



EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2005

BEHAVIOURAL ASPECTS OF MARKETING

General Comments

This year a very cheering pass rate of 63% was recorded, with 33% of candidates achieving higher grades of **A** and **B**, 17% achieved grade **C**, and 13% were awarded a **D** grade. This was a most encouraging result overall, and the examiner must express some degree of satisfaction and offer congratulations to the two of three candidates passing, and singular congratulations to the amazing one of three candidates who achieved higher grade. It is very heartening to note one of five candidates earning an **A**. Typical recurrent themes are present in abundance such as: Attitudes Perception, Personality, Motivation and Change in Irish society. All issues on this paper have been examined both before and frequently.

Despite this upbeat tone there are still areas of potential improvement for future candidates of BAM:

- All candidates should review past papers which clearly show recurrent examinable themes. Lecturers and tutors usually advise candidates to 'try out' past questions. This is valuable advice: it allows the development of exam time-management skills as well as allowing self-assessment of knowledge;
- All examiners use key verbs such as compare, contrast, evaluate, etc. Don't ignore them as marks are allocated to these specific lines of enquiry being followed by candidates;
- If the question contains the word *Groups*, for example, this does not mean write everything you know regarding groups in no specific order with no specific purpose, irrelevant 'filling' does not gain marks;
- This year one of five of all those sitting BAM attempted 4 or less questions, and a remarkable 1 in 10 attempted 3 or less. This is a risky strategy. Although it must be stated that it is readily possible to pass with four questions completed, in fact JUST an average **C** grade on four questions will average to an overall pass grade, but with only three or less questions completed failure is nearly inevitable.

Question 1

This third most popular question on the paper was attempted by two-thirds of candidates. This question required discussion of universal motivation theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, etc. Generally very well answered with well over two thirds attempting this question easily passing and one third gaining higher grades. However, some confusion reigned as a number of scripts contained rambling discussion of self reflections on 'what motivated me' which while interesting, were wholly irrelevant in the context of the question at hand.

Question 2

This specific question on social perception was the most popular on the paper, chosen by over ninety percent of candidates. Another very appropriately answered question, with a substantial proportion of higher grades earned. In fact nearly half of those attempting this question were awarded higher grades. The examiner was seeking informed commentary on: stereotyping, halo/horn effects, priming etc. Those who strayed from these obvious requirements failed.

Question 3

A question, asking students to explain Tuckman's stages of group formation: Forming Storming, Norming, Performing (Adjourning). Another very well answered question, with the vast majority of students better than passing. However, this was NOT directly a question on group conformity inviting detailed description of Asch's experiments. Attempted by 65% of students, over half of whom received honours grades, overall 80% of attempts passed.

Question 4

This unpopular question on attitudes was passed by nearly three-quarters of those attempting it. This was not a question directly on the tri-component structure of attitudes, the functions served by attitudes or a question on Fishbein/Fishbein & Azjen models of attitudes. What was required was a coherent description of the four components of attitude change i.e. communicator variables; message variables; medium variables; and audience variables. Over half received higher grades.

Question 5

A successfully dealt with question by the vast majority of candidates attempting it. Most seemed more than comfortable with the notions of personality type, personality traits, testing and measurement. In some cases very impressive descriptions of the big 5, and 16pf were given. Nearly one of three attempts gained a grade A.

Question 6

Not for the first time a substantial number of attempts did not recognise the term Behaviourism as an approach to the study of psychology, and its links in BAM to Learning. A recurring theme found in answers which did recognise the term, was the wasting of valuable time on irrelevant explanations of the cognitive approach to learning (Kohler's and Tolman's early experiments). Typically, the vast majority of students managed to tactfully avoid the key verb 'evaluate' which was an integral element to the question. Over half passed.

Question 7

Even though this question is nearly a hardy annual on the BAM paper, it seemed that some candidates have not even the most basic grasp of the recent evolution of this country, in terms of basic demographic or economic variables, such as Fertility, Mortality, Nuptuality, Mobility, Immigration etc. Three quarters passed, nearly half were awarded higher grades.

Question 8

The the least popular question on the paper by far and the last preserve of the desperate to find a fifth question. Answers could have contained reference to socialisation groups/institutions of socialisation (peer group, school, family etc), collectivist culture, religious imperative in Irish culture etc. Instead most responses contained waffling commentaries on immigration and associated new types of food, clothing, hair styles etc.