



HERIOT-WATT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT - STAGE 3

EXAMINERS REPORT – DIET: DECEMBER 2008

Overall Comments

In general, the standard of written English was always reasonable, but the organisation and layout of answers often left quite a bit to be desired.

General Comments: Section A

Candidates were presented with an interesting case-study paper and asked very relevant questions. However, the application of Porter's Five Forces Framework to retailing markets is not entirely straightforward – for example, what are Substitute Products? – and I was tolerant of a range of answers to this section A1 (b).

General Comments: Section B

This question elicited a range of responses.

Question C1

Candidates did not generally distinguish between corporate acquisition of a subsidiary and *de novo* foreign direct investment. This led to some confusion in the answers regarding advantages and disadvantages of such expansion routes. There was also some confusion in the latter part of this question regarding 'configuration', with some candidates straying quite widely from the concept.

Question C2

This question was generally quite well done, with candidates clearly familiar with the concept of ethical issues, although sometimes less explicit about managerial policies designed to address these. For the second part of this question, in addition to raising matters such as language and culture (in a very broad managerial sense) I might have expected some reference to the underlying concepts in this area stemming from Hofstede etc.