

Moderation Feedback — Visiting

Assessment Panel:

PSE

Qualification area:

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

PSE Course Intermediate 1/2/Higher
HN Units

Visiting Moderation

General comments on visiting moderation activity

PSE course constituted 14 visits to centres, all of which were accepted. Candidates were informally interviewed as a group in most centres, giving good opportunity for PSD grounding and exchange of views. This practice is welcomed by staff, candidates and moderators, especially in developing centres. Staff appeared reassured that what they were delivering was meeting standards and any discrepancy in marking interpretation was discussed and resolved on the spot. One centre required to be revisited as no evidence was available for the moderator to scrutinise. The return visit was successful.

Generally candidate work was clearly presented, with good practice showing where marks had been allocated against candidate work. Bi level teaching was evident — this may have contributed to low scores in one centre where entry levels are under review. There was also a high level of substitutions with a number of candidates reportedly undertaking the first Unit but missing motivation to continue beyond the winter break/fill in the written assessments. Substitute candidate evidence was available in such cases and across all internally assessed components, the marking was of a high standard and closely articulated with the marking guidelines.

There appeared to be two general areas which may require some further attention — these are at all levels and concern firstly, links between self evaluation and planning where targets are set and secondly, an appreciation of what constitutes ‘negotiation’ and how it can be evidenced. These are annual concerns which suggest staff development may be required to address them. Centres suggested that exemplification through candidate work from a range of centres would help the interpretation of marking guidelines which were considered too vague at times. Candidates suggested that the allocation of marks in relation to what they were expected to write was misleading compared to other Highers for example, and that these could be doubled to be more realistic. Both assessors and candidates were critical of the reliance on paperwork, considered to be excessive and too time consuming. There may well be a case to streamline assessment following the PSE review of the pilot period.

Candidates overall were positive about the course itself and many expressed how useful it had been in both topic content and in personal confidence at interview applying to Higher Education for degree courses. Where minor differences in marking had been identified, some the result of adding scores incorrectly, these were discussed and accepted by centre staff.

HN Units were moderated through college visits, including separate site visits. This was considered preferable to central moderation model due to the particular nature of the moderation group. One centre was also selected as part of a COVE (intensive) activity. Twenty-seven Units were moderated across 10 centres, with three centres having Units not accepted from the visiting activity. These have now been resolved, with support from the EM team. Both occurred when vocational specialists were delivering PSE Units and concern expressed over support/staff development given prior to delivery. This suggests that while contexts are being sought for delivery, content and process skills may require further assurances. As it appears staff turnover is a factor, more support in contextualising while maintaining standards is required. Centres appear to have had some difficulty linking self evaluation to action planning which is then carried out and evaluated critically; exercises/case studies which exemplify skills that are then demonstrated, assessed and reviewed in practical situation. Again this suggests a need for ongoing support to centres delivering and assessing at this level. Internal moderation systems appear also to be critical in this area as PSE tends to be housed across college sections. Moderation visits included a high developmental and reassuring input from moderators in some centres, while others were exemplary in both delivery and assessment practice witnessed. There

is scope for differentiation within candidates presented for this award using SCQF at levels 6, 7 and 8.

Development visits were also undertaken to three colleges in this moderation area.

PSD Units were moderated through incomplete evidence as part of moderation pilot in five centres. The major focus was on Work Experience and Community Involvement/SAD where programmes were being refreshed for certification. The ethos of PSD was high in all centres volunteering to participate in the pilot and visits were supportive. Only the Senior Moderator was involved in this particular activity in order to encourage reliability of responses. Centres appeared relieved firstly to see a moderator from this area to discuss with and secondly to hear that generally they are on the right lines in what they are planning to do. Outwith the pilot, six Units were moderated with two of the three centres not being accepted. In one instance, the instruments of assessment did not cover the Outcome specification nor was there sufficient candidate evidence to support certification across a range of different sites. The centre agreed on redirection and further guidance to be offered which was then implemented and issues resolved. The second centre has issues remaining within PAD Unit which still require to be addressed should they wish to resubmit at Intermediate 1 level. These centres all advised of prior moderation service as limited NABs exist for these Units.

Development visits were made to 10 further centres with a clear pattern of support required in linking PSD Units, SGAs and Core Skill of Working with Others. Schools often want to be able to offer candidates this through Work Experience Unit but have difficulty managing to offer the challenging context required for this level at all stages of the process. Successful contexts have been identified when linked to co-operative learning practices in eg North Lanarkshire schools, where the process of team working is truly core and the task sits on top as the vehicle for skill development. It would seem that this quest for Working with Others certification is common across schools and an appropriate context for skills development and assessment may be highly localised within the school programme.

Specific issues identified

Evidence of the need for:

- ◆ ongoing support for centres, following recommendations of PSE review
- ◆ enhancement of NAB materials
- ◆ clarification of work experience standards communicated to centres
- ◆ delivery materials to support negotiation skills development/assessment
- ◆ review of DPE in content and style with exemplar assessments to meet delivery demands in a range of contexts

Feedback to centres

Visiting moderation provides for on the spot feedback to centres which was generally well received. Agreement was reached for all other points of disagreement raised by moderators through discussion and explanation.

Development visits and moderation visits have produced encouraging feedback which has helped centres focus on the direction and delivery of their PSD programmes. Prior moderation of materials has been limited this session, with centres wanting to capture Working with Others often at a higher level than can be supported by the context — this has been reluctantly received by individual centres.

Full reports alongside verbal feedback on the day have underlined good practice where it has been evident.