Examination Period 3: 2016/17

LEM300217N

Module Title: Rural Development, Policy & Practices
Level: Six
Time allowed: Three hours

Instructions to candidates:
- Enter your student number not your name on all answer books.
- Answer Section A and two questions from Section B.
- All questions are not equally weighted.
- Begin each question on a separate page; label each page clearly with the number of the question you are answering.
- Neither books nor notes may be taken into the examination.

No. of Pages: 3
No. of Questions: 5
Section A

Answer this compulsory question in Section A.

1. The impact of the revised Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2015-2020 has now had some time to take effect. Initial criticism from the agricultural industry focussed on the sole delivery mechanisms for ‘greening’ under the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), the additional financial support for pillar two schemes and a perceived burden of additional regulation for farmers. Using these and other pertinent issues, critically review the options for post-Brexit scenario’s facing the agricultural sector. Relate your discussion to socio-economic, political and environmental factors and produce an action plan for priorities moving forwards post-2018.

(40 marks)

Section B

Answer two questions in Section B.

2. According to the UK Government\(^1\), many systems of food production are unsustainable, degrade the environment and compromise the ability to sustain biodiversity. With this in mind, comprehensively review current tools and initiatives available to attempt to balance agricultural production systems with environmental concerns in UK farming systems. Is land sparing supported by subsidies really the only way it can be done? Moreover, is the concept of ‘sustainable intensification’ a myth or reality?

(30 marks)

3. The Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom recently promised a ‘bonfire of regulation for farmers’ at the 2017 Oxford Farming Conference. Several organisations including the Green party have attacked her pledge to scrap the EU’s ‘three-crop rule’ as irresponsible whilst others including the CLA feel that this creates a climate of opportunity. Using relevant case-studies and referring to evolving policy, critically appraise this statement in light of current socio-economic and environmental pressures.

(30 marks)

4. One of the key elements that will dominate rural policy post-Brexit is how effectively land is used for competing purposes. For example, most rural development frameworks across Europe have historically attempted to encourage a synergy between competing demands on land for both the production of food and also energy. Using examples, critically evaluate how these outwardly paradoxical issues best be balanced to ensure the provision of adequate yields and competitive prices?

(30 marks)

5. The outgoing LEADER (Liaison among Actors in Rural Economic Development) rural development scheme aims to provide funding for rural businesses and farmers wishing to diversify their enterprises. For 2017, the Local Action Group (LAG) for North Northants is considering supporting a number of themes until the funding window closes, these being:

- Enhance farm productivity.
- Support rural Micro, Small or Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) and farm diversification.
- Support rural tourism.
- Support the provision of rural services.
- Support for increasing forest productivity.

For these themes, carry out a brief SWOT (strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats) analysis to deduce which would be priority themes with which the LAG should manage funding within the region, conforming with LEADER expectations.

(30 marks)

Total: 100 marks

End of Paper