

## CORRESPONDENCE

### *Actuarial Examinations*

The Editor,  
*The Journal of the Institute of  
Actuaries Students' Society*

5 November 1946

Dear Sir,

Messrs Mayhew and Vajda in their paper on pp. 67-75 of the *Journal* have given the answer to a problem—a very interesting problem—but not one which has much relation to the examinations for the Fellowship of the Institute of Actuaries. Students sitting for the examinations possess widely different qualities, but for the purposes of Messrs Mayhew and Vajda's investigation may be divided into two groups, viz. those worthy to become Fellows and those not so worthy. Superimposed on the natural or acquired qualities of the candidates are the hazards of the examination. It may happen that a student worthy to become a Fellow fails and vice-versa. It would be invaluable to know to what extent the hazards of the examinations affect the results and the type of question for which we should like an answer is (a) what proportion of 'worthy' candidates ultimately fail, (b) what proportion of 'unworthy' candidates pass, (c) to what extent is the examination period of the 'worthy' candidates lengthened by the hazards of the examinations?

It is doubtful whether these questions can be answered from the data at our disposal. There does not, however, appear to be much value in a statement that the average number of sittings required to qualify is eighteen when it is based on the unrealistic assumption that all candidates, no matter what their qualities, regularly continue to sit for the examinations. Clearly the 'worthy' candidate will, on the average, pass after far fewer attempts and the 'unworthy' will give up the struggle earlier still.

Yours faithfully,

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