

Principal Moderator's Report Summer 2010

GCE

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

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Publications Code US023456

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General Comments

The standard of work seen in this series was overall accurate and fair. The majority of centres appear to be working with the 2009 specifications (first assessed June 2010), however a few are still using the 2005 set. It was found that a number of centres are using the teacher guidance or the specifications as their assessment tool instead of the assessment criteria. Some centres are acknowledging the modifications in their annotation and feedback and in some cases indicating on the mark record sheets the QWC mark band.

The majority of candidates have clearly been supported to access appropriate placements to carry out their interactions. Most candidates still visit two settings and in a few cases, three. Best practice is definitely to carry out more than one interaction with at least two different client groups in order to obtain meaningful evidence to access mark band 3. However, far too frequently candidates are expected by their centres to jump through hoops in the acquisition of evidence, in other words they are carrying out as many as four interactions yet are awarded marks in band one only. It is only necessary for candidates who wish to be awarded marks in AO1 band 3 to carry out more than one interaction. In fact it is strongly recommended that only one interaction be carried out by candidates and for them to put their effort into developing it as a strong piece of work, they are still able to achieve the higher grades by carrying out one interaction really well. It is very pleasing to see the number of centres that are able to provide their candidates with a meaningful work placement. Some candidates have visited special needs settings which are fine in the most part but often they are trying to interact with children or young people that have learning difficulties, or autism and the interactions tend to be a bit one sided and limited. In one centre, some of the candidates had been on placement with young people with visual or hearing impairments and they were really good at having to rethink all their skills.

Most candidates worked hard to present their work to a high standard and clearly took pride in it. They are still including long strings of web address and relying on internet sources, including Wikipedia. Coverage of all assessment objectives was seen in the majority of portfolios.

Assessment Objective 1

Strong candidates placed their work in context at the outset but in some cases it was several pages before it became apparent which service user group was involved and in some very weak cases, not clear at all who the interaction was with. Many candidates were able to write in some detail about communication and the transmission of values showing a good level of understanding. However, this was usually theory based and not applied to an interaction. Often they compared their interactions rather than making comparisons in respect to the use of communication and the transmission of values. In some cases, the candidates tried to compare all their interactions in two or three settings and the work became very repetitive as they kept repeating the same knowledge over and over. All candidates had the opportunity to achieve marks across the whole range.

The QWC was generally good overall. Really strong candidates could comfortably reach mark band 3. Weak candidates found it difficult to focus and maintain the use of specialist terms so remained in mark band 1. The majority were comfortable in mark band 2.

Assessment Objective 2

Many candidates incorporated their knowledge from AO1 in with their interactions for AO2. Less strong candidates tended towards a narrative account of their interaction whereas stronger candidates were able to explain in more detail how they used the transmission of values in with their communication skills. There is sometimes a misunderstanding about 'similar contexts' in mark band 3. Some look at their different interactions and settings which meets the criteria. In some centres, the learners were writing about the NHS in great detail when they already had two settings to refer to. Some candidates wrote about the staff members' abilities in communicating with the children or the carers with the elderly or the children's own skills. Some candidates wrote more about the activity they were involved with rather than their communication skills. Again the marks awarded ranged across all the mark bands.

Assessment Objective 3

The majority of candidates carried out research from text books and the internet. Some were very good at referencing their sources but most do not. A well set out bibliography was quite rare.

Candidates were able to identify some barriers to communication. For weak candidates these tended to be generic with little bearing on their own interactions. Stronger candidates were able to consider actual and possible barriers to communication and relate them to their interactions. How the candidates overcame the barriers was often very simply stated, such as 'it was too noisy so we moved to a quieter place' without any further detail of the impact this would have on the interaction. Strong candidates were able to add this sort of detail with an acknowledgement of why a move might be necessary and the improvement it would bring. Weaker candidates often included barriers that were not connected to communication. Again, the learners were awarded marks across the whole range.

Assessment Objective 4

This was often the least successful of the assessment objectives. Many candidates do not understand what 'evaluation' means. They tend to summarise what they have done, or the activities that they were involved with. They might look at their strengths and weaknesses but not in an organised way. Strong candidates will evaluate but often fail to draw appropriate conclusions. A few included check sheets but did not use them effectively. Witness testimonies were often included but these very rarely said much about the learners' communication skills, just an acknowledgement that they were in the placement and carrying out an activity. Where the testimony was detailed, the candidates often failed to use this as another perspective to help them with their evaluation. Really good assessors will identify evaluative comments in the body of the report as the learners make them. In general the range of marks awarded tended to be in lower in this Assessment Objective.

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

Grade Boundaries

Internally assessed units

6939: Communication and Values

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	45	40	35	30
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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