

Education Studies

18 January 2021, 2.00-4.00pm
Remote meeting via Teams

Attendance:

4 delegates from 3 providers attended.

Jo Marriott (New College Durham)

Edel Charlton (Gateshead College)

Monica Pizzoli (Sunderland College)

In addition there was one external moderator: Debbie Griffiths.

The facilitator was Alison Zucker, One Awards Lead Moderator.

Apologies:

Emma French (Gateshead College)

Non attendance:

Roy Halpin (One Awards Moderator)

Elaine Renton (Sunderland College)

Aims and Objectives of the event:

Aim: To provide opportunities for those involved in the assessment and/or moderation of the Access to HE Diploma to increase their understanding of assessment requirements, and to compare their assessment judgements with others delivering and/or moderating units in the same subject area.

Objectives:

To undertake activities which enable participants to:

1. Compare assessment judgements in relation to student achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
2. Compare assessment judgements in relation to student achievement of grade indicators.
3. Explore and confirm QAA and One Awards requirements for assessment.

Samples of student work chosen for the event:

Unit title: Sociology – essay

Unit title: History – magazine article

Unit title: Study Skills – Beginner's Guide to Academic Study

The associated learning outcomes, assessment criteria and grade descriptor components were provided on separate sheets. The assignment briefs were not provided however a summary of the task was available.

Summary of feedback from delegates and moderators

Sample 1 – Sociology (essay)

Achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
4.1	<p>The discussion focused on the extent to which the two ideological perspectives had been evaluated, which is the command word in this particular AC. Although the student had confused ideological perspectives with political parties, overall it was felt that there was some evaluation, even though this was implicit rather than explicit in relation to Social Democracy.</p> <p>One delegate felt that the thinness of the evaluation on the second perspective would have an effect on the grade indicator judgement.</p> <p>One moderator said that there was quite a lot in the response but that it could be more clearly expressed.</p>	Pass

Grading judgements using GD components

GD	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/Merit/ Distinction/ Borderline
2	<p>All delegates agreed that the student made use of relevant perspectives and that levels of accuracy were fair. The main concern related to the strength of the analysis.</p> <p>One delegate said that the absence of references made her question the accuracy of the work, though some of the arguments were good. In response, another delegate said tutors would have to be very careful when feeding back on the referencing issue and that referencing would be best dealt with under GD5, which hasn't been allocated here. The point was made that GD2 relates to the application of knowledge and so we shouldn't penalise too harshly for a</p>	Borderline Merit

	<p>particular component (accuracy), especially as the student certainly addresses component a) fully. The points were also made that it is to be hoped that the contextualisation would have emphasised the need to support evidence with references and that referencing should be an area of development for this student.</p> <p>Another delegate said that the student had plenty of knowledge and that it was a good attempt at analysis.</p> <p>The consensus was that this was on the P/M borderline for GD2, but that overall it was just worth a Merit.</p>	
7	<p>The discussion focused on the phrase 'generally unambiguous' as it was agreed that this assignment was not approaching 'consistently unambiguous'/ Distinction level work as it lacked fluency and clarity. Again, delegates felt that the it should be placed on the P/M borderline but that, overall, it was just better than a P.</p>	Merit

Sample 2 – History (magazine article)

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
1.1	All delegates agreed that 1.1 had been clearly met as a number of different causes of WW1 had certainly been addressed and explored.	Pass
1.2	It was felt that the student had certainly identified and addressed a number of consequences but had they analysed them? It was agreed that although some of the response was descriptive, there was enough analysis of consequences, e.g. as shown in the discussion of the RAF, though some of the analysis was implicit. One delegate made the point that it might have been better to have focused on fewer consequences and treated them in greater depth.	Pass

Grading judgements using GD components

GD	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/Merit/ Distinction/ Borderline
2	Achievement on components a) and b) were felt to be better than a Pass, but achievement on c) was less creditable. All delegates agreed that a secure Merit should be awarded,	Merit

	but that this might have been higher had the analysis been more sustained.	
7	All delegates agreed that the links between sections could have been stronger, and that there was some lack of fluency. A brief discussion took place on whether the format of the assignment might have helped or hindered the fluency and linkage between sections. Would this student have been able to write a fully coherent essay? One delegate said that students shouldn't be penalised for the format given them in the brief and that the individual arguments in each section were pretty consistently clear.	Secure Merit overall, with some elements of a Distinction

Sample 3 – Study Skills (Beginner's Guide to Academic Study)

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
1.1	All delegates agreed that this has been clearly achieved.	Pass
1.2	Student has focused more on areas of development rather than strengths but the latter is inferred when discussing making a plan and finding it difficult to follow it. Overall, it was felt that 1.2 has been met.	Pass
2.1	There was a brief discussion on whether library staff could be considered a resource and the consensus was that this is acceptable. However, when colleges are closed other resources will need to be considered, and the assignment might need to be modified.	Pass
2.2	All delegates agreed that this has been clearly achieved.	Pass
3.1	All delegates agreed that this has been clearly achieved.	Pass
6.1	All delegates agreed that this has been clearly achieved.	Pass
7.1	All delegates agreed that this has been clearly achieved. However, one delegate thought the explanation of plagiarism should be supported by a reference.	Pass
7.2	All delegates agreed that this has been clearly achieved.	Pass
7.3	Only one example had been given, and the AC asks for 'examples'. Overall, however, it was felt that the AC has been achieved.	Pass
7.4	The AC is addressed but in rather a general way, as the differences between a bibliography in an essay and a report are not described. However, there is a lot to cover in this assignment and overall 7.4 has been achieved.	Pass

Outcomes from discussion Course Contingency Planning

The facilitator led a discussion on Course Contingency Planning in response to the disruption caused by COVID-19. The following key points were raised.

- Remote learning seems to require more time for students to process information.
- Deadlines have needed to be reviewed in order to accommodate the pressures on students.
- Jamboard, a facility on Google Classroom, has been found to be very useful for group and project work.
- One delegate is finding that the flipped classroom is essential for online delivery. She sends material in advance (e.g. a video presentation) and then summarises input with the students, and takes questions. This is often followed by a workshop where the students can frame their own understanding. Overall, a more individualised learning process is being implemented, as students are facing different pressures in lockdown.
- One delegate stressed the need for flexibility in delivery above all, as the national situation was evolving, as well as students' own circumstances. In some classes young children were present, and this needed to be accommodated. Also, different classes required different approaches. One delegate has a class of young Mums who cannot begin the lesson until after 9.30, when schools' remote delivery is up-and-running.
- One key point which emerged was the need to give resources in advance and make them available afterwards.

Agreed recommendations from the event

1. To share effective practice in the remote delivery of the programme.
2. To reiterate the need to focus very carefully on the GD and components being assessed, and not to penalise students for deficiencies in other areas which are not the focus of assessment, e.g. referencing.
3. To be careful not to penalise a student for the format of an assignment which might not best enable them to show what they can do.
4. To ensure that each GD is given an overall assessment, and not to allow one component to dominate our judgement.
5. To retain a clear focus on the command words, both in the ACs and in the GDs, when assessing a piece of work.

Date report written: 18/01/21

Name of facilitator: Alison Zucker