Improving Market Research Procurement: MRS Recommendations on the Creation of Framework 2 for research services

A document prepared by The Market Research Society

for the Government Procurement Service

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Executive Summary

Research is used to support critical policy and operational decisions in all areas of public life.

When procuring market research, government is procuring intellectual capital and evidence on which important decisions are based. The procurement practices should be structured to reflect this.

MRS is the world's leading professional research association setting professional and ethical standards for over 60 years. MRS is globally recognised for its expertise in training and the UK's research market represents a major asset in the UK, in terms of both the creation of intellectual capital and export revenues.

MRS believes government should take advantage of the experience and expertise of one of the UK's world leading industries and welcomes this opportunity to help government do so affordably and sustainably.

The opportunity exists for government not only to improve its efficiency but, in doing so, to reinforce the competitiveness of the UK in a major creative and intellectual capital business.

Following extensive consultation with MRS stakeholders, including research suppliers and in-house government research buyers, MRS has compiled the attached report, with detailed recommendations for the procurement approach for developing framework 2 for market research services, to replace the former COI framework.

In summary:

Reducing Costs and Improving Value for Money

- We recommend streamlining administrative procedures by adopting some simple changes e.g. standardising core documentation and information requirements (e.g. Health & Safety policies, data protection and so on) and storing such information centrally.
- We suggest a two-stage or restricted procurement process rather than a completely open one; this will reduce the amount of wasteful and unproductive effort for buyers, procurers and suppliers.
- You should focus on procuring research services to address specific business problems within government as opposed to procuring research solely by research methodology. Research methodologies are tools not research business solutions.
- If you use established available recognised resources you will save time and improve credibility in the market. MRS's Research Buyers Guide, a published and fully searchable online directory, is the only list of MRS accredited research suppliers in the UK. The government would save a lot of money, reduce waste and ensure only research, conducted in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct and its associated compliance procedures, was procured if the GPS adopt the use of this directory as an 'open' lot on the framework and the resource to access research services for the Agile Route to Market.
- Research is an intellectual capital and creative service depending on skills, training and intellectual capacity. It is highly labour intensive, often requires high levels of customisation and interaction service rather than one based on a 'methodology

menu'. As such any marking criteria used to evaluate research services should be based on assessing whether a proposed solution is fit for purpose and good value for money; not on lowest cost. Lowest cost does not equate with value for money.

Building on What Works and Reducing Administration

- The most effective approach to ensure a smooth transition and prevent the loss of capability and knowledge that have been invested in government research data and insight is to select the effective elements of the COI framework and develop and build on these.
- There is an excellent network of existing in-house government researchers and suppliers who have expertise built-up in public service evidence generation. This could be more effectively deployed.
- Do not lose access to research expertise when procuring research services – these are essential for ensuring that the most appropriate research is being procured.

Supporting SMEs

- The research market is dominated by SMEs, niche and specialist suppliers in addition to the small number of very large research groups. The framework and the Agile Route to Market should both be equally accessible to all research suppliers large and small.
- The terms and conditions underpinning the framework (and the Agile Route to Market) must be SME friendly. Disproportionate contractual burdens e.g. unlimited indemnity, obligations to pay 0.5% of charges for services invoiced, numerous warranties, responsibility for changes to contracts, etc. which if adopted (as for framework 1) will effectively drive many excellent small and micro suppliers not to apply for the framework.

Ensuring Legal, Ethical and Professional Standards

- Research is reliant on the trust of customers who take part in its programmes. It is increasingly dependent on the use of personal data. Policy makers and operational managers must have reliable evidence which is acquired legally and ethically. This is especially true when dealing with children or other vulnerable members of the public.
- In an era of high levels of public and press scrutiny confidence in the quality of evidence used in, for example Equality Impact Assessments must be high.
- Any future research framework and accompanying Agile Route to Market must continue to recognise the basic 'hygiene' factor adopted by COI; only to procure research that was conducted in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct and its compliance procedures i.e. from MRS Company Partner organisations or from suppliers with MRS members.

Supporting innovation and Ensuring Access to Best Practice

- The UK is the world's second largest research market, after the US, characterised by the innovation and adaptability of its organisations. In order to ensure policy makers and operation managers have access to the most up to date methods and ideas. You should adopt a feedback loop (such as the Cabinet Office's approach of using Mystery Shopping for Contract Finder) for the framework to ensure that framework 2 constantly evolves and improves in response to any identified weaknesses.

- You should also retain some flexibility in roster development; have one lot that remains flexible and open to new entrants to ensure continued access to new suppliers and evolving techniques which might better serve future government research needs.

Key Risks

During our discussions with our stakeholders a number of risks were identified. These **must** be addressed by GPS before any framework is finalised.

Risk Area	Why?	Risk Level	Likely Impact	Mitigation
Reputational damage if poor research is procured	• Impact of poor quality research or work undertaken that fails to meet legal, professional and ethical research standards due to lose of COI research expertise • Framework fails to recognise the creativity and intellectual capital of research; concentrating too much on research tools i.e. methodologies • Framework and ARM includes unregulated researchers • Access to insufficient numbers and breadth of research suppliers with the appropriate skills and services needed	**HIGH RISK**	• Government money is wasted on poor research • Bad decisions are made by government on poor evidence base due to unsuitable research being procured • Ineffective and inefficient decision making processes • Complaints about poor research are made, which cannot be pursued as suppliers are not part of the compliance framework • Negative public and media perception of government procurement	• Only use researchers that conduct research in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct and associated compliance procedures i.e. MRS Company Partners and suppliers with MRS members • Structure framework to factor in research expertise – using suppliers and in-house resources more effectively • Take a procurement approach that is structured around a high labour intensive, intellectual, customisation and interaction service rather than one based on a 'methodology menu'
Low SME participation in the framework *[See Section F for some research on SMEs views on*	• Disproportionate contractual terms and conditions required for access to the framework • Burdensome and complex procurement arrangements	**HIGH RISK**	• Failure to meet stated Cabinet Office objectives • Narrow range of suppliers on the framework • Buyers unable to access all research services they require • Niche and specialists completed excluded	• Adopt appropriate and proportionate terms and conditions for framework. Not a blanket 'one size fits all' • Adopt appropriate and proportionate administrative procedures

government procurement]				
Agile Route to Market (ARM) fails to work	• Limited understanding of how the ARM is meant to work • Difficult to apply in practice the threshold measurement • Too open; unregulated and inappropriately qualified researchers access ARM	**HIGH RISK**	• Waste and inefficiency • Potential accusation that the ARM is an 'OJEU avoidance route' • Confusion among suppliers and buyers • Government money is wasted on poor research • Bad decisions are made by government on poor evidence base due to unsuitable research being procured • Ineffective and inefficient decision making processes • Complaints about poor research are made, which cannot be pursued as suppliers are not part of the compliance framework • Negative public and media perception of government procurement	• Only use researchers that conduct research in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct and associated compliance procedures i.e. MRS Company Partners and suppliers with MRS members • Provide clear guidance on how ARM is to work • Use the MRS's existing Research Buyers Guide online directory as the source for any ARM contracts; ensuring only regulated suppliers are used and allowing for new suppliers and techniques to be considered for government projects
Perceived unequal treatment of suppliers	• Lack of transparency in procurement process • Some suppliers benefit more than others from the framework approach	**HIGH RISK**	• Disenchantment among suppliers with government procurement • Increasing number of suppliers stop bidding for government work • Fewer research suppliers available to provide services to government	• Fairness and transparency in the creation of the framework and lots • All suppliers large and small have equal access to government research projects via both the research framework and the ARM • Flexibility in the selection of suppliers including access to an 'open' lot which enables access to the full research market of suppliers

Section A: Background information

About The Market Research Society (MRS)

The Market Research Society (MRS) was established in 1946 and is the world's leading research association representing providers and users of market, social, and opinion research, and business intelligence.

MRS has a diverse membership representing all sides of research: individual researchers within agencies, independent consultancies, client-side organisations, the public sector and the academic community.

All individual MRS members and MRS Company Partners agree to self-regulatory compliance with the MRS Code of Conduct.

MRS offers various qualifications and membership grades, training and professional development. It is the only awarding body in the UK for vocational qualifications in market and social research.

MRS offers many opportunities for meeting, communicating and networking across sectors and disciplines, as well as within specialisms.

As 'the voice of market research', MRS defends and promotes research in its advocacy and representational efforts.

Through its media relations and public affairs activities, MRS aims to create the widest possible understanding of the process and value of market, social and opinion research, and to achieve the most favourable climate of opinion and legislative environment for research.

More general information can be found on the MRS website www.mrs.org.uk

About the Report Compilation

This report was compiled by MRS in full consultation with MRS Company Partners, which covers the full spectrum of research suppliers: from the very large research groups to the very smallest micro-business, including independent consultants (both direct and via the Independent Consultants Group).

MRS has also consulted with a wide range of individual research practitioners within government (many of whom are MRS members) to ensure that the buyer perspective is represented within this report.

The report, consultations and discussions with the Government Procurement Service was led by Debrah Harding the Chief Operating Officer of MRS. Debrah is the co-author of the book, *Quality in Market Research: from Theory to Practice*.

Section B: Market Research in Context

What is Market Research?

The MRS Code of Conduct (See Section G for full copy of the MRS Code of Conduct) defines 'Research' as:

> *Research is the collection and analysis of data from a sample or census of individuals or organisations relating to their characteristics, behaviour, attitudes, opinions or possessions. It includes all forms of market, opinion and social Research such as consumer and industrial surveys, psychological investigations, qualitative Interviews and group discussions, observational, ethnographic and panel studies.*

In terms of its application – what it is used for – market research is the provision of systematic information to assist and guide business and policy decisions. Within this overall framework, the specific objectives of market research projects and services are quite diverse and can be designed to meet virtually any need.

The Market for Market Research Services

The UK is the second largest research market in the world (second only to the US) and the UK research sector is recognised as leading the way in the development of creative and innovative research approaches. According to the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Annual Business Survey[1] estimates the total UK turnover of the 3,143 enterprises involved in market research and opinion polling to be £3,401 million in 2010. This is a sizeable sector but considerably smaller than other marketing communications sectors such as advertising, which is five times larger[2].

Due to the relatively modest size of the sector, the supplier market is dominated by SMEs. For example, based on the MRS 2010 League Tables[3], which details the largest suppliers of market research, analysis, intelligence, ranked by Individual company UK-based turnover (£m) reported in 2010, once outside the Top 15 companies, all other suppliers are SMEs and there is a considerable number of small and micro business suppliers.

Of the 2010 global research revenues[4], the top 10 research organizations represented just over 52 per cent of the total research revenues. This sort of pattern is replicated nationally. Research companies are commercial and profit-making businesses with varied ownership patterns. The very large suppliers tend to be publicly listed or have parents that are public companies. At the lower end of the scale most of the boutique and small suppliers are privately owned and are more likely to be managed by research

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[1] Office of National Statistics (ONS), (2011) *Annual Business Survey*. Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 73.2: Market research and opinion polling.

[2] According to the *AA/Warc online Expenditure Report* total UK advertising expenditure was £15.5bn in 2010.

[3] See www.mrs.org.uk/intelligence/industry_statistics for more information about the MRS league tables.

[4] Based on figures from the ESOMAR's *Global Market Research Report 2011*.

practitioners, operating in single markets.

A wide range of market research services are available, but some research companies will specialise in some way or other. One division is between those offering 'full service' and those restricting operations to just part of the research process (data collection and data processing being the most common) or specific methodologies (for example qualitative).

Research companies also specialise in both the markets and products covered and the techniques used. Few research companies except the very largest take on any and every type of client although most work in quite a wide range of market sectors. There are two reasons for this. First, it is a matter of commercial advantage; generally the opportunities are greater with less sector specialisation except in sectors where a small number of research organisations dominate supply of specialist services such as in media measurement. Second, the principles of market research are in fact much the same regardless of the product or sector covered. However, in fully understanding clients' needs and providing relevant interpretation of the data, prior experience of the product or sector has clear benefits and quality implications.

The Role of the Market Research Society

The Market Research Society (MRS) is the largest research association in the world. It is the UK's professional body, trade association and regulator for market, social and opinion research.

MRS has nearly 6,000 individual members, who are individual research practitioners from all sides of research – supply-side, in-house research departments, academia, public and private sector. MRS has members in a wide range of public sector organisations including central government, local government and arm's length bodies.

MRS has over 420 MRS Company Partners, which are companies that have signed up to be members of MRS. The vast majority of Company Partners are supply-side organisations representing the spectrum of suppliers from the very smallest to the very largest[5], including suppliers to suppliers such as viewing facilities, data collection suppliers, etc. In addition to suppliers, a modest number of in-house research departments from private, public and the third sector are also Company Partners including BT, Tesco, Ofcom, National Savings & Investments and Cancer Research.

MRS is the Code-holder for market, social and opinion research. The MRS Code of Conduct is supported by a robust compliance framework including disciplinary and complaint procedures, and an advisory helpline, Codeline.

The UK government recognises MRS role as the regulator, and liaises frequently with MRS on all issues regarding research practice. Only research conducted by MRS members and Company Partners is regulated research. It is an essential basic hygiene factor for any public sector research that only regulated suppliers are used.

To view a full list of MRS Company Partners see: www.mrs.org.uk/join_mrs/company_partner_members

The former COI framework recognised **MRS membership and/or Company Partner status as a fundamental entry requirement** for any research suppliers to be considered for the COI research roster.

It is **essential this requirement continues** with the new post-COI framework.

The MRS Code of Conduct

The MRS Code of Conduct is the 'rule book' which determines how market, social and opinion research should be conducted. There has been an MRS Code of Conduct for over 50 years (the first was introduced in 1954). The current Code was updated in 2010, and contains all the appropriate ethical and legal requirements to ensure research is conducted appropriately.

A copy of the MRS Code of Conduct is included in Section G.

The former COI framework recognised that **research must be conducted in accordance with the MRS Code of** Conduct and structured its requirements appropriately.

It is **essential that this requirement** continues with the new post-COI framework.

Relationship with the Data Protection Act 1998

The MRS Code of Conduct has long since recognised the need to protect respondent and personal data collected as part of a research exercise. The MRS Code contained many of the requirements which become part of the UK's legal framework with the introduction of the Data Protection legislation in 1984 (and subsequently updated in 1998). This long history of protecting respondent and personal data, means that MRS members and Company Partners have a broad and deep understanding of data protection requirements and are ideally qualified to handle government data for the purposes of conducting government research.

This was recognised by the Information Commissioner, Christopher Graham, in a foreword which he recently gave to an MRS guideline where he stated:

> *"Consumers and citizens are becoming more and more aware of the value of their personal information, its value to them in terms of what could happen if it gets into the wrong hands or is misused in some way, and its commercial and financial value to the organisations who collect it. So it's more important than ever that organisations collecting and processing personal information take privacy and data protection seriously.* ***Clear and relevant guidance written by representative bodies with expert knowledge of a particular sector is invaluable to organisations looking to comply with the law. It is also a clear signal to consumers that their rights and concerns are important to the sector. I welcome the focussed and practical advice contained in the guidelines produced by the Market Research Society*** *and the Social Research Association and I'd advise all concerned to follow it closely. Consumers and citizens are wising up and will start picking and choosing between brands that respect their privacy and those that do not. Don't get left behind. It's not just the Information Commissioner you'll have to deal with."*

International Standards (ISOs) for Research

MRS supports the development of International Standards (ISOs) for research via the MRS Market Research Quality Standards Advisory Board.

Quality and process standards are one of the important considerations when procuring research services[6].

There are three relevant standards:

- ISO 20252:2012 *Market, Opinion and Social Research – Vocabulary and Service Requirements* establishes the terms and definitions as well as the service requirements for organizations and professionals conducting market, opinion and social research.

  The standard sets out requirements for a quality management system. The standard requires senior management to be responsible for quality of client service, and the development, interpretation and continual improvement of the system. It also requires the appointment of a quality manager with sufficient authority to be responsible for and have control over the entire system.

  The standard also sets out requirements for the confidentiality of research, project documentation, training, outsourcing, and reviewing the effectiveness of the quality system as a whole.

[6] Although it should be noted that for many of the smaller micro-businesses and niche qualitative specialists the standards have had a lower take-up due to perceived cost concerns, unlike with the larger, full service suppliers.

- ISO 26362:2009 *Access Panels in Market, Opinion and Social Research – Vocabulary and Service Requirements* specifies the terms and definitions, as well as the service requirements, for organizations and professionals who own and/or use access panels for market, opinion and social research. It develops the criteria against which access panel providers can be evaluated and against which the quality of access panels can be assessed.

  This standard is intended to complement and be used in connection with ISO 20252 where access panels are used for market social and opinion research. It is applicable to all types of access panels whether recruited and used online (via internet) or offline (via telephone, post or face-to-face interaction).

- The Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS) is an independently run scheme, which requires members to adhere to a set of benchmark market research industry standards. These cover the recruitment, training and appraisal of fieldwork staff, and the implementation of various administrative and validation procedures to maintain the quality and accuracy of data collected. This standard is based on the data collection elements of ISO 20252: 2012.

SECTION C: MRS Response to GPS Questions

GPS Question 1: Was the COI approach the right approach? If not what would be the right approach?

Benefits of the COI Approach

i. Access to Research Expertise

One of the main benefits of the COI approach was that researchers were employed within COI who understood research and knew how to buy it effectively.

One of the most difficult areas when buying research is ensuring that the business problem or challenge to be addressed has been properly identified and defined, and as a consequence the best research approach procured. Having specialists that understood research as a discipline meant that, for the most part, the right research solutions were procured and there was less wasted research, resources and time as a result.

Any approach which replaces the COI for procuring research should include some research specialists to ensure that the benefits of the COI approach are not lost. The recommended way to address this is to use the existing skills of good research suppliers much more in the early stage of the procurement process, setting the business problem to be addressed but leaving it to the suppliers to suggest and reason a suitable research solution rather than narrowing the specification (by methodology and so on) at the tendering stage[7].

Another part of the solution would be much greater involvement and inclusion of professional researchers already employed in government (in government departments, etc.) in the procurement process. As the 'in-house consultants' within government, they are essential in ensuring that the most appropriate research is being procured, and would provide the check and balance to ensure research suppliers are providing the right research solutions to address the right research problems. When internal expertise is not available and a buyer desires independent advice, there are also a wide range of practitioners who can act in a consultative capacity for buyers (this already occurs in some government departments).

These consultative and advisory skills are part of the Intellectual Property that a good research framework and roster takes care to select and reward. There is no cost to the buyer as suppliers pitch this advice as part of their proposals, and as long as at least 3 suppliers are sought to propose best solution via the RFP process the risk of conflict or bias is properly mitigated. However, one key part of the RFP process that needs to be adapted from procuring goods or low skill services is the requirement for open dialogue at the stage of problem definition and research solution formulation. Without this dialogue, bad problem definition and solution specification is designed into the process, so nominal costs saved on unit costs will be far outweighed by the failure to address the correct business issue or research need. This would result in the waste of public money.

Including researchers properly (both in-house resources and research suppliers) in the research procurement process, should result in better value for money for government

[7] The only exception to this would be purchasing of very specific research services such as simple field and tabulation where no external consultation expertise would be required.

as the research procured will be fit for purpose, address the right business challenges and provide the right answers to the right questions being asked within government.

ii. Pre-Qualification

The larger the number of full proposals received in relation to a particular bid the more resources are wasted – by procurers having to read and judge proposals and by suppliers in developing full written proposals. A two-stage or restricted procurement process, rather than a completely open one, would help to reduce the amount of wasteful and unproductive effort.

This can potentially be achieved at two levels:

ROSTER LEVEL

A significant improvement to procurement overall is if the various core documents and information requested (e.g. Health & Safety policies, data protection policies, etc.) were **standard** across government i.e. the same information is requested in the same format whatever the research, and should only be asked from successful bidders with the contract being subject to the policies being satisfactory (with clear guidelines being provided as to exactly what is required). Ideally this information should be held centrally as part of the roster process so that once a supplier has been successful in a roster bid, the information is not requested by subsequent RFP's, but obtained from a central procurement point within the GPS. This alone would reduce a huge amount of repetition and waste. MRS is very willing to work with the GPS in developing a standard approach for research information.

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT BID LEVEL

The PSQ/PQQ approach used by the COI was recognised as being the right kind of approach. The advantage of the PSQ was that it: identified who was interested - suppliers did not feel obliged to respond if they felt they were unsuitable or had no capacity and; gave COI some basis upon which to narrow down the number of bidders writing a full proposal.

A two-tier PSQ/PQQ is a good way to conduct sifts of suppliers, but what is required at each stage could be refined from the approach used by the COI.

The second stage should be when detailed information about the proposed research approach is requested. The benefit of this approach is that only those suppliers that can deliver what is required submit detailed research proposals; this reduces waste by ensuring suppliers are not spending days on submissions that will never be selected due to delivery problems, but would also mean that those undertaking the procurement selection only consider those approaches from suppliers that can deliver what is required.

Limitations of the COI Approach

It is recognised that the COI approach was not without its problems. Based upon discussions with MRS members and Company Partners the following observations were made:

- The split by research methodology was generally unwelcome. Research methodologies are research tools, not research business solutions. A better way would be for research suppliers to suggest the best research design to address business problems (including the use of various methodologies) rather than shoe horning research into a research methodology which might not necessarily be the best approach.
- The roster was very large which meant that some suppliers either received no or very little work.
- There was inflexibility in the roster which meant that once the roster was closed, those that were not included could not be re-considered in the future even if a supplier might have been perfect for a particular business problem e.g. suppliers with very specific sector experience, access to markets etc.
- A general perception (not necessarily a reality) that some suppliers benefited more from the COI roster than other suppliers e.g. once a supplier became known they were repeatedly used as they were 'familiar'. Although it was also acknowledged that COI worked hard at ensuring that all tenders were evaluated fairly according to a strict set of criteria to address this perception.
- The size of the roster and the cost of bidding was at times a limitation, particularly for some SMEs and micro-suppliers where bidding was cost-prohibitive. This reduced the breadth of suppliers that responded to certain bids, reducing the choices available for selection.
- The level of pre-contract discussions was fairly limited and was not necessarily undertaken in an environment likely to encourage open debate e.g. in open forums with all suppliers present. A more beneficial and ultimately cost-effective approach would be one-to-one discussions or a Q&A stage with all short-listed suppliers. This would encourage genuine discussion and honest feedback, ensuring the best procurement is made.

GPS Question 2: COI split lots between research methodology, research specialism, etc. Is this the right approach? If not what is?

Research suppliers are moving away from being methodology specific. Aside from very specific activities such as field and telephone data collection - and viewing facilities - most modern research suppliers offer 'method neutral' solutions rather than specific methodologies. A better approach is to find a research solution to address a business problem rather than procuring a research methodology that a supplier has been pigeon-holed into using.

As detailed above, having lots split between research methodologies was a limitation with the COI approach and failed to recognise that for any given business problem there are a variety of approaches that could address and answer the challenge. Many business problems and challenges can be answered by multiple research approaches; structuring too tightly at the beginning minimises the opportunity to use the most appropriate and, ultimately, the most cost effective solution.

The best way to initially filter between lots should be by research business specialism/subject matter. For example there could be lots for creative development, pretesting, campaign evaluation, customer insight, etc. Within the research business specialisms additional information such as experience, skills, tools (e.g. methodologies) can be gathered to assist the selection process.

MRS welcomes the opportunity given by the GPS to draft a list of research business specialisms that could be used to create the lots. See Section D for more information on this point.

GPS Questions 3: What should the research specification look like?

The research specification for creating the roster must:

- Be a two stage process to reduce the cost of bidding and cost of evaluation
    - Stage 1 PQQ should incorporate the Cabinet Office recommendations for a reduced PQQ to ensure that SME's are not inadvertently discriminated against. We recommend the use of the revised PQQ resulting from that review. Additional PQQ compliance criteria should be:
        - ✓ Research suppliers conduct research in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct and associated compliance procedures i.e. are MRS Company Partners or individual professional MRS members.
        - ✓ Suppliers demonstrate adequate compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and demonstrate understanding of the importance of Information Security e.g. by holding ISO27001 accreditation or by demonstrating understanding of key requirements recognising that not all research will require ISO 27001 level of security and that obtaining this standard may be cost and resource prohibitive for smaller and specialist suppliers.
        - ✓ Suppliers demonstrate that they possess the consultative skills required in a post COI environment where they will play a key advisory role in helping buyers define business problems and translate them to research specifications.
    - Stage 2 full roster tender should be available to those suppliers that comply with the PQQ requirements
- Clearly understand and document the policy and business needs of the end buyers of research, who should not be expected to define their needs in research methodologies but rather by research business specialism (as per Q2 answer).
- Selection criteria should be based around suppliers demonstrating expertise in delivering advice and positive outcomes, measured against business and research objectives around lots based on business need. NB care should be taken not to mark down demonstration of valid expertise in different contexts – private sector experience in aiding innovation will be of equal merit to public sector for example.
- Demonstration of expertise can be by case study, mock briefs, customer references, etc.
- Pricing assessment should clearly separate data collection costs (e.g. cost per panel interview, omnibus question) from advisory costs (man day fees for interpretation of data and translation to research and business /policy recommendation). Attempts in the commercial world to combine the two into costs per unit simply price out good

advice and intellectual capital, ultimately leading to dissatisfaction with the perceived quality of research outputs.

The research specification for issuing work from the agreed roster must:

- include access to specialist research expertise to ensure that the right kind of research is procured, and to ensure cost effectiveness and maximum value for money
- be structured around business problems as detailed in the response to Question 2
- include a clear statement of expectations/objectives
- specify key questions to be answered and indications of respondents to be targeted
- include a PSQ/PQQ stage as detailed in response to Question 1
- include pre-contract discussions (in line with recommendations that have been issued by the Cabinet Office)
- have a sensible timeframe for completion for every stage of the competition: between the notice of bids and submission date; between the date of decision and the start date of the contract; and the length of the contract
- have clear processes detailed – including next steps
- include as a minimum a broad indication of available budget (we have received evidence from one government department that used indicative budgets which did a comparison between the indicative budget and the final actual cost. They found they made a saving of 11.2% of total budget)
- include pricing principles that the GPS expects bidders to adhere to and that these are also respected by the GPS and not changed post-contract
- be objective and transparent regarding the process and selection of suppliers - including a clear set of evaluation criteria, the number of suppliers asked to bid as initial and final selection stage and a requirement for buyers to provide clear and prompt feedback as to why suppliers were/were not selected
- include information about what outputs are expected
- respect the Intellectual Property Rights and copyright by being clear who holds IPR and research data. Research is an intellectual capital, professional service business. The intellectual input of suppliers and professional researchers into any bid process must be respected
- recognise that suppliers are expected to conform to and be regulated by a professional standards of research ethics, such as the MRS Code of Conduct

To aid this process MRS is developing guidance on good research procurement and this should be a helpful tool in the future for GPS as it develops its research procurement approach.

GPS Question 4: What are the workable numbers for the research roster? There is the legal minimum but what should be the maximum? Is a small roster better?

The approach to research roster is dependent on the way in which other questions raised by GPS are approached e.g. the research specification, the splitting of lots, etc. There is also a bigger question as to whether the GPS intends to use the roster for procuring research outside of the former COI remit. If the framework and roster is to be used for procuring other research being undertaken more broadly in government departments then other factors would need to be considered to ensure that the roster was sufficient to meet all the wider government research needs. Most importantly the framework agreements that are in place and/or being developed would need to be considered to ensure that the roster approach was suitable for the framework requirements.

If the intention is for the roster to be used more widely, MRS would need to engage further with government researchers to assess their specific needs, and reserves the right to make subsequent submissions should this be the case.

In response to the specific question about the size of the roster to replace the COI approach, assuming that the GPS takes on board other MRS recommendations regarding lots, etc. the roster should be structured as follows:

- Each lot should be of a different size based upon the research business specialism. Some lots would be very niche and would have relatively small rosters – say 10 or so. An example might be performance tracking for large scale audience where some suppliers have scale or technology advantages and as such a smaller roster is appropriate. Others which are very broad, involving for example primarily qualitative techniques, would be larger circa 15+ as there are a wide range of niche specialists in small and micro business plus the very large suppliers that provide qualitative research services. To arbitrarily reduce roster size would exclude the ability to conduct effective research within some specialist stakeholder and audience groups.
- The rosters may also require some granulation (sub-filters which might include methodology) to ensure that rosters still meet the needs of users.
- The roster should be evolving and flexible, not fixed and closed. For example, new suppliers and new technological solutions should be able to be considered that might have missed the roster approval process. Also, should government business and research needs change, there is flexibility to enable the GPS to select suppliers not on the roster but that ideally meet the new challenges. MRS has a proposal for how this might be achieved – by the creation of an 'open' lot - see Section D for full details.
- The roster enables organisations that have been accepted on the roster to partner with suppliers/researchers that are not on the roster but may bring specialist skills and expertise that are ideal for any particular project.
- The roster enables microbusinesses and independent researcher to partner with another to create a consortium offering a broad range of specialisms.

There also remains the question how the research framework will relate to the Agile Route to Market (ARM). Will the framework be only for large scale 'traditional' research approaches and the ARM for the smaller more niche projects? MRS has a number of concerns if there is no link between the research framework and the ARM:

- Smaller suppliers will be marginalised to the research ARM without the option to access the main research framework. There are many excellent smaller research suppliers that are more than suitable for meeting government needs via the main framework. It would be a huge disadvantage to SMEs to restrict them in this way.
- What would be the regulations and quality assurance provisions for the ARM? The same requirements should be in place for either approach.
- How to assess whether a project should be placed on the framework or ARM? How is the £100,000 over 4 years threshold derived and measured? What happens if a pilot project starts on ARM as below the threshold but becomes permanent and thus exceeds the monetary threshold?

- Much more detail is required as to how the research ARM and the research framework would relate. It is essential that the two are linked and are not isolated.
- Although the ARM is clearly suitable for SMEs and microbusinesses, this should not mean that the smaller suppliers are unable to be successful on the main research framework. Similarly large suppliers should not be excluded from the ARM. Both frameworks should offer level playing fields for all suppliers.

MRS has an alternative suggestion as to how ARM could operate. As previously stated, it is essential when using public money to purchase market research that only regulated suppliers are used; as without this there is no compliance framework to fall back on should problems arise with the research. MRS publishes an annual print and online directory of research suppliers, the Research Buyer's Guide: www.theresearchbuyersguide.com/

Only those researchers and suppliers that are either MRS members or MRS Company Partners can be listed in the directory. The directory allows buyers to search for suppliers against the following criteria:

- Market sectors e.g. full service, field and tabulation, etc.
- Expert areas e.g. behavioural change, communications/PR
- Research services e.g. depth interviews, deliberative
- Respondent specialities e.g. disabled people, ethnic groups, digital consumers, etc.
- Regions of the UK (if there is a preference for local suppliers)

Full detail of the current RBG criteria is detailed in Section E. MRS is very willing to expand the criteria to specifically meet GPS and government buyer needs, should additional information need to be gathered.

Rather than create a whole new procurement system to service research procurement for the ARM, why not use the RBG? Suppliers of every size from the very largest to the smallest micro-businesses are included on the RBG (there are over 500 companies) and the directory is constantly updated with the addition of any new suppliers which meet the MRS membership criteria. Using the RBG to service research needs for ARM, ensures that the agile route is open to all regulated suppliers, but without the restriction of a roster (which we understand is not what is wanted for this route); instead the advanced search criteria can be used to help buyers narrow down their search criteria to suppliers which specifically meet their needs.

The advantages of this approach are significant:

- saves government money
- ensures only quality regulated suppliers are being used
- provides value for money by ensuring only those suppliers that meet government's criteria are shortlisted for ARM projects
- access to an evolving supplier list, unlike a closed roster, ensuring access to new suppliers and techniques
- provides a fair, open and transparent process which will enable buyers to demonstrate how they went about their selection process and provide a clear rationale for their supplier choices during any post-procurement evaluation process.

GPS Question 5: What should be the pricing structure for research?

Research is an intellectual capital professional service, the same as other professional services such as management consultancy, accountancy, law, etc. It is not a 'widgets' type procurement process (see Figure 1: Spectrum of Services).

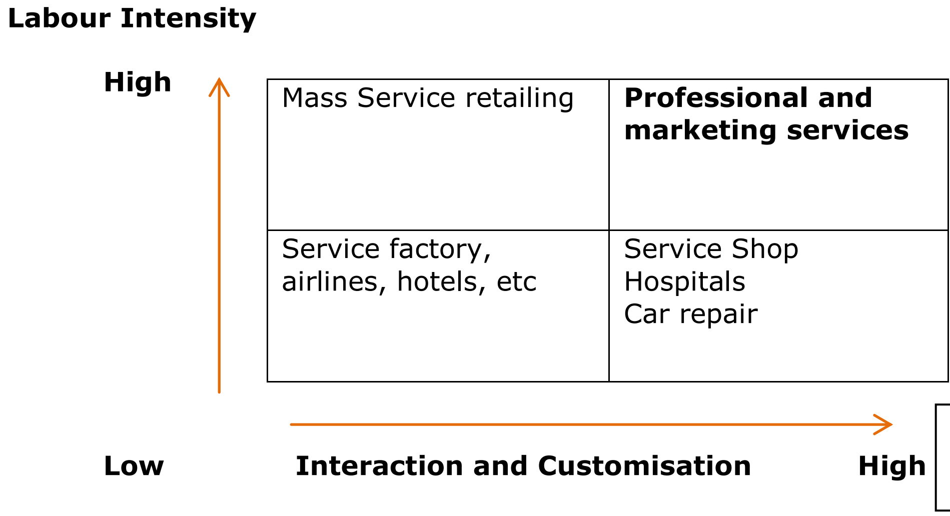

Figure 1: Spectrum of Services *(based on Crocker, Moore and Emmett (2012))*

A fundamental misunderstanding about research is that because there are specific methodologies e.g. focus groups, interviews, etc. research can be purchased on some kind of 'methodology menu' with unit costs decreasing due to increased volume. This is profoundly the wrong approach to research procurement. This only applies to very limited and generally lower level research approaches such as buying questions on an omnibus.

A better approach would be to break out the key parts of the research process e.g. project management, data capture, analysis and reporting plus direct out of pockets expenses. For example for direct costs for qualitative methodologies:

For Qualitative Groups:	For Depth Interviews:	For Online Qualitative
Recruitment	Recruitment	Set up costs
Incentives	Incentives	Recruitment
Viewing costs/hosting	Viewing costs/hosting	Incentives
Moderation	Moderation	Hosting
Transcription	Transcription	Moderation
Analysis	Analysis	Analysis
Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Face to face meetings	Face to face meetings	Face to face meetings
Other costs (please specify)	Other costs (please specify)	Other costs (please specify)

The level and experience of executives due to be involved in a project could also be detailed. This is one way to assess the degree/level of intellectual capital that would be applied for any given project. Similarly the approach to evaluating price should recognise the value of intellectual capital input; just accepting the lowest cost as an indication of 'value' would be totally underestimate the real value that excellent research and insight can bring to any business challenge or problem.

GPS Question 6: Any other feedback?

Terms and conditions

As part of this exercise MRS gathered feedback on the standard procurement terms and conditions used by government, which cause considerable problems for research suppliers. In addition, MRS has reviewed the terms and conditions being recommend for framework 1 and identified a number of significant issues which would be damaging to all suppliers large and small, and by their nature will almost certainly drive some excellent small and micro suppliers not to apply for the framework due to disproportionate burdens being placed on suppliers by government. The areas of most concern are:

- The obligation to pay 0.5% of all charges for services that have been invoiced to any contracting body each month under a call-off agreement, which cannot be passed on to the contracting body under a call-off agreement and is excluded from the limitation of liability. This is anti-competitive and entirely unjustifiable.
- The significant number, and scale, of warranties which need to be given by all suppliers.
- If a framework agreement or contract is terminated and an alternative supplier is retained, the original suppliers must bear the costs. It is unreasonable to expect suppliers to shoulder costs for changes in contracts (and indeed what costs would this relate to?), the decision for which they are unable to influence.
- Within call-off terms supplier's liability is uncapped unless specified in a Letter of Agreement. This would be critical for any SME, which would be less able to cover the cost of providing adequate insurance to cover unlimited liability.
- Similarly, within the call-off terms, a broad and unlimited supplier liability for any losses suffered by an agreement. Again, this would be a prohibitive burden for any SME and would actively discourage SMEs for responding to government tenders.

MRS supports the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply and Cabinet Office's recommendations to open-up the procurement market for SMEs, this is particularly pertinent to research when you consider that the vast majority of research suppliers are SMEs. The inclusion of the above terms and conditions categorically do not support these wider recommendations and we strongly recommend that the terms and conditions for the proposed research framework are not based on those used for framework 1 and are instead much more suitable for a research supplier market which is dominated by SMEs.

It should also be noted that all research suppliers that are MRS members or Company Partners, must adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct. The MRS Code of Conduct places ethical requirements (and legal requirements such as the Data Protection Act) upon researchers to protect respondents (those that take part in research) and also to protect the reputation of research, particularly by ensuring that research results are not misused. Such Code requirements must be recognised when procuring research. For example, the GPS should recognise supplier's terms and conditions, in addition to their own, as the suppliers will be structured around meeting MRS Code of Conduct requirements.

Other general feedback from the consultation exercise

During this exercise some additional comments, not relating particularly to the questions raised by GPS, but which are related, were raised:

- It is vital that GPS are held accountable for procurement practices that evolve and that there is an open and transparent way for suppliers to warn of bad or unethical buying practice and seek rectification. The Cabinet Office use of the "Mystery Shopping" team for Contract Finder procurement has served as a useful feedback and improvement loop for that area of government procurement. This could be used for Framework two or MRS would consider some sort of role in filtering feedback and recommending improvements. This is particularly apposite if GPS are proposing a levy for funding its own costs, as for Framework 1. This could be seen as a *de facto* levying a "tax" on suppliers and may well lead to supplier complaints.
- The process for credit checking needs to be revised. MRS has evidence from suppliers that 'failed' the Experian credit checks that they were told afterwards that this was a mistake - but even so they could not be considered as the process was closed. Any procurement approach has to have a system to rectify mistakes which suppliers are unable to control. Furthermore, many credit checks are relatively meaningless for small and microbusiness suppliers.
- There have been some negative comments on 'Bravo Solutions' and other emerging procurement portals - particularly poor understanding of research, poor targeting, email notification systems that don't work and multiple logins that keep changing. It was noted that the 'Bravo Solutions' helpdesk was very good - but it needed to be due to the high level of usage by suppliers because of the problems identified, and which represent a real barrier to submitting proposals – even to existing clients, which of course affects continuity and value to government.

SECTION D: Proposal for Lots

i. Research business specialism lot structure

The GPS asked MRS to specifically review the former COI classifications for research/business specialisms to ascertain whether these might be suitable for the new framework. Figure 2 summarises the information provided by GPS:

QUALITATIVE SPECIALISMS	QUANTITATIVE SPECIALISMS
Creative Development	Standard Campaign Evaluation
Campaign/Business Strategy Development	Integrated/Holistic Campaign Evaluation
Campaign Evaluation	Interactive TV Evaluation
Interactive TV	Word of Mouth Evaluation
Word of Mouth	Ambient Media Evaluation
Ambient Media	Campaign/Business Strategy Research
Brand Strategy/Development/Evaluation	Brand Strategy Research
Service Design & Development	Brand Strategy/Development/Evaluation
Public Perception Research	Corporate Social Responsibility
Reputation Evaluation/Corporate ID	Public Perception Research
Immersion	Reputation Evaluation/Corporate ID
Ethnography	Customer Satisfaction
Customer Satisfaction	Employee Satisfaction/Engagement
Employee Satisfaction/Engagement	Customer Journey Mapping
Customer Journey Mapping	Mystery Shopping
Mystery Shopping	Financial Research
Financial Research	Bespoke Panel Research
Segmentation	International Research
Semiotics	Segmentation
Website Development & Usability	

Figure 2: COI Research Specialisms

Before any changes are made, MRS recommends that the GPS reviews how the COI specialisms were used in practice. The view of some stakeholders was that some of the COI specialisms were used very rarely; such an evaluation should be a start point for any lot streamlining.

However, MRS did undertake some initial soundings and other recommendations include basing the structure on research business specialisms. Figure 3 provides an initial suggestion, although we would stress that due to the time constraints MRS has been unable to consult on this proposal as widely as is necessary and should this approach have traction within GPS we request that we have time to refine our proposal with our stakeholders.

Business requirement	Covering
Policy / strategic plan formulation, delivery plans and budgeting	• Opportunity /problem identification and quantification • Policy design and formulation • Public consultation • (Brand) and Communications development
Performance tracking and problem identification	• Customer Insight including analytical reviews of specific behaviour • Behavioural Economics • Financial metrics • Share /reach of target audience • Perception /reputation tracking • Customer Journey Mapping • User /customer satisfaction • User /customer segmentation
Policy /proposition / operational development	• Idea generation and innovation • Concept development • Stakeholder input and research • Testing and learning • Roll out and implementation
Stakeholder approval	• Stakeholder input and research • Random Control Testing
Operational management	• Operational improvement research • Mystery shopping • Channel testing • Complaints handling and accountability • Employee feedback and satisfaction

Figure 3: Tentative lot structure for research business specialisms

ii. GPS Proposal for a "Full Service" lot

GPS also asked MRS to consult with stakeholders about the introduction of a "Full Service" lot.

This proposal had more traction with the larger suppliers than with those that are SMEs. This is hardly surprising as it is perceived that larger suppliers, who by their nature provide full service, are more likely to be the main beneficiaries of this approach. Having said that, the larger suppliers had reservations about this approach:

- How would such a lot operate in practice?
- Would being on the full service lot mean that those suppliers would automatically be included on all other lots? Conversely would being on the full service lot exclude suppliers from access to other lots?

- What is the definition of full service? Many of the traditional 'full service' suppliers may not actually provide all services, particularly those that are highly specialist or niche.

MRS consulted with research buyers within government about the full service lot proposal. The idea was not warmly received; many of the researchers we spoke to were cautious, wary that the existing of such a lot could become a 'default' lot.

It should be remembered that the market for research services is dominated by SMEs (only the top 15 suppliers are not SMEs). Any GPS framework should meet the needs of all suppliers, whether large or small (particularly in light of the Cabinet Office recommendations to make government procurement more accessible to SMEs).

An alternative recommendation is for the GPS to operate an 'open lot'.

As previously stated, MRS publishes an annual print and online directory of research suppliers, the Research Buyer's Guide: www.theresearchbuyersguide.com/. Only those researchers and suppliers that are either MRS members or MRS Company Partners can be listed in the directory. The directory allows buyers to search for suppliers against criteria such as market sectors, expert areas, research services, respondent specialities, regions of the UK, etc.

Why not make the RBG in effect GPS's 'open lot'? Suppliers of every size from the very largest to the smallest micro-businesses are included on the RBG (there are over 500 companies) and the directory is constantly updated with the addition of any new suppliers which meet the MRS membership criteria. Using the RBG to service research needs not covered by the other lots, ensures that the framework is open to all regulated suppliers, but without the restriction of a limited lot; instead the advanced search criteria can be used to help buyers narrow down their search criteria to suppliers which specifically meet their needs.

The advantages of this approach are significant:

- saves government money
- ensures only quality regulated suppliers are being used
- provides value for money by ensuring only those suppliers that meet government's criteria are shortlisted for research projects
- access to an evolving supplier list, unlike a closed roster, ensuring access to new suppliers and techniques
- provides a fair, open and transparent process which will enable buyers to demonstrate how they went about their selection process and provide a clear rationale for their supplier choices during any post-procurement evaluation process.

SECTION E: MRS Research Buyer's Guide Current Criteria

Market Sector	Area of Expertise	Research Services	Respondent Specialities	Research Location
Accountancy	3D Body Sizing	Advanced Statistical Techniques	Affluent	UK
Agriculture	Access Panels	Audience Measurement	Baby Boomers	Republic of Ireland
Automotive	Advertising	Benchmark Studies	College/University Students	Northern/Western Europe
Catering/Hospitality	Analytics	Biometrics	Digital Consumers	Central Europe
Charities/Voluntary	Behavioural Analysis	Brainstorming	Disabled People	Eastern Europe
Chemicals	Behavioural Change	CAI Programmers	Ethnic Minorities	Russia
Computers – hardware	Brand/Branding	CAPI	Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender	Scandinavia
Computers – software	Business-to-Business	CATI	Hard-to-Reach	USA
Drinks (Alcoholic)	Clinical Trials	Co-creation	High Net Worth	South America
Drinks (Non-alcoholic)	Communications/PR	Coding/Data Entry	Hispanic Markets	Central America
Durables/White goods	Competitive Intelligence	Consultancy	Kids	Canada
Education/Training	Concept Testing	Continuous	Mature/Midlife	Caribbean
Electrical Goods	Consumer	Copy Testing	Mothers/Parents	Middle East
Energy	Crowdsourcing	Custom	Senior Citizens	Africa
Engineering	Customer Communities	Data Mining	Single Parents	India/Pakistan
Entertainment – in home	Customer Loyalty	Deliberative Research	Unemployed	China
Entertainment – out of home	Customer Satisfaction	Depth Interviews	Women	Japan
Environmental	Data Analytics	Desk Research	Youth/Teens	Australasia
Events/Conferences	Data Fusion	Ethnography		Central Asia
Fashion/Clothing	Diary Studies	Event Evaluation		Pacific Rim
Finance/Investment – Business	Direct Marketing/Promotions	Executive/Industrial Interviews		Worldwide
Finance/Investment – Personal	E-Commerce	Eye Tracking		Other
FMCG – General	Emerging Markets	Face-to-Face		
Food	Employee Research	Foreign Languages		
Gambling/Online Gaming	Forecasting	Gamification		
Government/Local Authority	International	Geo-demographic modelling		
Healthcare	Multi-Mode Fieldwork	Group Discussions/Focus Groups		
Home Entertainment	Neuromarketing	Hall Tests		
Home/Garden/DIY	New Product Development	In-Home/Doorstep Interviews		
Industrial	Online Panels	In-Store Interviews		

Market Sector	Area of Expertise	Research Services	Respondent Specialities	Research Location
Information Technology	Opinion Polling	Internet Research/CAWI		
Insurance	Packaging/Design	Kiosk Interviews		
Interactive Entertainment	Pricing	mCAPI		
Internet/New Media	Product Testing	Media Monitoring		
Legal	Reputation Management	Mobile Web Surveys		
Media (Broadcast)	Simulated Test Markets	Multivariate Stats and Modelling		
Media (Mobile)	Social Media	Mystery Shopping		
Media (Print)	Social Networking	Observation		
Non-Profit	Social Research	Omnibus Surveys		
Nutrition	Trendspotting	Online Communities		
Office Equipment	Usage & Attitude	Online Focus Group Hosting		
Online	Volumetrics	Online Results and Data Portals		
Pets/Petcare	Web 2.0 Research	Online Surveys		
Pharmaceutical	Web Analytics	Panels		
Politics		Postal Research		
Property/Construction/Housing		Qualitative		
Public Services/Utilities		Quantitative		
Retail		Questionnaire Design		
Social Media		Recruiting		
Sponsorship		Report Writing		
Sport/Leisure/Arts		Retail Audits		
Telecommunications		Script Writers		
Tobacco		Semiotics		
Toiletries/Beauty Products		SMS		
Toys/Games		Social/CGM Monitoring		
Transportation		Street/Mall Interviews		
Travel/Tourism		Syndicated Surveys		
Wellness/Fitness		Tabulation & Analysis		
		Telephone Interviewing		
		Tracking		
		Transcription		
		Viewing Facilities		
		Web Usability Research		

SECTION F: Research results from the Independent Consultants Group - SME's views on current government procurement[8]

The Independent Consultants Group (ICG) is a group of over 400 research professionals. During the MRS consultation on procurement, Step Beyond Market Research a member of ICG, conducted some research among the ICG membership to identify attitudes to current government procurement. The word cloud results are below. The views demonstrate frustration among the independent research community with the current government procurement process and a desire for a more flexible, simple and SME friendly approach to research procurement.

Sample Size=25

[8] Extract taken from Step Beyond Market Research (2012) research report: *How do ICG members feel about research procurement?*

MRS Evidence Matters™

CODE OF CONDUCT

April 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Market Research Society (MRS)

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 has a diverse membership of individuals at all levels of experience and seniority within agencies, consultancies, support services, client-side organisations, the public sector and the academic community.

It also serves MRS Company Partners agencies, suppliers of support services, buyers and end-users – of all types and scale who are committed throughout their organisations to supporting the core MRS values of professionalism, research excellence and business effectiveness.

In consultation with its individual members and Company Partners, MRS supports best practice by setting and enforcing industry standards. The commitment to uphold the MRS Code of Conduct is supported by the Codeline service and a wide range of specialist guidelines.

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 enables its members and Company Partners to be very well-informed through the provision of a wide range of publications, information services and conferences.

MRS offers many opportunities for meeting, communicating and networking across sectors and disciplines, as well as within specialisms.

As 'the voice of market research', MRS defends and promotes research in its advocacy and representational efforts.

Through its media relations and public affairs activities, MRS aims to create the widest possible understanding of the process and value of market, social and opinion research, and to achieve the most favourable climate of opinion and legislative environment for research.

The Code of Conduct

This edition:

This edition of the Code of Conduct was agreed by MRS to be operative from 1 April 2010.

It is a fully revised version of a self-regulatory Code which has been in existence since 1954.

Who it applies to:

MRS Members

All Members of the MRS must comply with this Code. It applies to all Members, whether they are engaged in consumer, business to business, social, opinion, international or any other type of research project.

It applies to all Members irrespective of the sector or methodologies used e.g. quantitative, qualitative, mystery shopping.

It also applies to MRS Members when conducting non-market research exercises using research techniques e.g. database building or research projects which are used for purposes other than research. Further regulations that apply to these activities are set out in MRS Regulations on Using Research Techniques for Non-Research Purposes and rule B48.

MRS Company Partners

MRS Company Partner organisations are required to take steps to ensure that all individuals employed or engaged by them (whether MRS Members or not) comply with this Code as if they were MRS Members.

The purpose of the Code:

The Code of Conduct is designed to support all those engaged in market, social or opinion research in maintaining professional standards.

The Code is also intended to reassure the general public and other interested parties that research is carried out in a professional and ethical manner.

The principles of the Code:

These are the principles of the MRS Code of Conduct:

1. Researchers shall ensure that participation in their activities is based on voluntary informed consent.

2. Researchers shall be straightforward and honest in all their professional and business relationships.

3. Researchers shall be transparent as to the subject and purpose of data collection.

4. Researchers shall respect the confidentiality of information collected in their professional activities.

5. Researchers shall respect the rights and well being of all individuals.

6. Researchers shall ensure that respondents are not harmed or adversely affected by their professional activities.

7. Researchers shall balance the needs of individuals, clients, and their professional activities.

8. Researchers shall exercise independent professional judgement in the design, conduct and reporting of their professional activities.

9. Researchers shall ensure that their professional activities are conducted by persons with appropriate training, qualifications and experience.

10. Researchers shall protect the reputation and integrity of the profession.

The structure of the Code:

Section A of the Code sets out general rules of professional conduct.

Section B of the Code sets out more specific rules of professional conduct as they apply in different aspects of research.

The Appendix lists a selection of other research codes which may be of interest.

All MRS Members and MRS Company Partners must adhere to the rules in Sections A and B of the Code.

MRS Guidelines and Regulations

A full list of guidelines, which provide additional best practice guidance, appear on the MRS website www.mrs.org.uk. Unless otherwise stated these guidelines are not binding. Binding guidelines currently in force are as follows:

1. MRS guidance on data protection (which has been written and agreed with the regulator, the Information Commissioner's Office) is binding on Members (except those that are published as consultative drafts).

MRS regulations are binding on Members. At the time this Code was published, the regulations were:

2. MRS Regulations on Using Research Techniques for Non-Research Purposes.
3. MRS Regulations on Administering Incentives and Free Prize Draws.
4. MRS Regulations on the Use of Predictive Diallers.

Members should keep themselves informed of any amended or new regulations. All documents can be found on the MRS website.

MRS Disciplinary Regulations

Under the MRS Disciplinary Regulations, membership may be withdrawn or other disciplinary action taken, if a Member is deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct. This is defined as a Member:

a) being guilty of any act or conduct which, in the opinion of a body appointed by Council, might bring discredit on the profession, the professional body or its Members; or
b) being found by a body appointed by Council to be guilty of any breach of the rules set out in Sections A and/or B of this Code of Conduct; or
c) being found by a body appointed by Council to be guilty of any breach of the provisions set out in any MRS binding guideline laid down from time-to-time by the Council; or
d) being found by a body appointed by Council to be guilty of any breach of any other regulations laid down from time-to-time by Council; or
e) failing without good reason to assist the professional body in the investigation of a complaint; or
f) in the absence of mitigating circumstances having become bankrupt or having made any arrangement or composition with his/her creditors; or
g) being found to be in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998 or other comparable legislation applicable outside the UK. Or being found, by a body appointed by Council, to have infringed any of the 8 data protection principles set out in the Act or similar provisions set out in comparable legislation outside the UK.

Note that where more than one MRS Member is involved in a matter under complaint, whilst the MRS reserves the right to proceed with an investigation and other relevant processes against all such Members under its Disciplinary Regulations, it will usually apply its discretion to proceed only against the most senior MRS Member(s) involved.

MRS Company Partner Complaints Procedure

Under the MRS Quality Commitment and its associated Complaints Procedure, MRS Company Partners are committed to comply the MRS Code of Conduct and to co-operate with MRS to assist in the early resolution of any complaints.

General

It is the responsibility of Members and Company Partners to keep themselves updated on changes or amendments to any part of this Code which are published from time to time and announced in publications and on the MRS website. If in doubt about the interpretation of the Code, members may consult the MRS Codeline Service which deals with MRS Code enquiries and advises on best practice.

The MRS Code of Conduct does not take precedence over national law. Members and Company Partners responsible for international research shall take its provisions as a minimum requirement and fulfil any other responsibilities set down in law or by nationally agreed standards.

Definitions for the Purposes of the MRS Code of Conduct

Agency:
Agency includes any individual, organisation, department or division, including any belonging to the same organisation as the Client which is responsible for, or acts as, a supplier.

Children:
Children are defined as those aged under 16. See Section B for full details about children.

Client:
Client includes any individual, organisation, department or division, including any belonging to the same organisation as the Member, which is responsible for commissioning or applying the results from a research project.

Company Partner:
An organisation with MRS Members that has signed the MRS Company Partner Service Quality Commitment which applies throughout the organisation.

Consultant:
Any individual or organisation that provides research services. Consultants can also be a sub-contractor in the research relationship.

Data Collection Process:
A data collection process is any process used to obtain information from or about Respondents. It includes, but is not limited to, interviews, questionnaires, discussion guides, and stimulus materials.

Identity:
The identity of a Respondent includes, as well as his/her name and/or address, any other information which offers a reasonable chance that he/she can be identified by anyone who has access to the information.

Incentive:
Any benefit offered to respondents to encourage participation in a project.

Interview:
An interview is any form of contact intended to obtain information from or about a Respondent or group of Respondents. This can involve passive as well as direct contact.

Interviewer:
Person involved in the collection of data.

Member:
A Member is an individual who has been admitted to membership of the MRS in one of the four categories set out in Article 3 of the Articles of Association (i.e. Nominated Members, Full Members, Associate Members, and Affiliate Members).

Mystery Shopping:
Mystery shopping or Mystery customer research are the same activity and can be defined as: The use of individuals trained to experience and measure any customer service process, by acting as potential customers and in some way reporting back on their experiences in a detailed and objective way.

The Profession:
The profession is the body of research practitioners and others engaged in (or interested in) marketing, social and opinion research or the application of its techniques.

Professional body:
Professional body refers to MRS.

Publication:
The communication of information to the public.

Recruiter:
Person who identifies and invites Respondents to participate in projects.

Research:
Research is the collection and analysis of data from a sample or census of individuals or organisations relating to their characteristics, behaviour, attitudes, opinions or possessions. It includes all forms of market, opinion and social research such as consumer and industrial surveys, psychological investigations, qualitative interviews and group discussions, observational, ethnographic, and panel studies.

Records:
The term records includes anything containing information relating to a research project and covers all data collection and data processing documents, audio and visual recordings.
Primary records are the most comprehensive record of information on which a project is based; they include not only the original data records themselves, but also anything needed to evaluate those records, such as quality control documents. Secondary records are any other records about the Respondent and the research results.

Respondent:
A Respondent is any individual or organisation from or about whom data are collected or who is approached for interview.

Responsible Adult:
An individual who has personal accountability for the well-being of a child, for example a parent, guardian, teacher, nanny or grandparent. See Section B for full details about children.

Sub-contractor:
Any individual or organisation that undertakes a part of a project .

Introduction to Sections A and B

Sections A and B below set out rules of professional conduct.

Section A sets out general rules.

Section B sets out more specific rules as they apply in different aspects of research.

All rules set out in Sections A and B must be observed and adhered to by all MRS Members with any involvement, or with any responsibility, at any level in a matter. This means that more than one MRS Member might be in breach of a rule in respect of the same matter.

Note that where more than one MRS Member is involved in a matter under complaint, whilst the MRS reserves the right to proceed with an investigation and other relevant processes against all such Members under its Disciplinary Regulations, it will usually apply its discretion to proceed only against the most senior MRS Member(s) involved.

All MRS Members should be aware that if found under the MRS Disciplinary Regulations to be in breach of any of the rules in Sections A and/or B of this Code, he/she will be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct and disciplinary action may be taken against him/her.

For further information about the MRS disciplinary procedure, MRS Members are referred to the relevant section in the Introduction to this Code and to the Disciplinary Regulations themselves (which are available on www.mrs.org.uk)

Participants in the MRS Company Partner Service are also required, in accordance with the terms of the Service , to take steps to ensure that the Code of Conduct is adhered to by all individuals employed or engaged by them (whether MRS Members or not). (The rules of this service are detailed in the Company Partner Quality Commitment.)

Section A: General Rules of Professional Conduct

A1 Research must conform to the national and international legislation relevant to a given project including in particular the Data Protection Act 1998 or other comparable legislation applicable outside the UK.

A2 Members must take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest with Clients or employers and must make prior voluntary and full disclosure to all parties concerned of all matters that might give rise to such conflict.

A3 Members must act honestly in dealings with Respondents, Clients (actual or potential), employers, employees, sub-contractors and the general public.

A4 The use of letters after an individual's name to indicate membership of MRS is permitted only in the case of Fellows (FMRS), Full Members (MMRS) and Associate Members (AMRS). These letters must not be used by any individual not admitted in any of these MRS categories of membership.

Comment: All MRS members may point out, where relevant, that they belong to the appropriate category of the professional body.

A5 Members must not speak or imply that they speak on behalf of MRS unless they have the written authority of Council or of some duly delegated individual or committee.

A6 Members must not make false claims about their skills and experience or those of their organisation.

A7 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that others do not breach or cause a breach of this Code.

Comment: This includes:

Members taking reasonable steps to ensure that the people with whom they work (including other Members, non-member research practitioners, colleagues, Clients, Consultants, Sub-contractors) are sufficiently familiar with this Code that they are unlikely to breach or cause it to be breached unknowingly or unintentionally, and

Members with responsibility for implementing processes, procedures and contracts, taking reasonable steps to ensure that they are such that this Code is unlikely to be breached or caused to be breached by others unknowingly or unintentionally.

A8 Members must not act in a way which might bring discredit on the profession, MRS or its Members.

A9 Members must not disparage or unjustifiably criticise other Members or other non-member researchers.

A10 Members must take all reasonable precautions to ensure that Respondents are not harmed or adversely affected by their professional activities.

Section B: Rules of Professional Conduct Applicable to Research

This section relates to specific aspects of work commonly carried out by MRS Members and other research practitioners.

Some of the rules in this section are legal requirements. Members should be aware that this Code does not cover all relevant legislative requirements of Members and it is the responsibility of all Members to familiarise themselves with these. Members should be aware in particular that breaches of the Data Protection Act 1998 or other comparable legislation outside the UK is a ground for disciplinary action under MRS Disciplinary Regulations.

Designing and Setting up a Research Project

B1 Members must not knowingly take advantage, without permission, of the unpublished work of another research practitioner which is the property of that other research practitioner.

Comment: This means, where applicable, that Members must not knowingly carry out or commission work based on proposals prepared by a research practitioner in another organisation unless permission has been obtained.

B2 All written or oral assurances made by any Member involved in commissioning or conducting projects must be factually correct and honoured by the Member.

B3 Members must take reasonable steps to design research to the specification agreed with the Client.

B4 Members must take reasonable steps to design research which meets the quality standards agreed with the Client.

B5 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of themselves and Clients are governed by a written contract and/or internal commissioning contract.

B6 Members must not disclose the identity of Clients or any confidential information about Clients without the Client's permission unless there is a legal obligation to do so.

Use of Client Databases, Lists and Personal Contact Details

B7 Where lists of named individuals are used e.g. Client databases, the list source must be revealed at an appropriate point in the interview, if requested. This overrides the right to Client anonymity.

Respondents' Rights to Anonymity

B8 The anonymity of Respondents must be preserved unless they have given their informed consent for their details to be revealed or for attributable comments to be passed on.

Comment: Members should be particularly careful if sample sizes are very small (such as in business and employee research) that they do not inadvertently identify organisations or departments and therefore individuals.

B9 If Respondents have given consent for data to be passed on in a form which allows them to be personally identified, Members must:

- demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the data will only be used for the purpose for which the data were collected and
- fully inform Respondents as to what will be revealed, to whom and for what purpose.

B10 If Respondents request individual complaints or unresolved issues to be passed back to a Client (for example in customer satisfaction research), Members must comply with that request. The comments/issues to be passed back to a Client must be agreed with the Respondent and must not be linked back to any other data or used for any other purpose without the explicit consent of the Respondent.

Re-interviewing Respondents

Comment: A re-contact question asks permission for a follow-up interview, i.e. an interview for which a respondent is selected as a consequence of participating in a previous interview.

Any re-contact question should be agreed at the design stage with the client to cover any planned or possible consequential interviews.

B11 A follow up interview with a Respondent can be carried out only if the Respondent 's permission has been obtained at the previous interview.
The only exception to this is re-contact for quality control purposes.

B12 Any re-contact must match the assurances given to Respondents at the time that permission was gained e.g. when re- contact was to occur, the purpose and by whom.

B13 Respondent details must not be passed on to another third party for research or any other purposes without the prior consent of the Respondent. The only exception to this is if the Client is the Data Controller of the Respondent data.

Designing the data collection process

B14 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure all of the following:

- that the data collection process is fit for purpose and Clients have been advised accordingly
- that the design and content of the data collection process or instrument is appropriate for the audience being researched;
- that Respondents are able to provide information in a way that reflects the view they want to express, including don't know/ prefer not to say where appropriate;
- that Respondents are not led towards a particular point of view;
- that responses are capable of being interpreted in an unambiguous way;
- that personal data collected are relevant and not excessive.

Preparing for Fieldwork

Communicating with Respondents

B15 If there is to be any recording, monitoring or observation during an interview, Respondents must be informed about this both at recruitment and at the beginning of the interview.

Comment: This does not include monitoring (listening to but not recording) telephone interviews for the purpose of quality control where interviewers have been informed that such monitoring takes place.

B16 Members must not knowingly make use of personal data collected illegally**.**

Fieldwork

B17 Respondents must not be misled when being asked for cooperation to participate.

B18 A Respondent's right to withdraw from a project at any stage must be respected.

B19 Members must ensure that Respondents are able to check without difficulty the identity and bona fides of any individual and/or their employer conducting a project (including any sub-contractors).

B20 Calls for face to face in home interviews and calls to household landline telephone numbers or mobile telephone numbers (including text messages) must not be made before 9am Monday to Saturday, 10am Sunday or after 9pm any day, unless by appointment.

Comment: The only exception to this is where local rules and customs differ from UK practice.

B21 Members must ensure that all of the following are clearly communicated to the Respondent:

- the name of the interviewer (an Interviewer's Identity Card must be shown if face to face);
- an assurance that the interview will be carried out according to the MRS Code of Conduct;
- the general subject of the interview;
- the purpose of the interview;
- if asked, the likely length of the interview;
- any costs likely to be incurred by the Respondent.

B22 Respondents (including employees in employee research) must not be unduly pressurised to participate.

B23 Members must delete any responses given by the Respondent, if requested, and if this is reasonable and practicable.

B24 Recruiters/ interviewers must not reveal to any other Respondents the detailed answers provided by any Respondent or the identity of any other Respondent interviewed.

Incentives

B25 Where incentives are offered, Members must clearly inform the Respondent who will administer the incentive.

B26 Client goods or services, or vouchers to purchase client goods or services, must not be used as incentives in a research project.

Comment: Incentives need not be of a monetary nature to be acceptable to a Respondent as a token of appreciation.

With the Client's permission, an offer to supply the Respondent with a brief summary report of the project's findings can sometimes prove a better alternative encouragement to participate in a research project. Other alternatives are for example:

- *Charity donations*
- *Non-monetary gifts*
- *Prize draws (for Prize draws the rules, as detailed in MRS Regulations on Administering Incentives and Free Prize Draws, must be adhered to.)*

Children

Comment: The intention of the following provisions regarding the age of Respondents is to protect children who are potentially vulnerable members of society and to strengthen the principle of public trust.

B27 Consent of a parent or responsible adult (acting in loco parentis) must be obtained before interviewing a child under 16.

Comment: A responsible adult (acting in loco parentis) is an individual who has personal accountability for the well-being of a child, for example, a guardian, teacher, nanny or grandparent. It is not an individual who has a limited or specific responsibility such as a lifeguard, instructor or employer.

Under special circumstances, permission to waive parental consent may be obtained, but only with the prior approval of the MRS Market Research Standards Board.

B28 Where the consent of a parent or responsible adult is required Members must ensure that the adult is given sufficient information about the nature of the project to enable them to provide informed consent.

B29 Members must ensure that the parent or responsible adult giving consent is recorded (by name, relationship or role).

B30 For self-completion postal/paper data collection, Members must ensure that:

- when it is known, (or ought reasonably to be known) that all or a majority of Respondents are likely to be under 16, these are addressed to the parent or responsible adult; and
- when it is known, (or ought reasonably to be known) that all or a majority of Respondents are likely to be under 16, that all questionnaires carry a

note or notice explaining that consent is required for all children to participate.

B31 For projects administered using an electronic communications network or service, where it is known (or ought reasonably be known that) some Respondents are likely to be under the age of 16, Members must ensure that Respondents are asked to give their age before any other personal information is requested. Further, if the age given is under 16, the child must be excluded from giving further personal information until the appropriate consent from a parent or responsible adult has been obtained and verified.

B32 In all cases, Members must ensure that a child has an opportunity to decline to take part, even though a parent or a responsible adult has given consent on their behalf. This remains the case if the project takes place in school.

B33 Personal information relating to other people must not be collected from children unless for the purposes of gaining consent from a parent or a responsible adult.

Qualitative Exercises

B34 At the time of recruitment (or before the exercise takes place if details change after recruitment), Members must ensure that Respondents are told all relevant information as per rule B21 and:

- the location of the exercise and if it is to take place in a viewing facility; and
- whether observers are likely to be present; and
- when and how the exercise is to be recorded; and
- the likely length of the exercise including the start and finish time; and
- the Member, moderator and/or agency that will be conducting the exercise;

B35 Members must ensure that completed recruitment questionnaires, incentive and attendance lists, transmissions or recordings or any other information or outputs which identify Respondents are not passed to or accessed by Clients or other third parties without the explicit permission of the Respondents; and Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that the information or outputs are used only for the purpose agreed at the time of data collection.

B36 If Members have agreed with Clients that observers are to be present, Members must inform all observers fully about their legal and ethical responsibilities.

B37 Members must make clear to Respondents the capacity in which observers are present; Clients must be presented as such, even if they are also Researchers and/or Members of MRS.

Comment: This also applies to Members themselves when an employee of a Client organisation, advertising/design/PR agency etc.

B38 There are some situations where observers could adversely affect Respondents' interests and/or wellbeing, and in such instances, Members must ensure that Respondents are told at an appropriate stage the identity of any observer who might be present during the exercise.

B39 Members must ensure that, in instances where observers may know Respondents (as may occur in business-to-business research), Respondents are informed before the start that their interviews are to be observed, with a warning that the observer may include Clients who already know them.

B40 The issue of anonymity and recognition is a particular problem in business and employee research. If guarantees cannot be given then Members must ensure that observers are fully introduced before the group/interview begins and Respondents given a chance to withdraw.

B41 Members must ensure that Respondents on attendance at a venue are informed about the nature of any observation, monitoring or recording and Respondents are given the option of withdrawing from the exercise.

B42 Members must ensure that any material handed to Clients or included in reports, without consent from Respondents, is anonymised e.g. transcripts containing verbatim comments and projective material.

Comment: Special care must be taken when the universe is small, as in the case of some business to business exercises.

Mystery Shopping Projects

Comment: The objective of a mystery shopping project is to provide management information on processes and/or quality of service, in order to aid training and retraining plans, improvements in service and hence increase customer satisfaction etc.

For mystery shopping exercises the 'Respondent' will be a staff member who is subject to the mystery shop and as such there are different levels of allowable disclosure and data usage.

B43 For mystery shopping of a Client's own organisation, Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that:

- the Client's employees have been advised by their employer that their service delivery may be checked through mystery shopping; and
- the objectives and intended uses of the results have been made clear by the employer to staff (including the level of reporting if at branch/store or individual level); and
- if mystery shopping is to be used in relation to any employment terms and conditions, that this has been made clear by the employer.

B44 Since competitors' employees cannot be advised that they may be mystery shopped, Members must ensure that their identities are not revealed. Members must ensure that employees are not recorded (e.g. by using audio, photographic or video equipment). This applies in all instances where employees cannot or have not been advised that they could be mystery shopped.

B45 Where there is mystery shopping of Client's agents or authorised distributors (as well as any organisations which are responsible to a compliance authority), Members must ensure that:

- the employees to be mystery shopped have been advised by their employer and/or/regulator that their service delivery and/or regulatory compliance may be checked by mystery shopping; and
- the objectives and intended uses of the results have been made clear by the employer and/or regulator (including the level of reporting if at branch/store or individual level); and
- if mystery shopping is to be used in relation to any employment/contractual/regulatory terms and conditions this has been made clear by the employer and/or regulator.

B46 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that mystery shoppers are fully informed of the implications and protected from any adverse implications of conducting a mystery shopping exercise.

Comment: For example, mystery shoppers must be made aware by the Member that their identity may be revealed to the organisation/individual being mystery shopped if they use personal cards to make purchases, loan arrangements, etc., and credit ratings may be affected.

Observation and Ethnographic Exercises

B47 Members must ensure that all of the following are undertaken when observation equipment is being used:

- Clear and legible signs must be placed in areas where surveillance is taking place.
- Cameras must be sited so that they monitor only the areas intended for surveillance.
- Signs must state the individual/organisation responsible for the surveillance, including contact information and the purpose of the observation.

Comment: Rule A10 of the Code requires Members to take all reasonable precautions to ensure that Respondents are not harmed or adversely affected. This may have particular pertinence in an ethnographic and observational setting. Issues to be considered are:

- *the need to be sensitive to the possibility that their presence may, at times, be seen as an unwarranted intrusion; here safeguards, and the ability to end the observation quickly, must be built into any ethnographic situation.*
- *the need to be sensitive to the possibility that Respondents may become over involved with them at a personal level.*
- *the need to be sensitive to the possibility of 'observation fatigue'; again there is value in having the ability to end the observation quickly within any ethnographic situation.*

Using Research Techniques for Non-Research Purposes

B48 Members must adhere to the rules in the separate regulations, *Using Research Techniques for Non-Research Purposes*, when conducting exercises which are for purposes in addition to, or other than, research.

Analysis and Reporting of Findings

B49 Members must ensure that conclusions disseminated by them are clearly and adequately supported by the data.

B50 Members must comply with reasonable requests to make available to anyone the technical information necessary to assess the validity of any published findings from a project.

B51 Members must ensure that their names, or those of their employer, are only used in connection with any project as an assurance that the latter has been carried out in conformity with the Code if they are satisfied on reasonable grounds that the project has in all respects met the Code's requirements.

B52 Members must allow Clients to arrange checks on the quality of fieldwork and data preparation provided that the Client pays any additional costs involved in this.

B53 Members must provide Clients with sufficient technical details to enable Clients to assess the validity of results of projects carried out on their behalf.

B54 Members must ensure that data tables include sufficient technical information to enable reasonable interpretation of the validity of the results.

B55 Members must ensure that reports include sufficient information to enable reasonable interpretation of the validity of the results.

B56 Members must ensure that reports and presentations clearly distinguish between facts and interpretation.

B57 Members must ensure that when interpreting data they make clear which data they are using to support their interpretation.

B58 Members must ensure that qualitative reports and presentations accurately reflect the findings of the project in addition to the interpretations and conclusions.

B59 Members must take reasonable steps to check and where necessary amend any Client-prepared materials prior to publication to ensure that the published results will not be incorrectly or misleadingly reported.

Comment: This means that Members are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure that any press releases include either final report details (including question wording for any questions quoted) or details of where the information can be obtained (e.g. via a website link).

B60 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that findings from a project, published by themselves or in their employer's name, are not incorrectly or misleadingly presented.

B61 If Members are aware, or ought reasonably to be aware, that findings from a project have been incorrectly or misleadingly reported by a Client he/she must at the earliest opportunity:

- refuse permission for the Client to use their name further in connection with the incorrect or misleading published findings; and
- publish in an appropriate forum the relevant technical details of the project to correct any incorrect or misleading reporting.

Data Storage

B62 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that all hard copy and electronic lists containing personal data are held, transferred and processed securely in accordance with the relevant data retention policies and/or contractual obligations.

B63 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that all parties involved in the project are aware of their obligations regarding security of data.

B64 Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that the destruction of data is adequate for the confidentiality of the data being destroyed. For example, any personal data must be destroyed in a manner which safeguards confidentiality.

Appendix

The MRS Code of Conduct applies to all MRS Members and Company Partners regardless of location. However, Members and Company Partners should be aware of other relevant codes that may apply to the research they undertake. A short selection of codes it supplier here for reference.

ICC and ESOMAR
ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social Research
www.esomar.org and www.iccwbo.org

Australia
AMSRS Code of Professional Behaviour
www.mrsa.com.au

Canada
MRIA Code of Conduct and Good Practice
www.mria-arim.ca

Germany
Declaration for the Territory of the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social Research
www.adm-ev.de

Italy
ASSIRM Code of Professional Ethics
www.assirm.it

Japan
JMRA Code of Marketing Research
www.jmra-net.or.jp

United States
CASRO Code of Standards
www.casro.org

SECTION H: Research terms - Glossary

The Following glossary has been reproduced from the book, Market Research: An Integrated Approach (2012) by Alan Wilson. This was in agreement with the book's author for the specific purpose of inclusion in this paper. Should the GPS or any other government department wish to use this information more widely, copyright permission must be sought by the user directly from the book's publisher.

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Access panels A database of individuals who have agreed to be available for surveys of varying types and topics. Rising rates of refusals and non response, make it more difficult to recruit for a single survey, therefore sampling from a pool of potentially willing marketing research respondents can be seen as an appropriate way of saving time and money.

Accompanied shopping A specialised type of individual depth interview, which involves respondents being interviewed while they shop in a retail store and combines observation with detailed questioning.

Alternative hypothesis The hypothesis where some difference or effect is expected (i.e. a difference that cannot occur simply by chance).

Ambiguous question A badly constructed question which results in respondents and researchers reading different meanings into what is being asked, resulting in inappropriate or unexpected answers.

Animatics A type of stimulus material where key frames for a television advertisement are drawn or computer generated with an accompanying sound track.

Annotation method An approach taken to analyse qualitative data using codes or comments on the transcripts to categorise the points being made by respondents.

ANOVA Analysis of variance. A test for the differences among the means of two or more variables.

Area sampling A type of cluster sampling in which the clusters are created on the basis of the geographic location of the population of interest.

Audience's thinking sequence The sequence of thoughts that people go through when they are being communicated with.

Audits An examination and verification of the movement and sale of a product. There are three main types: wholesale audits, which measure product sales from wholesalers to retailers and caterers, retail audits, which measure sales to the final consumer, and home audits, which measure purchases by the final consumer.

Bar chart A chart which uses a series of bars that may be positioned horizontally or vertically to represent the values of a variety of items.

Beauty parades The procedure of asking a number of agencies to present their proposals verbally to the client company. The procedure is used to assist clients in selecting the research agency that will undertake a research project.

Blog An abbreviated title for the term web log, meaning a frequent, chronological publication of personal thoughts and ideas. Twitter is a form of microblogging service that allows an individual to publish their blog type opinions and ideas in short Tweets (text-based messages of up to 140 characters).

Brand mapping A projective technique which involves presenting a set of competing brand names to respondents and getting them to group them into categories based on certain dimensions such as innovativeness, value for money, service quality and product range.

Brand personalities A projective technique which involves respondents imagining a brand as a person and describing their looks, their clothes, their lifestyles, employment, etc.

CAPI Computer-assisted personal interviewing. Where lap-top computers or pen-pad computers are used rather than paper-based questionnaires for face-to-face interviewing.

Cartoon completion A projective technique which involves a cartoon that the respondent has to complete. For example, the cartoon may show two characters with balloons for dialogue. One of the balloons sets out what one of the characters is thinking or saying, while the other is left empty for the respondent to complete.

CATI Computer-assisted telephone interviewing. CATI involves telephone interviewers typing respondent's answers directly into a computer-based questionnaire rather than writing them on a paper-based questionnaire.

CATS Completely automated telephone interviews which use interactive voice technology and require no human interviewer. Respondents answer the closed-ended questions with their touch tone telephone.

Causal research Research that examines whether one variable causes or determines the value of another variable.

Census Research which involves collecting data from every member of the population of interest.

Chat rooms An Internet-based facility that can be used for online focus groups where individuals are recruited who are willing to discuss a subject online usually using text.

Chi-square A statistical test which tests the 'goodness of fit' between the observed distribution and the expected distribution of a variable.

Closed question A question that requires the respondent to make a selection from a predefined list of responses. There are two main types of closed questions: dichotomous questions with only two potential responses and multiple response questions with more than two.

Cluster analysis A statistical technique used to classify objects or people into mutually exclusive and exhaustive groups on the basis of two or more classification variables.

Cluster sampling A probability sampling approach in which clusters of population units are selected at random and then all (one-stage cluster sampling) or some (two-stage cluster sampling) of the units in the chosen clusters are studied.

Coding The procedures involved in translating responses into a form that is ready for analysis. Normally involves the assigning of numerical codes to responses.

Coefficient alpha See Cronbach alpha

Coefficient of determination Measure of the strength of linear relationship between a dependent variable and independent variables.

Concept boards A type of stimulus material which uses a set of boards to illustrate different product, advertising or pack designs.

Confidence level The probability that the true population value will be within a particular range (result +/− sampling error).

Conjoint analysis A statistical technique that provides a quantitative measure of the relative importance of one attribute over another. It is frequently used to determine what features a new product or service should have and also how products should be priced.

Constant sum scales A scaling approach which requires the respondent to divide a given number of points, usually 100, among a number of attributes based on their importance to the individual.

Construct validity An analysis of the underlying theories and past research that supports the inclusion of the various items in the scale. It is most commonly considered in two forms, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Content analysis The analysis of any form of communication, whether it is advertisements, newspaper articles, television programmes or taped conversations. Frequently used for the analysis of qualitative research data.

Content analysis software Software used for qualitative research which basically counts the number of times that pre-specified words or phrases appear in text.

Content validity A subjective yet systematic assessment as to how well a rating scale measures a topic of interest. For example a group of subject experts may be asked to comment on the extent to which all of the key dimensions of a topic have been included.

Contrived observation A research approach which involves observing participants in a controlled setting.

Convenience sampling A non-probability sampling procedure in which a researcher's convenience forms the basis for selecting the potential respondents (i.e. the researcher approaches the most accessible members of the population of interest).

Convergent validity A measure of the extent to which the results from a rating scale correlate with those from other scales or measures of the same topic/construct**.**

Cookies Text files placed on a user's computer by web retailers in order to identify the user when he or she next visits the website.

Continuous research *See* Longitudinal research.

Correlation A statistical approach to examine the relationship between two variables. Uses an index to describe the strength of a relationship.

Critical path method (CPM) A managerial tool used for scheduling a research project. It is a network approach that involves dividing the research project into its various components and estimating the time required to complete each component activity.

Cronbach Alpha A statistical test used to measure the split half reliability of a summated rating scale. Also known as coefficient alpha.

Cross-sectional research Research studies that are undertaken once only involving data collection at a single point in time providing a 'snapshot' of the specific situation. The *opposite* of longitudinal research.

Cross-tabulations Tables that set out the responses to one question relative to the responses to one or more other questions.

Customer database A manual or computerised source of data relevant to marketing decision making about an organisation's customers.

Cut and paste method of analysis A method for analysing qualitative research data where material is cut and pasted from the original transcript into separate sections or tables relating to each topic. Cutting and pasting can either be done physically using scissors or using a word processing computer package.

Data analysis errors Non-sampling errors that occur when data is transferred from questionnaires to computers by incorrect keying of information.

Data analysis services Organisations, sometimes known as tab shops, that specialise in providing services such as the coding of completed questionnaires, inputting the data from questionnaires into a computer and the provision of sophisticated data analysis using advanced statistical techniques.

Data cleaning Computerised checks made on data to identify inconsistencies in the data and to check for any unexplained missing responses.

Data conversion The reworking of secondary data into a format that allows estimates to be made to meet the researcher's needs.

Data display Summarising and presenting of information in order that relationships or connections can be identified and conclusions can be drawn.

Data elements The individual pieces of information held in a database (e.g. a person's name, gender or date of birth). These elements mean little independently but when combined they provide information on a customer or group of customers.

Data entry The transfer of data from a questionnaire into a computer by any of the following means: either directly in computer-assisted interviewing, by an operator copy-typing the responses from questionnaires, or by the optical scanning of printed questionnaires.

Data errors Non-sampling errors that occur during data collection or analysis that impact on the accuracy of inferences made about the population of interest. The main types of data error are respondent errors (where respondents give distorted or erroneous answers), interviewer errors and data analysis errors.

Data fusion Data fusion involves the fusing together of different types information to present a more complete picture of an individual or a group of individuals.

Data mining An activity where highly powerful computers are used to dig through volumes of data to discover patterns about an organisation's customers and products.

Data protection legislation Legislation created to protect against the misuse of personal data (i.e. data about an individual person).

Data validation The verification of the appropriateness of the explanations and interpretations drawn from qualitative data analysis.

Database A collection of related information that can be accessed and manipulated quickly using computers.

Deduplication The process through which data belonging to different transactions or service events are united for a particular customer. Software will be used to either automatically eliminate duplicates or identify potential duplicates that require a manual inspection and a decision to be taken.

Degrees of freedom (d.f.) The number of observations (i.e. sample size) minus one.

Depth interview *See* Individual depth interview.

Descriptive research Research studies that describe what is happening in a market without potentially explaining why it is happening.

Descriptive statistics Statistics that help to summarise the characteristics of large sets of data using only a few numbers. The most commonly used descriptive statistics are measures of central tendency (mean, mode and median) and measures of dispersion (range, interquartile range and standard deviation).

Dichotomous questions Questions with only two potential responses (e.g. Yes or No).

Directories A listing of individuals or organisations involved in a particular activity. May be available in printed format, CD-ROMs or on the Internet.

Discriminant validity A measure of the extent to which the results from a rating scale do not correlate with other scales from which one would expect it to differ.

Discussion guide *See* Topic list.

Disproportionate stratified random sampling A form of stratified random sampling (*See* Stratified random sampling) where the units or potential respondents from each population set are selected according to the relative variability of the units within each subset.

Double-barrelled question A badly constructed question where two topics are raised within one question.

Doughnut chart A form of pie chart which allows different sets of data (e.g. for different years) to be shown in the same chart.

Editing The process of ensuring that questionnaires were filled out correctly and completely.

E-mail survey A self-completion survey that is delivered to pre-selected respondents by e-mail. The questionnaire can take the form of text within the e-mail or can be sent as an attachment (either as a word processor document or as a piece of software which runs the questionnaire).

Ethnography A form of participant observation that involves the study of human behaviour in it's natural setting. For example, a researcher may accompany consumers (sometimes with a video camera) as they engage in a wide range of activities such as going on a shopping trip with friends. It involves the researcher exploring the interactions between group members, their reaction to various events and experiences, how they consider different courses of action and take decisions.

Executive interviews Quantitative research interviews with business people, usually undertaken at their place of work, covering subjects related to industrial or business products and services.

Experimental research Research which measures causality and involves the researcher changing one variable (e.g. price, packaging, shelf display, etc.), while observing the effects of those changes on another variable (e.g. sales) and controlling the extraneous variables.

Exploratory research Research that is intended to develop initial ideas or insights and to provide direction for any further research needed.

External data Secondary data that is sourced from outside the organisation requiring the research to be conducted.

Eye tracking The use of equipment in the observation and recording of a person's unconscious eye movements when they are looking at a magazine, a shop display or a web site.

Face-to-face survey Research which involves meeting respondents face-to-face and interviewing them using a paper-based questionnaire, a lap-top computer or an electronic notepad.

Factor analysis A statistical technique that studies the interrelationships among variables for the purpose of simplifying data . It can reduce a large set of variables to a smaller set of composite variables or factors by identifying the underlying dimensions of the data.

Field agencies Agencies whose primary activity is the field interviewing process focusing on the collection of data through personal interviewers, telephone interviewers or postal surveys.

Focus groups *See* Group discussions.

Frequency distributions *See* Hole counts.

Full service agencies Marketing research agencies that offer the full range of marketing research services and techniques. They will be able to offer the entire range of qualitative and quantitative research approaches as well as be capable of undertaking every stage of the research from research design through to analysis and report writing.

Funnel sequence A sequence for ordering questions in a questionnaire based on moving from the generalities of a topic to the specifics.

GANTT chart A managerial tool used for scheduling a research project. It is a form of flowchart that provides a schematic representation incorporating the activity, time, and personnel requirements for a given research project.

Geodemographic profiling A profiling method which uses postal addresses to categorise different neighbourhoods in relation to buying power and behaviour.

Grounded theory A set of analysis techniques that were developed in the 1960s by two medical sociologists, Glaser and Strauss(1967). It is more commonly used by academic researchers rather than marketing research practitioners in areas where little is known about a subject or where a new approach to understanding behavior is required. It is a systematic method of generating theory and understanding through qualitative data collection and analysis.

Group depth interviews *See* Group discussions.

Group discussions Also known as focus groups or group depth interviews. These are depth interviews undertaken with a group of respondents. In addition to the increased number of respondents, they differ from individual depth interviews in that they involve interaction between the participants.

Group dynamics The interaction between group members in group discussions.

Group moderator The interviewer responsible for the management and encouragement of participants in a group discussion.

Hall tests Research undertaken in a central hall or venue commonly used to test respondents' initial reactions to a product or package or concept. Respondents are recruited into the hall by interviewers stationed on main pedestrian thoroughfares nearby.

Hidden observation A research approach involving observation where the participant does not know that they are being observed.

Holecounts The number of respondents who gave each possible answer to each question in a questionnaire. Sometimes known as frequency distributions.

Hypothesis An assumption or proposition that a researcher puts forward about some characteristic of the population being investigated.

Hypothesis testing Testing aimed at determining whether the difference between proportions is greater than would be expected by chance or as a result of sampling error.

Implicit assumption A badly constructed question where the researcher and the respondent are using different frames of reference as a result of assumptions that both parties make about the question being asked.

Independent samples Samples in which the measurement of the variable of interest in one sample has no effect on the measurement of the variable in the other sample.

Individual depth interview An interview that is conducted face-to-face, in which the subject matter of the interview is explored in detail using an unstructured and flexible approach.

Information explosion The major growth in information available in a wide range of formats from a wide range of sources. This growth has principally resulted from improvements in the capabilities and speeds of computers.

In-home/doorstep interviewing Face-to-face interviews undertaken within the home of the respondent or on the doorstep of their home.

Internal data Secondary data sourced from within the organisation that is requiring the research to be conducted.

Internet monitoring The measurement undertaken by web-based retailers and suppliers to monitor the number of times different pages on their sites are accessed, what search engines bring people to the site, what service provider browsers are used as well as tracking the specific time at which the site is accessed. Using cookies, the retailers may also be able to identify when users revisit the site.

Interquartile range A measure of dispersion that calculates the difference between the 75th and 25th percentile in a set of data.

Interval data Similar to ordinal data with the added dimension that the intervals between the values on a scale are equal. That means that when using a scale of 1 to 5, the difference between 1 and 2 is the same as the difference between 4 and 5. However, the ratios between different values on the scale are not valid (e.g. 4 does not represent twice the value of 2).

Interviewer bias Bias and errors in research findings brought about by the actions of an interviewer. This may be influenced by who the interviewer interviews, how the interview is undertaken and the manner in which responses are recorded.

Interviewer errors *See* Interviewer bias.

Interviewer guide *See* Topic list.

Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS) A quality control scheme for interviewers in the UK. The scheme is aimed at improving selection, training and supervision of interviewers and is jointly run by the Market Research Society, the Association of Market Survey Organisations, the Association of British Market Research Companies, the Association of Users of Research Agencies, and a number of leading research companies.

Judgement sampling A non-probability sampling procedure where a researcher consciously selects a sample that he or she considers to be most appropriate for the research study.

Kiosk based Survey A survey often undertaken at an exhibition or trade show using touch screen computers to collect information from respondents. Such computers can be programmed to deliver complex surveys supported by full colour visuals as well as sound and video clips. They can be much cheaper to administer in comparison with the traditional exit survey undertaken by human interviewers.

Leading question A badly constructed question that tends to steer respondents toward a particular answer. Sometimes known as a loaded question.

Least squares approach A regression procedure that is widely used for deriving the best-fit equation of a line for a given set of data involving a dependent and independent variable.

Lifestyle databases Databases that consist of data derived from questionnaire responses to ‘lifestyle surveys’. Such surveys make it clear to respondents that the data is being collected for the creation of a database rather than for marketing research purposes.

Lifetime value The present value of the estimated future transactions and net income attributed to an individual customer relationship.

Likert scales A scaling approach which requires the respondent to state their level of agreement with a series of statements about a product, organisation or concept. The scale using the descriptors Strongly agree; Agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree; Strongly disagree is based on a format originally developed by Renis Likert in 1932.

Line graph A two-dimensional graph that is typically used to show movements in data over time.

List brokers Organisations that sell off-the shelf data files listing names, characteristics and contact details of consumers or organisations.

Loaded question *See* Leading question.

Longitudinal research A study involving data collection at several periods in time enabling trends over time to be examined. This may involve asking the same questions on a number of occasions of either the same respondents or of respondents with similar characteristics. Sometimes known as continuous research.

Mall intercept interviews *See* Street interviews.

Marketing concept The proposition that the whole of the organisation should be driven by a goal of serving and satisfying customers in a manner which enables the organisation's financial and strategic objectives to be achieved.

Marketing decision support system (MDSS) An interactive computerised information source designed to assist in marketing decision making.

Marketing research The collection, analysis and communication of information undertaken to assist decision making in marketing.

Marketing research process The sequence of activities and events involved in undertaking a marketing research project.

Mean The arithmetic average which is calculated by summing all of the values in a set of data and dividing by the number of cases.

Measures of central tendency Measures that indicate a typical value for a set of data by computing the mean, mode or median.

Measures of dispersion Measures that indicate how 'spread out' a set of data is. The most common are the range, the interquartile range and the standard deviation.

Mechanised observation A research approach involving observation of behaviour using automated counting devices, scanners or other equipment.

Median When all of the values in a data set are put in ascending order, the median is the value of the middle case in a series.

Metric data A name for interval and ratio data.

Mixed Mode Studies Research studies that use a variety of collection methods in a single survey (e.g. using the same questionnaire online and face to face) in order to improve response rates.

Mode The value in a set of data that occurs most frequently.

Multiple-choice questions Questions which provide respondents with a choice of predetermined responses to a question. The respondents are asked to either give one alternative that correctly expresses their viewpoint or indicate all responses that apply.

Multiple discriminant analysis A statistical technique used to classify individuals into one of two or more segments (or populations) on the basis of a set of measurements.

Multiple regression analysis A statistical technique to examine the relationship between three or more variables and also to calculate the likely value of the dependent variable based on the values of two or more independent variables.

Multi-stage sampling A sampling approach where a number of successive sampling stages are undertaken before the final sample is obtained.

Multivariate data analysis Statistical procedures that simultaneously analyse two or more variables on a sample of objects. The most common techniques are multiple regression analysis, multiple discriminant analysis, factor analysis, cluster analysis, perceptual mapping and conjoint analysis.

Mystery shopping A form of participant observation which uses researchers to act as customers or potential customers to monitor the processes and procedures used in the delivery of a service.

Netnography Sometimes known as online ethnography and webnography is the ethnographic study of communities on the World Wide Web. It generally involves a researcher fully participating as a member of the online community.

Newsgroups Internet-based sites that take the form of bulletin boards/discussion lists on specific topics. They involve people posting views, questions and information on the site.

Nominal data Numbers assigned to objects or phenomena as labels or identification numbers that name or classify but have no true numeric meaning.

Non-metric data A name for nominal and ordinal data.

Non-probability sampling A set of sampling methods where a subjective procedure of selection is used resulting in the probability of selection for each member of the population of interest being unknown.

Non-response errors An error in a study that arises when some of the potential respondents do not respond. This may occur due to respondents refusing or being unavailable to take part in the research.

Non-sampling error Errors that occur in a study that do not relate to sampling error. They tend to be classified into three broad types: sampling frame error, non-response error and data error.

Normal distribution A continuous distribution that is bell-shaped and symmetrical about the mean. This means that in a study, 68.27 per cent of the observations fall within plus or minus one standard deviation of the mean, approximately 95.45 per cent fall within plus or minus two standard deviations, and approximately 99.73 per cent fall within plus or minus three standard deviations.

Null hypothesis The hypothesis that is tested and is the statement of the status quo where no difference or effect is expected.

Observation A data gathering approach where information is collected on the behaviour of people, objects and organisations without any questions being asked of the participants.

Omnibus surveys A data collection approach that is undertaken at regular intervals for a changing group of clients who share the costs involved in the survey's set-up, sampling and interviewing.

One-way mirrors Used in qualitative marketing research to enable clients and researchers to view respondent behaviour during a discussion. Behind the mirror is a viewing room, which consists of chairs for the observers and may contain video cameras to record the proceedings.

On-line communities A community of individuals who interact on-line focusing on a particular interest or simply to communicate.

On-line group discussion These are group discussions or private chat rooms where a group is recruited who are willing to discuss a subject online usually using text (webcam and microphone are sometimes used). Participants are recruited by phone, e-mail or through an online special interest group. They react to questions or topics posed by the moderator and type in their perceptions or comments taking account of other participants' inputs.

On-line survey A self-completion questionnaire which is delivered via the Internet. It may appear on the computer screen as a standard questionnaire where the respondent scrolls down the page completing each question. Alternatively, it can take the form of an interactive questionnaire with questions appearing on the screen one at a time.

Open-ended questions Questions which allow respondents to reply in their own words. There are no pre-set choices of answers and the respondent can decide whether to provide a brief one-word answer or something very detailed and long. Sometimes known as unstructured questions.

Ordinal data Numbers that have the labelling characteristics of nominal data, but also have the ability to communicate the rank order of the data. The numbers do not indicate absolute quantities, nor do they imply that the intervals between the numbers are equal. and type in their perceptions or comments taking account of other participants' inputs

Paired interviews An in-depth interview involving two respondents such as married couples, business partners, teenage friends or a mother and child.

Panel research A research approach where comparative data is collected from the same respondents on more than one occasion. Panels can consist of individuals, households or organisations, and can provide information on changes in behaviour, awareness and attitudes over time.

Participant observation A research approach where the researcher interacts with the subject or subjects being observed. The best-known type of participant observation is mystery shopping.

Pearson's product moment correlation A correlation approach that is used with interval and ratio data.

Perceptual mapping An analysis technique which involves the positioning of objects in perceptual space. Frequently used in determining the positioning of brands relative to their competitors.

Photo sorts A projective technique which uses a set of photographs depicting different types of people. Respondents are then asked to connect the individuals in the photographs with the brands they think they would use.

Pictogram A type of bar chart which uses pictures of the items being described rather than bars.

Pie chart A chart for presenting data which takes the form of a circle divided into several slices whose areas are in proportion to the quantities being examined.

Pilot testing The pre-testing of a questionnaire prior to undertaking a full survey. Such testing involves administering the questionnaire to a limited number of potential respondents in order to identify and correct flaws in the questionnaire design.

Placement tests The testing of reactions to products in the home and where they are to be used. Respondents are given a new product to test in their own home or in their office. Information about their experiences with and attitudes towards the products are then collected by either a questionnaire or by a self-completion diary.

Population of interest The total group of people that the researcher wishes to examine, study or obtain information from. The population of interest will normally reflect the target market or potential target market for the product or service being researched. Sometimes known as the target population or universe.

Postal surveys Self-administered surveys that are mailed to pre-selected respondents along with a return envelope, a covering letter and possibly an incentive.

Primary data Data collected by a programme of observation, qualitative or quantitative research either separately or in combination to meet the specific objectives of a marketing research project.

Probability sampling A set of sampling methods where an objective procedure of selection is used, resulting in every member of the population of interest having a known probability of being selected.

Product/Service Review Sites On-line sites that allow individuals to feedback their views on products and services. These sites may be independent or operated by manufacturers, retailers and other forms of intermediaries.

Professional codes of conduct Self-regulatory codes covering acceptable practices in marketing research developed by the professional bodies responsible for the research industry (e.g. the Market Research Society or ESOMAR).

Profilers Organisations that gather demographic and lifestyle information about consumers and combine it with postal address information. They take this base information and use it to segment an organisation's database of existing customers into different lifestyle and income groups. They may also be used to identify additional prospective customers whose characteristics match those of an organisation's existing customers.

Programme evaluation and review technique (PERT) A managerial tool used for scheduling a research project. It involves a probability-based scheduling approach that recognises and measures the uncertainty of project completion times.

Projective questioning Sometimes known as third-party techniques, this is a projective technique that asks the respondent to consider what other people would think about a situation.

Projective techniques Techniques used in group discussions and individual depth interviews to facilitate a deeper exploration of a respondent's attitudes towards a concept, product or situation.

Proportionate stratified random sampling A form of stratified random sampling (*See* Stratified random sampling) where the units or potential respondents from each population subset are selected in proportion to the total number of each subset's units in the population.

Purchase intent scales A scaling approach which is used to measure a respondent's intention to purchase a product or potential product.

Qualitative research An unstructured research approach with a small number of carefully selected individuals used to produce non-quantifiable insights into behaviour, motivations and attitudes.

Quantitative research A structured research approach involving a sample of the population to produce quantifiable insights into behaviour, motivations and attitudes.

Questionnaire design process A stepped approach to the design of questionnaires.

Quota sampling A non-probability sampling procedure which involves the selection of cells or subsets within the population of interest, the establishment of a numerical quota in each cell and the researcher carrying out sufficient interviews in each cell to satisfy the quota.

Participant Validation A validation technique that involves taking the findings from qualitative research back to the participants/ respondents that were involved in the study and seeking their feedback. If the feedback verifies the explanations and conclusions, then the researcher can be more confident about the validity of the findings.

Range A measure of dispersion that calculates the difference between the largest and smallest values in a set of data.

Ratio data Actual 'real' numbers that have a meaningful absolute or zero. All arithmetic operations are possible with such data.

Regression A statistical approach to examine the relationship between two variables. Identifies the nature of the relationship using an equation.

Related samples Samples where the measurement of interest in one sample may influence the measurement of the variable of interest in another sample.

Reliability of scales Refers to the extent to which a rating scale produces consistent or stable results. Stability is most commonly measured using test-retest reliability and consistency is measured using split –half reliability.

Research brief A written document which sets out an organisation's requirements from a marketing research project. This provides the specification against which the researchers will design the research project.

Research proposal The submission prepared by the research agency for a potential client specifying the research to be undertaken. On the basis of the research proposal, the client will select an agency to undertake the research. The proposal becomes the contract between the agency and the client company.

Respondent errors Non-sampling errors that are caused by respondents inadvertently or intentionally giving distorted or erroneous responses. Respondents may give erroneous answers because they fail to understand a question and do not want to admit their incomprehension.

Role playing A projective technique which involves a respondent being asked to act out the character of a brand.

Sample A subset of the population of interest.

Sampling error The difference between the sample value and the true value of a phenomenon for the population being surveyed. Can be expressed in mathematical terms: usually the survey result plus or minus a certain percentage.

Sampling frame A list of the population of interest from which the researcher selects the individuals for inclusion in the research.

Sampling frame error A bias that occurs as a result of the population implied by the sampling frame being different from the population of interest.

Scaling questions Questions that ask respondents to assign numerical measures to subjective concepts such as attitudes, opinions and feelings.

Scanner-based research Collecting sales information using electronic scanners reading barcodes at the checkouts of retailers and wholesalers. The information collected feeds into audits.

Screening questionnaire A questionnaire used for identifying suitable respondents for a particular research activity, such as a group discussion.

Search engines Internet-based tools for finding web addresses which contain collections of links to sites throughout the world and an indexing system to help you find the relevant sites. Examples include AltaVista, Yahoo! and Lycos.

Secondary data Information that has been previously gathered for some purpose other than the current research project. It may be data available within the organisation (internal data) or information available from published and electronic sources originating outside the organisation (external data).

Self-administered surveys Surveys where the respondent completes the questionnaire with no help from an interviewer. The questionnaire can be delivered to the respondent via the mail (postal surveys), by hand, by fax or online (e-mail, web surveys).

Semantic differential scales A scaling approach which requires the respondent to rate a brand or concept using a set of bipolar adjectives or phrases (e.g. helpful and unhelpful; friendly and unfriendly). Each pair of adjectives is separated by a seven-category scale with neither numerical nor verbal labels.

Sentence completion A projective technique which involves providing respondents with an incomplete sentence or group of sentences and asking them to complete them.

Shelf impact testing equipment *See* Stand-out equipment.

Simple random sampling A probability sampling method where every possible member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the survey. Respondents are chosen using random numbers.

Simulated test markets A research approach used to predict the potential results of a product launch and to experiment with changes to different elements of a product's marketing mix. Rather than testing in retail stores, simulated test markets rely on simulated or laboratory-type testing and mathematical modelling.

Snowball sampling A non-probability sampling procedure where additional respondents are identified and selected on the basis of referrals of initial respondents. It tends to be used where the population of interest is small or difficult to identify.

Social Networks Online social networks allow individuals to communicate with one another, construct a public or semi-public profile of themselves as well as share a variety of content.

Spearman's rank-order correlation A correlation approach for ordinal data.

Specialist service agencies Marketing research agencies that do not offer the full range of services (*See* Full service agencies) but tend to specialise in certain types of research. For example, a specialist agency may only do research in a specific market sector such as the automotive sector or children's products, or in a geographic region of the world. Alternatively, the agency may be a specialist in terms of the research techniques it undertakes, focusing on telephone research or qualitative research.

Split half reliability Measures the internal consistency of a summated rating scale and refers to the consistency with which each item represents the overall construct of interest. The method involves randomly dividing the various scale items into two halves. High correlations between the two halves suggests internal consistency of what is being measured.

Spider-type diagrams Diagrams used to organise data in the analysis of qualitative research data.

Standard deviation A measure of dispersion that calculates the average distance that the values in a data set are away from the mean. The standard deviation of different sets of data can be compared to see if one set of data is more dispersed than another.

Stand-out equipment Sometimes known as shelf impact testing equipment, this is used to determine the visual impact of new packaging when placed on shelves next to competitors' products.

Stapel scales A scaling approach which is a variation of the semantic differential scaling approach. It uses a single descriptor and 10 response categories with no verbal labels.

Statistical significance If the difference between two statistical measures is large enough to be unlikely to have occurred due to chance or sampling error, then the difference is considered to be statistically significant.

Stimulus materials Materials used in group discussions and individual depth interviews to communicate the marketer or advertiser's latest creative thinking for a product, packaging or advertising to the respondents.

Storyboards A type of stimulus material where key frames for a television advertisement are drawn consecutively, like a comic strip.

Stratified random sampling A probability sampling procedure in which the chosen sample is forced to contain potential respondents from each of the key segments of the population.

Street interviews Interviews where respondents are approached and recruited while they are shopping or walking in town centres. In North America, these are known as mall intercept interviews.

Structured observation A research approach where observers use a record sheet or form to count phenomena or to record their observations.

Systematic sampling A probability sampling approach similar to a simple random sample but which uses a skip interval (i.e. every *n*th person) rather than random numbers to select the respondents.

***t* test** A hypothesis test about a single mean if the sample is too small to use the *Z* test.

Tabular method of analysis A method for analysing qualitative research data using a large sheet of paper divided into boxes.

Target population *See* Population of interest.

Telephone interviewing Quantitative research where the interviewing is undertaken over the telephone.

Television viewing measurement The procedures used in the measurement of the number of viewers watching a particular television programme. In the UK, around 20,000 households have electronic meters attached to their television sets to register when the set is turned on and to what channel it is tuned.

Test-retest reliability Measures the stability of rating scale items over time. Respondents are asked to complete scales at two different times under as near identical conditions as possible. The degree of similarity between the two measurements is determined by computing a correlation coefficient

Text analysis software Software used for data analysis in qualitative research. Such software helps segment the data and identify any patterns that exist.

Third-party techniques *See* Projective questioning.

Topic list Sometimes known as an interviewer guide. It outlines the broad agenda of issues to be explored in an individual depth interview or group discussion. It may also indicate the points at which stimulus material or projective techniques should be introduced.

Transcript A detailed "word for word" record of the depth interview or group discussion setting out the questions, probes and participant answers

Triangulation Using a combination of different sources of data where the weaknesses in some sources are counterbalanced with the strengths of others. The term triangulation is borrowed from the disciplines of navigation and surveying, where a minimum of three reference points are taken to check an object's location.

Twitter A microblogging service. *See Blog*

Type I error Rejection of the null hypothesis when it is actually true.

Type II error Failing to reject the null hypothesis when it is actually false.

User generated content Online material such as comments, profiles photographs that is produced by end users.

Universe *See* Population of interest.

Unstructured questions *See* Open-ended questions.

Validity Whether the subject requiring to be measured was actually measured.

Video conferencing The bringing together of a group of individuals using a video link and telecommunications. Can potentially be used for group discussions, particularly where the respondents are located in various parts of the world.

Viewing rooms Specialist facilities/locations for group discussions. They are set out in the form of a boardroom or living-room setting with video cameras or a large one-way mirror built into one wall. Some are owned by research agencies, but the majority are independent and available to anyone willing to pay the hourly room-hire rates.

Web 2.0 Web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability and collaboration on the Internet.

Web survey see Online survey

Weighting The process of adjusting the value of survey responses to account for over- or under-representation of different categories of respondent. Weighting is used where the sample design is disproportional or where the achieved sample does not accurately reflect the population under investigation.

Word association tests A projective technique that involves asking respondents what brands or products they associate with specific words. In addition to the direct outputs regarding brand imagery, it is also a very useful technique for building rapport within a group discussion and getting everybody contributing and involved.

Word cloud A visual depiction of words used by respondents in qualitative research or the content appearing on social network sites or publications. The font size of the words, is determined by the number of times a word has been used. The more that a topic or word is talked about, the bigger it is.

***Z* test** A hypothesis test about a single mean where the sample size is larger than 30.

SECTION I: Supporting Sources

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