EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2006

MARKETING INFORMATION ANALYSIS II (MIA 2)

General Comments
One quarter of the candidates failed to attain the pass mark of 40%. This reflects almost exactly the proportion of candidates who failed in May 2005 and parallels closely the failure rate in May 2004. On the other hand, one in seven candidates obtained an A grade (a score of 70% or more). In Section B many candidates performed well on questions 5 and 6, while questions 7 and 8 (the more "statistical" questions) were not on the whole popular, nor were they particularly well answered in most cases.

Question 1
Most candidates attempted this question and as would be expected obtained at least more than half of the marks. The point of the question was to allow candidates show how a marketing research problem arises from a marketing problem, something most easily shown by means of an example. Some candidates appeared to miss the point of the question by attempting to describe general features of marketing problems and separately problems which can arise in carrying out marketing research.

Question 2
This was a popular question part (a) of which was answered well. However some candidates lost most of the marks for part (b) by seemingly interpreting panels as being equivalent to focus groups and describing advantages and disadvantages of these.

Question 3
Marks were lost here where individuals categorised any type of external secondary data as being a syndicated source. Moreover some candidates "wasted" time by unnecessarily describing aspects of secondary data in general, while a few candidates wrongly classified CSO data as a syndicated source.

Question 4
Some candidates managed to "double up" by repeating parts of their answer to Question 2 in this question. The intention of the question was to underline how both qualitative and quantitative methods have particular strengths and weaknesses which make both, essential methodologies in marketing research.

Question 5

The concepts of sampling unit and sampling error caused most difficulty in this question. The former is best clarified by using the household/particular individual within the household or firm/particular officer within the firm, as illustrations. Few candidates adequately realised that sampling error is an intrinsic feature of random sampling procedures and many tended to inappropriately describe various types or errors which arise when surveying.

Question 6

Part (a) of this question, which demands a detailed knowledge of several, distinct steps, was well answered by many candidates. Part (b) was rather less well answered by those who attempted the question.

Question 7

This type of question involving a table of data and the χ^2 statistic has often being asked in the MIA2 exam in the past. It was surprising therefore that less than one quarter of candidates attempted it.

Question 8

This question emphasing uses of multivariate techniques in marketing research, allowed candidates deal with the topic without needing to describe the complex mathematical basis of the methods. Notwithstanding this, some of those who attempted the question tended to confuse the different methods or showed little understanding of their purpose.