



MRS Diploma in Market & Social Research Practice

Unit 5 – Case Study - Examiner's Report

Candidate Name: XXXX

Candidate Number: XXXX

Examination Date: XXXX

Result: FAIL

Examination scripts which fail to meet pass criteria are marked by an examiner, double marked by a Senior Examiner and subject to external moderation by appointed industry moderators. The feedback given overleaf combines comments made by all those involved in the assessment process

Summary of Examiner and Senior Assessment Team Feedback

Question 1	
<p>Part A Question Outline/Requirement</p> <p>The question required candidates to outline how they would respond to the client requesting during a pitch meeting for further clarification on the relevance and benefits of conducting ethnographic research in phase 1. At pass level, candidates should outline a clear and valid response to the clients' question, and a convincing argument for the ethnographic research proposed. Stronger answers may demonstrate a deeper appreciation of the value of ethnography for this research programme, and clearly describe how it would be used to develop the later phases. They may also acknowledge the proposal was lacking in detail in this area and/or describe how they would establish what the client was confused about.</p>	
<p>Part A Candidate Feedback</p> <p><i>The answer stated this would be addressed with the client after the meeting by email. The answer does not indicate if or how the question would be dealt with during the meeting itself.</i></p> <p><i>An understanding of ethnographic research is shown, but with very little justification for its inclusion within the research, focusing only its value in isolation and not as part of the full-proposed programme.</i></p> <p><i>Given these two failings, this answer does not meet pass criteria.</i></p>	<p>Grade Awarded</p> <p>FAIL</p>
<p>Part B Question Outline/Requirement</p> <p>The question required candidates to demonstrate an understanding of the main sampling methodologies available and identify/suggest the most appropriate methodology for different research scenarios. Thus demonstrating an awareness of the key sampling considerations when designing a large scale social research study, and justifying their chosen methodology during a pitch meeting. At pass level, candidates should describe how they would respond to the client's request, and outline a clear and valid response, explaining why the sampling approach recommended is the optimum solution for the research programme. Stronger answers may demonstrate a deeper understanding of the key requirements when designing and undertaking social research of this sort, and communicate the academic rigor required in all elements of the research process.</p>	
<p>Part B Candidate Feedback</p> <p><i>The answer provided was very limited and required much further depth, it therefore did not demonstrate sufficient understanding,</i></p> <p><i>The explanation regarding sampling was very superficial and suggested a limited knowledge of the various sampling approaches. The answer did not really discuss the pros and cons of each sampling approach in order to develop a coherent argument for the selected method.</i></p>	<p>Grade Awarded</p> <p>FAIL</p>
OVERALL GRADE	FAIL

Question 2**Part A Question Outline/Requirement**

The question required candidates to demonstrate an appreciation of the financial constraints that clients can unexpectedly face and to be able to respond to such issues and requests whilst being mindful of the overall research objectives. At pass level, candidates should outline a clear and valid response to the client's request, justifying any recommendations made. Stronger answers may provide persuasive and valid recommendations for ways in which the scope of the research could be reduced while clearly identifying any associated implications; or they may explain why the objectives outlined in the brief require the research to remain as currently proposed and ask that the objectives themselves are revisited and refined. Stronger candidates may also recognise that specific costs are not given in the proposal extract but show an understanding of the sorts of costs that various research elements might involve.

Part A Candidate Feedback

The answer noted the need to discuss with the client, and to establish if all of the original objectives still need to be met and whether more budget may be available for year 2, all of which is reasonable.

The answer contained a suggestion to reduce the qualitative elements, which was less than clear. The answer demonstrated some confusion between Phase 1 and Phase 2 with Stages A and B within Phase 1, so it was unclear just what was being proposed and what would be left.

The answer contained mention of reducing the pilot (which is incorrectly referred to as preceding the qual stage), with very limited rationale.

The answer did note the need to discuss with the client, and to liaise internally (within the agency), gave potentially plausible suggestions to reduce the qualitative research element, and noted the importance of maintaining quant sample sizes given the client's original stated requirements.

Grade Awarded
MARGINAL
PASS

Part B Question Outline/Requirement

The question required candidates to outline the possible benefits and logistical issues of changing the remit of the proposed research. At pass level candidates should provide a clear and valid response, demonstrating an understanding of what this might mean for the proposed research and providing the client with appropriate guidance and advice. Stronger answers may show a deeper appreciation of the merits and limitations of changing the proposed research in this way, and the consequences of doing so on research objectives, research design, timings, costs and deliverables. They may also outline how a longitudinal/tracking element could be added to the current research design, or provide a persuasive argument for leaving the proposed design as is. Stronger candidates may also answer this question in the context of the previous question scenario, which describes the budgetary constraints the client is facing.

Part B Candidate Feedback

The answer demonstrated an understanding of panels per se and outlined some of the associated logistics, but only at the end of the answer addressed the fundamental issues that a panel approach would not be appropriate given the current research objectives. However, the latter was addressed, and there was also some (albeit limited) mention that a panel approach would be inappropriate for the respondent audience.

Grade Awarded
MARGINAL
PASS

**OVERALL
GRADE**

MARGINAL PASS

Question 3**Part A Question Outline/Requirement**

The question required candidates to demonstrate that they were able to deal with unexpected issues and complaints that arise during the research process and describe how these would be handled in a professional and sensitive way. At pass level, candidates should demonstrate an understanding of the impact this development might have, and outline a clear, valid and sufficiently reassuring response to the client's request. Stronger answers may provide greater detail on how the issue would be clarified and explored, and show an appreciation of the impact respondent complaints/client unease can have on the research itself, the client, the agency and the client/agency relationship. They may also outline a clear set of measures that will be taken to ensure such issues do not occur again.

Part A Candidate Feedback

The answer demonstrated an appreciation of the impact that these complaints will have and their importance to the client.

The answer progresses through various steps and possible actions aimed at addressing the complaints and improving the research.

The answer also links material back to MRS Code of Conduct. The answer could have possibly been structured better, in order to clearly set out the approach and recommended set of actions.

Grade Awarded
PASS

Part B Question Outline/Requirement

The question required candidates to describe how they would respond to the client's request, and to provide valid draft content for a one page document that would be given to potential respondents. At pass level, candidates should draft a one page information sheet, containing clear, relevant and sufficient reassurances and explanations, in appropriate language. Stronger candidates may recognise the relevance of the request given the complaints reported at the pilot stage. They may also note that while the MRS Code of Conduct does not itself have specific rules for research amongst this specific audience, it contains a number of provisions and safeguards that would be highly appropriate for inclusion (including respecting the rights and well-being of all individuals and ensuring respondents are not adversely harmed). Stronger answers may also outline the other professional practices or procedures that are employed in such research studies, and provide agency and client contact points for respondents who wish to discuss any aspect of the study in more detail.

Part B Candidate Feedback

The answer demonstrated the basic minimum understanding by outlining what the one page document would include but it did not actually provide the one page draft that was requested.

Grade Awarded
MARGINAL
PASS

**OVERALL
GRADE**

PASS

Overall, with one Fail grade, one Marginal Pass grade and one Pass grade the paper was judged not to have reached the required standard for an overall Pass to be awarded.



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