



General Certificate of Education

Health and Social Care 8626/8629

HC18 Social Policy

Report on the Examination

2008 examination – June series

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HC18 Social Policy

Principal Moderator's Report

This unit challenges candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of how central and local governments attempt to deal with social problems in the UK today. Candidates in many cases chose a sensible and relevant research question (a social policy issue) and produced a report focused locally and/or nationally. There were far fewer instances of inappropriate topics than last year. The emphasis was on Health and Social Care related issues of a practical and applied nature.

This unit did not suffer from the inclusion of reams of generic material and some highly original individual reports were submitted. The work demonstrated independence. Once again nutrition and Jamie Oliver were popular choices, which tended to be in the less academic reports.

As was the case last year, marks tended to be 'clustered', with whole centres presenting reports that reached either the higher or the lower mark bands. Candidates did produce formal reports following the guidelines in the specification.

The introduction to the reports was done well by the majority of candidates. There was an improvement in the application of appropriate terminology when discussing policy issues. Candidates demonstrated an understanding of cause and effect with issues and possible consequences discussed, supported by secondary source information.

A range of policy solutions was covered and applied to their targeted issue by the majority of candidates. When discussing instruments of social policy some candidates neglected to evaluate their effectiveness, or to illustrate points with everyday examples.

Research and referenced materials should support any analytical input. This was an area where there is room for improvement. Analysis of any data is often made clearer or more palatable using visual representations such as charts or graphs. Cost benefits modelling might also serve the candidates well in this section.

The section where candidates were required to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of potential or actual policy solutions tended to be limited. Possible outcomes are a useful way of evaluating solutions.

Overall this unit was tackled in an interesting and sociologically competent manner. Formal reports were the norm and some original and interesting conclusions were drawn.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the AQA website at www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html .