



## EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2000

### BEHAVIOURAL ASPECTS OF MARKETING

#### General Comments

The results on this paper were the worst encountered by this examiner on any Autumn sittings. Explanations for such overall poor performance are difficult to determine. The paper itself was made up of 6 questions which were derived from the most frequently if not twice yearly occurring issues: Attitudes (2 questions), Perception, Personality, Motivation and Groups. The other questions represented substantial areas of the syllabus and have been previously examined.

The examiner has never before seen so many students attempting fewer than the required 5 questions, many only attempted 3 or even 2 (in total 41%). This obvious lack of preparation is incomprehensible. Students are, on a yearly basis, encouraged by their lecturers and the examiner to review past papers, to research and study the syllabus, and **not** to believe that Behavioural Aspects of Marketing is a subject that can be passed by 'common sense' answers. This advice has been ignored, as results show all too clearly.

#### Question 1

*Assess the contribution of Raymond Bernard Cattell to our understanding of the dynamics of personality.*

Most students recognised the name Cattell and associated him with the 16pf but generally that is where answers stopped. Few discussed his propositions on surface and source traits and his 'mathematical' approach to personality assessment, and many wandered into discussions on Freud where they were obviously more comfortable.

#### Question 2

*Identify how the physical properties of stimuli may be important variables in gaining individuals' attention*

This direct question required students to discuss External Factors of Selective Perception, and Selective Sensation. This was not a question solely on sensation or on the Internal factors. There was a lack of understanding by many students of the context of perceptual selection and the perceptual process in general.

#### Question 3

*Describe and evaluate ONE process theory of motivation.*

As is all too usual a number of candidates chose to ignore the key verb *Evaluate* in the question. Students were being asked to both describe AND make value (usefulness) judgements, with respect to only one Process motivation theory. Adequate descriptions of the chosen theory more often than not guaranteed a pass, but very little more, and frequently answers revolved inappropriately around the more traditional Content theories of Maslow and Herzberg.

#### Question 4

***Outline the primary elements of Fishbein's approach to the structure and measurement of attitudes.***

A very unpopular question with students and considering the answers given this is not surprising. This was not a question on the structure of attitudes, the sources of attitudes; the functions served by attitudes nor the consistency theories. The vast majority of students who had correctly 'read' the question were rewarded.

**Question 5**

***Compare and contrast the Classical and Human Relations approaches to organisational management and design.***

A surprising number of students appeared to believe that because the question contained the word 'Classical' then it must be a question on Classical and/or Operant condition, which it clearly was not. Those who did recognise the context of the question in the majority of cases failed to make comparisons or draw contrasts between these approaches.

**Question 6**

***'Culture is a defining element of human behaviour'. Discuss.***

This was the question which suffered most from a lack of any research or study by the overwhelming majority of students. This majority failed to mention definitions of culture, characteristics and components of culture or any references to society in general. Anecdotal yarns of holidays, weddings and foreign visits were unsupported and insufficient.

**Question 7**

***Evaluate the role of communications in attitude change.***

Yet again it must be stated that the area of attitudes and attitude change have often been represented in past papers. Surprisingly few students associated the statement in this question with the communication process variables such as: source, message and receiver factors and preferred to engage in lengthy discourses on attitudes in general.

**Question 8**

***What are the main variables in the structure of groups?***

A question which suffered from a lack of focus by students. Substantial descriptions of the stages of groups formation, types of groups, why individuals become members of groups and the Hawthorne studies were superficial issues to the question at hand i.e. group structure variables such as cohesiveness, status, roles, norms etc.