

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Health and Social Care (6947)
Unit 10 Using and Understanding
Research

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General Comments

The assessment evidence for this unit consists of a report on a research project carried out by the student, and a relatively small number of centres sent work for moderation this examination season. Most students had chosen appropriate health and social care related topics, and had attempted to address all the assessment requirements of the unit. A range of topics had been chosen that covered all four user-groups and settings. Lifestyle issues that influence the health and well-being of young people were popular, such as smoking, binge drinking, and STDs.

Assessment Objective 1

In Assessment Objective 1 there was sometimes a lack of evidence of consideration of different research methods, and the methods chosen were sometimes stated without explanation or justification. Students should look into a range of research methods and explain how their choice of methods makes sense in relation to characteristics of their research project. This allows them to show knowledge and understanding in their research planning. Most students had opted for some form of questionnaire. Students who had apparently been directed by teachers to use a particular set of research methods often showed limited understanding of the advantages, disadvantages and overall rationale of each method they employed.

Assessment Objective 2

In Assessment Objective 2 students are expected to develop a research plan, and appropriate research tools, and to use these to collect data that is appropriate and relevant. Most students included plans of their research, and had developed appropriate tools. Often the methods used were questionnaires and structured interviews. Pilot studies were sometimes used, and most students who did pilot their research showed how and where their methodology was changed in the light of the pilot, though often this was merely a slight rewording of questions in their questionnaires. One common weakness was that sampling methods were not well understood or described. Students had often used opportunity sampling without showing that they had an understanding of the rationale and the limitations of this method.

Assessment Objective 3

In Assessment Objective 3 analysis of results was sometimes very good with clear, well labelled, graphs, tables and charts accompanied by lucid explanation. However many students had provided only superficial analysis, or had simply stated some of their results with little or no analysis offered. In many reports the findings from individual questions had been displayed, without links and relationships between responses to different questions being explored. Students are advised to plan their data analysis when they make decisions about the data they intend to collect and the methods to be used, so that the data they collect can be dealt with logically and systematically in the final report.

The evaluation provided for Assessment Objective 4 was fairly weak in most reports. Students who had good understanding were able to evaluate their work in a balanced way, recognising both strengths and limitations, and most students had at least identified some weaknesses in their data. Students should be encouraged to consider the limitations as well as the strengths of their research to help them develop an evaluation. Some students had included generic, theoretical statements about the role of research in health and social care that were not linked to the rest of their research report. Students understanding of

the role of research would be best demonstrated by setting their own research in the context of the broader world of research through recognition of its constraints and limitations.

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