

Examiners' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback January 2011

GCE

GCE Health & Social Care (6939) Unit 2 - Communication & Values

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General Comments

There were some very good centres where adherence to the specifications was excellent. These centres in general were accurate in their assessment of the learners' work and awarded marks appropriately. They also tended to provide annotation to demonstrate where the learners had met the criteria with detailed written feedback. The learners had clearly been supported in enabling them to access appropriate settings and service user groups. Their work was beautifully presented and the learners and the centres had clearly taken pride in the work.

In contrast, a few of the centres were poor in their approach to this unit which left the learners with little guidance on how to proceed, their work was unfocussed and disorganised. Assessment of the learners' work and the awarding of marks then tended to be rather 'ad hoc', out of tolerance and/or inconsistent.

A fair proportion of centres were somewhere in the middle and, although not out of tolerance, still needed some guidance to help them make improvements. Learner performance compared favourably with previous years.

It was pleasing to see that the majority of learners had access to suitable care environments on which to base their work. The learners had undertaken either a visit to one or more relevant settings or participated in a work experience placement and had then proceeded to carry out their interactions in these settings with relevant client groups. Coverage of all assessment objectives was seen in the portfolios.

There are still instances where the centre has misinterpreted the specifications or some of the criteria. Sadly, this was to the detriment of the learners.

Some centres are still using the Teacher Guidance notes as their assessment tool. In a few cases, the assessor annotated the work in very good detail and provided excellent feedback to justify the marks awarded.

Learners continue to use inappropriate jargon, colloquialisms and inaccuracies which were left unchallenged by some assessors. Many are still not referencing their work or including a bibliography. Some centres include witness testimony but these are often only a confirmation that an activity had been carried out and provided little evidence for the learners to use in their evaluations.

Assessment Objective 1

The majority of learners selected their service user groups appropriately from those identified in the specifications. Some selected two groups, usually early years and older people, carrying out either two or four interactions. A number of learners launched straight into 'Interpretation and Analysis' of their interactions without providing any context at the outset. These tended to incorporate their knowledge and understanding of communication and the transmission of values, along with barriers and how they overcame them, in one account. This often became repetitive because they did that for each interaction in an automatic way. A small number of learners were able to provide high levels of knowledge and understanding of the theory underpinning communication and/or transmission of values.

Learners attempted comparisons but often the preceding work did not meet all the criteria to enable the learners to reach MB3. Some centres provided witness testimonies for the interactions but often these did not record anything about the learners' skills, only that the interactions had taken place. A number of learners wrote almost everything generically but occasionally would make a comment that clearly indicated they had been on placement.

Assessment Objective 2

The learners need to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to a work-related context. In mark band 1, they need to describe this whereas in mark band 2 they are asked to explain how the communication and transmission of values used were related to the particular work related context. Learners need to provide explicit evidence to show their understanding of this assessment objective as opposed to relying on implicit evidence from AO1.

In this assessment objective the area of weakness for the learners' was in explaining how communication and the transmission of values are related to a particular work-related context and for those awarded marks in band 3 how these can be applied in a number of similar contexts. The learners tended to either discuss this implicitly or leave it out completely. Those learners that have included the work-related context in their work covered it to a high standard.

Assessment Objective 3

Evidence for this assessment objective requires the learners to demonstrate their skills in obtaining information and analysis of work related uses. The majority of learners carried out appropriate research from the standard text books and the internet. More able learners did reference their work appropriately and support this with a detailed bibliography. However, many learners still do not know how to reference properly. They will include the full book reference or website within the body of the work. In some cases this confuses the reader because of long strings of web address and all the links from it which ends up as 'gobbledygook'. Alternatively, there was no referencing and no inclusion of a bibliography.

Most learners analysed barriers to communication skills and transmission of values as their work related issue. Generally identifying appropriate barriers to communication but less able learners failed to explore the range, usually keeping to noise and interruptions. More able learners often identified many barriers, including the above, and also through learning difficulties, hearing impairments, bi-lingual issues and so on. Most learners were able to explain how they overcame the barriers, however it was only the more able learners who were able to evaluate how they may overcome them, thereby gaining marks in band 3. Less able learners often introduced barriers that were not to do with communication.

The area of concern in AO3 is again related to the work-related context, in that the learner is required to relate problems to them, this has been either not attempted at all or done really well.

Assessment Objective 4

Many learners do not demonstrate evaluative skills. Their work leans towards a narrative account of their interactions. More able learners are able to demonstrate their understanding here but often they do not really consider their own communication skills. In some instances, the learners are credited by the assessor for evaluation when it is in fact a repeat of the comparisons carried out earlier. They also credited the evaluations of the activities undertaken. There was very little evidence of learners including check lists on their skills to help their evaluations. In many cases, this Assessment Objective was the weakest attempted.

Overall, there was some very good work seen and many of the learners did themselves proud.

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