

Moderation Feedback – Visiting/Central - 2005

Qualification area

Social Sciences

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
included in this report**

Sociology –Higher National level

General comments on moderation activity

Sociology –Higher National level

Comments are based on feedback given by the moderators to nine Centres.

In general candidates across the nine Centres moderated reflected a range of performance from those of a high standard to borderline. Candidates were assessed according to the SQA standards for the relevant units. There was a tendency to have a large number of remediations amongst some Centres in relation to unit D7J2 34 Sociology A: Developing a Sociological Imagination. This appeared to apply particularly to the non – completion or inadequate responses to the questions on education which are towards the end of the assessment. With the exception of this issue, there were no specific trends evident in relation to candidate performance on specific units or components of units.

Specific issues identified

Sociology –Higher National level

Issues in relation to misunderstanding of procedures did not arise during the moderation activities undertaken.

In a number of cases the units delivered by the Centres did not always match the SQA Product list.

There was some confusion amongst Centres with regard to where the responsibility for moderating the unit ‘Research Methods in the Social Sciences’(A4YG 04) was located, as they reported this was previously moderated by the Psychology moderation team.

In a very small number of cases there were a number of issues that emerged in relation to moderation and assessment activities:

- (i) Lack of effective recording systems to enable tracking of candidates who required remediation, hence making it difficult for the moderator to detect trends in candidate performance on specific assessments and modules.
- (ii) Lack of information on the basis for sampling decisions in internal moderation processes.
- (iii) Lack of consistency amongst staff within the same institution in approaching assessment decisions and feedback.
- (iv) Lack of evidence of feedback to candidates. In general the practice on feedback across Centres was variable, ranging from in-depth qualitative feedback using feedback sheets to minimal or no evidence of feedback. The latter were in a very small minority

Feedback to centers

Sociology –Higher National level

All of the Centres (i.e. Nine) moderated used appropriate instruments of assessments and have assessed to the SQA specifications for the units delivered.

In the case of about half of the colleges moderated during the session 2004-5 it was evident that they had:

- provided candidates with clear information about each unit and the requirements, including detailed guidelines on handling of assignments, such as essays and referencing.
- adopted clear and effective systems for candidate feedback (both written and verbal);
- provided detailed qualitative comments to candidates;
- used feedback sheets;
- in place clear and effective systems for undertaking and recording internal moderation activities and decisions; and
- established clear systems for tracking candidate performance on assessments.

However, there were a small minority of Centres where the following issues emerged:

- Little or no evidence of relevant Unit information provided to candidates.
- Inconsistencies amongst staff within the same institution in relation to candidate feedback
- Weak evidence of adherence to the quality assurance system prevalent within the Centre.
- Lack of clear recording systems for tracking candidate performance on Units.
- Lack of information on criteria for sampling of candidates' assignments in relation to the internal moderation process.