

## Principal Assessor Report 2004

**Assessment Panel:**

**Management and Enterprise**

**Qualification area**

**Subject(s) and Level(s)  
Included in this report**

**PBNC Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations**

### **Statistical information: update**

<b>Number of entries in 2003</b>	11
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<b>Number of entries in 2004</b>	7
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### **General comments re entry numbers**

Entry numbers remain low for this award as they have done for the last four years. Numbers increased slightly last year when another centre submitted candidates, however, this appears to have been a one-off and only one centre continues to offer this award on a regular basis.

## Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

### Distribution of awards

7 candidates.

4 passed: 3 a B grade, 1 at C grade.

3 candidates received no award.

### Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

In the previous year, 11 candidates were presented, 7 passed, all with C grades.

The mean mark for individual components were:

- ◆ Planning section (20% of overall mark) — this fell from 20.6 to 19.7.
- ◆ Developing section (60% of overall mark) — this rose from 60.5 to 61.3.
- ◆ Evaluation section (20% of overall mark) — this rose from 18.5 to 25.4.

The most significant change occurred in the Evaluation Section where candidates' marks improved considerably. There was a noticeable difference from previous years with candidates being more reflective and critical of their marketing communication plans. They were not assuming that everything in their plan was going to work out 100% and they were beginning to look for weaknesses and potential problems that lay ahead. This is an important point in any marketing, advertising or public relations activity and it is anticipated that candidates will maintain this reflective approach next year.

The Planning Section marks fell for the second year in a row. This is a concern since this section is the basis upon which the next section — worth 60% — builds upon.

### **Grade boundaries for each subject area included in the report**

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	0	0	0	
B	42.9	42.9	3	63
C	14.3	57.1	1	51
D	0	57.1	0	
No award	42.9	100	3	40

### **Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area**

Grade boundaries continued unchanged from previous years and operated from the same standard a priori range.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

There appears to have been a clear division amongst candidates this year with two clear and distinctive groups emerging.

The first group appeared to relish the challenge posed by the case study. They made use of knowledge gained from the three individual NC units and attempted to integrate this information into a cohesive and logical plan. They undertook research into their chosen case study and thought carefully about the problem they faced, what additional information they required and what options lay open to them. This group chose a topic they were interested in and could relate to. They also realised that increased effort was required if they wished to achieve this award. This group of candidates attained three Bs and one C.

The second group lacked the required skills to step up this extra level. Their work was disjointed and lacking in depth. It is possible that the PBNC arrived a year early for these candidates. It was possible to see the knowledge gained from the individual NC units in their work, however, too often it was presented as a regurgitation of material rather than an analysis of the problem presented in the case study.

The centre concerned should be congratulated for their effort in getting all seven to the starting line.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Imaginative and original ideas — related to the chosen case study — continue to be the strong point of many candidates. There was less evidence this year of candidates using celebrities just for the sake of it without any rational explanation as to why they were being used. In previous years there were frequent mentions of Robbie Williams and Kylie just because they were famous without any thought as to their availability, cost or relevance to the campaign. This year candidates were more practical and came up with workable ideas relevant to the case study.

In addition the better candidates were more reflective and open to criticism about their ideas and consequently became more realistic.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

The Planning Section marks remain relatively low. Answers here then to be brief and vague. Candidates should be encouraged to think about the practicalities involved in issuing questionnaires, operating focus groups and the time required to undertake them successfully. Candidates should consider the use of external secondary sources of information which may be available for purchase by the case study organisation in question.

## **Recommendations**

### **Feedback to centres**

This year, for the first time, candidates were able to present their ideas to the PA in the form of a 'pitch'. This was extremely beneficial to myself since it allowed me to question the candidates about their plan and the thinking behind it. Hopefully, this was beneficial to the candidates since they were able to get an idea of what I liked about their plan and where some weaknesses were. It is strongly recommended that this procedure continues in the forthcoming year. Ideally, it should take place in May allowing the candidates to concentrate on the planning and developing of ideas but before they complete the evaluation section. This will allow them to make any changes to their plan as they see fit.

It is important that the centres concerned clearly stress to the candidates that any ideas they generate should be kept to themselves. Obviously it is beneficial to candidates working on the same case study to discuss mutual areas of interest, however, it should not go beyond that. Candidates should be aware that this is an individual project where originality and strong creative ideas gain marks. When ideas are duplicated in other answers then marks are lost because there is no way of knowing which candidate came up with the idea in the first place.

Candidates should be encouraged to read relevant marketing, advertising and public relations magazines on a weekly basis. Information gained from these publications can be useful in areas such as budgeting, evaluation and marketing research.