



## **EXAMINER'S REPORT**

**MAY 2004**

### **STAGE 2 PROJECT**

The pass rate for this project was over 95%.

The project brief required students to undertake an investigative study into the marketing challenges and opportunities faced by one sector of the tourist industry. The brief encompassed a wide diversity of sectors. Nearly one quarter of all projects selected the accommodation sector, 15 % studied some aspect of the transport sector and 15 % investigated golfing. The remaining projects mainly chose a range of activity based tourist products, a particular institution or event, or a specific geographical location. In many instances it was unclear as to why the student selected a particular tourist sector.

The first part of the brief required students to undertake an environmental analysis of the sector they had selected. In certain cases students failed to introduce their topic so as to put their project in a context. In better submissions a substantial bibliography with detailed referencing provided clear evidence of extensive reading of many information resources. Weaker students failed to analyse or evaluate or make any conclusions based on the information they found. In some instances corporate material was quoted verbatim without any student evaluation.

Many students brought marketing theoretical frameworks, models, tools and concepts to bear on their environmental analysis. Where appropriate, students should apply the marketing theory they have been exposed to on their programme. For example, students used their understanding of buyer behaviour, SWOT analysis, services marketing, BCG matrix and market positioning maps to aid their analyses. In some instances students took a very generic approach to the environmental analysis, failing to detail specific aspects relevant to their chosen sector.

The second part of the brief required students to design, develop and implement some primary research. A few students failed to do so. In some cases students selected a number of different techniques to gather information. In stronger submissions students showed evidence of a methodical approach to the research design and attempted to evaluate the study and results afterwards. There was no need to provide substantial material on the choice of primary techniques available along with their relative merits. In some cases the questionnaire instrument employed reflected poor design.

Better submissions developed a clear purpose to the research, defining a problem and specifying a precise set of objectives. In weaker submissions there was very superficial analysis of the results, with no evaluation or conclusions drawn. Better submissions were professional in the way they conveyed results and any conclusions.

Students should invest effort in ensuring grammar and spelling is correct. Proof-reading is an essential part of the exercise.

Where material has been sourced and used, it is important that the source of the information is acknowledged and referenced in a proper manner.