

Moderation Feedback – Visiting - 2005

Management and Enterprise

Qualification area

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

**This moderation group consists largely of HN units.
It is closely related to 254 Business Management.**

General comments on moderation activity

There has been relatively little moderation activity in this moderation group. Many of the units moderated have been in existence for some time but some centres have begun the delivery of new units produced under the revised HN Design Principles.

The visits confirmed the experience of previous years which is that most centres carry out their assessment and internal moderation responsibilities seriously and carefully. It is very encouraging to be able to report again that this is the case.

For well-established units, centres have developed effective ways of working with the units. However, this is not always the case with the new units, particularly DE3D34 Managing People and Organisations. The assessment instrument given in the exemplar assessment pack for this unit involved closed book conditions which proved challenging for candidates and did pose administrative problems in some centres. Feedback from centres has led to changes in the unit specification which should help address the problems experienced. However, the experience does suggest that the new HN awards in Business and related areas do require centres to review their practice and, perhaps, to find ways to change what they have been accustomed to doing in order to meet the requirements of these new awards.

This moderation group is closely related to 254 Business Management and similar issues arise for both groups. It may be helpful to read this report in conjunction with that for 254 Business Management.

Specific issues identified

It has already been noted that most of the units moderated have been in existence for some time. Centres have developed suitable arrangements for assessment which have, in most cases, been tried and tested. This means that the process of assessment generally raised no significant issues and there were no significant difficulties in moderation.

The exception is DE3D34 Managing People and Organisations. Closed book assessments have not been widely used in Colleges in the last decade or so although they have been re-appearing in the last year or so. There does tend to be a lack of experience in preparing students for closed book assessment as well as considerable apprehension on the part of students about this form of assessment. This can translate into a reluctance to see it as relevant. In this unit, candidates did require considerable re-assessment and there was a perceived lack of clarity about the evidence requirements in the unit specification. The unit specification has been changed and this should help to address the difficulties experienced.

SQA procedures worked well largely because moderation staff are helpful, supportive and efficient. However, this group contains units which are closely related to units in 254 Business Management. They are often delivered as part of the same awards to the same groups of students. This can mean that centres are visited by two different moderators for what seems to be much the same thing. It seems sensible that, if at all possible, visits should be combined with a single moderator looking at both groups at the same visit.

Feedback to centres

Most centres have considerable experience of delivering the units in this moderation group. It is easy to find examples of good practice such as:

- A master folder for each unit containing instruments of assessment, assessment strategy and so on
- Robust and clear systems of recording candidate performance.

Not all centres are equally adept at keeping master folders up to date and sometimes things like notes of internal moderation meetings relate to previous sessions. Similarly some recording of student performance is easier to track than others. The new units may provide the stimulus for all centres to review procedures and modify them where required. It is hoped that the good practice will continue and there is every reason to suppose that it will. Informal feedback suggests that many centres are working on preparing this material which is very encouraging.

There are two areas in particular which centres may wish to consider:

1. giving detailed feedback to candidates – the use of special ‘cover sheet’ for assessments on which feedback can be given seems to be increasing. Some centres actually use two pro-formas – one for each assessment and one to keep an overall tally of unit progress. It is increasingly common also to see script comments. All this is time-consuming but it does seem to pay dividends and does highlight a commitment to candidates and to helping them to do as well as possible. Most centres do explain to candidates what is needed when re-assessment is required but additional feedback may enhance the learning process.
2. develop marking guidelines for each instrument of assessment – and follow them once they are developed. This helps to standardise assessor judgments and contributes to consistency of assessment between cohorts and between different assessors. Some centres do this well but it is a practice which can be further developed. It is particularly important for new HN units to ensure that candidates do achieve the requisite SCQF level. Where exemplar assessments are used, the marking guidance supplied can be annotated to show how the centre has interpreted them.

Overall, though, centres are assessing units in this moderation group in a capable and competent manner for which they deserve credit.