EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2003

STAGE 1 PROJECT

General Comments
In 2003 the Stage 1 projects showed a similar representation of higher grades to last year (As and Bs): 44% of candidates were in this range, with one in five achieving an A grade. Over a quarter of candidates were graded C, 22% graded D and 8% failed.

CONTENT & TECHNICAL ISSUES

Content Issues
A significant number of students showed over-reliance on discussion of the company's background. Although a relevant requirement, the company profile should NOT take over the whole project. Company background details stretching to 11 pages within the context of the word limit seriously disadvantaged such candidates. This section is only valued at 15% and should be allocated a proportionate amount of effort. It is also worth noting that some candidates found themselves engaged in rambling and not wholly relevant discourses on the state of the planet, some going as far as to include lengthy introductory sections on global warming, air and water pollution, ozone depletion and CFCs, and waste disposal. While relevant, brevity was the key.

The second section of the project in most cases was dealt with adequately, and many analyses were founded on principles of the marketing mix and market segmentation. There seemed to be lack of understanding in some cases of what actually constituted the 4Ps, other than promotion.

In the final section of this project candidates were required to put forward general recommendations which could be relevant to other businesses. Those who fulfilled this requirement and showed clear attention to their secondary research, demonstrated a solid and well researched grasp of green/environmental marketing principles.

Technical Issues: Presenting & Packaging Your Product
Even a simple once-over proof reading by many candidates would have addressed many of these outstanding issues. There is an obvious inadequacy of knowledge in how to reference sourced material, despite frequent past recommendations. Candidates must be reminded that the name of the person(s) interviewed does not constitute a bibliography. The word limit guidelines advocate a project of between 3000 and 5000 words. Shorter projects proved that it is not possible to do justice to the topic in less.

Despite the inclusion of a section entitled *Additional Briefing Notes* on the project which clearly stated that candidates should NOT submit their projects in individual page plastic covers, a significant number did not follow this most basic requirement. For future reference,

candidates who fail to follow this guideline will NOT have their projects assessed and will automatically be awarded a mark of ZERO. A final technical issue is the inclusion of the required abstract and word count. Excluding these requirements constitutes a breach of the projects requirements.

EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- The making of recommendations to other companies in a similar field has long been an essential element of the Stage 1 projects. It should not be seen as an optional extra. It is now valued at 35% which should underline its necessary inclusion.

- Presentation and packaging skills make a difference, especially at the margins, and the allocation of 15% for such issues should be seen as an opportunity by candidates to gain marks for a MINIMUM of investment.

- In cases of PLAGIARISM from national or international case clearing houses, or other institutions private or public, the candidate is deemed to have failed and may not register with the Institute thereafter.