



EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2005

STAGE 1 PROJECT

General Comments

In 2005 projects showed a very positive representation of higher grades in comparison to previous years (As and Bs), with 62% of candidates in this range. One in three achieved an A grade (34%). Seventeen percent of candidates were graded C, 9% graded D and 12% failed. This indeed is a most encouraging development and the examiner extends very warm congratulations to all involved, especially those who received an A and were above the 80% mark (of whom there were a remarkable 9%). This was an area of investigation which obviously stimulated an enormous amount of interest and effort, with rewards clearly accruing to a large proportion of those submitting projects.

Content Issues

It seems for the fourth year running there are a recurrent set of themes emerging in the weaker or failing project, happily an ever decreasing number. A significant number of students showed a clear over-reliance on discussion of the company's background which is only valued at 15% and should be allocated a proportionate amount of effort. 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. Although a concentration on advertising to the exclusion of the other elements of the marketing mix served candidates poorly. In this year's projects the examiner noticed for the first time a significant focus on pricing, but it must be stated that the inclusion of price lists from the motor retailer without any critical commentary can hardly be deemed satisfactory.

In the final section of this project candidates were required to put forward general recommendations which could be relevant to other businesses. For the most part, those who engaged in this requirement and showed clear attention to their secondary and primary research, indicated a clear understanding of the marketing mix in the context of motor retailing. BUT this is not an optional section, as the examiner keeps repeating, so to ignore it will significantly impede the candidates' chance of progress.

The word limit guidelines advocate a project of between 3000 and 5000 words. Those projects submitted in the region of 2000 words suffered very substantial deficiencies by not sufficiently engaging with the subject matter. An abstract, word count and bibliography must be included; those projects that do not meet these most basic of requirements will automatically receive a mark of ZERO.

EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- Don't ignore the Recommendations section of the project brief;
- Don't expend a disproportionate amount of effort on the 'easy' company profile section;
- Present and package your project professionally, which means PROOFREAD it at a minimum;
- In the case of PLAGIARISM the candidate is deemed to have failed and may not register with the Institute thereafter.