



## EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2009

### B2B MARKETING MANAGEMENT

#### General Comments

The percentage breakdown of the marks is as follows.

A – 4.9%. B – 19.5%. C – 24.4%. D – 14.6%. E – 14.6%. F – 22%

These figures show that over 63% of the candidates succeeded in passing the examination. Overall, the candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the issues raised in the examination questions. The more effective answers focused on the specific themes and utilised detailed and appropriate examples to support their point of view. Candidates who were awarded A and B grades made efficient use of Irish examples. Weaker scripts failed to adequately address the questions and adopted a very general and superficial approach. In particular, many in this category appeared to selectively interpret the question to fit into a prepared answer to the topic in question.

#### Question 1

The strong answers to this question focused on the proposition contained in the question and made effective use of the relevant frameworks and examples to build up their line of argument. By contrast, weaker answers provided a summary of the general approach to pricing as laid out in the relevant chapter of the text, but failed to adequately address the “specifics” of the question. No reference was made to the impact of the present financial crisis on pricing strategy. A couple of candidates used consumer product examples which were clearly inappropriate for this subject.

#### Question 2

This was not a popular question. As a consequence, it produced a diverse range of answers. The major weakness of some scripts lay in a failure to address the steps that could be employed to reduce or manage conflict. Top answers addressed the different parts of the question and also linked a detailed example to highlight evidence of good or bad practices.

#### Question 3

Effective answers drew upon material both from this and other subjects on the Graduateship programme to examine the role and relevance of key account management to personal selling. Most candidates who addressed this topic clearly understood the concept and were able to make effective use of examples.

**Question 4**

This topic produced a diversity of answers. At the lower end of the scale, some candidates focused on summarising the steps involved in the marketing research process and failed to adequately get to grips with specific aspects such as the role of secondary data and how the internet might be utilised in a productive fashion. In essence, they lacked a focus. By contrast, the effective answers used examples and discussed the dangers of relying too much on secondary sources from the internet.

**Question 5**

Weaker answers simply described the concept of the buying centre and the various roles and responsibilities played by gatekeepers, influencers and so on. They neglected to address the specific proposition contained in the question. This was a clear weakness and restricted the ability of the examiner to award higher marks.

**Question 6**

This topic proved to be most popular with candidates. Strong answers made good use of the relevant frameworks identified in the text and adopted a pragmatic approach to the recommendations that they put forward. Again, the answer encouraged students to make use of examples. Many candidates related their analysis and discussion to their own practical experience with current or past employers.