



## EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2003

### STAGE 3 PROJECT

### “Scent of a Man”

This year's Stage 3 projects required candidates to profile the European male fragrance market, outlining the major players in this market and the main segments existing. Candidates were also asked to discuss the buyer behavioural factors that need to be considered when marketing fragrances to the male market. In addition, candidates were asked to develop a promotional strategy for the Irish market and to comment on the diversity existing in Europe and how this impacts on male fragrances.

The objective of the project was to encourage candidates to apply the theoretical concepts of marketing in general and buyer behaviour, promotions and international marketing in particular, to the practical scenario outlined in the project. This year for the first time, 15% of the project's marks were allocated to referencing and the integration of relevant theory with the project material.

The overall quality of this year's stage 3 projects was somewhat lower than last year with 50% of candidates receiving a grade C or better. Last year, 57% of students attained in excess of 50 marks out of 100. 20% of candidates failed this year's project, compared to 11% last year. A possible reason for the poorer results this year is the specific allocation of marks for referencing and integration (something which a lot of candidates did poorly).

Projects awarded a low grade were weak in their coverage of the male fragrance market, showing little research on this issue. These projects also failed to discuss the impact of the whole range of buyer behaviour influences on the male fragrance market, even though these were identified in the question. In addition, weaker projects failed to consider all aspects of a promotional strategy (e.g. objectives, target market, budget etc.), and focused mostly on the choice of promotional tools to use. Projects awarded a low grade also failed to outline the many areas of diversity within Europe and how they influence the market for male fragrances. In a lot of cases, candidates were not answering the question asked of them and were providing irrelevant material. Despite the fact that marks have now been allocated for the integration of theory with the project material, a surprising number of candidates failed to do this. They discussed some aspect of buyer behaviour or promotions theory, but made no attempt to apply it to the male fragrance market.

On a positive note, the examiner was impressed with the amount of effort, research and thought that went into the majority of projects, and with the wide range of sources used in the information gathering process. Indeed, a lot of projects included some form of primary research, even though this was not necessarily required. The better projects were well structured and presented and gave a comprehensive account of the European male fragrance market. They also described the application of buyer behaviour influences on this market and produced a well thought out promotional strategy. A detailed account of European diversity and its impact on this market was also a feature of the better projects. The examiner wishes to congratulate those candidates who received an A grade, as these projects were extremely good and included many innovative and creative ideas.