

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

June 2011

GCSE Health & Social Care (5HS02)
Exploring Health, Social Care & Early Years
Provision

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General Comments

This was the first year that a full cohort of learners was entered for the GCSE Health & Social Care. It was pleasing to see that most centres met the submission deadline this series and candidates had authenticated their work. Centre administration was generally good with few errors noted.

The unit is assessed through the production of a portfolio of evidence based on Controlled Assessment Material (CAM). The requirements of the CAM change each year and give the learners the choice of two service user groups on which to base their assignment. For June 2011 the two service user groups were in the categories of Early Years and Health. There was an even split between the two service user groups; however, of some concern was the fact that a large percentage of learners had chosen service users with specific needs and it appeared that learners may have been given the wrong Controlled Assessment material to base their assignments on. For this series, Centres were not penalised, however, Centres must ensure that the correct CAM is used for submissions in June 2012. CAMs are only valid for one year.

In general, assessment was either very accurate or very lenient with some Centres struggling to interpret the requirements of the Assessment Objectives. Centres might find the following useful for future series.

The assignment comprises four tasks which provide evidence for the variety of contexts. The tasks cover the main elements of the syllabus.

Candidates would benefit from going out on placement and basing their report on their experience within the placement but this is not a requirement and centres can use visiting speakers and case studies for the learners to base their assignments on. One issue with the use of case studies is that it makes it more difficult for learners to obtain evidence from primary research, a requirement of Task 3 and an aid to gaining marks in the higher mark bands for AO2(i).

The CAM required the learners to complete four tasks under Controlled conditions within a suggested time frame of 22.5 hours. Centres should note that the 22.5 hours is only a guideline and refers to the time allowed to write up the portfolio. Research time may be in addition to the 22.5 hours. However, centres should note that any data obtained during research must not be analysed outside the controlled environment and only raw data should be taken in to the environment.

The assessment requirement is to provide evidence of knowledge and understanding, planning and research, application, analysis and evaluation of information. The various tasks, if undertaken correctly, will provide evidence for all four assessment objectives and therefore assessment should be holistic and not based on a task per assessment objective method. It was clear from portfolios sampled that assessors struggled with this concept and tried to assign assessment objectives to individual tasks.

Assessment Objective 1

This assessment objective assesses knowledge and understanding and evidence should be found throughout the portfolio and particularly within Tasks 1, 2 and 3. In general learners were able to discuss the needs of the individual service user for Task 1 and also the roles of workers for Task 3 quite well. Learners struggled to understand the National Framework for their chosen Service Provider and evidence for Task 2 was weak throughout the majority of portfolios. A significant percentage of learners did not appear to understand that frameworks for different service providers might be different. An example would be that many learners gave the National Framework for the NHS when discussing an Early Years' service provider. Worryingly, assessors had awarded marks for this error.

Assessment Objective 2(i)

This assessment objective assesses the learners' ability to plan their work and undertake both primary and secondary research. Marks are also awarded for independent work. It was pleasing to see that many assessors had commented on the amount of help required by the individual learners. Planning was evidenced in some portfolios by the inclusion of an action plan for completion of the portfolio and this is considered good practice although completion of all elements of all four tasks was accepted as evidence of implicit planning. There was some very good evidence of both primary and secondary research seen in many portfolios with learners providing comprehensive bibliographies as evidence of secondary research and questionnaires or transcripts of interviews for primary research.

Assessment Objective 2(ii)

This assessment objective assesses the learners' ability to apply the knowledge shown in AO1 and in general, this was weak in the majority of portfolios and had been over assessed. A classic example would be the inclusion of information regarding Maslow's Hierarchy of needs with no reference to how this might affect the service user under discussion. Evidence for this AO is also provided through discussion and application of Care Values. In the majority of portfolios seen, the Care Values were discussed very briefly showing limited understanding and application was not well evidenced. For future series, learners wishing to achieve marks in the top two mark bands need to discuss all Care Values in detail and then provide clear examples of how the workers implement the Care Values to evidence an ability to apply knowledge and understanding. The Quality of Written Communication (QWC) should also be assessed in this AO and there was limited evidence seen that assessors had taken QWC into account when awarding marks

Assessment Objective 3

This final AO assesses the learners' ability to analyse and evaluate information and in general this was not well done and for the most part had been leniently assessed. Analysis can be clearly evidenced through interpretation of data obtained from primary and secondary research and yet in too many cases whilst it was clear that learners had used questionnaires or undertaken interviews there was limited if any evidence of conclusions drawn from the information gained. Many learners had just included the questionnaires and not commented on the information at all.

As is often the case with learners of this age, evaluation skills were not well evidenced in the main with the majority of learners merely providing descriptive comments and not evaluative statements. What learners should do is evaluate the service provider under discussion in terms of how effective it is at meeting the needs of the service user. This should be done by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the service provision and relevant conclusions should be drawn. Learners had attempted to make suggestions for improvement but these were limited and not fully justified. Again, the QWC is assessed in this AO and for the most part this does not appear to have been taken into account.

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