Statistics

Table 1: MATSEC Advanced Level Marketing, May 2010
Distribution of Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of candidates</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Assessment

The papers were graded according to the marking scheme provided. The overall approach at tackling the paper was positive with some high marks obtained. However, many candidates lost significant marks when answering certain questions.

Marks attained in this session were mixed. Even in the same paper, candidates often obtained both high and low marks for questions. The problem of answering the question as opposed to writing all one knows about a topic was evident in certain questions. With regards students who did not pass, it was clearly evident that they were not adequately prepared to sit for the examination. In good number of cases they did not even attempt to answer all the questions; clearly a sign of unpreparedness.

Shortcomings

- It is important to answer all the questions and time answers properly. It was quite evident that certain candidates spent disproportionate amounts of time on certain questions or sections of questions. This resulted in loss of valuable time with no extra marks earned.
- Candidates must read the question properly and answer what is asked. There were instances where candidates either wrote all they knew about a topic (even though much was irrelevant) or failed to give practical example/s which were specifically asked for. In such instances significant marks were lost.
- There were some very good answers and high marks earned, reflecting the seriousness these candidates undertook in their studies. On the other hand, some candidates were not adequately prepared to answer certain questions and made a feeble attempt at doing so.
- Being too concise at times will not earn full marks. It is not enough just to mention a reason or approach as a brief explanation and, more often than not, a practical example is required. When a point is made, time should be taken to elaborate it to show that the student knows what s/he is talking about.
- Not attempting to answer all required questions led to a loss of substantial marks. No marks can be allocated if a question (or part thereof) is left out.
- At this level it is expected that candidates get the spelling of such words as convenient, guarantee, and questionnaire right. They should also know the difference between ‘lose’ and ‘loose’ and that ‘in fact’ and ‘a lot’ are two separate words. There were numerous instances of these words being spelt incorrectly and at times the grammar left much to be desired. In Marketing the “packaging” is important and while students were not penalised for incorrect spelling and grammatical mistakes they will be as they progress in their studies. Overall improvement in this area is definitely required.
Response Analysis

Paper I

✓ Question 1: Overall the answers for this popular question left much to be desired. While candidates mentioned certain “touch points” there was no structure in answering this question. As a result, not all elements of the marketing mix were considered and this led to loss of marks.

✓ Question 2: Another popular question. A little planning in how to approach this question would have been beneficial. Many candidates just chose a not-for-profit organisation and wrote about what it did as opposed to properly structuring their answer. Overall, a better approach to tackling this question was expected.

✓ Question 3: A very popular question with some high marks earned. Candidates who did not earn high marks often lacked structure and failed to link the DMU/Influencers to the decision-making process and give adequate examples. A number of candidates just wrote everything they knew about the topic instead of focusing on what was actually asked.

✓ Question 4: Mixed results for this question. Although, a number of candidates did very well and even full marks were earned in certain cases. Candidates who did not do so well was mainly because they decided to write all they knew about the subject as opposed to answering the question. While others failed to apply practical examples to the theory.

✓ Question 5: A popular question but overall candidates lost significant marks in their answers. The main shortcoming was not applying the theory to a practical situation. Once again, many candidates wrote all they knew about the topic as opposed to answering the question.

✓ Question 6: Similar to the previous question, this also proved popular with candidates. Overall, replies could have been better structured as most candidates wrote about their personal “shopping” experiences. In spite of this, the majority of candidates still earned good marks for their replies.

✓ Question 7: There were some very high scores in this question indicating that candidates were well prepared. There was a batch of students who failed to mention “Direct Marketing” as one of the components of the Communications mix and as a result lost marks. Other candidates who faired poorly was mainly because they confused the Communications mix with the Marketing mix. By focusing on the latter they went out of point in their replies.

✓ Question 8: The approach to this question could have been better. Many candidates failed to apply the marketing theory to a start-up company and in some instances not even mentioning an example.
**Paper II**

**Case Study Questions**

Overall, students fared well in the case study questions. The best scripts were those which [a]. answered the questions ‘to the point’ and did not ‘waffle’ through; [b]. managed to provide the ‘right’ detail requested in relation to the amount of marks allotted to the question/s; [c]. gave ‘applied’ examples/arguments where requested.

The failing scripts [in the case study] were largely those which ignored the amount of marks allocated to each and every question. Ie, the detail and length of answer and applied examples/arguments, etc required in this section were directly related to the amount of marks allocated to each question.

**Essay Questions – Overall Comments**

On the whole answers put forward, by a good number of students were well structured, focused and comprehensive with introduction, applied examples and a conclusion. Students who presented answers which simply treated the subject topic and failed to plan out and answer the question specifically as required were penalised. Moreover, the students who scored badly in the essay questions were those who [a]. did not give the required detail; students must keep in mind that these questions carry the most marks, and [b]. did not give the requested application of theoretical concepts, principles, etc in question.

**Overall Concluding Remarks**

The purpose of this report is to enable lecturers and students to know where improvement is required as this will contribute to the overall learning process and assist them in their future endeavours.

As students continue their studies at higher levels it is important that they are aware of their shortcomings so they will not repeat the same mistakes again. It is just as important for lecturers to know the main issues that need to be addressed and in which areas to better prepare students. In this manner, this will serve as a good learning process to achieve even better results in the future.