EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2001

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

General Comments
The results of this examination reflect the very varying levels of preparation which candidates have undertaken. Examination questions in MIA2 in recent years have followed a fairly predictable pattern, suggesting that with some preparation most candidates should be able to attain at least a pass (D) grade. While MIA2 has a quantitative component, this is not so significant that it would prove insuperable for candidates who are not comfortable with quantitative concepts. What the MIA2 paper does require is some specific knowledge of particular procedures or techniques. Excluding those who have particular work experience, such knowledge can only be acquired by studying the relevant material in the essential textbook. Alternatively, candidates can succeed by studying some version of this material provided by lecturers.

Question 1
Most candidates had little difficulty with part (a) of this question. However many found difficulty with part (b) which required them to identify specific reasons why decision makers might not accept marketing research findings. The main issues here have to do with the relevance, timeliness and perceived technical competence of the research .

Question 2
Answers to this question often illustrated the earlier point made, that MIA2 requires specific knowledge. Some answers discoursed at length, but irrelevantly, on the pros and cons of secondary data, or how one might evaluate secondary data. Where one is unable to provide the requested information, there is a natural and understandable tendency to wish to show one's knowledge on a given topic, somewhat related to the question asked. As yet, examiners or more generally examination authorities, have not found a means of acknowledging and giving credit for knowledge which a candidate has acquired, but which has not been requested in the examination questions.

Question 3
In this question, two particular scales, Constant Sum and Q Sort, caused problems for some candidates while most were able to deal with Likert and Stapel scales.

Question 4
Qualitative and Quantitative methods are research approaches reflecting either the nature of the information sought or a view as to what information can legitimately be amenable to measurement. The definitions requested in this question were often answered in a somewhat

vague manner. A common approach to part (b) was to offer detailed descriptions of focus groups or other qualitative research methods, often without coming to explain the underlying rationale of qualitative research, a matter of great importance in marketing and dealt with at some length in text books.

Question 5
A common error here was to indicate the steps in the **research** design process rather than the **sampling** design process, as requested. Many candidates were unable to identify clearly the advantages and disadvantages of quota sampling.

Question 6
Many candidates provided relatively satisfactory answers to this question, although very few were able to provide detailed information on data cleaning or on the statistical adjustment of data.

Question 7
This question proved the least popular of all. Evidently these multivariate techniques are seen as very mathematical and difficult. While the procedures are quite complex, MIA2 candidates are not required to be able to explain the detailed mathematics. This question asked for the purpose of these methods. No technicalities were requested.

Question 8
Few of the candidates who attempted this question got more than half the available marks. The probability concepts underlying hypothesis testing require careful study. As this material tends to appear in the latter part of textbooks, it is possible that some candidates never arrive at this point.