



MRS Diploma in Market & Social Research Practice

Assessment Summary

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.

MRS contributes significantly to the enhancement of skills and knowledge by offering various qualifications and membership grades, as well as training and professional development resources.

MRS Diploma Assessment Summary
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- 1. Introduction..... 4**
 - Table 1: Syllabus outline 5
 - Table 2: Assessment summary 6

- 2. Overall Result 7**

- 3. Grading System for each unit of Diploma assessment..... 7**
 - Unit 1 - MR&l..... 7
 - Units 2 & 3 and 4 7
 - Unit 5 7

- 4. Registration 8**
 - Assessment Level Descriptors 9

1. Introduction

The MRS Diploma comprises 5 units, each of which is individually assessed. In order to be awarded the qualification, all candidates must complete successfully:

- units 1,2 & 5
- either unit 3 or unit 4

It is recommended that candidates follow the units in sequence as each builds on knowledge and skills developed in the previous.

Candidates are not awarded an overall grade for the qualification. Grades are reported individually for each unit.

The following sections provide:

- **Table 1:** an overview of the titles, length and mode of assessment of each of the units within the qualification, and the level of demand of each unit. This table also outlines the inter-relation between units.
- **Table 2:** a summary of assessment across all units and grades awarded across units.

Table 1: Syllabus outline

Unit Name	Unit Outline	Guided learning hours	Mode of assessment
Unit 1: The Principles of Market & Social Research	This unit seeks to enable candidates to develop the knowledge and skills required to plan, undertake and present results from market and social research, and to understand and use other information sources within this process. The role of the unit is to provide the platform upon which later units build. All candidates must complete this unit.	45	Examination (externally assessed)
Unit 2: The Practice & Context of Market & Social Research	This unit seeks to ensure that candidates develop an understanding of the theoretical and scientific principles which underpin market and social research, and how these impact on research in practice. Central to this unit is the concept of 'fitness for purpose'. Therefore the unit also focuses on the practical limitations of the application of theory in the real world. All candidates must complete this unit.	90	Coursework assignments (Externally assessed)
Unit 3: Analysing and Interpreting Quantitative Market & Social Research Data	This unit provides participants with both the detailed knowledge and the skills to interpret and report on quantitative market research data. It therefore builds on the exploration of quantitative data gathering techniques in Unit 1, and the deeper consideration of attitudes, behaviours and measurement in Unit 2. Candidates must complete either Unit 3 or Unit 4.	90	Coursework assignment (Externally assessed)
Unit 4: Collecting, Analysing and Interpreting Qualitative Market & Social Research Data	This unit provides participants with both the detailed knowledge and the skills to interpret and report on qualitative market research data. It therefore builds on the exploration of qualitative data gathering techniques in Unit 1, and the deeper consideration of attitudes, behaviours in Unit 2. Candidates must complete either Unit 3 or Unit 4.	90	Coursework assignment (Externally assessed)
Unit 5: Case Studies in Market & Social Research	This unit aims to enable candidates to develop a holistic approach to problem solving using research-based intelligence. It encompasses the research process, from research brief through to the research proposal focusing on the management of the research process and analysis of the choices and decisions. It builds on the understanding of approaches and techniques covered in Units 1, 3 and 4 and develops further the criticality which is central to Unit 2. All candidates must complete this unit.	75	Examination (externally assessed)

Table 2: Assessment summary

The following grid summarises the mode of assessment for each unit and the grading.

Unit title	Mode of assessment	Assessment periods	Internal/external	Grading
Unit 1: The Principles of Market & Social Research	Examination (3 hour paper)	June & December	Externally assessed	Fail, Pass, Distinction
Unit 2: The Practice & Context of Market & Social Research	4 Coursework assignments (5000 – 7000 words in total)	June & December	Externally assessed	Fail, Pass, Distinction
Unit 3: Analysing & Interpreting Quantitative Market & Social Research Data	Coursework assignment (5000 - 6750 words)	June & December	Externally assessed	Fail, Pass, Distinction
Unit 4: Collecting, Analysing & Interpreting Qualitative Market & Social Research Data	Coursework assignment (5000 - 6750 words)	June & December	Externally assessed	Fail, Pass, Distinction
Unit 5: Case Studies in Market & Social Research	Examination (up to 90 minutes prep & 3 hour paper)	June & December	Externally assessed	Fail, Pass, Distinction

2. 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.

3. 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**.

4. Registration

From the date a candidate is registered with MRS for assessment they have four years in which to successfully complete the four Diploma unit assessments in order to be awarded the MRS Diploma in Market and Social Research Practice. This potentially gives candidates eight assessment opportunities in which to successfully complete the four units of assessment.

Extensions may be made to the registration period where Special Considerations are cited by a candidate. Candidates re-registering with MRS for assessment will be required to pay the published registration fee.

Candidates can take each of unit of assessment a maximum of three times within their four-year registration period. Candidates who are unsuccessful in a unit assessment on the third attempt are normally required to wait until the end of their four-year registration period before being able to re-register with MRS for assessment. Prior attainment of units in a previous registration period will not be carried forward. On re-registering candidates will be required to sit/re-sit assessment of all four units.

Candidates who fail to successfully complete all four units within their four-year registration period are normally required to re-register with MRS for assessment, and prior attainment of units in a previous registration period will not be carried forward. On re-registering candidates will be required to sit/re-sit assessment all of the four units.

Candidates re-registering with MRS for assessment will be required to pay the published registration fee.

Assessment Level Descriptors

	Fail	Pass	Distinction
	<i>The candidate's work</i>	<i>The candidate's work</i>	<i>The candidate's work</i>
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited understanding of principles, key concepts, issues and theoretical approaches relevant to the subject demonstrates limited awareness of the subject in both breadth and depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates an awareness of the underlying principles, key concepts, issues and theoretical approaches relevant to the subject demonstrates an adequate understanding of both the range and depth of the subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of principles, key concepts, issues and theoretical approaches relevant to the subject demonstrates a thorough understanding of the subject in both breadth and depth
Skills (Intellectual/Subject)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited judgement in analysing routine issues for presenting ideas may offer a personal and unsubstantiated point of view, with limited reference to sources and limited use of examples may demonstrate little or no connection between subject knowledge and the candidate's professional practice when required to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates an ability to critically analyse the relationships between differing arguments and evidence demonstrates the ability to examine and evaluate a range of sources, research methods and strategies and assess the appropriateness of their use demonstrates the ability to advocate a point of view and exercise critical judgement with good use of examples demonstrates evidence of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates evidence of clear and original thought, and of critical thinking draws on and uses a wide range of knowledge to address questions analyses concepts and theories and applies them to issues of practice in a systematic way draws appropriately on a range sources demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate the significance and limitations of theory and practice demonstrates an appreciation

		<p>familiarity with primary and secondary sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where appropriate, demonstrates evidence of the candidate's ability to make connections between aspects of subject knowledge and their professional practice 	<p>of alternative and competing methodological choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where appropriate, shows evidence of advanced professional competence
<p>Values & attitudes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates little or no evidence of critical awareness of the wider social, political and/or economic implications, relevant to market and/or social research practices when required to do so 	<p>where appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates some evidence of critical awareness of the wider social, political and/or economic implications, relevant to market and/or social research practices 	<p>where appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates a high level of critical awareness of the wider social, political and/or economic implications, relevant to market and/or social research practices

<p>Presentation & transferable skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes inappropriate or very limited use of specialist terminology • demonstrates limited or no evidence of the ability to interpret and/or present data in a format which is appropriate to the task • presents information in a manner which does not reflect a coherent structure and which may impede the reader's understanding • is written in a style which is inappropriate to the task and which puts strain on the reader 	<p>where appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes generally appropriate use of specialist terminology • demonstrates the ability to interpret and/or present data in a format which is appropriate to the task • presents information within a generally coherent structure which does not impede the reader's understanding • provides generally clear, consistent and accurate referencing • is written in a style which is appropriate to the task and puts little or no strain on the reader 	<p>where appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes effective and appropriate use of specialist terminology • demonstrates a well-developed ability to interpret and/or present data in a variety of forms and in a critical and constructive way • presents arguments and information in a logical, coherent and creative way in order to assist the reader's understanding • provides clear, consistent and accurate referencing • is written in a style which is appropriate to the task and puts no strain on the reader
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