L2	Factual recall

		Reasons for investing in BRICS		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Understanding economic integration
		Advanced and emerging economies		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L2	L2	Interpretation of source materials

Table 3.3.9 presents a comparative overview of the Protectionism and Free Trade topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.9 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Protectionism and Free Trade topic was examined across all three years. The consistent assessment of this topic across all three years suggests a high level of predictability in topic selection. Candidates could reasonably predict that Protectionism and Free Trade will appear in the final examination each year, which may reduce the element of uncertainty that is important for valid assessment. The topic aligned with the CAPS requirements, and the uninterrupted repeated assessment of the topic over three consecutive years signalled unacceptable predictability in topic coverage. The assessment body should implement a topic rotation strategy to ensure that no single major topic is examined every year.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that across the three years, the Protectionism and Free Trade topic was assessed with an inclusion of the following core content: tariffs, causes of international trade, reasons for trade protection policies, trade agreements, SA's trading

partners, benefits of international trade, methods of export promotion and its economic impact, SA's trade protocols, AGOA and members of AGOA, BRICS, members of BRICS and reasons for the investment in BRICS countries, and the advanced and emerging economies. In 2022, emphasis was placed on tariff types, the causes of international trade, and the reasons for trade protection policies. In 2023, the focus shifted to preferential trade agreements, South Africa's trading partners, the benefits of international trade, export promotion methods, and the impact of export promotion policies.

In 2024, content included South Africa's trade protocols, AGOA, BRICS, and the distinction between advanced and emerging economies. Although the topic was assessed every year, there was a slight repetition of identical subtopics across the three years. In each year, a new content area was introduced, suggesting deliberate variation in content selection. This indicated that while topic coverage was predictable, content coverage within the topic was largely unpredictable and acceptable. The assessment body should continue to rotate subtopics systematically, while ensuring coverage of both theoretical and applied content areas aligned with the CAPS.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the overall mark allocation for this topic showed slight variation across the three years: 2022: 21 marks, 2023: 25 marks, and 2024: 21 marks. A variety of item types were used to assess the Protectionism and Free Trade topic, including MCQs, interpretation of source materials, and short objective items, over the three-year period. MCQs were consistently allocated 2, 3, and 3 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The short response item types were allocated 4, 10, and 12 marks across the three years, respectively. The allocation of marks remained within a narrow range, indicating that the topic consistently carries a moderate level of importance in the examination. There was a slight increase in 2023, and the general consistency suggests a predictable weighting pattern. However, the variation observed is not extreme and does not significantly advantage or disadvantage candidates who

prepare broadly. The allocation of marks demonstrated acceptable predictability; therefore, the assessment body should maintain flexibility by allowing periodic fluctuations in mark allocation and avoiding a fixed mark range each year.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that across the three years, a variety of item types were used to assess this topic. These included short factual questions (e.g. definitions and acronyms), source-based interpretation, structured questions, and analytical and evaluative questions requiring judgement. Over the years, the distribution of the difficulty levels and cognitive demand levels has been consistent. MCQs, with consistent marks of 2, 3, and 3 across the three years, were rated between L1 and L2 for difficulty and cognitive demand. The short response items showed slight inconsistency in mark allocation, while difficulty levels ranged between L1 to L3. Long response item types were inconsistently allocated 15, 18, and 6 marks across the three years, with difficulty levels ranging from L2 to L4 and cognitive demand levels at L2 and L3, respectively.

Allocation of marks across item types varied, with higher-order questions receiving more marks, particularly in 2023 and 2024. Levels of difficulty ranged from L1 (recall) to L4 (evaluation and judgement), demonstrating a progression in cognitive demand. Despite this variation, lower-order item types, particularly factual recall, were consistently present across all three years, introducing a moderate level of predictability in question structure. Item type variation is partially predictable, particularly regarding the regular inclusion of recall-based questions. Therefore, the assessment body should vary the balance between lower and higher-order item types.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the topic was consistently skill-paired with factual recall (definitions, acronyms, and listings), understanding and interpretation, application of knowledge, and logical reasoning and judgement. There is a noticeable pattern in which factual recall is repeatedly paired with introductory subtopics, while analysis and evaluation are consistently linked to policy-

impact questions. This repeated pairing of specific skills with subtopics suggested a predictable skill–concept relationship. The topic–skill pairing demonstrated unacceptable predictability, as learners may anticipate the type of skill required for certain content areas. The assessment body should interchange skill demands to reduce the predictability of examination question papers.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate that scenario-based framing was used inconsistently across the three years. In 2023 and 2024, real-world contexts, such as South Africa's trade relations, AGOA, and BRICS, were used, while 2022 relied heavily on theoretical framing with limited contextualisation. Although real-life contexts were present, they closely aligned with South African trade policy, which may become predictable when used repeatedly. The scenario framing displays moderate predictability, particularly due to repeated use of South African–focused trade contexts. The assessment body should integrate a range of other topics, such as international trade scenarios and unfamiliar trade contexts, in the examination question paper.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Protectionism and Free Trade topic

Table 3.3.10 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Protectionism and Free Trade Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Tariffs & quotas were repeated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotate subtopics (trade agreements, WTO, and subsidies).
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance conceptual and applied knowledge.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid fixed mark allocation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Short answers dominated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing

Factual recall/application were consistently paired with this topic.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue using diverse contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use applied/narrative scenarios.

Table 3.3.11 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Dynamics of Markets topic in the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.11: Findings on the Predictability of the Dynamics of Markets Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Dynamics of markets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered,**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)	including mark allocation		allocated per content area/subtopic	examine the subtopic		
2022	✓	**Dynamics of markets**	**25**				
		Concept of ceteris paribus		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Demand and supply graphs		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Interpretation of a graph
		PES (Price Elasticity of Supply), types, causes and calculations		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating PED
		Complementary goods and their graph		MCQ (3)	L2	L1	Interpretation of a graph
		Supply shock		MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Understanding of supply shocks in the economy

		PED (Price elasticity of demand)		Short response (2)	L3	L3	Interpretation of graphs
		Concept of price elasticity of demand		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of concept of elasticity of demand
		Factors affecting PED		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L2	L2	Factual recall
2023	✓	**Dynamics of markets**	**50**				
		Types of PED		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Interpret a graph
		Factors causing a shift in PED		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Understanding PED
		Supply curve		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the concept of ceteris paribus
		Market structures and		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (10)	L2	L3	Understanding market structures

		their characteristics					
		Income elasticity of demand		Short response (2)	L2	L3	Understanding of the concept of income elasticity of demand
		Income elasticity.		Short response (Interpret income elasticity of electricity) (4)	L2	L2	Understanding and logical reasoning
		Price elasticity of supply		Paragraph discussion (8)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning and understanding of factors influencing PES
		Revenue maximisation level		Short response (Identify from the source) (1)	L3	L2	Understanding of revenue maximisation level
		Normal and economic profit		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding of the

							difference between normal and economic profit
		Variable costs, Total costs, Marginal costs and Profit		Short response (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge (Calculations)
		Arc elasticity of demand		Short response (Description of concept (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of concept of arc elasticity of demand
		Calculation of PED		Short response (Calculation) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge: Calculating PED
		Forms of elasticity of demand; elastic or inelastic		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of PED concepts
		Factors influencing PED		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall

2024	✓	**Dynamics of markets:**	**31**				
		Causes of a shift in demand		MCQ (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Income elastic demand graph		MCQ (2)	L2	L1	Factual recall
		Calculation of PED		MCQ (3)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge - Calculating PED
		Costs and revenues calculations		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Calculating cost and revenue
		Calculation of PED		Short response (Calculation) (3)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge - Calculating PED
		Demand and supply law		Short response (4)	L2	L1	Factual recalling
		Demand and supply graphs- graphic representation		Short response (4)	L3	L3	Drawing and labelling of demand and supply curve

		of the effects of a change in price					
		Elastic and inelastic demand		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Understanding of PED concepts
		Factors affecting PED		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L3	L2	Understanding factors influencing PED

Table 3.3.11 presents a comparative overview of the Dynamics of Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.11 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Dynamics of Markets topic was examined frequently over three years. The consistent assessment of the topic across the three-year period suggested a clear and repeated pattern in topic selection. As one of the most important subtopics in microeconomics in the CAPS curriculum, the assessment repetition ensured curriculum alignment; however, its uninterrupted appearance over three consecutive years introduces a high level of predictability. The assessment indicated unacceptable predictability in the topic coverage, as learners could have anticipated the topic's appearance in the examination question paper. Therefore, the assessment body should alternate the topics with other microeconomics topics to reduce the likelihood of predictable question papers.

b. Content coverage

The findings demonstrate that a wide range of subtopics within the Dynamics of Markets topic were assessed across the three years. These included demand and supply concepts, elasticity of demand (PED, arc elasticity, income elasticity), graph interpretation and drawing, cost and revenue calculations and market structures and profit concepts. Certain subtopics, particularly price elasticity of demand (PED) and calculations related to elasticity, appeared consistently across all three years, often in multiple questions within the same paper. Other subtopics, such as market structures and profit calculations, appeared less frequently or only in specific years. The repeated assessment of PED-related concepts indicates moderate to high predictability in content coverage. The assessment body should ensure a more even distribution of subtopics to limit repeated emphasis on the same concepts.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the Dynamics of Markets topic was allocated 25, 50, and 31 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The analysis further reveals that the topic was assessed using a variety of item types, with 25, 50, and 31 allocated to each. The MCQs were allocated a slightly inconsistent mark of 13, 6, and 10 in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The short response item types were allocated 4, 6, and 12 marks across the three years, while paragraph discussion item types were almost consistently allocated 8, 10, and 6 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. Concepts were assessed in 2023 with an allocation of 6 marks, whereas calculations were assessed over two years: in 2023 with an allocation of 9 marks and in 2024 with an allocation of 3 marks. There was a fluctuation in mark allocation, indicating that the topic was given varying levels of emphasis, with a particularly substantial increase in 2023. The variation in mark allocation suggested a low predictability in topic weightings. Therefore, the assessment body should continue allowing flexible mark allocation.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates a broad range of item types used in the assessment of the topic, including calculations (PED, costs, revenues, profit), graph drawing and interpretation, short theoretical explanations, conceptual questions, and application-based questions using data or graphs. There was variation in the use of item types, and calculation-based and graph-related questions appeared consistently across all three years, often carrying moderate to high marks. There was a consistent distribution of both difficulty levels and cognitive demand levels over the years. As the MCQs were allocated slightly consistent marks of 13, 6, and 10, the level of difficulty ranged from L1 to L3, with the cognitive demand at L1 to L3. The distribution of difficulty levels for short-response items ranged from L2 and L3, and the cognitive demand levels ranged from L1 to L3.

The long response (paragraph discussion) items were allocated difficulty levels ranging from L2 to L3 across the three years, while the cognitive demand levels were L2 and L3. Since concepts were only assessed in 2023, analysing the distribution of difficulty levels and cognitive demand was difficult, as they were assessed at L2 for both difficulty and cognitive demand levels. While calculations were allocated difficulty level (L3), with cognitive demand levels ranging from L2 and L3 over the two years. Lower-order recall questions were generally allocated fewer marks, while calculations and graph analysis required higher cognitive engagement. The repeated use of calculations and graph-based questions suggested partial predictability in item types. The assessment body should incorporate more evaluative and scenario-based questions to reduce the predictability of the examination paper.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the topic-skill pairing included factual recall (definitions and laws), interpretation of graphs, application of knowledge (calculations), drawing and labelling graphs, and logical reasoning in applied contexts. The observed pattern indicated that calculations were consistently paired with elasticity concepts, while graph interpretation was linked to

demand and supply analysis. This repetition of skill–content pairing suggests a predictable structure, while the topic–skill pairing displays unacceptable predictability. The assessment body should vary skill demands by including item types that require interpretation or evaluation instead of calculations for elasticity concepts.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed reveal that most questions in this topic were framed in abstract or theoretical market contexts, primarily using graphs and numerical data rather than real-life scenarios. Where context was used, it was generally generic (e.g. changes in demand or supply) and showed limited variation across the years. The limited use of diverse or real-world scenarios contributes to moderate predictability in scenario framing. To reduce predictability, the assessment body should introduce more varied and realistic market scenarios.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Dynamics of Markets topic

Table 3.3.12 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Dynamics of Markets Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
There was no unacceptable predictability identified.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation of sub-topics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was unacceptable predictability as some content was repeated.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Maintain rotation of subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain rotation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Unacceptable predictability was identified, as diagrams were dominant.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays, case studies, and scenario-based questions.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of the essays, case studies, and scenarios.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
Moderate – consistently paired with interpretation/calculation.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation tasks.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None, as contexts varied.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue the use of diverse contexts.

Table 3.3.13 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Perfect Markets topic in IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.13: Findings on the Predictability of the Perfect Markets Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Perfect Markets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	**Perfect markets**	**21**				

		Characteristics of a perfect market		MCQ (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Competition Commission and its aims		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Total revenue, total costs, total profit and marginal revenue calculations		Short response (Calculation) (5)	L2	L3	Application of knowledge - Calculating TC, TR, TP, and MR
		Normal and economic profit		Short response (Description of concepts (4)	L2	L2	Understanding concepts of normal and economic profit
		Characteristics of Perfect Markets		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L2	L2	Understanding Perfect Markets
2023	X						
2024	X						

Table 3.3.13 presents a comparative overview of the Perfect Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.13 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Perfect Markets topic was examined only once over the three-year period, in 2022, and not in 2023 or 2024. This pattern of assessing Perfect Markets indicated infrequent assessment of the topic, suggesting clear variation in topic selection across the years. The once-off assessment of the topic indicated low and acceptable predictability in coverage, as candidates could not predict whether the topic would be examined in any given year. The assessment body should continue using a rotational approach to topic selection to ensure an unpredictable examination question paper.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that a range of subtopics within the topic assessed in 2022 included: characteristics of Perfect Markets, aims of the Competition Commission, calculation of TR, TC, TP, and MR, and concepts of normal and economic profit. As the topic was assessed only in 2022, not in 2023 or 2024, no repetition of content areas occurred across the three-year period. Given its single appearance, the content coverage for this topic shows very low predictability. There is insufficient repetition to establish any pattern. When the topic is fully assessed across comparable years, the assessment body should vary the selection of subtopics, ensuring that different conceptual and applied areas are tested each time.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was allocated only 21 marks in 2022 and received no marks in 2023 or 2024, as it was not assessed in those years. Perfect Markets was only allocated 21 marks in 2022. The MCQ was allocated 2 marks and difficulty and cognitive

demand level (L2). The short response items were allocated 2 marks at difficulty L2, and the cognitive demand level was also L2, while concepts were allocated 4 marks, with difficulty and cognitive demand also at L2. Long paragraph discussion item types were allocated 8 marks, while the difficulty and cognitive demand levels were both at L2. Calculations were allocated 5 marks, with difficulty level L2 and cognitive demands at L3. This uneven distribution indicated that the topic did not receive consistent mark allocation across examination cycles. The variation in mark allocation reflected acceptable unpredictability, as candidates could not predict the topic or any special emphasis attached to it in any given year. The assessment body should continue to allocate marks flexibly to avoid a predictable question paper.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that, when assessed in 2022, the topic included a variety of item types, including short theoretical questions, calculation-based questions, and conceptual explanation questions. There was a combination of recall, understanding, and application-based items that indicated internal variation within the topic only for 2022. However, because the topic appeared only once, cross-year comparison of item types is limited. Item type use shows acceptable unpredictability, and in future, the assessment body should continue using multiple item types and avoid repeating the same structure used in 2022.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills-topic pairing assessed in 2022 included factual recall (characteristics and aims of Competition Commission), application of knowledge (calculations of cost and revenue), and conceptual understanding (normal and economic profit). As the topic was examined only in 2022, there is no evidence of repeated skill–concept pairing across multiple years. The topic–skill pairing shows low but acceptable predictability. The assessment body should vary the skills assessed by including evaluation and interpretation item types in the examination.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that questions on Perfect Markets in 2022 were largely framed in theoretical, abstract terms, focusing on market conditions and firm behaviour. No explicit real-life or sector-based scenarios were used. As the topic was assessed only in 2022 and not again in 2023 or 2024, no repetition of the contextual framing occurred. Scenario framing demonstrates acceptable unpredictability, primarily because of the infrequent assessments. The assessment body should incorporate real-world scenarios in the examination question papers to reduce the predictability of the question paper.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Perfect Markets topic

Table 3.3.14 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.14: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Perfect Markets Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Repeated focus on equilibrium, diagrams across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage

Rotate subtopics (long-run versus short-run and efficiency).
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance conceptual and applied knowledge.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid fixed mark allocation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Diagrams dominated.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Factual recall/application were repeated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.

Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue use of diverse contexts.

Table 3.3.15 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Imperfect Markets topic in the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.15: Findings on the Predictability of the Imperfect Markets Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Imperfect Markets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Imperfect Market structures	**34**				

		characteristics of monopoly and monopolistic competition		MCQ (3)	L3	L2	Factual recall
		Cartel		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the concept of cartel
		Oligopoly and its characteristics		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (15)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
		OPEC		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		OPEC countries		Short response (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Oligopoly and price control		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of pricing in oligopoly
		Oligopoly graph		Long response (Drawing, labelling and interpretation of graph) (9)	L4	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and interpretation of oligopoly graph

2023	✓	Imperfect Markets – NERSA	**14**	Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Graph showing an effect of an increased electricity price		Short response (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and labelling of a graph
		Impact of an increase in electricity price on SA's economy		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	Imperfect Market structures oligopoly and its examples	**35**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Cartel		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Picture of Imperfect		Short response (1)	L2	L1	Factual recall

		Market structures					
		Price fixing and its impact on the economy		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding price fixing
		Price fixing and recent cases		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Understanding the role of the Competition Commission
		Manipulation of the rand and its effect on the economy		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L3	L2	Logical reasoning
		Imperfect market structures and their differences		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (12)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Classification of		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding monopolistic competition

		monopolistic business					

Table 3.3.15 presents a comparative overview of the Imperfect Markets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.15 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Imperfect Markets topic was examined in all three years. This displays a high level of consistency in topic selection across the examination cycles. While this aligns with the CAPS and the IEB SAG requirements, the uninterrupted inclusion of the topic increases the likelihood that learners and educators can anticipate its appearance in the final examination. The predictability here is considered acceptable but approaching overexposure, as the topic is not rotated out or integrated with related topics such as Market Failure.

b. Content coverage

The findings demonstrate that a wider variety of subtopics were assessed across the three years, including cartels/price fixing, oligopoly (characteristics, pricing, and comparisons), graphs (oligopoly price effects), regulatory bodies (OPEC, NERSA, Competition Commission), and real-world economic impacts. Certain subtopics, particularly cartels, oligopoly, and regulatory bodies, appeared more frequently than most other subtopics. The repeated assessment of these areas suggests a narrow focus, while other aspects of Imperfect Markets (e.g. monopolies in depth and dynamic efficiency) are less prominent. Unacceptable predictability was identified in content coverage due to the repetition of the same subtopics. The assessment body should rotate subtopics annually. Introduce

under-assessed areas, such as dynamic efficiency, barriers to entry, and welfare implications, and broaden content sampling within the topic.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the Imperfect Markets topic was allocated 34, 14, and 35 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The analysis further indicates that the topic was assessed using a variety of item types, including MCQs, interpretation of source materials, and short objective items, over the three-year period. The MCQ was consistently allocated 3 and 4 marks in 2023 and 2024, respectively; short response item types were inconsistently allocated 5, 6, and 13 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively; and concepts were only assessed in 2022, with an allocation of 2 marks.

The long paragraph discussion item types were allocated 15, 8, and 18 marks across the three years, while the drawing and labelling of diagrams was allocated 9 marks only in 2022. The topic mark allocation fluctuated significantly, with very high weighting in 2022 and 2024, and a sharp decrease in 2023. There was moderate predictability due to repeated high weighting in alternate years. The assessment body should allocate marks more evenly across years and avoid clustering high marks for the same topic.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that item types used to assess imperfect market included short factual questions (definitions and acronyms), graph drawing and interpretation, essays and evaluation questions, comparisons and explanations, and visual stimulus interpretation. The Imperfect Markets topic was assessed using a variety of item types, including MCQs, interpretation of source materials, and short objective items, over the three-year period. The MCQ was consistently allocated 3 and 4 marks in 2023 and 2024, respectively; short response item types were inconsistently allocated 5, 6, and 13 in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively; and concepts were only assessed in 2022, with an allocation of 2 marks. The long paragraph discussion item types were allocated 15, 8, and 18 marks across the three

years, while the drawing and labelling of diagrams was allocated 9 marks only in 2022. Over the years, there was an inconsistency in the distribution of difficulty levels and cognitive demand levels.

In 2022 and 2024, the MCQs had a consistent allocation of 3 and 4 marks, with difficulty levels ranging from L1 to L3 and cognitive demand levels at L1 and L2. The difficulty levels and cognitive demand levels for short responses ranged from L1 to L3. As concepts were only assessed in 2022, the difficulty level and cognitive demand levels were both at L2. The paragraph discussion was assessed at difficulty levels L3 and L4, while the cognitive demand of the topic was L2 and L3. As drawing and labelling of graphs were assessed only in 2022, with an allocation of 9 marks, the level of difficulty and cognitive demand were L4 and L3, respectively. Although multiple item types are used, a recurring pattern is observed of low-level factual recall, graph-based questions, and extended evaluation questions on economic impact. The level of difficulty and cognitive demands show limited variation, with a predictable progression from recall to evaluation. There was unacceptable predictability in the item type's sequence and design; therefore, the assessment body should introduce calculations, data-response items, and unfamiliar-stimulus mixed-level items within the same question to avoid a predictable question paper.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills assessed across years include factual recall, understanding, application, and logical reasoning. Specific subtopics were repeatedly paired with the same skills, which made skill demands highly predictable. There was unacceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing. Specific subtopics are repeatedly paired with the same skills (e.g. cartels with recall and oligopoly with evaluation). This stable pairing makes skill demands highly predictable. The assessment body should assess the same subtopic using different skills across years and include higher-order skills (evaluation and synthesis) for traditionally factual content.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate how a variety of scenarios and real-life contexts were used in the framing of item types, including: OPEC and oil pricing; electricity price increases and NERSA; price-fixing and Competition Commission cases; and rand manipulation. There was moderate predictability observed. The assessment body should use broader, less conventional contexts (such as digital markets and platform economies) and introduce unfamiliar case studies to test the transferability of knowledge.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Imperfect Markets topic

Table 3.3.16 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.16: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Imperfect Markets Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None, as it was examined but not repeated.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Maintain rotation of subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Ensure occasional omission.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage

Yes, monopoly and oligopoly were emphasised.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation in the allocation of marks.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid fixed allocation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Diagram dominance-costs and/or revenue curve and the equilibrium point were repeated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays, case studies, and scenario-based item types.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate format of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Moderate predictability, particularly on factual recall or application pairing.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation tasks.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills (analysis and synthesis).

Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None, as contexts varied.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue diverse contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use applied or narrative scenarios.

Table 3.3.17 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Market Failure topic in IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.17: Findings on the Predictability of the Market Failure Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Market Failure							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Market Failure	**38**				

		Minimum and maximum prices		MCQ (2)	L3	L2	Factual recall
		Concept of Market Failure		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Factual recall
		Causes of Market Failure		Short response (Identifying from source material) (3)	L3	L3	Interpretation of source material
		Causes of Market Failure		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L2	L2	Understanding of Market Failure
		Government intervention on Market Failure		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding the concept of inequality, merit, and demerit goods
		Minimum wage		Short response (Identifying from the cartoon) (2)	L3	L3	Interpretation of source material (cartoon)

		Minimum and living wage		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding of concept of living and minimum wage
		Minimum wage		Short response (Drawing and labelling of graph) (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and labelling of minimum wage graph
		Impact of an increase in the national minimum wage		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning and judgement
2023	✓	Market Failure: government intervention on Market Failure	**27**	MCQ (3)	L3	L2	Understanding Market Failure
		Causes of Market Failure		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (12)	L2	L2	Logical reasoning
		Minimum wage and the		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding minimum wage

		reason for its introduction					
		Minimum wage graph		Short response (Drawing and labelling a graph) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - drawing a minimum wage graph
		Impact of minimum wage on businesses		Short response (4)	L4	L3	Understanding the concept of minimum wage and its implications
2024	✓	**Markets failure**	**21**				
		Causes of Market Failure and the examples		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L2	Understanding Market Failure
		The use of taxes as government intervention on Market Failure		Short response (4)	L2	L1	Understanding role of government in the market

		Impact of externalities such as carbon tax on the market for petrol using a graph		Short response (5)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and labelling of a graph
		Ways the government can deal with Market Failure		Short response (4)	L3	L2	Understanding role of government in the market

Table 3.3.17 presents a comparative overview of the Market Failure topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.17 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Market Failure topic was examined in all three years. The yearly assessment of the topic demonstrated high acceptability and predictability, and its regular assessment aligns with the CAPS and the IEB's SAG. However, its yearly inclusion may increase learners' anticipation of the topic's appearance in future examination question papers. The assessment body should maintain acceptable predictability by varying content focus and assessment strategy.

b. Content coverage

The findings demonstrate that the following subtopics were assessed repeatedly: externalities (positive and negative) all three years. The Market Failure topic was assessed with the inclusion of the following core content: minimum and maximum prices, concepts of Market Failure, causes of Market Failure, government intervention on Market Failure, minimum and living wages, economic impact of increased minimum wages, graph of minimum wage, and the impact of externalities. The findings further indicate that public goods in 2022 and 2024, merit and demerit goods in 2023 and 2024, market inefficiency and welfare loss in 2022 and 2023, government intervention methods across all three years and cost–benefit analysis in 2024. Repetition of focus in areas such as externalities revealed moderate predictability, whereas rotation of subtopics reduced it. The assessment body should at least reduce the number of assessed subtopics.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic was allocated 38, 27, and 21 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The topic was assessed using a variety of item types, including MCQs, short-answer items, graph drawing and labelling, concept questions, and long paragraph discussions. MCQs were allocated a consistent mark of 2 and 3 over the two years, i.e. 2022 and 2023, respectively. The short response item types were allocated a consistent mark of 11, 8, and 13 across the three years, while drawing and labelling of graphs were allocated a consistent mark of 5 and 4 over the two years, i.e. 2022 and 2023. The paragraph discussion items were allocated 16, 12, and 8 marks across the three years, respectively, while concepts were assessed only in 2022, with a 2-mark allocation. The allocation of marks remained relatively stable over the three-year period. This steady allocation of marks contributed to an acceptable predictability with no excessive dominance of either topic. The assessment body should maintain this moderate fluctuation in mark allocation.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the following item types were included in the assessment of Market Failure: short definition questions, diagram interpretation (MSC, MSB, and welfare loss), explanatory questions, application-based policy questions, and evaluative questions on intervention effectiveness. Over the years, there was a slight consistency in the distribution of difficulty and cognitive demand levels. MCQs were assessed at difficulty level L3 and cognitive demand L2 over the two years. The response items were consistently allocated 11, 8, and 13 marks across the three years, with difficulty levels ranging from L2 to L4, while the cognitive demand levels were at L2 and L3.

The drawing and labelling of graphs were consistently allocated 5 and 4 marks over the two years, with a range of difficulty level and L3 cognitive demand level. The paragraph discussion items were allocated 16, 12, and 8 marks, with difficulty levels ranging from L2 to L4 and cognitive demand levels L2 and L3, while concepts were assessed at difficulty and cognitive demand L2 only in 2022. Diagram-based item types appeared more frequently than others; however, they varied in interpretation and evaluation. The level of difficulty ranged from L1 to L4, while the cognitive demands ranged from L1 to L3, with an increase in analysis and evaluation item types. There was acceptable predictability in the format of the item types, but they varied in cognitive demand.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the Market Failure topic was skill-paired with knowledge and understanding, application (diagram interpretation and policy analysis), analysis (inefficiency and welfare loss) and evaluation (government intervention effectiveness). Although the application of knowledge appeared more frequently than the others, it was paired differently with other subtopics and higher-order demands. There was moderate variation in skill-topic pairing, resulting in low-to-moderate predictability. The assessment body should increase the use of evaluation skill assessment across all subtopics.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate that the following scenarios and real-life contexts were used in the framing of item types, generic market situation, environmental and social externalities, government policy interventions, and diagram-based welfare analysis. The scenarios were conceptualised, but varied, with an increasing contextual application in 2024. The scenario framing showed acceptable predictability; therefore, the assessment body should maintain diagram-based analysis across varying contexts.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Market Failure topic

Table 3.3.18 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.18: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Market Failure Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Externalities were repeated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotate subtopics (public goods, merit/demerit goods).

Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance conceptual versus applied.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation in mark allocation.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid fixed mark allocation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Short answers dominated when this topic was examined over the years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Factual recall/application was consistently paired with this topic.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue to use diverse contexts.

Table 3.3.19 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Economic Growth and Development topic in the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.19: Findings on the Predictability of the Economic Growth and Development Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Economic growth and development							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	**Economic growth and development**	**13**				

		Lorenz curve		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Standard of living		Short response (1)	L2	L2	Interpret source material
		Human Development Index		Short response (2)	L3	L2	Interpretation and application of knowledge
		Measuring economic development		Short response (4)	L2	L2	Understanding the concept of HDI and GDP per capita
		Foreign direct investment – reasons why a country can attract investments		Short response (4)	L4	L3	Understanding and proper judgement
2023	✓	**Economic growth and development**	**20**				
		Economic growth and development concepts		MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Understanding concept of economic growth

		Concepts of economic growth and development		Short response (2)	L2	L3	Interpretation of graph
		Economic concepts of economic growth and development		Short response (Description of concepts (4)	L2	L2	Understanding economic concepts of economic growth and development
		Regulations on economic growth and development		Short response (Drawing and labelling a graph) (4)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Drawing and labelling of a graph
		Impact of positive economic growth on economic development in SA		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Evaluation)

2024	✓	**Economic growth and development**	**13**				
		Economic growth and development concepts		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Developed and developing countries – is SA a developing economy?		Short response (2)	L2	L1	Understanding concept of development
		IMF		Short response (1)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Impact of prospective economic growth on economic development		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning (Evaluation)

Table 3.3.19 presents a comparative overview of the Economic Growth and Development topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.18 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that there was no unpredictable pattern in the assessment of Economic Growth and Development.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the Economic Growth and Development topic was consistently examined across the three years. The assessment of the Economic Growth and Development topic included core content, such as the Lorenz curve, standard of living, concepts of economic growth and development, HDI, measuring economic development, FDI, regulations related to economic growth and development, impact of economic growth and development, and developed and developing economies and the IMF. The consistent assessment of this topic over the three-year period suggested a clear, recurring pattern in topic selection. While the topic forms an important part of the CAPS curriculum, its inclusion supported curriculum alignment, and its repeated appearance contributed to high predictability in topic coverage. The frequency with which this topic has been examined indicates unacceptable predictability, as candidates could easily predict its inclusion each year. The assessment body should adopt a rotational approach to topic selection, alternating Economic Growth and Development with other macroeconomic topics across examination cycles.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for the topic varied slightly across the three years: 13, 20, and 13 marks were awarded in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. The topic was assessed using a variety of item types, including MCQs, short responses, concepts, drawing and labelling of diagrams, and paragraph discussion. MCQs were consistently allocated 2 marks in 2022 and 2023. There

was an inconsistent allocation of 11, 2, and 3 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively, for the short response items across the three years. Concepts were allocated a consistent 4 and 2 marks over the two years, i.e., 2023 and 2024, while drawing and labelling were allocated 4 marks only in 2023, and long response item types were consistently allocated 8 marks over the two years. Although there was a noticeable increase in 2023, the topic generally carried a moderate and consistent weighting, returning to its original level in 2024. The relatively stable weighting, despite minor fluctuations, suggests acceptable predictability. The assessment body should continue to allow moderate variation in mark allocation, ensuring that no topic is assessed more frequently than others.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a variety of item types were used in assessing the topic across the three years, including short conceptual questions, interpretation of source material and graphs, drawing and labelling graphs, and extended evaluative questions. Lower-order item types (definitions and factual recall) were generally allocated fewer marks, while higher-order evaluative questions carried the greatest allocation of marks, particularly in 2023 and 2024. Over the years, the distribution of difficulty and cognitive demand levels has remained relatively stable. MCQs were assessed at L1 for both difficulty and cognitive demand in both 2022 and 2023.

The short response showed variation in the difficulty and cognitive demand levels over the years. The difficulty level ranged from L1 to L4, while the cognitive demand ranged from L1 to L3. There was consistency in the assessment of concepts at L2 cognitive demand level, while demand levels ranged from L1 to L2. The drawing and labelling of diagrams were at L3 for both difficulty and cognitive demand levels in 2022, while long paragraph discussions were consistent at difficulty and cognitive demand levels at L4 and L3 in 2023 and 2024, respectively. However, the regular assessment of an extended evaluation question linking economic growth to development revealed a predictable item-type pattern. There was moderate predictability in item types, particularly the repeated use of evaluation questions as the main high-mark component. The assessment body should vary the dominant item types by

occasionally replacing extended evaluations with comparative analysis, interpretation of unfamiliar data, or scenario-based problem-solving questions.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills-topic pairing assessed across the three years included factual recall (definitions and acronyms), interpretation of graphs and source material, application of knowledge and logical reasoning, and evaluation. A clear pattern emerged in which evaluation and logical reasoning skills were consistently paired with questions examining the link between economic growth and development. Meanwhile, recall skills were repeatedly associated with definitions and indicators. The consistent pairing of specific skills with subtopics indicates unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing. The assessment body should vary skill demands by requiring interpretation or application of knowledge for economic growth and development item types in the question paper.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate how the contextual framing of item types was largely South Africa–focused, particularly in questions evaluating economic growth and development. In some cases, abstract or generic economic contexts were used, while real-life international comparisons were limited. Although there was variation, the repeated focus on South Africa's development context contributes to a degree of predictability. Scenario framing demonstrates moderate predictability, as similar national contexts are repeatedly used. The assessment body should introduce different international or comparative scenarios to reduce the predictability of the examination question paper.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Economic Growth and Development topic

Table 3.3.20 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.20: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Economic Growth and Development Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation of subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
Tariffs and quotas were repeated across the years.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotate subtopics (trade agreements, WTO, and subsidies).
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance conceptual and applied knowledge.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation.

Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid fixed bands.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Short answers dominated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Factual recall or application were repeated.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation or explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue use of diverse contexts.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Use applied or narrative scenarios.

Table 3.3.21 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Economic and Social Performance topic in the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.21: Findings on the Predictability of the Economic and Social Performance Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Economic and Social Performance							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	x	Economic and social performance indicators	X	X	X	X	X
2023	✓	**Economic and social performance indicators**	**18**				

		Calculation of unemployment rate		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Calculation of unemployment rate
		Gini coefficient and calculation		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge – Calculating the Gini coefficient
		Concept of economic indicator		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of economic indicator
		Importance of indicators to the government		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding the importance of economic indicators
		Impact of interest on the economy		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	**Economic and social performance indicators**	**18**				

		Economic and social performance indicators		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (12)	L2	L2	Logical reasoning
		Ways the government can improve the Gini coefficient		Short responses (6)	L3	L3	Understanding Gini coefficient

Table 3.3.21 presents a comparative overview of the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.20 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic was not examined in 2022, but it was assessed in 2023 and 2024. The absence of the topic in 2022, followed by its consecutive inclusion in 2023 and 2024, suggests a partial pattern of repetition. While the topic aligns with CAPS requirements, its back-to-back assessment in 2023 and 2024 suggested a moderate level of predictability in topic coverage. The frequent assessment of the topic indicated moderate but acceptable predictability, as it was assessed for only 2 years instead of 3. The assessment body should avoid repeated examination of the topic and thus use rotational topic selection to avoid predictability.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that a range of subtopics was assessed in the two years the topic was examined and included: calculation of unemployment rate, calculation of the Gini coefficient, understanding economic indicators, importance of indicators to government, evaluation of the impact of interest rates in 2023 and purpose of social indicators (Gini coefficient, life expectancy, and GDP per capita) and government strategies to improve income distribution in 2024. Although the exact questions differed, the Gini coefficient and income distribution–related content appeared in both years, indicating some repetition in content emphasis. The reappearance of indicators of inequality suggests moderate predictability in content coverage. The assessment body should use a rotational approach to indicators, including poverty rates, productivity measures, Balance of Payments indicators, and environmental indicators.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the topic received consistent marks of 18 in both 2023 and 2024, while 0 marks were allocated in 2022. The topic was assessed using a wide variety of item types, including MCQs, concept questions, short-response and paragraph discussions. MCQs were allocated 6 marks only in 2023, at difficulty L3 and cognitive demand L3. The concepts were allocated 2 marks in 2023 at the difficulty and cognitive demand level of 1. The short response items were allocated inconsistently, with 2 and 6 marks in 2023 and 2024 at difficulty level and cognitive demand levels ranging between L2 and L3, while paragraph discussions were assessed at the difficulty levels ranging between L2 and L4 and cognitive demand levels ranging between L2 and L3 in 2023 and 2024, respectively. This fixed mark allocation across consecutive years suggested a predictable pattern. The consistency in mark allocation indicated unacceptable predictability in topic weighting for the years in which the topic was assessed. The assessment body should vary the mark allocation to ensure flexibility rather than assigning a fixed allocation across multiple years.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a range of item types was used across the two years the topic was assessed, which included calculation questions (unemployment rate and Gini coefficient), short conceptual explanations, and extended evaluative questions. Calculation-based items appeared mostly in 2023, while in 2024, the focus was more on explanatory and evaluative responses. However, both years included higher-order questions that required logical reasoning. There was acceptable variation in item types, although the repeated use of calculations and extended evaluation questions suggested a moderate level of predictability. The assessment body should continue using a mix of item types.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skills-topic pairing used in assessing the topic across the two years included application of knowledge (calculations), understanding and explanation, logical reasoning, and evaluation. A pattern observed indicated that calculations were consistently paired with quantitative indicators, while logical reasoning was paired with policy- or impact-based questions. This repeated pairing suggested a predictable alignment between skills and subtopics. The topic–skill pairing demonstrates moderate predictability, although it remains acceptable due to variation in question focus. The assessment body should vary skill demands by including item types that require evaluation of quantitative indicators.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate a few scenario-based item types used in the assessment, with most item types primarily framed in national (South African) contexts, particularly when assessing income distribution and government intervention. The repeated use of a South African context contributed to moderate predictability in contextual framing. Scenario framing demonstrated moderate but acceptable predictability. The assessment body should incorporate international or comparative contexts.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Economic and Social Performance Indicators topic

Table 3.3.22 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.22: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Economic and Social Performance Indicators Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
Maintain rotation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
There was repeated focus on HDI and the Gini coefficient.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Rotate subtopics (poverty, literacy, and health indicators).
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Tables dominated across the three years.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Factual recall/application was consistently paired with this topic.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair with evaluation/explanation.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue diverse contexts.

Table 3.3.23 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Inflation topic in IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.23: Findings on the Predictability of the Inflation Topic for the IEB Economics Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Inflation							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	**Inflation**	**46**				
		Calculation of inflation rate		MCQ (3)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge - Calculating inflation rate
		Concept of inflation		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L2	Understanding concept of inflation
		Inflation impact on consumers		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding inflation
		Factors leading to		Short response (6)	L2	L2	Understanding inflation

		increased inflation					
		Inflation types and causes of inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (10)	L3	L3	Logical reasoning
		Inflation rate in SA		Short response (1)	L2	L2	Interpretation of a graph
		Reasons for an increase in inflation		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Understanding of inflation
		Consequences of inflation		Short response (6)	L2	L2	Understanding of inflation effects
		The use of fiscal and monetary policies to curb inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (14)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
2023	✓	Effects of an increase in inflation	**29**	MCQ (3)	L2	L2	Understanding inflation

		Headline and disinflation		Short response (Description of concepts) (4)	L2	L2	Understanding concept inflation and disinflation
		Factors contributing to inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L3	L3	Application of knowledge
		The use of fiscal and monetary policies to curb inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (14)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning
2024	✓	Inflation types	**32**	MCQ (2)	L1	L1	Factual recall
		Analysis of inflation graphs		MCQ (3)	L2	L1	Interpretation of graph
		VAT and its effects		MCQ (3)	L3	L2	Understanding inflation
		PPI (Producer Price Index)		Short response (Description of concept) (2)	L1	L1	Understanding of concept PPI

		Concept of inflation		Short description (Description of concept) (2)	L2	L1	Understanding of concept inflation
		Types of inflation		Short response (2)	L2	L2	Interpretation of source material
		Calculation of inflation		Short response (Calculation) (4)	L3	L2	Application of knowledge – calculating inflation rate
		Causes of demand-pull inflation		Long response (Paragraph discussion) (6)	L2	L2	Understanding demand-pull inflation
		Impact of inflation on businesses		Impact of inflation on businesses (Long response (Paragraph discussion) (8)	L4	L3	Logical reasoning

Table 3.3.23 presents a comparative overview of the Inflation topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.22 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Economics final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the Inflation topic was consistently examined across the three years. The frequent assessment of the topic over the three-year period indicated a high level of acceptable predictability. As this topic forms the core of the macroeconomic

topic linked to price determination and stability, the purchasing power of money, and the country's economic policy, its frequent appearance aligns with the CAPS and the IEB's SAG. The assessment body should integrate the Inflation topic into the Business Cycles topic and/or the Public Sector topic to reduce the risk of excessive predictability in the examination question paper. The consistent assessment of inflation across the three-year period indicates a high level of acceptable predictability. As a core macroeconomic topic linked to price stability, purchasing power, and economic policy, its regular inclusion aligns with CAPS and IEB requirements. However, annual inclusion may increase predictability.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the Inflation topic was fully assessed across the three years, i.e., 2022–2024. The content areas assessed included core content such as the concept of inflation, calculations of inflation rate, economic impact of inflation, causes of inflation, types of inflation, inflation rate in SA, reasons and factors causing increase in inflation, consequences of inflation, policy measures to curb inflation, headline and disinflation, analysis of inflation graphs, VAT and its economic impact, and the PPI. The finding further demonstrates that CPI and inflation measurement in 2022 and 2024; the effects of inflation in 2022 and 2023; inflation trends and interpretation in 2024; and the Phillips curve link in 2023. The definition of inflation and its causes appeared frequently, while the measurement of inflation and its application were sparingly assessed, with a moderately acceptable level of predictability. To reduce the chances of a predictable examination question paper, the assessment body should reduce the topic's reliance on the definition and causes of inflation when assessing the topic.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that inflation was steadily allocated 46, 29, and 32 marks in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. Over the years, the topic was assessed using a wide range of item types, including MCQs, short responses, concepts, paragraph discussions, and calculations. MCQs were allocated consistent marks of 3, 3, and 8 across the three years, with difficulty and cognitive demand levels

ranging from L1 to L3. The short response items were allocated inconsistent marks of 17 and 2 in 2022 and 2024, respectively, at consistent difficulty and cognitive demand levels of L2.

There was a very slight inconsistency in the allocation of marks for paragraph discussion items, particularly between 2023 and 2024, as 24, 22, and 14 marks were allocated across the three years at the consistent cognitive demand L3 and the difficulty level ranging between L2 and L4, while calculations were allocated 4 marks only in 2024 at the difficulty and cognitive demand L3 and L2, respectively. The allocation of marks remained relatively stable, with a significant decrease in 2023 and a slight increase in 2024. The steady allocation of marks suggested acceptable predictability; therefore, the assessment body reduced reliance on a single topic in examinations and maintained modest fluctuations in mark allocation.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the inflation assessment included the following item types: MCQs, short-answer questions, data interpretation (CPI tables), diagram interpretation (AD/AS, Phillips curve), and application-based questions. The format of these item types varied across the three years, with more focus on the interpretation and application of knowledge in other assessments. The cognitive demands in the assessment of the topic ranged from L1 to L3, while the difficulty level ranged from L1 to L4. The assessment of inflation showed acceptable predictability in the format of the items but varied in cognitive demand. The assessment body should continue with the rotation of diagram-based tasks and increase the use of data-response and scenario-based item types in the examination question paper.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the assessment of the topic was skill-paired with knowledge and understanding, interpretation (data and trends), application (economic impact), and basic analysis (cause-and-effect). There was a repeated reappearance of

lower-order topic-skills pairing, with an increased pairing with interpretation tasks. The topic-skill pairing for inflation showed moderate predictability, with low-to-moderate predictability, and the examination body should increase the number of item types based on evaluation and maintain a balance between factual recall and the application of knowledge in the examination question paper.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed demonstrate that the following scenarios and real-life contexts were used in the framing of item types: general price changes, South African inflation trends, CPI data, and macroeconomic policy contexts, with a shift in contexts from generic explanations to applied national data. The scenario used indicated acceptable predictability with increased contextual depth in the examination question paper. The assessment body should continue using real-life data and introduce the comparison of item types in the examination question paper.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the IEB Economics Inflation topic

Table 3.3.24 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.24: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of the 2022–2024 IEB Economics Inflation Topic Paper (1)

Identified unacceptable predictability in topic coverage
The topic was examined annually.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic coverage

Rotate emphasis and integrate into broader price-level analysis.
Identified unacceptable predictability in content coverage
CPI & inflation rate calculations were repeated across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Include qualitative aspects (impacts and policy responses).
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Balance quantitative and conceptual content.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in topic weighting
Maintain variation.
Identified unacceptable predictability in item types
Calculations item types dominated.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in item types
Add essays and case studies.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate formats of item types.
Identified unacceptable predictability in topic–skill pairing
Inflation was consistently paired with calculation/application.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Pair the topic with evaluation/explanation.

Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Increase higher-order skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
None.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in scenario framing of items
Continue the use of diverse contexts.

Conclusions

Based on the evaluation of the 2022–2024 IEB final examinations, the question papers do not demonstrate unacceptable predictability. The partial omission of the prescribed examinable topics is a concern. As prescribed in CAPS, topics such as Industrial Development Policies, Tourism, and Environmental Sustainability are Grade 12 examinable. The CAPS prescribed Grade 12 topics were compromised, indicating a deviation from the approved topics as also contained in Abridged Section 4. This created a problem of predictability.

Within the mandated topics, however, the content focus was not adequately assessed, as topics were omitted over the three-year period, leaving some content gaps in the assessment of Grade 12 learners. The item types, skills required, and scenario framing all vary meaningfully from year to year. Although the format remains stable, the nature of questions, such as reliability, usefulness, bias, comparison, paragraph writing, and higher-order evaluation, changes in response to the selected sources. The distribution of cognitive levels also remains aligned with SAG, with no evidence of repeated cognitive patterns that could contribute to predictability.

The structure of the IEB examination question papers remained consistent. The variation in the topic-skill-pairing, real-life context, scenario framing of item types, cartoons, graphs, pictures, and graphs reduced the predictability of the IEB question papers. The findings indicate that, in the assessment of Economics as analysed between 2022 and 2024, there is neither unacceptable predictability nor a recognisable pattern. The papers were balanced, although not CAPS compliant.

Section 4: Discussions, Conclusions, and General Recommendations

Sections 3.1–3.3 presented the findings that emerged from the evaluation of each topic assessed in the DBE and IEB Economics NSC examination papers. These findings were derived from a systematic analysis of examination papers administered between 2022 and 2024 to identify patterns of predictability across the sampled assessments. Building on these findings, this chapter presents a discussion of the results, followed by evidence-based recommendations informed by the observed trends. This chapter concludes with reflections on the implications of the findings for assessment quality, validity, and future examination design.

4.1 Discussions

Evidence presented in Sections 3.1–3.3 indicates that, across most topics assessed in the DBE and IEB Economics Paper 1 and Paper 2, the examinations generally adhered to acceptable standards of quality, cognitive demand, and structural consistency. However, notable differences emerged between the two assessment bodies regarding predictability, curriculum coverage, and alignment with prescribed requirements.

For DBE Economics Paper 1, the findings indicate a high level of structural consistency and acceptable predictability in examination format. Although predictability in structure is not inherently problematic, recurring patterns in the sequencing and presentation of topics across successive years may contribute to increased examination predictability over time, potentially affecting assessment validity. Nevertheless, the papers maintained a balanced distribution of cognitive demand and incorporated diverse real-life contexts, thereby supporting the assessment of higher-order thinking and application skills.

Similarly, DBE Economics Paper 2 demonstrated consistent quality, with an appropriate distribution of cognitive levels and effective use of varied contextual scenarios. While some repetition in item types was identified, this did not significantly compromise the overall integrity of the assessment. However, as with Paper 1,

recurring patterns in topic sequencing highlight the need for greater variation to reduce potential predictability risks.

In contrast, the IEB Economics Paper 1 examinations demonstrated a different pattern. While no significant concerns were identified predictability in question format, skills, or cognitive demand, issues were noted in relation to curriculum alignment. In particular, the omission of key CAPS-prescribed topics, such as Industrial Development Policies, Tourism, and Environmental Sustainability, represents a deviation from the prescribed curriculum. This creates a different form of predictability, whereby certain topics appear to be consistently excluded, potentially limiting the scope of assessment and disadvantaging learners.

Despite these omissions, the IEB papers demonstrated strong variation in item design through diverse scenario framing, the integration of visual stimuli (such as cartoons and graphs), and changing skill requirement. This variation effectively reduces unacceptable forms of predictability and encourages deeper learner engagement. However, inconsistencies in topic coverage result in content gaps that raise concerns regarding the comprehensiveness, fairness, and overall validity of the assessment process.

4.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, both the DBE and the IEB Economics examination papers administered between 2022 and 2024 demonstrate an overall high standard in terms of structure, cognitive demand, and contextual relevance. The DBE papers are characterised by stability and consistency, with acceptable levels of predictability that do not significantly compromise the validity of the assessments. However, recurring patterns in topic sequencing may increase predictability over time and should therefore be addressed.

The IEB papers, by contrast, effectively minimise predictability through greater variation in question design and cognitive demand. However, this strength is tempered by shortcomings in curriculum alignment, particularly the omission of key CAPS-prescribed topics. Consequently, while the IEB assessments are less predictable in their design, they are less comprehensive in their coverage of the prescribed curriculum.

Overall, the findings indicate that effective assessment design requires an appropriate balance with curriculum compliance and comprehensive topic coverage to ensure fairness, validity, and reliability.

4.3 General Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed:

- The DBE should introduce greater variation in the sequencing and presentation of topics across examination papers to reduce recurring patterns that may contribute to predictability.
- Both assessment bodies should continue to ensure an appropriate distribution of cognitive demand levels to support the assessment of a broad range of learner abilities.
- Examination designers should adopt multi-year rotation matrices to regulate the recurrence of subtopics, skills, item types, and scenario framing.
- Moderation processes at the assessment-body level should include explicit cross-year comparisons to identify emerging patterns, particularly in subjects where improving learner performance has raised concerns about predictability.
- Assessment bodies should develop and expand item-type and scenario banks to diversify question structures, reduce reliance on familiar templates, and minimise unintentional patterning.
- Routine predictability audits, based on the six analytical dimensions outlined in this report, should be implemented to support ongoing monitoring and prevent the emergence of unintended patterns.