



MRS Diploma in Market & Social Research Practice

UNIT 3 – Analysing & Interpreting Quantitative Market and Social Research Data

Sample Assignment Materials & Tasks

8 week completion and submission period

With members in more than 70 countries, MRS is the world's largest association serving all those with professional equity in provision or use of market, social and opinion research, and in business intelligence, market analysis, customer insight and consultancy.

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MRS Diploma in Market & Social Research Practice
Unit 3 – June 2012 Assessment Materials
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MRS Diploma in Market & Social Research Practice
Unit 3 – Analysing & Interpreting Quantitative Market and Social Research Data – Sample Assessment Materials

Introduction

This document provides the sample assessment material for Unit 3 of the MRS Diploma in Market & Social Research Practice. It contains sample tasks and links to the materials on which your assignment should be based.

This sample assessment is based on – **Food and You Survey, 2010**. The study is deposited in the UK Data Archive as SN: 6739. The data and documentation can be accessed from:

<http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=6739>

Free access to study descriptions, online variable lists and online documentation, including questionnaires are available to all users and does not require registration. Registered users can download datasets. The Data Documentation, Interviewer & Coder Instructions, and User Guides can also be downloaded at this location.

Further information about the research may be found on at [Food and You 2010](#). This assessment references the main report published on the survey results titled 'Exploring food attitudes and behaviours: Findings from the Food and You Survey 2010' – which can be found at: http://www.foodbase.org.uk/results.php?f_category_id=&f_report_id=641

This study was commissioned following the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Social Science Research Committee (SSRC) being asked to review the Agency's Consumer Attitudes Survey (CAS), which had ran for eight waves from the FSA's inception in 2003. The SSRC recommended that a new rigorous regular survey was needed to underpin the FSA's policies. In 2009, the FSA commissioned a consortium comprising TNS-BMRB, the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) and the University of Westminster to carry out the first wave of the Food and You Survey.

Centres are required to conform to data protection requirements governing the use of the material. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all data protection requirements are followed, both by the centre and the candidates.

Mode of assessment for Unit 3 Analysing & Interpreting Quantitative Data

Detailed on pages 9 & 10 are four tasks related to these materials. You are required to complete all four tasks. These are externally assessed and externally moderated.

Assignment specifications

Each task is designed to be completed in essay format, and should address the issues detailed in the specifications table for that task. Copies of task specifications can be obtained from your centre.

The total word count for all four tasks should fall between 5,000-6,750 words (excluding appendices). Appendices of material used to illustrate points made within the assignment may be included if you feel these are necessary. However, appendices should not be used to extend the word limit.

Candidates must understand the importance of respecting the word limit. All words within the main body of the text, including those within tables are included within the word count. Text within the title page or contents page is not included in the word count. Materials included in appendices should *illustrate* points made in the body of the assignment. Appendices should not be used to extend the word limit.

Assignments that considerably exceed the 6,750 word limit (by more than 10%) will be graded as 'non-compliant' as they do not comply with assessment criteria and cannot be assessed with the qualifications framework.

Candidates **must** include a word count at the end of the assignment.

All assessed components of the MRS Diploma should be completed in English.

Assessment weighting

The tasks are weighted in accordance with the weighting ascribed to each area within the syllabus description and also with the level of analysis required within each assignment.

Task 1	30% of total
Task 2	30% of total
Task 3	20% of total
Task 4	20% of total
Total	100%

Presentation of your assignment

The assignment should be printed on A4 white paper, with a one inch margin around the text. Text size should ideally be 11pt.

Make sure that each section within your assignment is easy to read by:

- using headings and bullet points effectively.
- avoiding over-brief note form. If you include notes, you should ensure they make your points clearly and overtly.
- ensuring that your use of English is clear, accurate and appropriate to a client audience.

All four tasks should be secured together and submitted as one assignment. The assignment should be secured with a staple in the top left hand corner. Please do not bind your assignment by any other means.

Number of copies

You are required to present three hard copies of the assignment in its final form for formal assessment to your centre co-ordinator by the centre's specified deadline. All copies must include an Assignment Cover Sheet. 1 copy of your assignment will be retained by your centre, the remaining two copies will be sent to MRS for external assessment.

Overall Result

No overall grade is awarded for the MRS Diploma. The *certificate* issued to successful candidates will give the level of achievement in each unit of assessment.

Pass requirements

In order to complete a unit successfully, candidates should meet or exceed the Pass requirements highlighted in the assessment sections of the handbook.

In order to be awarded the Diploma, candidates must achieve a Pass grade (or above) in all 4 units of assessment.

Grading System for each unit of Diploma assessment

Unit 1

Answers will be awarded a band grade (Distinction, Pass or Fail). In order to pass the examination, candidates will normally be required to achieve a minimum of a Pass grade in all three questions.

All candidates must pass Question 1. Candidates who are awarded a Fail grade in either question 2 or 3 will normally be expected to achieve a strong Pass grade in the other question. Guidance on the general assessment criteria for each grade can be found in the following table.

Units 2 & 3 and 4

Candidates are given an overall band grade (Distinction, Pass, Fail). The assessment criteria for each assignment is included in the assignment specifications. In addition, the level descriptors provide guidance for the expected depth and range which are expected to be demonstrated at pass, distinction and fail grades. In order to pass the assessment candidates will normally be required to achieve a minimum of a Pass grade for each task within the assignment. Candidates who are awarded a Fail grade for a task will normally be expected to achieve a strong Pass grade or above in one or more of the remaining tasks to pass.

Unit 5

Candidates are awarded a band grade (Distinction, Pass or Fail). In order to pass the examination, candidates will normally be required to achieve a minimum of a Pass grade in all three questions. Candidates who are awarded a Fail grade in one question will normally be expected to achieve a strong Pass grade or above in one of the remaining two questions to pass.

For full guidance on the levels of attainment required for awarding each grade for all Units please refer to the **Full Syllabus & Assessment Guidelines Handbook**.

The Research Project

Background

The main aim of the survey was to collect quantitative information about the UK public's attitudes, beliefs and values towards food issues (such as food safety and healthy eating), as well as their food-related behaviour, in order to ensure a sound social science evidence base to support policy making at the FSA and across relevant government departments. The survey also collected supporting information on lifestyle, such as eating habits, shopping and eating outside the home, all of which may influence food behaviours. More specifically, the objectives were to collect quantitative information to enable the Agency to:

- monitor public understanding of, and engagement with, the FSA's aims of promoting healthy eating and improving food safety
- assess public attitudes to new developments, such as emerging food technologies
- identify the complex influences on knowledge, attitudes and behaviour
- assess knowledge of, and response to, messages and interventions aimed at raising awareness and changing behaviour
- identify specific target groups for future interventions (e.g. those most at risk or those where there is likely to be the greatest impact)
- monitor changes over time in attitudes and behaviour; and
- broaden the evidence base and develop indicators to assess progress in fulfilling the FSA's strategic plans, aims and targets.

The first wave of the Food and You Survey forms a baseline from which changes over time can be monitored via future surveys.

Main Topics

The questionnaire covered household information, healthy eating, shopping, food safety, physical activity, physical measurements (respondents' perception) and demographics.

Coverage

Dates of Fieldwork: March 2010-August 2010

Country: United Kingdom

Spatial Units: Government Office Regions (GORs)

Observation Units: Individuals

Kind of Data: Individual (micro) level

Universe Sampled

Location of Units of Observation: National

Population: Adults aged 16 years and over, resident in the UK

Methodology

Time Dimensions: Cross-sectional (one-time) study

Sampling Procedures: Multi-stage stratified random sample

Method of Data Collection: Face-to-face interview

Weighting: Weighting used: see documentation for details

Research Materials & Documentation

The following files are included as part of the assessment materials

The study is deposited in the UK Data Archive as SN: 6739. The data and documentation can be accessed from:

<http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=6739>.

Free access to study descriptions, online variable lists and online documentation, including questionnaires is available to all users and does not require registration. Registered users can download datasets.

To download the dataset you must register, agree to an End User Licence (EUL) and provide details of your intended use. The dataset is given in SPSS, STATA, SAS or TAB formats for analysis purposes

The Food and You 2010 User Guides can be found at the same location: [6739 userguide.pdf](#)

The User Guides were prepared by TNS-BMRB, Policy Studies Institute and University of Westminster and covers:

- Technical Report
- The Questionnaire
- List of Omnibus questions
- Code frames
- Fieldwork materials

Assessment tasks focus on a report 'Exploring food attitudes and behaviours: Findings from the Food and You Survey 2010' – which can be found at:

http://www.foodbase.org.uk/results.php?f_category_id=&f_report_id=641

TASKS

Task 1: The Research Objectives & Sampling Approaches

(Weighting: 30% of total)

This task requires you to analyse and evaluate the research design and sampling methods used for this research study.

In your answer you should:

- identify the objectives of this study – what problems/issues did the project set out to address; giving examples of outcomes for each objective.
- identify the approaches taken to sampling. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each of these approaches in relation to the given research objectives, and with reference to any relevant statistical theory.
- evaluate the appropriateness of the sample design, size and composition of the quantitative samples with reference to the given research objectives and analysis plan.
- identify strategies that have been used to achieve a high response rate and any further strategies that could be used to increase the response rate. Discuss the impact of questionnaire length and type of data collected and their likely impact on response rates.
- identify the weighting methods used and the impact of regional boosted sample sizes. Given the method used, comment on using the weights for analysis of the data particularly with reference to significance testing. Comment on the sample efficiency given the range of weights and the implications on the achieved sample size.

Task 2: Analysis of data

(Weighting: 30% of total)

This task requires you to describe and evaluate the approaches used for analysing questionnaire data in the published report – ‘Exploring food attitudes and behaviours: Findings from the Food and You Survey 2010’.

In your answer you should:

- identify the analysis objectives for this report.
- identify and evaluate the range of strategies used for achieving the analysis objectives.
- identify and comment on the summary statistics used in the report and the inferences made to the general population.
- identify two statistical tests which might be applied to the Food and You dataset to address the analysis objectives. Give reasons for your choices and demonstrate the tests using data from the study.

Task 3: Determining and interpreting associations amongst variables

(Weighting: 20% of total)

This task requires you to describe and evaluate the approaches used for determining and interpreting associations between variables in chapters 5 and 6 of the report ('Exploring food attitudes and behaviours: Findings from the Food and You Survey 2010'), and in particular the BMI and measures of physical activity included in the survey to provide 'additional explanatory power to the findings'.

In your answer you should:

- identify and describe the techniques used to determine association amongst variables.
- evaluate the usefulness of these techniques in achieving the analysis objectives.
- identify and describe two further techniques that can be used to determine associations between questions in this survey.
- evaluate the usefulness of your selected approaches to the analysis objectives.

Task 4: Explaining and predicting behaviour

(Weighting: 20% of total)

This task requires you to identify the approaches used in Chapter 5 to combine reported eating out occasions and to separate out the different socio-demographic factors associated with eating outside of the home in the report 'Exploring food attitudes and behaviours: Findings from the Food and You Survey 2010'.

In your answer you should:

- identify the techniques used to explain or predict likely impact of characteristics.
- discuss the use of multivariate regression modelling using socio-demographic factors and other possible variables from the study that may be used to predict eating out.
- discuss the use of other explanation or prediction approaches that may be used with this dataset to understand characteristics of those people more likely to eat-out.



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