

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCE in Health &
Social Care (6947)

Unit 10: Using and Understanding
Research

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General Introduction

The assessment evidence for this unit consists of a report on a research project carried out by the learner. There were a relatively small number of entries sent work for moderation this examination season. Most learners 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 Objectives

In **AO1** there was sometimes a lack consideration of different research methods, and the methods chosen were sometimes stated without explanation or justification. Learners should look into a range of research methods and explain how their choice of methods relates to their research project. This allows them to show knowledge and understanding in their research planning. Most learners had opted for some form of questionnaire. Learners 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.

In **AO2** learners need to develop a research plan, and appropriate research tools, and to use these to collect data that is appropriate and relevant. Most learners included plans of their research, and had developed appropriate tools. The methods used most often were questionnaires and structured interviews. Pilot studies were sometimes used, and some learners who did pilot their research tools showed how and where their methodology was changed in the light of the pilot. Often though this was merely a slight rewording of questions in their questionnaires. One common weaknesses was that sampling methods were not well understood or described. Learners had often used opportunity sampling without showing that they had an understanding of the rational for, and the limitations of, this method.

In **AO3** analysis of results was sometimes very good with clear, well labelled, graphs, tables and charts accompanied by lucid explanation. However many learners 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 explanation of the links and relationships between responses to different questions. Learners are advised to plan their data analysis when they make decisions about the data they aim to collect, so that the data they collect can be dealt with logically and systematically in the final report.

The evaluation provided for **AO4** was fairly weak in most reports. Learners who had good understanding were able to evaluate their work in a balanced way, recognising both strengths and limitations, and most learners had identified some weaknesses in their data. Learners should be encouraged to consider the limitations as well as the strengths of their research to help them develop an evaluation. Some learners 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. Learners 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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