

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCE in Health and
Social Care (6943)

Unit 6 Public Health

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Publications Code US038013

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The assessment evidence required for this unit consists of a report of an investigation carried out by the candidate into a public health issue. In general the work seen had been assessed accurately, though there was a relatively low candidature this year.

In AO1 learners need to demonstrate understanding of the public health issue they have chosen to investigate. A key aspect of this unit is that it concerns public health, and higher scoring reports linked their issue to the public health consequences it can bring about. Less successful reports focused instead on descriptions of the issues impact on the health of the individual affected. In some reports students had included as much information as possible from their research. This may on occasions have a negative effect on the quality of work in AO1 as the student often loses focus on the issue. To reach higher mark bands it is important that interpretation and explanation is provided by the candidate, and that information is relevant and appropriate. Candidates should be advised to concentrate on a specific section of the UK population in order to help them focus their work. They should also be encouraged to reference their work throughout, it is both good practice, and helps them access the marks in AO3.

In AO2 students need to show how social, environmental and lifestyle factors can affect the impact of the issue on a section of the UK population. In higher scoring reports the candidates had successfully linked their issue of interest to a specified group of the UK population, and then identified the relevant social, environmental and lifestyle issues that were relevant to that section of the population. In some reports students did provide relevant links between their issue and social, environmental and lifestyle factors, but then did not go on to consider the impact on the public health of a specified group or section of the U.K. In some reports candidates had reversed the assessment requirement and talked about the effect of the public health issue on social, environmental and lifestyle factors. Candidates should be advised that the requirement is for how factors affect the impact of the issue.

In AO3 candidates need to demonstrate skills in investigating and using a variety of sources of information that are relevant to their chosen public health issue. In higher scoring reports a good level of skill was shown in obtaining information from literature searches. In some cases though, candidates need to be encouraged to be more selective in the choice of information used in their final report. Additionally learners should be advised to reference all the work that they quote. To access Mark Band 3 an awareness and understanding of the sources used should be explicitly shown. For example a discussion of the possible effect of bias in the sources used was seen in the better scoring reports. Learners are required to analyse environmental and lifestyle factors in relation to the public health issue. This may be included with the description of the factors in AO2, but assessors need to ensure that they do not credit description as analysis.

In AO4 learners need to evaluate ways of minimising the impact of their chosen issue on the risks to public health. It was pleasing to note that a greater number of students had attempted to evaluate rather than simply describe in this section, however there are still a significant minority of centres that credit descriptions as evaluations, which needs to be avoided. Choosing an appropriate issue at the outset can have a major effect on the candidates' opportunities to access marks in AO4. Centres need to ensure that learners are choosing issues that have appropriate strategies to minimise the risks before learners start work on the unit, to allow them full opportunity to access this AO. Problems with inaccurate assessment often were due to over assessing in AO4, where description had been credited as evaluation. Some centres were also generous in the awarding of marks at the upper end of MB3. For this level excellent evaluative skills need to be shown, full, balanced and accurate evaluations of a number of relevant strategies must be present and valid and evidence based conclusions need to be drawn.

