EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2004

**MARKETING INFORMATION
ANALYSIS II (MIA 2)**

General Comments
Approximately one quarter of candidates failed to attain the pass mark of 40%. This is a distinctly lower failure rate than that of recent years. Some 10% of candidates achieved an A grade, obtaining 70 marks or more. As usual, a preference was shown for questions in Section A of the paper, with few candidates opting for three questions from Section B. Two features appeared to help candidates this year. One was the inclusion of a question comparing surveying methods, where even otherwise poorly prepared candidates were able to gain marks. The second factor was the appearance in Section B of a question on scaling methods which in previous years appeared in Section A.

Question 1
Over 90% of candidates attempted this question and most answered it well. The second part of this question was open to a wide variety of possible, legitimate answers which helped candidates pick up marks.

Question 2
Answers here showed a good awareness of the need to scrutinise secondary data carefully. Some candidates were inclined to describe the various types of secondary data which was not a requirement.

Question 3
It is a little disappointing that so many see the main benefit of qualitative research methods as residing in their supposed greater speed and lesser cost relative to quantitative methods. It could be said that the essential value of qualitative methods lies in their recognition of the decided limitations of quantitative methods in understanding human attitudes and behaviour. As regards part b of the question, few candidates could say what Ethnographic Research is.

Question 4
Any alert student of marketing would be able to make sensible comments on the relative effectiveness of various surveying methods without necessarily having a detailed knowledge of the matter. This being so most candidates chose this question and performed well on it.

Question 5
Question 5 and Question 6 were the most popular questions in section B. Many were able to explain the essential features of stratified sampling but were less clear on why particular

stratification variables are chosen. The simplest way to explain part b of the question would be by a numerical example, rather than a verbal description which can here appear confusing.

Question 6
Part (a) of this question was satisfactorily dealt with while part (b) was evidently seen as a bit more demanding. Overall, candidates benefited by finding this question in Section B of the paper, as against Section A where it would normally reside, as, for various reasons, most candidates are not as well prepared for Section B as they are for Section A.

Question 7
This was the least popular question on the paper, reflecting the intrinsic difficulty of the topic. Nevertheless, candidates who understood <u>any</u> of the multivariate methods could attempt it, whereas often questions on this topic specify <u>particular</u> multivariate methods thus narrowing the options for the candidate.

Question 8
Contingency tables, with the chi squared statistic, have appeared in MIA2 papers in the past. The presence of contingency tables in research reports is of course related to their ease of interpretation. Candidates who attempted this question performed less well than it would be reasonable to expect, given the widespread use of this method of analysis and its appearance many times on past MIA2 papers.