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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCE
Health and Social Care (6938/01)

Unit 1: Human Growth and Development

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General Comments

The examination consisted of three questions matching the three areas of the specification. There were few unattempted questions this summer than in previous series, indicating that the paper was accessible to candidates with a variety of skills and abilities. Handwriting was again a problem, ranging from scripts 2mm tall to completely filling the spaces between the lines. When these factors are added to weak spelling, omitted words and cancellations, the examiners may experience some difficulty with explanation.

The question paper contained more short response questions, enabling weaker candidates to gather marks more easily although specialist vocabulary was frequently lacking. Students should be guided to only use correct terms particularly for genital organs.

The question stem does not need to be repeated and doing so takes precious examination time that many candidates cannot afford, so tutors should discourage this practice when revising. It was pleasing to see that there was a decrease in the universal use of "PIES" and candidates were able to distinguish between questions where the use was profitable and those that were not. On some questions it was apparent that the candidates were not considering the mark allocation and wrote too much or too little.

The main issue is not reading and interpreting the question stem correctly and changing the content to a topic well practised. For example, in Q2b) many students described the effects of low income and poor housing on health and well-being rather than the importance of a safe environment.

Question 1

1a) (i) and (ii) Very few inaccurate answers were given for these questions but 10-15% of students still cannot name the life stages accurately.

1b) (i) and (ii) Careless students did not relate their physical features to either the named characters or gender and lost marks in b(i). Many did not read the questions accurately. Puberty was not accepted at this level.

1c) This was disappointing as many referred to the "Eatwell" plate and several believed that to eat a balanced diet meant that equal portions of healthy and junk food were acceptable.

1d) Functions of dietary components are not well known e.g. many believe that vitamins are the source of energy. Repetition was very common and often meals were described.

1e) Some students had excellent insight and scored highly while other responses lacked depth and were somewhat muddled.

1f) Responses were frequently one-sided, but generally this was well done with 1/3rd of students scoring 5+ marks.

Question 2

2a) (i) and (ii) These questions were well answered with 65% and 50% of students respectively gaining full marks.

2b) The majority of students gained between 4 and 6 marks as they went through PIES. There was a great deal of repetition and many answers dealt mainly with children.

2c) A well-answered question although many turned to social development rather than emotional.

2d) Over half the students achieved 5-6 marks here, but there were very few positive aspects provided. Many answers included employment and ignored the character's age.

2e) Disappointing responses were offered for this question as most answers were to take the character out in a wheelchair mainly to the park, Maria's charity location or places he used to go. Any response dealing with past and memories was not appropriate. Students appeared to think that the carer had unlimited time and funds or was related to Steve.

Question 3

3a) (i) and (ii) Knowledge of the ways in which health can be defined was weak and often misunderstood. Standard questions which were not well addressed; answers to 3a)(ii) which omitted to name a health definition were not credited.

3b) This was another health promotion question that might have been anticipated but 1/3rd of candidates could only get half marks. Advantages tended to be known but disadvantages were few.

3c) (i) Nearly 90% of students scored full marks on identifying the correct model.

3c) (ii). Few answers scored full marks but most achieved less. Some responses could only refer to causing accidents or passive smoking in general.

3c) (iii) Half the responses gained at least 1 mark.

3d) While many could describe other Government strategies, only a few attempted to provide any evaluation of them.

A range of scripts was seen, however very few could be said to be excellent with logical thought and a good quality of written communication. The remaining scripts relied on vague, basic knowledge with poor grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. This caused results to be bunched together within a narrow range.