



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2007

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING MANAGEMENT & STRATEGY

General Comments

The overall results of the August examinations were very disappointing. While there was a 75% pass rate, only one candidate achieved a C mark and the majority of passes were in the very low D category.

There were three main reasons why the marks were so low:

1. Candidates simply transferred basic marketing theory to the international situation without any effort to show they understood international as opposed to domestic marketing
2. Almost every paper had at least one answer that bore no relation whatever to the question asked
3. Candidates showed little or no sign of having studied – as opposed to just read – the essential text.

Question 1

This was the first question on the paper. It was hoped that it would help candidates settle down to the examination as it seemed to be a very simple one for candidates who had looked at Section 4:3, page 10, in the essential reading on e-Business. All candidates attempted it and, with one exception, all achieved at least a pass mark. Students should note the importance of the essential reading as at least one question in the exam is usually based on this reading.

Question 2

In the past, questions on organization and control have been few and far between on examination papers. This has been because the essential texts - and the diagrams therein - have made both topics unnecessarily complex. However, Chapter 7 in the new edition of the essential text makes for reasonably easy study and a clear understanding of organization and control are essential elements of knowledge for the international marketer. For this reason, the topics were included in the August examination – with pretty disastrous results for all but one candidate who attempted the question. It was painfully obvious that candidates had either not read the text or had not read the question properly. The question itself is a re-statement of the opening few lines on page 215. The Examiner would have been very happy to find that candidates had 'cherry picked' a few points from the introduction to Chapter 7 page 215 in the essential text, or had expanded a little on the sentence on the middle of the page which states "the basic functions of an organization are to provide (1) a route and locus of decision making and co-ordination, and (2) a system for reporting and communications". In fact, it was painfully obvious that the topics were totally unknown territory for all but one candidate. Students should note that this type of question is likely to come up again in examinations.

Question 3

All but one candidate attempted this question with very mixed results. The question was one where many candidates waffled on about the basic principles of pricing taken from the domestic marketing situation without any effort to show how things change radically in the overseas situation. Almost no one tackled the question from the point of view of the difficulties or managing pricing strategies in the multinational or global marketing context. This was surprising in view of the excellent and obviously extremely relevant materials in Chapter's 11 and 17 in the essential text. Students should be aware that there are usually at least two questions on the marketing mix on every examination paper and prepare themselves accordingly.

Question 4

This question was phrased very carefully so that there would be no misunderstandings about what exactly the Examiner was asking which was about the opening sentence in the chapter on 'Stages in the Negotiation Process' on page 389 in the essential text. Only 25% of candidates who attempted the question achieved a pass mark. The failures were mostly due to the fact that candidates waffled on at great length about the difficulties of adapting negotiations to a foreign culture situation. Students must read questions more carefully.

Question 5

Only one candidate attempted this question: she/he achieved a very good pass mark. The important work of the WTO, IMF, World Bank and the various regional organizations is well described on pages 32 to 39 of the essential text.

Question 6

The three structures are set out on page 215 of the essential text towards the bottom of the page and diagrams 7:1 to 7:9 expand on the text. Students at this level should be well aware of the elements of management – planning, organization, motivation and control and the text book devotes a lot of material to the issues of organization and how the organization changes as it evolves from a domestic to a global entity. This type of question is very likely to arise again in future examinations.

Question 7

This was considered to be one of the simplest questions on the paper and it has been asked in various formats in many examinations in the past. The answer is set out very simply in Exhibit 9:2 on page 283 of the essential text. This exhibit is probably one of the most important in the entire book from the point of view of the student.

Question 8

All but one candidate attempted this question. Unlike all previous examinations where this question proved to be the 'banker' that pulled many a paper over the pass line, this time it was obvious that candidates had simply not studied the essential text. All six topics that made up the question are simple and fundamental to the understanding of international marketing and management.