EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2002

MARKETING INFORMATION ANALYSIS II (MIA 2)

General Comments
The pattern of performance of candidates reflects two features of MIA2 papers which appear to be a continual source of difficulty for many candidates. Firstly, Section B of the examination paper encompasses questions which, while not actually requiring calculations, are essentially quantitative. Many candidates have trouble with quantitative questions. The other recurring source of difficulty is that much of the information required to satisfactorily answer most questions on MIA2 papers is essentially factual and often quite technical, even if not actually numerical. One cannot perform adequately on such an examination without some study effort. Reliance on commonly acquired knowledge, even if combined with considerable ability to embellish one's answers with broad awareness of marketing issues, is unlikely to allow a candidate attain the required pass mark.

SECTION A

Question 1
The key issue here is that the fundamental purpose of marketing research is to identify and provide critical information to management decision makers to help the latter make more effective decisions. Often this type of question can be answered most effectively by carefully following through a particular example and using this to illustrate the different tasks and concerns of marketing managers and researchers.

Question 2
The most commonly encountered types of external secondary data include Government publications, particularly those emanating from the CSO, other published sources, on-line and off-line data bases, data from syndicated sources and information from the World Wide Web. Most MIA2 candidates appear to be quite familiar with these sources.

Question 3
Several candidates approached this question by discussing matters which were not relevant to the question such as the validity and reliability of scales. However, in respect of part (b) a number of candidates had assimilated the distinct decisions involved in constructing a non-comparative rating scale.

Question 4

Most candidates had little difficulty in providing examples of projective techniques, though some had greater difficulty in explaining clearly why projective techniques in general are used. A few candidates guessed somewhat wildly that the techniques involved projecting sales figures or similar data extrapolation.

SECTION B

Question 5

Questions on sampling tend to be those most often attempted even by candidates who are otherwise quite ill-prepared for the quantitative type questions in Section B. However one cannot score well on sampling questions without a good grasp of the distinctive strengths and weaknesses of various sampling methods as well as their quite subtle underlying assumptions and procedures.

Question 6

Few candidates were able to provide satisfactory answers to both parts of this question. Rather surprisingly part (b) on the logic of hypothesis testing was generally answered rather better than the seemingly more easy part (a) concerned with classifying statistical methods.

Question 7

This question was the least popular one on the paper. It however would have been well within the scope of any students who had been able to study the topics of correlation and regression.

Question 8

Of the candidates who attempted this question very few had sufficient knowledge of the techniques to be able to adequately address the specific information requested.