

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCE in Health &
Social Care (6941/01)

Unit 4: Social Aspects and Lifestyle
Choices

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2015

Publications Code US040792*

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2015

General Introduction

The format and style of the paper was similar to that in the previous series. There were three full questions in total, each marked out of 30, giving an overall total for the paper of 90 marks. The scenarios enabled the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge across the full breadth of the specification.

The external assessment paper covered the unit specification, which includes:

- Lifestyle choices and life course events
- Social factors affecting health and well-being
- Care professional/service user relationships

A holistic summation of the paper is that it was very fair and gave the candidates the opportunity to show what they have learnt throughout the course. Using Nadira, the 87 year old who had just had a hip replacement, as the focus for the case study was felt to work well as candidates were able to relate to this subject.

The examiners felt that the paper discriminated well, with a wide range of marks being seen in each question. They noted that when marking the candidates' responses, there were a decreased number of 'blank' pages (where the candidate did not attempt to answer the question at all), than seen in previous series, a clear indication that the candidates are more aware of the time factor when sitting the exam. However, the candidates' repeated previous mistakes seen in other series in that they failed to read the question stem correctly, confusing words in them and often repeating themselves. Many candidates paraphrase the question at the beginning of their response, thereby failing to gain any credit for their answer until half way down the page. The Quality of Written Communication was often poor and bullet points were frequently seen which limits the number of marks that a candidate can be awarded. A number of candidates appeared to become so engrossed with the scenario of the question that they were unable to look beyond it.

Question 1

This question was based around Nadira, 87 years of age, who had just had a hip replacement. Nadira had never been away from her family before and was admitted to a nursing home to help her recovery after her operation. She speaks very little English.

1a)

The majority of students will score 2 marks for this question as it is an 'identify' question and provided the candidates have learnt the care values, all they need to do is to repeat what they know. Some candidates provided an example rather than identify a specific care value.

1b)

Overall a question not well answered. The majority of candidates made reference to self-concept in their answer, however they were unable to make the link between ineffective care practice and its impact on self-concept.

1c)

Many responses focused on Nadira's age and her speaking very little English as the basis for their answer. Very few candidates included the possibility that Nadira may not know how to raise the issues herself, or that she may be scared and/or lack confidence. A number of candidates judged that she is an (illegal) immigrant and got very carried away with the 'sponger' approach, believing her to be unemployed and on benefits - at 87!

1d)

Confident candidates were able to discuss the service user approach from a quality care standard objective. These candidates were able to apply their knowledge to a practical context, related to older service users through use of appropriate examples. Less confident candidates tended to make vague statements with regard to service users' feelings with limited mention of service providers.

1e)

It was pleasing to read that most candidates' understand the concept of empowerment and were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through relevant examples. Some completely misunderstood the question. They wrote that a service-user centred approach is important for the reputation of the care home - promotes as in advertising for prospective service users. Very few candidates achieved the top mark band, with only a small number attempting a conclusion.

Question 2

This question consisted of five parts which were mainly related to the stimulus material presented. It required candidates to recall terms and concepts, apply knowledge through explanation and demonstrate understanding through their ability to discuss specific topics such as social factors affecting health and well-being and care professional/service user relationships.

2a)

This question was answered well by most candidates.

2b)

This question appeared quite straight forward for most candidates. Their descriptions included the fact that Nadira's daughter visits every day and at weekends, thus maintaining family relationships, showing warmth, understanding and encouragement. Some candidates stated that Shakila will be able to support her mother, but did not clarify in what way.

2c)

A common response was that Nadira will find it difficult to make friends. Confident candidates were able to link this factor into Nadira's emotional well-being and the possibility of her becoming lonely

2d)

Most candidates were able to identify life events, although some omitted to explain the difference between predictable and unpredictable life events. Some candidates' knowledge and understanding of how health and social care professionals may help service users manage different life events was patchy. A frequently cited source of support was that of counselling following bereavement but not how counselling may also be used following other traumatic life events eg. acquired disability or unexpected job loss. Few candidates discussed how the various care professionals often complement one another when supporting someone through a life event.

With regard to Quality of Written Communication, many candidates demonstrated lack of accuracy with spelling of common vocational words / terms eg . "practioner" for practitioner, "councillng" for counselling.

2e)

This appeared to be a popular question. Many candidates chose appropriate lifestyle behaviours on which to base their discussion. Stronger candidates were able to assess a specific behaviour from a full PIES perspective. Less able candidates tended to comment on physical well-being only.

Question 3

This question continues to use the case study revolving around Nadira and her daughter Shakila. This time the focus is on family and work relationships, peer pressure, living in poverty and how it may affect health and well-being.

3a)

Most candidates differentiated between family and work based relationships, using key words "informal" and "formal" correctly. Few candidates explained work relationships in terms of them being rule bound (contractual) or procedural.

3b)

It was very evident from this question that a majority of candidates do not understand self-concept and how it may be effected by external influences like peer pressure. They discuss what it is but not the effects on it, just that it does.

3c)

Many wrote what poverty is not how it affects health and well-being. Bullet points were widely seen with little or no explanation. Many candidates got carried away with defining absolute/ relative poverty/ minimum need and the Acheson report - some pre-empt the next question instead and wrote about factors. Very few candidates discussed both negative and positive aspects of poverty. Stronger candidates were able to discuss how living in poverty may affect all areas of PIES.

3d)

Most candidates attempted this question, albeit to a greater or lesser degree. It was pleasing to see that some candidates were using information contained in The Black Report (1980) and The Acheson Report (1998) to support their answers and this data was applied appropriately. Some candidates appeared confused by the cause and effect phenomenon, citing the effects of poverty as its cause, rather than the other way around eg poor housing. Other candidates made assumptions with regard to the causes of poverty eg everyone with low educational attainment will end up impoverished. Some candidates failed to make full use of the two pages provided for their response, thus limiting the opportunity to give a thorough, detailed response.

Overall, the paper challenged the AS students and it gave them an opportunity to gain some good marks if they had the subject knowledge. However, it appeared that a number of students did not seem to understand what was being asked of them. It is always a little disappointing that more students do not gain Mark Band 3 marks.

Centres appear to have completed some work on the verb hierarchy of exam questions, and generally overall the answering of exam questions which is refreshing, but too many marks were lost because students did not read the questions properly. There were very few blank pages which is always a good sign for students. An observation from the examiners was the low standard of handwriting demonstrated by some candidates. Some scripts were near illegible, proving very challenging to read, thus making it difficult to assess candidates' knowledge and understanding.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

