Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel Higher Projects Qualification
(P201)
Paper 01

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Suitability of work submitted

The Higher Project qualification requires that learners submit evidence for four assessment objectives.

Learners need to select, plan and carry out a project that uses relevant skills and methods to reach their project objectives. During the development of their project learners need to obtain, select and use relevant information sources from a range of sources and, where appropriate, from both primary and secondary sources in order to complete their project outcome.

The learners are given the best opportunity to produce relevant evidence for the qualification if they are supported in choosing a research question to address or a design brief or commission to complete that requires research to take place that is relevant to the project outcome. Centres are reminded that candidates should be supported in choosing project work that is sufficient in scope to cover the 60 guided learning hours suggested for the qualification.

For AO1, learners need to supply a completed project proposal form and activity log that is focused on the requirements to plan and manage the project.

To access marks in mark band 2 the learners need to describe any problems encountered and how they were overcome. The activity log should chart the progress of the project and relate back to the main activities cited in section 3 of the project proposal form.

Both the project proposal form and the activity log should be supplied on the relevant Edexcel paperwork that is available to download from the Edexcel project website.

For AO2, learners need to demonstrate that they have gathered and used resources that are appropriate to their project title and these resources should be clearly identified in a bibliography that would allow the sources to be fully retrievable. Resources should be relevant to the project objectives. Learners should be encouraged to comment on the reliability and usefulness of their sources.

For AO3, the learners need to develop and realise their intended project outcome. This can be done in the form of a written report, an investigation, an artefact or a performance. Ideas need to be developed that show some understanding of the topic and some evidence of alternative points of view / design should be seen. The resultant work should be logically sequenced and show coherence. The learner should demonstrate a clear understanding of the project outcome and how this was attained.

AO4 requires learners to review both the process and the outcome of their project showing what skills and knowledge were developed and ideas for follow up work. They should assess how well they managed and performed, and these comments should incorporate feedback from others.

The most successful project titles were those that stated a clear research question that was sufficiently focussed to allow completion within the prescribed time allowance and provided a platform for alternative views or counterarguments to be brought forward when addressing the chosen research question. If a design brief or commission for the learner to investigate and/or make was chosen, the brief should allow the learner scope to investigate a range of designs and be able to justify final

choices. The least successful titles were those that gave a statement to investigate, as opposed to a research question to investigate or a design brief to fulfil. Such titles did not allow learners to focus their research skills on the development of an alternative argument or opinion and resulted in descriptive accounts rather than providing research for a balanced discussion resulting in evidence-based conclusions.

However, most learners in this series submitted work that showed a very interesting range of successful project titles spanning across curriculum areas and areas of learners' interests. In the higher graded work candidates showed skills that demonstrated ability and analysis that is considered relevant to the lower grades at level 3 with some significant aspects that overlap with the EPQ expectations at level 3. This is pleasing to report.

Learner Performance

There was a significant increase in this series of submissions of artefact outcomes although the written report format was seen to be most popular submission outcome. The higher graded projects showed tended to be when learners chose a project title in the form of a question and then set out to gather relevant sources of data to address their chosen question. By posing a question to research, learners could provide their own viewpoint and then look at a range of sources of information to prove or disprove their views. Conclusions were drawn and comments made on the reliability and validity of both primary and secondary sources. The most successful written reports seen in this series were those where the learner carried out a review of their research sources and then entered into a discussion, using their sources, to report on their project question. In this series the referencing of sources found and used to develop projects was generally of at least a reasonable standard and, in the higher marked work, of a very pleasing standard approaching that expected at level 3 showing extensive bibliographies and consistent referencing techniques.

Assessment

The project proposal form is an important part of the assessment evidence and should not be completed hastily. It is recommended, where possible, that it is typed on computer, allowing the proposal form to evolve with the project. Section 3, where learners need to give thoughtful ideas for the main activities that they need to carry out to complete their project outcome and relevant timescales, is of particular importance. Where this is completed in a non-specific and hurried manner it is not possible for the learner to show how they have followed their agreed plan for their activities to complete their project therefore restricting access to marks in mark band 2 for AO1. The activity log should chart the course of the progress for the specific project and comments should be made on progress that link back to the proposed timescales for the main activities that are provided in section 3 of the proposal form. Lack of depth in the proposal form and lack of monitoring of

progress in the activity log also restricts perceptive comments being made for parts of AO4.

Where candidates seem unclear as to the meaning of an objective, they would benefit from some further guidance here before completing their proposal form. Also, candidates should be encouraged to provide a meaningful set of project objectives, that are not vast in number, that they need to fulfil to complete their project rather than just a long list of things they could do.

It is not necessary for candidates to include photocopies of all their secondary research material or, where primary data is collected using questionnaires, it is not required to submit all completed questionnaires. Analysis of the respondent's answers is sufficient.

Centres need to ensure that all learners are supported in providing a review of their project work that addresses all the requirements for AO4 and does not just focus on the actual project outcome. This evidence should review the project process including a review of the learners own learning and performance, stating which objectives were or were not met and why, giving a description of skills and knowledge developed and learnt during the project and giving ideas for follow up work. Reviews can be supported by peer review where appropriate.

Centre Performance

The Level 2 Project is a qualification that attracts 60 GLH and learners need to be given enough time (at least 20GLH) to develop their skills and knowledge relevant to their area of study. It is recommended that centres use at least this number of guided learning hours to teach the relevant research skills that the learners will need to develop their project successfully. Most centres are now directing the learners to provide clear bibliographies of all sources used.

Although an oral presentation is not a mandatory requirement for AO4 at level 2, it does provide information that can very usefully be used by the learners in judging their own performance and how well they have managed. Where this is not conducted learners would still benefit from a discussion with the tutor / assessor about how well they have conducted their project and, again, this feedback information could be used for evidence towards AO4.

At level 2 assessors can award an extra mark for each assessment objective if the learner has worked fairly independently. Centres are asked to justify the awarding of this mark and to denote it in the assessment column as the mark for the evidence such as, for example 5, then +1 to denote the extra mark for independent working, not just a 6 which does not show the extra mark is awarded but implies that the evidence is worthy of 6 marks.

In this series learner achievement and centre assessment demonstrated a high level of competency. Centres are, generally, seen to be applying the mark bands and points in the assessment grid to their awarding of marks for learner evidence in an accurate and supportive manner. This is pleasing to report.