



STEP II, 2009, Q12 EC

Q12 There were only around 200 attempts to Q12, and the mean score was just 5, making it the worst question on the paper for marks. Many of the attempts failed to get very far at all, largely for finding that efforts to integrate e^{ax^2} proved difficult. Personally, I had thought it was giving too much away to ask for the sketch of the pdf at the beginning, in that it might just give the game away that what was being handled here was just half of a normal distribution. I worried in vain. Sadly, without this crucial observation, little or no progress was possible. Even with it, a little care was still needed in handling the differences between this and $N(0, 1)$, for which the tables could be used.



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