



## EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2003

### MARKETING INFORMATION ANALYSIS II (MIA 2)

#### General Comments

Just over one quarter of candidates failed to obtain a pass (grade D or better). This proportion is in line with the failure rate in recent years. On the other hand one in nine candidates achieved an A grade on this occasion. As is usual in MIA2, the great majority of candidates did not do as well on questions in Section B, as they did in Section A. However, many candidates performed comparatively well on the Sampling question (Q5) in Section B, a feature also very noticeable in recent years.

#### SECTION A

##### Question 1

Most candidates attempted this question on the general nature and purpose of marketing research. As would be expected, the majority scored well. In some cases, candidates lost marks by failing to identify and give examples of the various categories of problem solving projects.

##### Question 2

Almost one quarter of the candidates who attempted this question received no marks, as their answers consisted of descriptions of various types of secondary data with no reference to how one should evaluate secondary data as requested. It is hard to believe that so many candidates could misread or fail to understand a plainly stated question like this. There must therefore be a belief on the part of some candidates that one will get some marks by showing that one knows something about a topic, even if one cannot attempt the question actually asked. Everyone can sympathise with the plight of a person who, while knowing something or even much about a topic, cannot answer the question asked. However, examiners will not normally give marks for material not directly relevant to the question, since this would inevitably undermine the entire written examination process.

##### Question 3

This was a popular question and most candidates can deal capably with the comparative analysis of surveying methods. However, a much smaller proportion can clearly identify the key problem arising from non response, that the resulting sample may cease to be sufficiently representative of the population. Marks were allowed for those candidates who took partial non response ( i.e., respondents not answering some questions) as within the meaning of non response.

**Question 4**

Most candidates have a good understanding of the different objectives and outcomes of qualitative and quantitative research and are also able to identify what are usually seen as the key potential weaknesses of the former.

**SECTION B****Question 5**

As mentioned above, sampling is the most favoured topic in Section B. Many candidates were able to identify the particular advantages of stratified sampling and practically all were able to more or less describe how to systematically sample fifty individuals from a population of 2,000.

**Question 6**

A question like this requires specific information. While some could describe in general terms what data consistency checks might be, few were able to identify the usual specific checks. Many candidates tended to guess at the meaning of dummy variables and weighting.

**Question 7**

Only a small number of candidates attempted this question. Of those who did, most were able to explain satisfactorily the general nature of regression analysis but were generally unable to explain the role of the various statistical measures specified.

**Question 8**

Questions on multivariate methods in MIA2 almost invariably require some explanation of the purpose or usual use of the technique(s). Most candidates who attempt such questions are able to deal competently with this requirement. However, relatively few can provide evidence of a clear understanding of the specific procedures involved in the methods, even, as is the case in MIA2, where detailed understanding of the mathematical basis of the methods is not a requirement.