



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2005

STAGE 3 PROJECT

General Comments

This year's Stage 3 project firstly required candidates to present an overview of the ice cream market in Ireland, highlighting the major players involved and the main market segments existing. Candidates were then asked to advise on a promotional strategy that could be used to promote a new range of organic ice cream in the Irish market. In addition, they were asked to outline the aspects of buyer behaviour theory that influence the marketing of ice cream. Finally, candidates were required to discuss the diversity existing within Europe with respect to the acceptability and growth of ice cream.

As in previous projects, candidates were required to reference fully the theory they were studying, integrating it with the practical situation 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. 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 the Irish and European ice cream markets, showing evidence that they had researched this topic extensively.

The overall quality of this year's projects was good, with 43% of the candidates obtaining a grade C or better. The average mark was 50% and the failure rate was 14%. Projects awarded a low grade showed little evidence of extensive research on the Irish and European ice cream markets. In some cases, students took a far too generic approach to the project, failing to apply the theory used to the ice cream sector. Weaker projects took a very narrow view of the promotional strategy, just focusing on the promotional tools an organic ice cream manufacturer could use. There were a number of projects poorly presented and inadequately referenced. Where material has been sourced and used, it is important that the source of the information is acknowledged and referenced correctly.

On a positive note, the examiner was impressed with the better projects, as there was evidence that extensive effort, research and thought went into these projects. These reports included numerous innovative and creative ideas in advising on an appropriate promotional strategy for an organic ice cream manufacturer.