



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2004

STAGE 3 PROJECT

General Comments

This year's August Stage 3 project required candidates to outline the bases used to segment the children's market and to discuss the use and influence of Advertising in reaching these segments. In addition, candidates were asked to present detailed arguments for and against a ban on children's advertising. The second part of the project required candidates to outline the many aspects of buyer behaviour theory that influence the marketing of products and services to children. Thirdly, candidates were required to discuss the influence of promotional tools (other than advertising) on children, commenting on whether or not the advertising ban should be extended to other promotional tools. Fourthly, candidates were asked to comment on the diversity existing in Europe with regards to advertising to children, profiling the situation in several European countries. In addition, candidates were asked to address the question of whether or not a European-wide ban on advertising to children should be imposed.

As in previous projects, candidates were required to reference fully the theory they were studying, integrating it with the practical scenario outlined in the project. The purpose of the project was to encourage candidates to use and apply the theoretical concepts of marketing in general, and marketing communications, buyer behaviour and international marketing in particular. The overall quality of this year's August projects was good, with 86% of candidates obtaining a grade D or better. The failure rate was relatively low at 14%. A high proportion of results fell within the D marks bracket, with 71% of candidates receiving a grade D.

Projects awarded a low grade showed little evidence of extensive research on the children's market in general, and advertising to children in particular. Quite a high proportion of candidates failed to answer all parts of the questions being asked. Most questions had a number of sub-sections that needed to be addressed, and failure to do so led to a loss of marks. When considering how the children's market could be segmented, many candidates only considered one segmentation basis (age), even though other bases could have been used. Low marks were obtained because candidates failed to consider the many aspects of buyer behaviour theory that influence the marketing of products and services to children, focusing mainly on just one or two buyer behaviour influences. The weaker projects also took a very narrow view of the different promotional tools that could be used to reach the children's market. When discussing the diversity existing in Europe, weaker candidates focused only on one or two countries and failed to look any further than this. As in previous projects, a surprising number of students failed to illustrate an ability to integrate course material with the practical scenario outlined in the project. A large number of candidates also placed the theory in a separate section of the report rather than integrating it into the entire project.