EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2007

PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING

General Comments

77% of students achieved at least a pass mark and 23% referred. The standard of performance has improved on previous years, and there is growing evidence that students are familiar with the course text as is their knowledge and understanding of fundamental marketing concepts and models. Work still needs to be done on explaining the marketing concepts and models in an applied sense and helping students connect the theory with practical real life marketing practice. The standard of answer this year represents a real improvement on previous years.

Question 1

89% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 68%. The question was answered well by the majority of students, with clear evidence of a good knowledge of the philosophies and their relationship to the development of marketing thought. This is a clear improvement on past years and indicates that students are engaging with their syllabus and texts. The average mark achieved of 68% represents an excellent level of understanding demonstrated through good exam technique. Marks were available for the description of marketing as well as the identification and description of the Marketing Management Philosophies, (the production Concept, the Product Concept, the Selling Concept, the Marketing Concept, and the Societal Marketing Concept, as well as the use of examples to illustrate the answer.

Question 2

26% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 37%. This question proved difficult for the majority of students who attempted it. The question was designed to test the students' ability to identify and differentiate between the main approaches to the design and undertaking of marketing research. From the standard of the answers it is evident that more attention needs to be given to the market research topic and in particular students understanding of the differences between the three main approaches in their objectives, methodology and type of data/information generated. Marks were available for the identification and description of the three categories of market research objectives which describe the main research approaches – (Exploratory Research, Descriptive Research and Conclusive Research) as well as for examples

Question 3

54% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 49%. This question was answered well by the majority of the students who attempted it. Answers indicated a good knowledge of the internet as a marketing distribution and promotional channel, with many answers indicating personal experience. The better answers, which achieved the higher marks, sought to describe the internet as an integrated marketing mechanism capable of supporting business strategy throughout the marketing process. Marks were available for the identification and description of how the internet helps the marketing manager to acquire and retain customers as well as grow the business.

Question 4

This was a popular question with students and one which was answered very well by the majority. Students had little difficulty describing the PLC model and drawing the diagram, however there is still a superficial understanding of how the model connects with strategy development, with many students treating it as a deterministic model which dictates strategy rather than a simple descriptive model which suggests strategy options. Marks were available for the description of PLC, the use of the PLC diagram, demonstrating ones' understanding of the PLC model, and the use of the model to guide marketing strategy.

Question 5

91% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 59%. The majority of students attempted this question and succeeded in providing satisfactory answers. Students demonstrated a very good knowledge of the three concepts and their linkage in the development of marketing strategy. This was a significant improvement on previous years, with a much higher standard of answer and clear evidence of students having been exposed to the concepts with clear explanation of their use. Marks were available for the definition and description of each of the concepts - Market Segmentation', 'Market Targeting', and Market positioning' - as well as the demonstration of the understanding of how these concepts fit together and link to marketing strategy.

Question 6

9% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 45%. This was the least popular question and presented a difficulty for the majority who attempted it. The definition of 'Supply Chain Management' was generally adequate, but the main part of the question dealing with selection, motivation and evaluation of channel members was answered poorly. It was evident from the limited answers that students were not knowledgeable or comfortable with this part of the course. Marks were available for the definition of 'Supply Chain Management' and the explanation of how organizations select, motivate and evaluate channel members.

Question 7

40% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 52%. A significant number of students attempting this question did not really understand the role or significance of IMC. Students provided lists and descriptions of the various methods of communication but failed to demonstrate the integrative or supporting nature of a good marketing communications programme. The applied section of the question - concerning the political party example - further demonstrated students' lack of understanding of how effective marketing communications are used in an integrated way. Marks were available for the definition of IMC, and the description of Marketing Communication Components, (Advertising, Sales Promotion, PR, Personnel Selling, Direct Marketing, Billboards). Also how a political party might use IMC to communicate with the public.

Question 8

83% of students attempted this question, with an average mark achieved of 43%. This composite question which samples topics from across the syllabus proved popular with a large number of students and many achieved a high mark. However for a significant number of students it was attempted as a final question and answered as such, with little knowledge. The nature of the question required students to have specific knowledge from across the syllabus. Students who knew their course scored high marks in this question. Marks were available for the description and example of any four of the topics listed; Market Information System; Derived Demand; Integrated Marketing Communications; Geodemographics; Market Skimming pricing and Push Strategy.