Advanced Certificate in Market and Social Research Practice

18th June 2008
10.00am –12.30pm

EXAMINATION ANSWER GUIDE

NOTES TO EXAMINERS

Candidates must answer <u>ALL</u> questions in Section 1
Candidates must answer <u>TWO</u> questions from Section 2

Section1 accounts for one third of the final result.
Section 2 accounts for two thirds of the final result.

The following Answer Guide is not intended to provide a comprehensive guide to all possible points in response to exam questions.

Examiners should give credit for any points not included in the Answer Guides but which are credible responses to the question asked.

Examiners should note that the aim of many of the questions is to test the candidate's ability to apply knowledge to given contexts. However, candidates may fail to make full reference to the context in some cases. In these cases, examiners are required to assess the extent to which the information given meets the needs of the context. The following guidance has been produced for examiners:

- Credit should be given for information which is relevant to the question, even if it does not make overt reference to the context.
- Some credit should be given for information which has some relevance to the context but which needs to be more focused to be fully effective
- Credit should not be given for information which is not relevant to the context

The research problems contained in this material are fictional, any similarity to any real-life organization, company or business is entirely unintended.

Section 1: Compulsory question (Recommended time: 50 minutes)

This section tests problem identification and problem solving using a number of skills. The answers in this section account for one-third of the total marks.

Read the following case study and answer ALL the questions below.

A major supermarket chain operating in several markets across the European Union is considering ways to reduce the environmental impact of its business practices. One suggestion has been to stop the provision of plastic carrier bags in all of its stores. Instead, shoppers would be encouraged to buy a branded reusable bag made of cotton. However, the Chairman of the company is concerned that such a change in policy might have a negative impact on profit and sales.

Prior to making a decision, the supermarket needs to assess how the suggested change is perceived by customers and by key groups of opinion formers, such as consumer groups, environmental bodies, journalists and politicians. It has commissioned quantitative research to be carried out in the 4 countries which represent the largest or growing markets for the company (UK, Poland, Greece and Italy).

Your research agency, which has offices in each of the target countries, has won the contract for the project. The agency proposes to conduct a telephone survey using CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing), with each office taking responsibility for carrying out the fieldwork in its own country. The results will then be fed back to the agency's central office in London for analysis. The supermarket has given a deadline of 3 months for the completion and reporting of the research.

a) Describe the benefits of conducting the fieldwork separately in each of the countries concerned as is proposed here, versus the benefits of conducting all the telephone interviews centrally from the UK.

(Weighting: one-third of total)

This question requires candidates to identify and discuss some key issues involved in designing international research. At pass level, candidates are expected to identify at least two benefits for locally conducted interviews and at least two benefits for UK-based interviewing. Weaker answers may provide lists of benefits with little in the way of commentary. Stronger answers are likely to provide a wider range of ideas, and/or greater depth of consideration of the issues they have identified.

The <u>benefits</u> of conducting fieldwork locally might include the following:
- *Easier for local offices to draw appropriate samples for their country*
- *Greater depth of sensitivity to local issues than might be shown by a centralised approach*
- *Greater access to interviewers with the appropriate language skills*
- *Ensuring that appropriate translation of the questionnaire is undertaken*

A more advanced answer may also include:
- *'Ownership' of the research seen to be resting within each country, rather than being UK-centric*
- *Possibility of collaboration with locally-based client, leading potentially to further projects at a local level*

The <u>benefits to central interviewing</u> might include:
- *Cost – if budget is tight, central telephone interviewing can be greatly cheaper than in-country work*
- *Control – a centrally co-ordinated survey can mean a tighter project team; fewer other fieldwork partners need to be briefed, the project can be more tightly managed*
- *Time -telephone fieldwork from a central telephone centre normally can be completed in a shorter space of time than if different agencies are involved*
- *Costs and time associated with the client having to travel to the interviewer briefing (if they want to attend) and agency to travel for the reporting will be lower*
- *Standardisation/consistency – briefing and managing one centralised team will limit the possibility for information to be interpreted/construed differently*
- *Timeliness of information – if centralised, project updates and communications are likely to be more immediate*
- *Problems may be identified, communicated, discussed and resolved more quickly, if centralised*
- *All centralised team members are likely to be English speakers, limiting the need for constant interpretation (and potential mis-interpretation).*

Examiners should give credit for answers which provide well-justified ideas which are not included in the lists above.

b) Describe the main issues you would need to consider for the sampling and recruitment processes. Illustrate your answer with examples.

(Weighting: one-third of total)

At pass level, candidates are expected to identify a minimum of two issues to be considered when sampling and recruiting for this particular project. Stronger answers may demonstrate clear understanding of a range of different issues, stemming from the international nature of the research and the range of groups to be involved. Weaker answers may fail to provide a range of issues, or to provide convincing illustration of their ideas.

Considerations might include some/all of the following:

- *Representativeness of the sample – in terms of Country (Poland, Greece etc) and in terms of type of Opinion Former (consumer groups, environmental groups etc)*
- *Identifying sample sources for customers, in each country*
- *What is the definition of a customer? Will this vary by country?*
- *Will different sampling/recruitment methods or solutions be needed in each country?*
- *Where to obtain the sample for opinion formers – can the client provide lists (in which case, how – electronically, hard copy, what "fields" – e.g. by type, name, country, how up-to-date/reliable the lists are, etc). Does the range of this type of sample vary by country?*
- *If the client cannot supply all or any of the sample, where might you find it in each country?*
  - *Yellow pages or equivalents*
  - *EU or environmental associations Directories*
  - *Internet searches*
  - *Others?*

Stronger answers may also include

- *Ability to find and/or get through to the (busy) respondent (e.g. how to identify appropriate spokespeople, or navigate PAs etc)*
- *Respondents unavailable (e.g. travelling, busy with other issues)*
- *A focus on both opinion former and customer audiences*

c) The supermarket chain is keen to get maximum benefit from the project and wants to make sure that reporting takes on the most appropriate form to achieve this. They are keen to use the results both locally, to influence shoppers in the individual countries, and globally, to reflect their international brand. Outline the approaches you could offer for reporting the results, giving reasons for the choices you have made.

(Weighting: one-third of total)

Credit should be given for the range of ideas included and the rationale provided for each point made. Poorer candidates will tend to focus on one aspect of reporting e.g. Delivery Mechanism, whereas better candidates will think of more aspects.

Delivery mechanism

- *Straightforward computer data tables (note that these alone would not be very good at getting maximum benefit out of the study, but for individual countries to work on they could be useful)*
- *Executive Summary*
- *Debrief charts - delivered as they are or delivered in person at a presentation or workshop*
- *An overall presentation brining together results from across the research study, followed by presentations/workshops tailored to, and possibly held, in each country.*
- *Number of presentations/workshops – would they need to be in different countries/languages?*
- *Stronger candidates may suggest priorities for items which should be delivered in multilingual versions. Candidates should note that this will have an impact on cost.*
- *Video-conference or something like Webex could be useful to facilitate a presentation/workshop if cost of travelling an issue*
- *Written report*
- *Press release for distribution or posting on company website….*

Content/cosmetics

- *Summary table of all questions. This could take the form of an annotated questionnaire (with totals written on it for quick scanning of "top lines"), but with a CATI survey, a questionnaire will not necessarily exist, and with 4 countries in the study you would want all results on same page not on different questionnaires.*
- *Tables would include coded answers for open ended questions (if any included on the questionnaire)*
- *Verbatim answers in raw format (uncoded) could add depth.*
- *Recorded answers (provided permission obtained in advance) could be particularly strong in helping to put across key points.*
- *Action Plan with key recommendations (just going a bit further than the Executive Summary)*

Underlying structure of data delivery

- *Ways in which results may be cross-tabulated – e.g. would the main focus be on comparisons across countries, or across topic areas within a country? Stronger candidates may indicate the benefits to both for different audiences.*

Constraints

- *Stronger answers might identify that the MRS Code of Conduct places parameters on how research results can be used in marketing. The company may need guidance if they are to use the results to inform their marketing strategies.*

Section 2: Optional Questions (Recommended time: 100 minutes)

The answers in this section account for two-thirds of the total marks.

Answer any TWO questions from the six listed below. Give a full answer to each of the questions you choose.

1. A small charity needs to gather information to inform its next fund-raising campaign. A member of staff has suggested adding questions to an omnibus survey.

a) Discuss the strengths and limitations of selecting an omnibus survey as opposed to other research methods that the charity could have used.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

b) Taking into account the limitations which have been identified, what steps can a charity take to ensure that a suitable omnibus survey is selected? Give reasons for the suggestions you make.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

This question requires candidates to discuss the pros and cons of omnibus surveys, but in relation to a given context. Weaker answers may fail to take account of this context. At pass level, candidates are expected to identify a minimum of two strengths and two limitations, and relate these clearly to the context given in the question.

The strength of answers to Part 2 is largely dependent on the strength of the answer to Part 1. Candidates are expected to make clear links between the two parts. At pass level candidates should provide solutions which would deal adequately with the limitations. Stronger answers are likely to address a wider range of issues and to provide clear and convincing rationale for the solutions suggested.

Strengths	*Limitations*	*Solutions*
• *Can be a cost effective option – voluntary sector has limited funds* • *Will get expert input for the formation of questions – may not be available otherwise* • *Can reach a wide audience – maybe wider than would be possible with other affordable options* • *Large nationally representative samples* • *Speed of turnaround* • *Can repeat exercise in one or more further waves to increase sample size* • *Can put new/additional questions onto a further wave* • *Reputation of omnibus supplier can add to credibility of information*	• *May not adequately reach the correct target group for this charity* • *Depending on the size of the charity, it may still be an expensive option* • *Response rate may not be very high, depending on the demographics of the omnibus* • *Overall length of questionnaire might be limited* • *Other topics covered in the omnibus may have an impact on the response* • *May need to run on several waves to get sufficient number of respondents answering key/specific questions* • *May achieve less information than had hoped for* • *If telephone omnibus, stimulus material will not be shown*	• *When selecting omnibus, check:* *- the background of the study – have other relevant charities used it?* *- does the structure of the omnibus allow for a range of suitable question types?* *- typical response rates?* *- does the normal demographic of the response match the charity's population of interest?* *- if expensive, can charity share costs with another, similar organisation?* • *Decide on whether a telephone, online or f2f omnibus would be most appropriate* • *Establish where questions would be positioned within the interview, and ask what other topics will be covered before these questions (although such information may not be forthcoming)* • *Establish timescales and costs of using another wave* • *If stimulus material is needed decide on whether a f2f or online approach offers appropriate solution*

2. You work for T@3, a company which owns a small chain of teashops in London. The T@3 chain specialises in traditional afternoon tea, with a large menu of different teas and cream cakes. The company now wants to expand its business to one more city in the UK. It is considering three major tourist destinations – Edinburgh, Oxford and Brighton. However, it first needs to commission some market research to identify the most appropriate place to open its next teashop.

a) Outline the types of information which should be included in the brief in order to provide a basis for appropriate research. Give reasons for the suggestions you make.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

Candidates are expected to provide a minimum of three sections which should be included in the brief, and to provide convincing rationale for their inclusion. The sections should include some or all of the following:

- *Background: Giving both the company context, and information about its current range of products.*
- *A clear definition of the business issue or problem*
- *Project rationale: Information about why this project and the research are necessary, in order to help the potential researchers identify priorities.*
- *Objectives: Clarity of objectives may help the researchers to focus on the key issues to be investigated, thereby help improve the quality of the research.*
- *Suggestions for possible methods: If the company has a clear idea of the type of information it wants and how to get it, this will provide clear guidance for research provider.*
- *Sample: client may give details or have ideas on the audiences to be covered, sample sources, views on quotas and number of interviews.*
- *Reporting of findings: Having a clear idea of what type of information you want, and how it will be used, will help the proposal writer to offer an appropriate means of disseminating information*
- *Timing*
- *Budget*
- *Communication requirements: How often would you expect to be updated on the project?*

b) The marketing manager of T@3 has decided that money could be saved if the desk research for this project is carried out in-house. Outline a programme of secondary research which the company could undertake to find out about the potential market for its brand in each city. Give reasons for the suggestions you make.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

At pass level, candidates are expected to identify a minimum of two sources for secondary research, and to provide justification for their choices. Weaker answers will talk about using the internet in general terms without specifying the sort of information that might by sought.

Possible approaches:

- *Search to find any key competitors in each city – using restaurant guides, city listings etc. Compare their offering with T@3's.*
- *Search for any small business reports from each city – are there statistics on how small businesses are faring in each place?*
- *Visit each city to gather information about competitors and possible locations for siting T@3*
- *Search for press coverage of similar types of offerings – newspaper, magazine and journal websites*
- *If available, review current sales across existing T@3 shops in London to compare profiles of customers*
- *Search local Council planning sites to see if any barriers exist to opening new restaurants.*

3. Personal interviewers, who are prepared to conduct interviews in respondents' homes, are becoming increasingly difficult to recruit.

a) Discuss the benefits and limitations of in-home face-to-face data collection. Illustrate your answer with examples.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

Candidates might begin by defining their understanding of in-home face-to-face interviewing. They are expected to identify at least two benefits and two limitations which apply specifically to in-home interviewing. Mention may also be made of more general benefits which in-home shares with all F2F interviewing methods:

BENEFITS: Apply particularly to In Home

- *Easier to conduct interviews for more complex studies –*
    - *Interviews can be much longer than in street, hall, etc.*
    - *Complex questions and techniques can be used*
    - *Very complex stimulus material can be used involving respondent in sorting and ranking prompt cards, concepts, etc*
- *Can target respondents geographically e.g. use electoral register, random sampling techniques such as Random Route, ACORN or similar.*
- *Can ensure all respondents live in particular area - important for e.g. retail research, TV ad awareness*
- *More relaxed environment for sensitive issues.*
- *Access to other information e.g. What's in the fridge? What brands and sizes of cereal packs in store cupboard?*
- *Can interview more than 1 member of family more easily.*
- *Respondent can use test product in more 'natural' environment.*
- *Interviewer can show identity card and leave a Thank You leaflet to help reassure respondent of bone fide nature of research.*
- *Can pre-arrange appointments to ensure adequate time available to complete the interview and maximise quality information.*

Apply to all F2F

- *Stimulus material can be used*
- *Can build rapport with respondent so can achieve and maintain cooperation so to increase data quality*
- *Response rates can be higher (higher than in-street, too)*

LIMITATIONS

- *Interviewers may feel insecure about approaching people in their own homes – concern about safety issues*
- *Timing can be an issue – many interviews need to take place in the evening and at weekends when people are more likely to be at home*
- *In certain places, the response rates may not be very high. Members of the public may be wary of allowing interviewers into their homes.*
- *In some areas, there may be a high percentage of people for whom English is not a first language – this means that either interviewers need to be bilingual (and briefed accordingly) or that there may be restrictions on the sample being selected.*
- *More difficult to assess quality of fieldwork (e.g. interviewer bias) as little/no supervision possible at the time of interview.*
- *Environment within the home may not be conducive (e.g. interview conducted in same room as television set which is kept on to keep children 'pre-occupied', or finding somewhere suitable within the home where interviewer can get out and use interview-related materials, and where others in the household will not try to join in, may be difficult).*
- *Limited access to certain types of households e.g. blocks of flats/gated properties, those with entry phones, leading to possible skewing of the sample.*

b) An electrical goods company wants to test consumer reactions to a new type of vacuum cleaner which is ready to go into production. Identify two possible alternative methodologies which may be used in preference to in-home interviewing for this project. Describe the benefits and limitations of each in gathering the information which is required.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

In this section, candidates are required to identify and provide an evaluation of two suitable alternatives, giving reasons why they might be used in preference to in-home interviews. Weak answers may simply list the benefits of the different methodologies rather than focusing on the needs of the context. Strong answers are likely to provide clear justification of their choice in comparison with in-home interviewing.

Possible alternatives may include:

	Benefits	***Limitations***
Hall test	• *Provides a secure environment for interviewers and respondents* • *If the area is chosen carefully, can achieve an appropriate range of sample* • *Can choose to have cordoned-off area which gives individuals a chance to try out equipment* • *Can achieve a relatively large number of interviews on one day* • *Can liaise across Halls and refine individual quotas if necessary to ensure achieved balanced sample overall*	• *Lose the benefit of trying in a home environment – don't know how respondents will feel about it in their own homes (e.g. will it pick up dog hair? will it cope with nooks and crannies?)* • *Depending on which features might be 'new', respondents might not get the opportunity to try them all out* • *Respondents may be short on time - more likely to cut this type of test short* • *Need to be able to cater for respondents' children* • *Need sufficient interviewers present for required number of interviews to be conducted* • *Need sufficient space for each individual interview to take place* • *Need several prototypes available at each Hall* • *If limited to certain days of the week, or certain locations may only get certain limited/types of individuals in that location, with possibility of skewed samples as a result* • *Limited opportunity to test and fully assess the product*
Panel recruited online for home trial of cleaner	• *Secure environment for respondent* • *Panel can be selected to reflect the sample which the company needs* • *If cleaner is delivered to respondents' homes, time is available for them to try it out – more likely to get a full response*	• *Could be more time consuming than straightforward in-home* • *Miss out on immediate reactions – e.g. reactions when using (in hall test) or reactions in family environment (in-home)* • *Not all respondents have access to the internet* • *Respondents may not have technological skills required to participate* • *Would need to arrange for items to be delivered and collected, and could*

		therefore have this being done by someone who could go on and do a f2f interview at the same time (at delivery or collection stage) • *Logistical issues of respondent being at home for delivery and collection* • *Asking respondents to keep the item in their home for a period of time, taking up space etc* • *Fieldwork would take longer to achieve than a central location solution* • *Fieldwork likely to be more expensive* • *Bigger incentive required than hall test would need*
Focus groups	• *Similar to hall tests but can get also group reactions to the product* • *Can get real-time reactions when the cleaner is used* • *More time available to fully test reactions to all aspects of the equipment.* • *Opportunity for the group to discuss, and share and generate new ideas* • *Clients can view (if appropriate code of conduct requirements met)*	• *Unless families are involved in the focus groups, may not get the whole range of reactions to the product* • *Cannot explore individual's perceptions as much as may wish* • *Individuals may not want to share some of their "cleaning" thoughts / issues in public* • *Clients may leave one group with the impression that they know all the answers* • *Possible recruitment biases depending upon method used to recruit participants (e.g. snowballing etc)* • *Location used for a group (e.g. holding the groups in real homes versus in a central viewing facility and whether or not this could influence perceptions about the vacuum cleaner)* • *Limited opportunity to test and fully assess the product*

4. Rowbury, a major confectionary company, has recently acquired Maybury's, a small company which produces fine chocolates using essential oils for flavouring. Maybury's employees have been guaranteed employment with Rowbury. Rowbury now needs to decide whether to rebrand Maybury products as 'Rowbury fine chocolate'. It has approached an insight provider to help the company gain the insight needed to inform the decision.

a) Describe what you understand by the term 'insight' and how it differs from more traditional market research. Illustrate your answer with examples.

(Weighting: one-third of total)

Examiners should note that this section of the question is worth ***one-third*** *of the overall total.*

Candidates are expected to demonstrate an understanding of 'insight' as a term which covers the development of an understanding of issues through information gathered from a wide variety of sources, i.e. that insightful research will generally result in more than the sum of the individual research outputs. Stronger answers might point out that there is no single definition. However, there are some general points which emerge.

At pass level, candidates should identify that insight attempts to create a 'fuller' understanding of issues, for example information which:

- *informs the client's actions*
- *relates to client strategy*
- *applies knowledge to help drive growth*
- *leads to commercial improvement*
- *assists in client decision-making*

etc, rather than simply providing data. For example, candidates might also talk about having an extremely good understanding of the client, their business issues and the market in which they are operating – over and above what might be deemed necessary /acceptable for traditional research.

Stronger answers might also identify that some writers (e.g. DVL Smith) allow for the inclusion of 'intuition' – i.e. the researcher's own insight gathered from small 'nuggets' of information which may have been gathered from outside the main research activity.

Candidates are also expected to make some comparison with traditional views of market research. These might include:

- *the use of a single method (e.g. quantitative <u>or</u> qualitative project, rather than a combined approach), whereas insightful research might combine*
    - *information from primary and secondary sources*
    - *both qualitative and quantitative data*
- *the difficulty of accounting for 'additional' information (i.e. Smith's 'intuition')*
- *the expectation that researchers or research teams developing 'insight' will need to develop a perspective which is broader than looking purely at either qualitative or quantitative data.*

b) Describe the types of research information that the insight provider might use to help Rowbury make their decision, and how that information could be gathered. Give reasons for the suggestions you make.
(Weighting: two-thirds of total)

Examiners should note that this section of the question is worth ***two-thirds*** *of the overall total.*

The success of an answer to this section is likely to depend on the breadth of definition included in section (a). At pass level, candidates are expected to identify at least three types of information which might include some/all of the following:

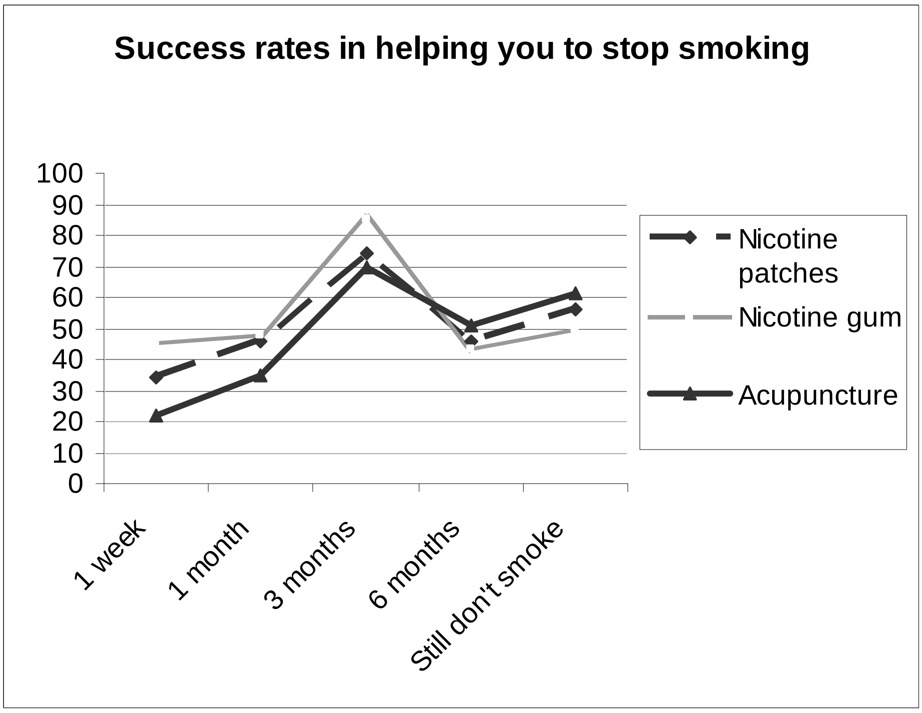
Secondary data: Existing market research reports on Maybury chocolates
Existing sales figures for the different types of chocolate made by Maybury
Newspaper/magazine reviews of Maybury products

Quantitative: Survey of Maybury distributors, gauging reaction to the Rowbury brand
Survey of Maybury consumers, gauging reactions to Rowbury

Qualitative: Focus groups with Maybury employees, gauging their perceptions of the Maybury brand values
Focus groups with consumers, again gauging their reactions/perceptions to both companies
Focus groups and/or in-depth interviews with distributors.

Stronger answers are likely to provide a wider range of sources and/or types of information, or greater reflection on how the different types of data might work together to help produce greater insight. Weaker answers are likely to provide only a limited range of data sources and not relate this to how it would generate insight in this context.

5. For the past year, a chain of pharmacies has been offering a range of support for people who wish to give up smoking. Among its services, it offers free nicotine patches, free nicotine gum and free acupuncture treatment. The company has recently conducted a survey among users of this service to find out which treatment has been most successful in helping them stop smoking.



a) Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the graph in conveying information about the research findings, giving reasons for your suggestions.

(Weighting: one-third of total)

Candidates are expected to evaluate the graph as a presentation of research findings. At pass level, candidates should identify a minimum of one strength and two weaknesses, with appropriate justification.

Strengths include:
- *Clear line chart, with format of lines used to differentiate findings from different groups*
- *Key to explain what the lines represents*
- *Categories being focused on clearly identified in the X axis*

Weaknesses include:
- *No indication as to what the scale on the Y axis represents. Possibly percentages but it's not clear*
- *The X axis is potentially misleading as the gaps in time are not equal*
- *No indication of sample size*
- *No indication of statistical significance*
- *The question hasn't been included here – we don't know what respondents were responding to.*
- *What does the data actually mean? Is it the percentage who said they stopped smoking after one month, or after three months etc when questioned at the end of the year? Or the number who said one month into the research that they had stopped smoking, and then the number who said they had stopped when asked at the 3 month point etc?*
- *Is this data based on all respondents or just those who gave up at some point?*

- *No indication of when the fieldwork was conducted*
- *No indication if the data has been weighted*
- *Possibly wrong type of chart being used to display information. Line graphs are usually associated with trend data; if this data is not from a longitudinal survey of the same respondents showing how their views of the method they are using changes over time, then the use of a line graph may be inappropriate.*

b) The pharmacy chain would like to use these findings and others from the survey in marketing materials to promote the usefulness of nicotine patches, nicotine gum and acupuncture in helping people to stop smoking. What advice would you give to the company on the use of research findings in marketing material? Give reasons for the suggestions you make, with reference to the MRS Code of Conduct where appropriate.

(Weighting: two-thirds of total)

Candidates are expected to demonstrate familiarity with the range of rules included in Section B, particular rules B48 – B61 of the MRS Code of Conduct. At pass level, candidates should identify at least three areas which they should make the client aware of, with some rationale for their selection. Answers which provide only two suggestions should provide enough rationale to demonstrate that the candidate understands the key principles on which the guidance is based.

Key areas which should be identified include:

- *Respondents cannot be identified in marketing material unless consent has been gained for this from the respondents. They must be fully informed as to what will be identified, to whom and for what purpose at the time consent is gained.*
- *Using personal data for research and marketing means that this would be a mixed purpose project. Rule B48 states that separate regulations 'Using research technology for non-research purposes' must be adhered to.*
- *Results cannot be used to mislead the public*
- *Facts should be clearly differentiated from interpretation*
- *Research conclusions must be clearly and adequately supported by the research data*
- *Guidance to the client may include some or all of the following points:*
    - *If you are likely to want to attribute verbatim comments, we need to make sure that respondents are informed of this and that permission is sought for re-contact to seek consent for use of the verbatims*
    - *If the findings are to be published (e.g. in marketing or press material), members of the public must be able to access the technical details. How will this be arranged?*
    - *Any graphs/charts and other materials drawing on the results provide enough technical detail to 'enable reasonable interpretation' of the validity of the results. This should include:*
        - *Information on sample size*
        - *Information on the questions asked*
        - *information on weighting*
    - *Any marketing material being prepared must be checked by the researcher before publication to ensure that it is not using the results inappropriately.*
- *Information regarding sample source(s) and possible bias*
- *Statistically significant differences should be made clear*

6. A government agency is conducting a nationwide research project to find out ways of increasing engagement in politics. You are the lead researcher for the qualitative phase of the project, working with a team of 3 colleagues. Each of you will be conducting 4 group discussions.

a) Describe the steps you would take to ensure consistency of approach across the 16 groups. Give reasons for each of the steps you suggest.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

Candidates are expected to identify a minimum of two steps, with detailed rationale, to meet pass level. Candidates with more steps may provide more limited rationale. Stronger candidates may identify sequential steps which can be taken and will provide clear justification for their suggestions.

- *Review the research objectives: Ensure that there is shared understanding of the aims and the type of information required.*
- *Moderators to have early sight of/involvement in discussion guide development to ensure all are clear and comfortable with content and sequence*
- *All moderators briefed at the same time to ensure all have sufficiently similar understanding*
- *Review the discussion guide: Do all moderators agree on the aim and interpretation of the questions? Do all feel it can be covered in the time given for the discussion group?*
- *Discuss the approach and structure of tasks. How are groups going to be warmed up? What types of techniques are to be used (e.g. projective techniques)? What (if any) materials are to be used and how will they be used?*
- *Give approximate times to be spent on each section of the discussion to ensure consistency across groups*
- *Ensure agreement on how data will be recorded. Also what data will be recorded – e.g. are you going to record non-verbal behaviour?*
- *Review the make-up of the groups (i.e. geographical spread, age groups etc): What similarities and differences are there? Can possible impacts on the data collection be anticipated?*
- *First group observed by other moderators and reviewed before continuing other groups?*
- *Arrange meeting/communication following the first round if possible to discuss and resolve any problematic issues and to do debrief of early findings and examine their impact*

b) As the lead researcher, you are responsible for analysing the data and writing up the findings. Outline your approach to the analysis, giving reasons for the approach you take.

(Weighting: one-half of total)

Candidates are expected to identify a minimum of two suggestions, with detailed rationale, to meet pass level.

- *Think ahead to the analysis stage at the planning stage:*
    - *What type of information is being looked for and what information will client want? E.g. respondent permission needs to be given at the outset if client is going to watch videoed data/get attributable quotes*
    - *How and when is the data going to be transcribed? What resources are going to be needed for transcription?*
    - *How much time is available for analysis? This will have an impact on the approach taken.*
    - *Ask all moderators to complete detailed debrief notes (use an agreed pro forma) at end of each group*
    - *Ask all to outline main themes/issues/points arising in relation to objectives*
    - *How will you analyse and distil the data? This may impact on resources needed.*
- *What is the data going to be used for?*
    - *Identify decisions to be taken on basis of the findings, and what outputs are expected. This will help guide the range and depth of analysis*
- *Ensure that you and the other researchers keep detailed field logs, identifying themes or recurrent points.*
- *Before beginning main analysis, ensure data is organised in a way which makes it easy to handle, e.g. by group? By region? By question? By respondent type?*
- *Ensure that you are familiar with all of the data – review it all, making notes of themes and impressions to be tested later*
- *Use topic guide and observed recurrent themes to generate a framework for analysis of the data*
- *Identify recurrent themes using the most appropriate format (e.g. key words highlighted on hard copy or on screen; using software package)*
- *Identify recurrent themes and responses, and test for frequency, consistency and strength*
- *Review data for emerging ideas – e.g. are there identifiable patterns between groups?*
- *Go back to outputs required in order to pull together findings appropriately.*