



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2000

MARKETING PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

General Comments

The general comments made in the May report are relevant to the Autumn scripts and need not be reiterated here.

Question 1

There are three main issues that students should be aware of in answering the case study question.

Firstly the task required in sections (a) and (b) is to analyse the case. Far too many students simply reiterate the historical development of the company or state facts from the case without any interpretation or analysis. Answers must have an analytical content.

Secondly candidates should use marketing analytical tools and frameworks appropriately. Too frequently answers include the application of successive analytical frameworks, presumably in the hope that one of them will be appropriate. At this stage of the Graduateship candidates should be able to select and apply the relevant analytical tools.

Thirdly, section (c) requires decision making, based usually on the analysis presented in the previous sections. Calling for more research is usually insufficient by way of an answer.

Question 2

This was a very straightforward question which, on the whole, was well answered.

Question 3

Many students interpreted this question as 'what is pricing?' and proceeded to describe the steps in setting a price, the various pricing policies and so on. Excellent answers exhibited a full understanding of cost leadership as a strategy, the relationship between that and scale and experience effects and the stage of industry development.

Question 4

This question was not attempted by many candidates and was on the whole not well answered, even though the issue is well dealt with in the text.

Question 5

As stated in the May report answers to discursive questions such as this one must be structured. Candidates should make specific points relevant to the question, substantiate these before presenting a conclusion. Many candidates presented answers that evidenced no specific marketing knowledge beyond general knowledge. Excellent answers exhibited a good understanding of the impact of ebusiness on marketing communications, took a position on whether or not marketing communications was the area most affected and made an informed comment on the future direction of ebusiness.

Question 6

This question was well answered in general, with candidates exhibiting a good understanding of both the business system and the emergence of branding in the process. Some candidates incorrectly interpreted the question as 'what is branding?' or 'Give the advantages and disadvantages of branding'