**EXAMINER'S REPORT**

**MAY 2004**

**STAGE 3 PROJECT**

**General Comments**

This year's stage 3 project required candidates to present an overview of the online recruitment (e-recruitment) market in Ireland, profiling the major players and highlighting the main market segments existing. Candidates were also asked to advise on a promotional strategy that could be used to promote online recruitment jobsites in the Irish market. They were also required to comment on the difficulties associated with selling a job online, identifying the main customers and the importance of customer care. In addition, candidates were required to discuss the diversity existing in Europe with regard to the acceptability and growth of online recruitment.

As in previous years, the purpose of this project was to encourage candidates to use and apply the theoretical concepts of marketing in general and marketing communications, sales and customer service and international marketing in particular, to the practical scenario outlined in the project. In order to obtain a good grade, candidates were expected to exhibit an understanding of how marketing theory applied to the practical nature of the project. Candidates were also expected to provide a comprehensive account of online recruitment, showing evidence that they had researched this topic extensively.

The overall quality of this year's stage 3 project was quite similar to last year, with 51% of candidates receiving a grade C or better. However, the failure rate was much improved from last year. 10% of candidates failed this year's project, compared to 20% last year. Quite a high proportion of the results fell within the D marks bracket, with 39% of candidates receiving a D grade.

Projects awarded a low grade were weak in their coverage of the online recruitment market, showing little research on this issue. These projects also failed to answer all parts of the questions asked. For example, a surprising number of candidates failed to consider the main segments existing in the online recruitment market, even though this was specifically requested. Those who did mention segmentation, took a very narrow view of how this market could be segmented. The weaker projects also failed to recognise that online recruitment is services marketing in action. Low marks were obtained because candidates failed to advise on all elements of a promotional strategy. Quite a few candidates provided recommendations on the promotional tools that could be used, but failed to discuss other aspects of promotional strategy, such as the target market, objectives, the message, media and evaluation. Most of the weaker projects also failed to adequately outline the extent of European diversity e.g. cultural, political/legal, demographic and technological, and its impact on e-recruitment. The weaker projects focused on describing the online recruitment websites existing in Europe and failed to focus on the diversity existing. If

diversity was discussed, it was generally limited to a description of differences in internet penetration across Europe. Finally, weaker projects did not illustrate an ability to integrate course material with the practical scenario outlined in the project. Those who did use some theory, placed it as a separate section of the report, rather than integrating it throughout the entire project.

On a positive note, the examiner was impressed with the amount of effort, research and thought that went into most projects, and with the wide range of sources used. The examiner wishes to congratulate those who obtained an A grade. There were more A grades awarded this year than in previous years. These projects were well researched and well presented. The candidates showed an ability to marry theory and practice and to reference material correctly. Their reports included many innovative and creative ideas.