

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Health and Social Care (6939)
Unit 2 Communication and Values

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General Comments

The standard of work seen in this series was lower than in previous years, which was disappointing. The main area of concern is the inconsistency of assessors, who tend to be too lenient with portfolios accessing the higher mark bands and too harsh with those at the lower end. However, there were some very good centres where adherence to the specifications was excellent. These centres in general were accurate in their assessment of the students' work and awarded marks appropriately. They also tended to provide annotation to demonstrate where the students had met the criteria with detailed written feedback. The students had clearly been well supported, enabling them to access appropriate settings and service user groups. Their work was beautifully presented and the students and the centres had clearly taken pride in the work.

It was not always apparent which client group the students were interacting with. The front cover may indicate early years but often the age of a child was not given so the appropriateness of any interaction was not clear. Some of the interactions were inappropriate because, for example, one student had chosen a two month old baby. The response was limited in the extreme. In another case students went to a residential home for the elderly. One student tried to interact with an elderly lady with Alzheimer's who was also partially sighted and partially deaf, again, the response was limited.

It is strongly recommended that only one interaction be carried out by those students who would be placed in mark band 1 and 2 for assessment objective 1 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 students with a meaningful work placement.

Assessment Objective 1

The majority of students were able to demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of communication, with the communication cycle described widely. However, less information was seen this year about theorists such as Egan and Tuckman, with many not even mentioning SOLER for example and it was rare to find a communication sandwich. Students will say "I used eye contact" but failed to say in what manner or for what purpose. Many centres seem to forget totally about verbal communication apart from mentioning formal and informal language. Referencing sources tended to be poor. There were some bibliographies but these often showed a reliance on Internet sites.

In Assessment Objective 1 the main area of weakness was found to be where the students were required to show their knowledge and understanding of communication and the transmission of values and how this was applied to interactions with clients. The students discussed their communication skills but very few discussed their application of the transmission of values. Where students were taken out of mark band 3 it

tended to be because there was very limited application of theory to practice. Mark band 3 requires the student to undertake a comparison of their interactions with respect to the communication skills and the transmission of values that they have used. Whilst many comparisons were seen of their communication skills there were few seen of their transmission of values.

Specialist language was apparent in many reports demonstrating a good level of knowledge and understanding of both communication skills and transmission of values as applied to a number of interactions.

Assessment Objective 2

This section was poor with transmission of values, more often than not, being merely stated as opposed to discussed. Work tended to remain implicit and hidden within transcripts. The majority of students did not tackle comprehension with a range of other work related contexts.

The students need to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to a work related context. In mark band one, they need to describe this whereas in mark band two they are asked to explain how the communication and transmission of values used were related to the particular work related context. In mark band 3 the students need to provide evidence of how these can be applied in a number of similar contexts. Those students that have included the work-related context in their work covered it to a high standard. Students need to provide explicit evidence to show their understanding of this assessment objective as opposed to relying on implicit evidence from Assessment Objective 1.

Assessment Objective 3

Evidence for this assessment objective requires the students to demonstrate their skills in obtaining information and analysis of work related issues. Most students analysed barriers to communication skills but were unable to explain how they would overcome them for mark band 2 and as for an evaluation of how they proposed to overcome the barriers they highlighted for mark band 3 that was rarely seen.

Students continue to use inappropriate jargon, colloquialisms and inaccuracies which were left unchallenged by some assessors. They are still relying on the internet for their information and Wikipedia in their droves. It was rare to find an assessor that commented on the inappropriateness of including long strings of web address in the body of the work and in the bibliography. Many are still not referencing their work or including a bibliography. Some centres include witness testimony but these are often only a confirmation that an activity had been carried out and provided little evidence for the students to use in evaluations.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment objective four is still proving to be the most difficult to provide relevant evidence for. There is still confusion as to the requirements of this section, with students evaluating their reports rather than their own communication skills. The students are required to demonstrate varying degrees of evaluative skills and draw reasoned conclusions based on evidence from their interactions. Little evaluation was seen on the transmission of values. The section was on the whole weak, with lack of well reasoned and detailed conclusions being drawn.

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

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