

Principal Assessor Report 2003

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

Number of entries in 2002	10
Pre appeal	10

Number of entries in 2003	11
Pre appeal	11

General comments re entry numbers

This course still operates from a very low base.

This can be partially explained by the fact that candidates have to pass 3 individual units before they can proceed onto attempting the case study involved. Initial numbers are high to begin with but as the year goes on it becomes evident that candidates are unable to cope with the demands placed on them.

This year entries were received from 2 centres instead of just one, however, this did not have an impact upon the final number of candidates attempting the case study.

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

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Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

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

General comments

The overall standard slipped slightly this year. It is possible that this is only a temporary occurrence and that the situation will be rectified next year.

With the low numbers of candidates being presented for this course a poor performance by two or three candidates can dramatically alter the overall results pattern

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

The generation of ideas for promotional activities appears to be a strong point of candidates. Many imaginative and innovative ideas are put forward, which although may contain some flaws, are always to be welcomed because they bring something new to the case study.

To counter-balance that I would caution some candidates on using promotional activities that are over-the-top and totally impractical. The suggestions of certain celebrities to take part in these promotions tends to ignore the fact that they are already employed by a rival product, are too expensive or would never consider taking part in such promotions.

Overall, I would say that candidates are to be encouraged to try and think up something different as an integral element of their promotional activity.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Candidates appeared to have difficulty with the planning stage where they were asked to formulate a marketing research plan which would form the basis of proceeding onto the advertising and public relations aspects of the case study. The depth of answer received was often too brief and did not provide evidence that the candidate fully understood the issues involved with marketing research.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Centres must ensure that candidates submit work that is entirely their own. It is accepted that candidates will work together to enhance their understanding of the topic but they should remember that the work submitted should be entirely their own. Candidates should be advised to keep their ideas to themselves but to discuss their viability with the class tutor.

There does not appear to be any evidence that candidates are reading recommended journals such as Campaign and Marketing Week as a source of information. Small snippets of information from trade journals greatly enhances the overall standard of work.

Candidates should think through the practicalities of what they are advising, whether it be for their marketing research, advertising or pr plan. They should look for what could go wrong, what alternatives might be more advisable – a simple series of questions such as who, when, where and why would be sufficient.

Feedback questions will be a critical element of this PBNC. Candidates should be able to make a presentation in front of the Principal Assessor which is to all intents and purposes a platform for their ideas. Their ability to answer questions on key elements of their work enables them to gain higher marks. The questioning process allows the candidate to reflect on possible weaknesses of their plan and to clarify certain issues within them.

Candidates were not consistent in all 3 areas. It was not unusual to discover that a candidate achieve very good marks in the Planning and Evaluating sections but performed poorly in the Developing section – or vice versa.

Candidates have to recognise the importance of submitting work of the highest standard possible in all three areas to avoid losing unnecessary marks.

There are occasional moments when it becomes difficult to read the handwriting of particular candidates.

If possible, candidates should consider word processing some elements of their work.