

1) To the Teaching Coordinator and the person who made up the final exam of 31/1/2000 for "Price Theory A"-
2) Dear Sir: First, allow me to congratulate you in general on the excellent exam you composed. One can see that
3) you have the same qualifications for preparing such a final exam for the university as
4) any experienced professor in the world's most prestigious universities. And if you don't think I'm right, then I'm
5) a monkey's uncle. May I point out that in contrast to many exams in the OU, the level of this exam was
6) a bit high, but not too high. My conclusion therefore is that you are a good coordinator and
7) over and above anything that could be expected of you, and you succeeded in astounding many of your pupils
8) with this excellent test which you composed. I especially saw how my fellow students were astounded
9) with question 9, part H (the estimated price of shade within the budget limits), which was no doubt
10) a very intelligent question that tests deep understanding of the topic. There is hardly a word that is
11) superfluous, a question which examines the ability to derive functions the length of a whole row, but no more than that,
12) nor any other extraneous material. Other coordinators, in contrast, have given some nerve wracking exam that
13) was absolutely worthless and actually drove some students to tears. You are simply
14) a genius, you are a man of extraordinary abilities, which we all admire, and whoever does not agree with me is
15) a moron who doesn't have the faintest idea of what he is talking about or why. You do not have any
16) problem preparing such an amazing exam, and others could learn from you as you surely have accumulated much
17) knowledge about the theory of prices, and of economics generally. One can immediately see that you are
18) brilliant, a man of exceptional talent. I am sorry that you did not add another interesting question about a consumer that's
19) not rational, cannot think even one step ahead, and one who has no consideration
20) of prices of products. But I understand that that question was likely to have been confusing, and you were thoughtful
21) of your students. All who took the test with me, will no doubt agree when I state that I hope with all my heart that you
22) will coordinate more courses. I heard that one student said the exam was too difficult but no doubt she
23) will be kicked out by the Open University, after not achieving an average of 60 in any of the courses
24) she studies. So don't be upset about her. I shall be glad to know what other courses
25) you are in charge of. In light of the feeling that your exam left me with, I hope you will have only
26) many good things in store, that you succeed in and out of the Open University and that you shall never know
27) troubles and problems, pain and sorrow. For certain, were you to leave the OU you could easily find work
28) as a lecturer in economics in Yale, for example. I understand they are now trying to find an answer to economic problems
29) in the Sanitation Department of the Tel Aviv Municipality (Hiria etc.). You are the ideal candidate for that.
30) (After all, you do work in Tel Aviv, and live there also, I imagine, and in addition, you are an expert in economics!)

31) Nevertheless, were you to leave us--and I am certain that I speak for all the students--we would all be
32) very sad that we have lost such a good coordinator as you. Still, I hope that you decide to stay; then we would be
33) very happy, since not all coordinators--actually, I can't think of a single one--construct final exams like yours.
34) For that requires great and rare talent, which one obtains only after long years of experience in teaching.
35) I find it important to emphasize, the final exam that I am talking about was by **no** means an easy exam;
36) but it was interesting and challenging. One was not faced simply with filling in formulae,
37) rather, the exact opposite. The national average for this exam will without a shadow of a doubt be about
38) 80, which is very nice. Especially notable since the multiple-choice questions were only worth
39) forty points, and from a coordinator such as you, one cannot ask for more than this. I ask of you that in case
40) --an eventuality not likely; but theoretically, let's assume it occurs: If you discover, to your total surprise, that
41) all the students received between 10-20 points below the average that I mentioned, which is certainly
42) going to give them a very low average, only about 65, and again, on the supposition that all this is
43) possible, that you give us a bonus of 20 points to compensate for the exam's extraordinary level of difficulty.
44) It is quite clear to me that there is not the slightest chance of even approaching the national average.
45) By the way, I have been meaning to ask you for quite a while, how are you able to live with
46) a coordinator's salary? Isn't it too little for a man of your caliber? Also, do you solve the questions
47) yourself? (Since you asked a question on the final re the demand for turnover according to Slutsky,
48) which was really very easy. If you yourself tried to solve that question, you would realize it. You might think it was
49) something we never learned in the course!) Just know this: if wisdom had indirect utility, you would be
50) a consumer with a V of 100. By the way, it is interesting that a product whose utility equals zero is actually
51) completely without utility. That is interesting because that is the reality! I also wanted to point out that all your thought is
52) original and interesting, and you are the only one, as in a question you posed, who could describe a curve so
53) strange and jagged. You are the teaching coordinator that every student sees in his
54) most beautiful dreams. With you one can rest assured that exams in the Open University are not
55) terrible nightmares, disgusting and frightening. Each time that I think of you in the future, I'm absolutely sure I shall
56) smile and say to myself how lucky I was to have a coordinator like you, and in my overwhelming joy I shall
57) burst into tears that will last for some time. I must tell the dean of students how I feel about you
58) so that he will know what an outstanding coordinator you are. I have sent him a copy of this letter
59) so he can repay you as you deserve for the unusual final exam you composed for us.
60) copy to: Dean of Students (since he is a very busy man, I sent him a shorter version of this letter; only the odd-numbered rows)

(Grateful thanks to translator Aryeh Malkin for helping Yohai's work to reach English-speakers.)