

Principal Assessor Report 2003

Assessment Panel:

Sport and Leisure

Qualification area:

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

Fitness and Exercise
Intermediate 2 and Higher levels

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2002	
Pre appeal	Int 2 30 Higher 32

Number of entries in 2003	
Pre appeal	Int 2 12 Higher 58

General comments re entry numbers

The increase in numbers at Higher level is positive, but a disappointing drop at Intermediate 2 level. Initial feedback seems to suggest Unit assessment workload became too heavy for some candidates who subsequently failed to complete all areas of the PBNC external assessment and were therefore withdrawn from entry to the external award. This issue is currently being addressed within the review of NAB materials and Unit content, although will not be effective until 2004/2005. Centres should therefore be encouraged to consider a more holistic approach to internal assessment in the meantime to reduce candidate workload.

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

Fitness and Exercise Higher:
C – 100 (50%)
B – 120 (60%)
A – 140 (70%)
Fitness and Exercise Intermediate 2:
C – 100 (50%)
B – 120 (60%)
A – 140 (70%)

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

No change from last year.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Higher level

It appears that the distribution of marks across each assessable area remained very similar to last year with candidates achieving approximately 60% (mean) of the total marks in the plan, development and evaluation stages. Generally, comments from the External Assessor are positive with regard to candidate performance.

Intermediate 2 level

Distribution of marks suggests candidates are achieving very well in the plan and developmental stages (mean 77% and 75% respectively), but less well in the evaluation stage (mean 60%). This could be related to the time-scales involved in producing the evaluation, but also will have been affected by one centre which had staffing problems towards the latter stages of the programme.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Candidates generally performed well in all areas of the external assessment with the only significant difference being with Intermediate 2 level evaluations as above. External Assessor comments suggest a high quality of work being produced in those centres who are confident in their approach. The Development stage projects submitted were generally of high quality, reflecting the work carried out in the relevant Units. It is suggested that these projects are an excellent tool for candidates to learn a variety of skills from, including planning, researching and compiling information and is particularly useful for candidates continuing to Higher National level study.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Candidates again appeared to have difficulty in adhering to the 500 word limit in the planning stage of the Assessment as was seen last year. This issue is currently being addressed in the review of the award.

The evaluation stage at Intermediate 2 level were generally less well done than both planning and developing stages. As mentioned previously, this may related partly to time-scales for completion of the external assessments. Candidates and teaching staff appeared to use the marking scheme and each bullet point within it as a definitive response to the evaluation process rather than considering their own situation independently. There was also evidence of centers allocating marks without considering quality of the candidates' work which made differentiating between candidates

difficult. This seemed to encourage a very non-reflective evaluation, and in several cases very little self-evaluation appears to have been carried out at all. These centres were encouraged to consider the grade descriptions within the project specification document as a guide for mark allocation.

Unfortunately, this situation was highlighted last year, but it seems that the problem has not been resolved.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

The overall response to visits by the External Assessor was very positive with good standards being met in most centres. Centres are suggesting that the PBNC style award in Fitness and Exercise is appropriate to the subject and is an excellent introduction to the work required at Higher National level. There was, at the time of Visiting Assessment however, some adjusting of marks required. This perhaps reflects a need for further training and advice to centres to ensure that centres are clear on the 'demand level' required to reflect an award at Higher level and at Intermediate 2 level, and in particular, the use of grade descriptions when allocating marks.

Where centres performed less well during Moderation, it appears that, as suggested last year, the main concern relates to internal moderation procedures, or the lack of in most cases. It should be strongly emphasised that particularly when offering an award for the first time, the process of internal moderation of both Internal Units and External Assessments is crucial in monitoring standards and can often provide an excellent grounding for discussion between teaching staff relating to issues being encountered. Further, that internal moderation take place early enough so that any difficulties that may arise can be dealt with in plenty of time prior to the External Visit which will invariably be towards the end of the year. It should also be emphasised that all Principal Assessors are available for informal discussions and/or visits to centres at any point through the academic year to assist in the delivery of the programme.

Centres should be aware that changes to the PBNC are current, the emphasis being on reducing the quantity of internal unit assessment, as well as re-writing some units to encourage a more holistic approach to the Intermediate 2 and Higher level courses. These changes are designed to make progression from the internal units to the external project more coherent, and therefore assist candidates in the production of plans and evaluations in particular.