



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2000

MARKETING INFORMATION ANALYSIS I (MIA I)

General Comments

Less than half of the candidates (47%) passed this time, which is about par for the Autumn sitting.

Question 1

Not really a very popular question. Few were able to calculate the necessary sample size using the usual formula. This is surely a serious problem as every MII student should learn to master such material, given its importance for survey research. On the other hand, the efforts to pick a stratified random sample of stores within Ireland were much better and generated higher marks than the first section of the question.

Question 2

The drawing of a histogram with uneven class sizes proved too difficult for most students. In a histogram as we all know it is the area that represents the frequency. If a particular category has a wide base, then its height must be reduced to correctly represent the order. The calculation of the mean and standard deviation are standard skills and should be mastered by all candidates. Calculation of the proportion of individuals having phones in the country overall was not as popular as expected; nor were the attempts impressive.

Question 3

In the question on index number students were asked to analyse earnings data for males and females. This was fairly well done. Good students calculated an index of wages for males and one for females and compared the increases. They also calculated and commented on the way the relative wage for females as a percentage of that of males had changed over the time under review.

Question 4

As usual, the question on time series was well performed by all students irrespective of their overall results. Students were generally able to graph the data and to calculate the trend. The calculation of seasonal variation and forecasts were less good

Question 5

Students are reminded that a scatter diagram should not include any lines joining the points. It is important also to correctly position both the X and the Y axes. It was most surprising this year to see people incorrectly labelling the vertical axis as X. The calculation of a correlation coefficient must use the correct formula. Many students used the formula

$$r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 \cdot \sum y^2}}$$

which can only be used where you realise that

x is $X - \bar{X}$ and y is $Y - \bar{Y}$

Question 6

There is very little that can be said about this question on various aspects of probability distributions. Very few attempted it and among those who did, very few knew anything about the subject matter

Question 7

In some centres students have selected to concentrate on the syllabus section dealing with significance tests. This seems to be a good strategy as they generally gained good marks. Not only is this subject area important for our understanding of research findings but concentration on this topic is to be recommended for a second pragmatic reason - which is that it also arises in MIA2.

Question 8

Fewer than expected attempted to set out a research programme to investigate music buying behaviour. The pass rate was OK.