

General Standardisation

12 January 2021, 10.00am-12.00pm

Attendance:

4 delegates from 4 providers attended:

Ros Henderson – Newcastle City Learning
Garth Bachi – Bishop Auckland College
Jamie Donnelly – Middlesbrough College
Robyn Cairney – Hartlepool College

In addition Ros Henderson is also an external moderator. The facilitator was Alison Zucker, One Awards Lead Moderator. Donna Coulson, from Tyne Met College, was not able to attend.

Apologies:

Peter Monaghan
Lesley Larkin

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: Psychology and Sociology of Health - guidance document for newly qualified health professionals

Unit title: History – magazine article

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

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

Summary of feedback from delegates and moderators

Sample 1: Psychology and Sociology of Health - guidance document for newly qualified health professionals

Achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
2.1	Delegates all felt that 2.1 had only just been achieved because, although the role of lay referral networks is described or briefly explained, the analysis is very limited.	Borderline Pass
2.2	All delegates agreed that 2.2 was achieved as a range of determinants are described, including gender, employment commitments and cultural influences.	Pass
2.3	All delegates agreed that 2.3 was achieved. A range of factors are touched on, including religious beliefs, overuse, delay, fear of finding out, the 'worried well' and Munchausen's syndrome.	Pass
5.1	All delegates agreed that this was achieved though the explanations are not very clear. For example, depression as a response to chronic illness is briefly explained, as are concerns about the cost of prescriptions.	Pass
5.2	Delegates had quite a lengthy discussion about the need for students to cover 'three issues' in this AC and whether they could be considered to be achieved if they are all thinly touched on. One delegate thought that the issue of depth would be more usefully addressed in the grading feedback, rather than in relation to the AC, whereas another felt that mentioning a number of issues to be covered in an AC is not helpful for either the student or the assessor, as it constrains the response, and that the term 'explain' requires more than a brief mention. Overall, it was felt that 5.2 had been achieved.	Pass
5.3	It was felt that 5.3 has been achieved, though again the evidence of analysis was felt to be limited. One delegate asked where this assignment came in the delivery of the unit and explained that one might be more lenient with the earlier assignments. This led to a more involved discussion on assessing the absolute standards of the work submitted, regardless of when in the delivery of the unit it was	Pass

	scheduled. The LM raised the issue of the extent to which an assignment submission is formative as well as summative. One delegate asserted that ACs are simply judged to be passed or not, and on this basis, 5.3 was considered to be achieved.	
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Grading judgements using GD components

GD	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/Merit/ Distinction/ Borderline
2a,c	All delegates agreed that this student's work should be judged at a Pass, but no higher. There were glimpses of better quality work (some breadth of coverage of relevant issues, though component b. is not being addressed) but these were not sustained. Also, both the plagiarism and the language weaknesses prevented the student from producing analysis which is very good in terms of precision and accuracy.	Pass
7a	The general feeling was that a Pass should be awarded, and no more. One delegate mentioned that a Merit could be considered but was then persuaded otherwise by another delegate who drew attention to the disjointed structure of the piece and the fact that the student was struggling to process what they have read and explain its relevance. Another delegate commented on the untidy visual appearance of the assignment and said that the messy appearance reflected the lack of logical organisation.	Pass

Sample 2 – History (magazine article)

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
1.1	All delegates agreed that a number of causes for World War 1 were substantially covered in this assignment, namely militarism, alliances, nationalism, imperialism and the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand.	Pass
1.2	Consequences were also thoroughly covered, and included the effects on women's lives, new medical understanding (trench foot and shell shock) and the creation of the RAF.	Pass

Grading judgements using GD components

GD	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/Merit/ Distinction/ Borderline
2a,b, c	All delegates felt that this assignment was very competent in terms of application of knowledge but felt that although it had breadth of coverage, there wasn't always the depth of analysis to reach Distinction level. However, it does have a clear sense of direction and there are glimpses of Distinction-level work. A secure Merit overall.	Merit
7a,b	One delegate felt that a Merit should be awarded because this is a magazine article, and although the content is good the presentation, formatting and structuring of the material is not as clear and logical as it might be, and that this disturbs its readability. However, the other three delegates felt that, on balance, the piece was worthy of a Distinction because the individual sections are very well written and the arguments are consistently unambiguous. One delegate said that she knew nothing about this topic beforehand, and learnt a great deal from reading this assignment.	Distinction

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

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
1.1	All delegates agreed that 1.1 was clearly met as a number of key factors are mentioned.	Pass
1.2	Delegates felt that this was more limited as one flaw is explained and strengths are briefly touched on.	Borderline Pass
2.1	All delegates agreed that three sources are clearly identified.	Pass
2.2	Delegates felt that the student explains how each source supports personal study but that COVID-19 considerations might make this activity less immediately relevant if students couldn't actually access a LRC at this time.	Pass
3.1	All delegates agreed that three models of note-making are described.	Pass
6.1	Delegates agreed that the student has described how to create a plan for an essay and a report, though it was noted that the same format (mapping) was used for both.	Pass
7.1	Delegates felt that plagiarism was clearly defined.	Pass

7.2	Delegates felt that the consequences of plagiarism are clearly and comprehensively outlined.	Pass
7.3	Delegates felt this was just achieved as only one example is given, and the student misses the opportunity to reference his/her own source.	Borderline Pass
7.4	Delegates felt that this was achieved, though the explanation suggests that different sections and headings are needed for different types of sources. In addition, one delegate said that the student missed the opportunity of including a bibliography on the assignment itself.	Pass

Outcomes from discussion on Course Contingency Planning in response to COVID-19 disruption

The facilitator led a discussion on Course Contingency Planning. The following key points were raised.

- Delegates felt much more confident about course planning and delivery in the current circumstances than they had been last March. They had learnt a great deal from their previous experiences.
- One delegate said that there has been no face-to-face delivery in her college since the first lockdown, and agreed that this had made life easier for students and staff, compared with colleges which had opened for a while and then had to close or temporarily suspend face-to-face delivery.
- Two delegates were having ongoing discussions with colleagues about how to modify assignments which usually contain practical elements (health and music composition units).
- One delegate was focussing on enabling students to use all the functionality of Teams to create and present work, and generally developing their confidence in the use of this kind of technology.

Agreed recommendations from the event

1. To offer guidance and examples on the extent to which ACs need to be covered, in order to be achieved: One Awards
2. To share good practice in terms of remote delivery, especially where practical elements are involved: both within colleges and for One Awards to collate and disseminate good practice

Date report written: 12 January 2021

Name of facilitator: Alison Zucker