



STEP II, 2008, Q4 EC

Q4 Another very popular question, poorly done (600 attempts, mean score below 7). Most efforts got little further than finding the gradient of the normal to the curve, and I strongly suspect that this question was frequently to be found amongst candidates' non-contributing scorers. Using the $\tan(A - B)$ formula is a sufficiently common occurrence on past papers that there is little excuse for well-prepared candidates not to recognise when and how to apply it. Once that has been done, the question's careful structuring guided able candidates over the hurdles one at a time, each result relying on the preceding result(s); yet most attempts had finished quite early on, and the majority of candidates failed to benefit from the setters' kindness.



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