

Principal Assessor Report 2004

Assessment Panel:

Care

Qualification area

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

Care Issues for Society – Int 2

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2003 (pre appeal)	405
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Number of entries in 2004 (pre appeal)	322
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General comments re entry numbers

The drop in the number of candidates from last year is sizeable. However, numbers in excess of 300 are still healthy for a project-assessed national Course. Centre entries did in fact show an increase over 2003 but submitted projects was as shown.

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of awards and grade boundaries

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	9.0	9.0	29	150
B	20.2	29.2	65	130
C	28.9	58.1	93	110
D	7.5	65.5	24	90
No award	34.5	100	111	

Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

It may be that centres are now entering more able candidates for one of the Higher project-based Courses instead. The number of awards at B, C and No awards remain similar to those of last year.

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

The grade boundaries remain the same as in previous years. Since this is a project-assessed Course with no change in project specification, this is appropriate.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

It was generally felt, by the marking team, that the overall standard was poorer than in previous years, but the statistics show that the only significant change is that there were no outstanding projects.

A considerable number of centres gave estimates which markers found generous. Occasionally, centre estimates were wildly adrift from the actual mark given, such as high As being estimated for candidates who achieved low Cs.

Some centres enter candidates for this Intermediate 2 course when the candidate's work indicates that they are performing at a level closer to Intermediate 1. One centre in particular, with a high number of entries, had done this.

One centre presented good candidate projects in one of the options and poor projects in the other option with evidence of some misdirection and over generous estimates. In this situation, where different teams within one centre present candidates for the Course, it would benefit candidates if experience was shared and some degree of cross-checking estimates took place.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Candidates choosing the Older Adult option did well in describing the issues relating to the various people in the case study.

Those who took the Childcare option did well in examining the situation from the position of the Nursery Nurse showing awareness of the links between a child's behaviour and possible underlying issues.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Considering that this is the fifth year of the Course, it is disappointing that centres have not picked up the problem areas indicated in previous reports.

Evaluations have always been the area which separated the best candidates from the rest, but this year the standard of evaluations overall was disappointing.

A substantial number of candidates chose to research family structures which bore no relevance to the families of the case study which may be a reflection on the centre's candidate guidance. It should be the case that all the research done by the candidate is relevant to the case study, yet a considerable number of candidates failed to identify any support agencies relevant to the case studies.

One centre with a substantial number of candidates appeared to have misdirected candidates regarding the research based element of the project for the Childcare option, yet candidates from this centre taking the Older Adult option were appropriately guided. This reinforces the point already made about centres sharing good practice across teams/staff.

Candidates have difficulty describing differences in family structures and issues related to the case studies between the present and 25 years ago. They often describe family structure 25 years ago more in terms of 75 years ago.

In the Older Adult option, there is evidence of difficulty with 'patterns of ageing' which is too often answered only in terms of physical aspects of ageing. This question needs to be answered in a broader way indicating the range of ageing patterns and stressing positive images of ageing.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Centres should guide candidates to select family structures to research which relate to the case study. They should also encourage use of Course notes and relevant texts to provide the basis of the research into family types, as research based only on candidate's own family, a fictional family or acquaintances, may not reveal all the necessary features of a specified family structure.

The extended family is too often defined in very narrow terms with no real description of the way the extended family interacts in the 21st century. Too many candidates see the extended family as something historic which is not accurate. Centres need to ensure that candidates do not see family structure as something static and rigid, ensuring that candidates understand how structures overlap, for example, when a lone parent family may be part of a larger extended family.

Centres should ensure that candidates cover the areas of support agencies, both voluntary and statutory.

Most candidates would benefit from some practice at evaluation. Centres should consider teaching this skill, perhaps evaluating some of the Course work relating to the Course Units as practice. There is a tendency for candidates to do no real analysis of how they approached the project with statements such as 'I thought I did well' and no real comment on strengths and weaknesses.

Some centres should examine their decision to enter candidates who are performing at Intermediate 1 level, for this Course.

Centres who find that their own estimates are widely at variance from the grades awarded may benefit from cross-marking work, especially where one group of candidates achieves as expected and another group does not.