



EXAMINER'S REPORT

MAY 2006

STAGE 4 PROJECT

General Comments

Satisfying the customers real needs was taken as the project topic this year because it is so relevant to business activity today. Candidates were being given the opportunity to identify an enterprise of their choice, and investigating just how the activity of customer management was undertaken.

Those scoring poorly should note the following:

- Spelling and grammar errors at this level of study are simply unacceptable.
- In several cases, a lack of any effort whatsoever to participate in some form of primary research. Engaging in primary research has the dual payback of getting the candidate engaged in the research effort and provides a foundation on which the examiner can better judge the enthusiasm of the candidate. Projects must have primary research. This has been an issue in several recent examination reports and continues in 2006!
- Inability or unwillingness to display knowledge gleaned from previous study. Candidates are at Stage 4 of their studies, and the examiner is insistent that a substantial level of knowledge of what marketing is about is clearly visible. Candidates are also expected to display an overall professional ability in terms of structure, argument and analysis
- Candidates were at times unsure of just what their objective(s) was/were, and this resulted in a garbled first few pages, making it extremely difficult for the examiner to identify just where the piece was going.
- Candidates should avoid the habit of launching into a “lecture” on whatever topic they are dealing with. Simply providing page after page of notes from modules does not impress this examiner.
- Candidates should also observe the weightings attached to the various parts of the project assignment. Too often, these guidelines are ignored.

Those scoring well should note the following:

- Candidates presented a professional layout, well planned and logical. Ideas are developed and conclusions drawn.
- Use of lecture notes, but only if relevant to the argument being made
- Going beyond mere description, and into analysis.
- Clear evidence of relevant primary research. It is 100% necessary to engage in primary research, whether this is the administration of a questionnaire (in person, by e-mail et cetera), or a series on personal interviews. For the latter, it is often not advised to simply take one or two.

General comments.

- Perhaps picking a “well-known” enterprise is a mistake, in that there is often too much information available, often from the web site, a tendency then to access the web site and “download” vast tracks of “information”. Doing so does not impress the examiner and results often in a disjointed flow of ideas.
- Where a marketing plan is presented, it must be clear that it is the creation of the candidate, and not simply a presentation of the “company” plan, or work already completed by someone else. In these situations, it is not acceptable to “lift” some marketing plan, even if the candidate does provide a reference (of course not providing a reference is deemed to be plagiarism, and opens up the prospect of penalties being applied to the candidate)
- Candidates must state whether or not they are employed by the company that they are researching. Further, thought should be put into taking ones own enterprise as the subject matter, perhaps it is unsuitable, being close to the enterprise, one may not be as objective as is desirable.
- Candidates must provide a comprehensive list of references used.
- Candidates must start by clearly stating the objective which they expect to achieve in writing their paper.