



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2001

STAGE 3 PROJECT

General Comments

This year's Autumn projects required students to focus on the marketing of Spanish property to the grey market in Ireland. Students were asked to present an overview of the market for Spanish property in Ireland, highlighting environmental issues and the competitive climate. Buyer behaviour factors to be considered and promotional strategies used were also requested. Students were also required to comment on customer service strategy and how it applies to the grey market.

The project was designed to test the research capability, knowledge and skills of the students in applying the theoretical concepts of marketing to a practical situation. Necessary criteria for achieving a good mark were a comprehensive evaluation of the marketing of Spanish property to the older Irish consumer, together with a well-structured report, adequate content and good presentation. The inclusion of an abstract outlining the objectives, methodology and conclusions of the report was also deemed important.

Overall, the quality of the projects was disappointing, with the majority of students obtaining a 'D' grade or lower. The pass projects demonstrated some grasp of the theoretical and practical issues associated with the marketing of Spanish property to the older Irish consumer. However, there were several weaknesses evident in the projects submitted. When profiling the market for Spanish property in Ireland, many students focused on one particular Spanish property provider, rather than focusing on the entire market. There was also a tendency by students to over rely on international internet information rather than researching information that was relevant to Ireland. When outlining the buyer behaviour factors that need to be considered when marketing to the grey market, many students failed to examine the whole range of possible factors – cultural, social, personal and psychological. Most students focused on advertising as the primary promotional tool used when promoting Spanish property. Other promotional options were also important and should have been considered.

In relation to customer service, students were aware of its importance and how good customer service may be achieved. However, there was a real failure to address how a customer service strategy applies to the grey market. The examiner noted that students gave broad and often irrelevant information and failed to answer the questions asked. Structure and presentation were poor in a lot of these projects and the examiner also noted that a lot of the projects submitted failed to adequately reference the sources used in the writing of the project document.