Access to HE Diploma
Standardisation Report 2020-21

Study Skills
16 November 2020, 2.00-4.00pm
Held remotely via Microsoft Teams

Attendance:

6 attendees from 4 providers attended.

Steven Davis – Open Study College
Beth Hudspith – Newcastle College
Donna Stokes – Newcastle College
Elaine Allcock – Darlington College
Steph Garnett – Darlington College
Sharron Galley – Ashton Sixth Form College

In addition Jennie Lawson, One Awards Quality Manager, attended for the final 45 minutes.

The facilitator was Alison Zucker, One Awards Lead Moderator.

Apologies:
Melanie Porritt – NOCN Business Development Manager

Aims and Objectives of the event:

Aim: To provide opportunities for those involved in the assessment and/or moderation of the Access to HE Diploma to increase their understanding of assessment requirements, and to compare their assessment judgements with others delivering and/or moderating units in the same subject area.

Objectives:
To undertake activities which enable participants to:
1. Compare assessment judgements in relation to student achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

2. Compare assessment judgements in relation to student achievement of grade indicators.

3. Explore and confirm QAA and One Awards requirements for assessment.

Samples of student work chosen for the event:

Unit title: Study Skills – Beginner's Guide to Academic Studies (ungraded unit)

Unit title: English Language Writing Skills – booklet comprising summary, formal letter, review, report and bibliography (ungraded unit)

The associated learning outcomes and assessment criteria were provided on separate sheets. The assignment briefs were not provided.

Summary of feedback from delegates and moderators

Sample 1 – Study Skills: Beginner's Guide to Academic Studies

Achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
1.1	All delegates in agreement that 1.1 has been met as the student outlines 3 factors to be taken into consideration: work commitments, family commitments and grocery shopping. They also consider the implications of not having a regular weekly routine.	Pass
1.2	Delegates felt this was less securely achieved because the student focuses on his/her one weakness rather than balancing strengths and weaknesses. The response to this AC is rather thin.	Pass
2.1	3 sources clearly identified: books, computers and printers, staff. There was little discussion here as everyone was in agreement.	Pass
2.2	Student explains clearly how each resource can help with personal study and all delegates agreed that this AC was achieved. However, one delegate felt that the description could have been developed to link the resources with actual assignments which students have been asked to do, or give an example of an assessment where these resources would help, and explain how.	Pass
3.1	3 different models of note-taking are clearly described. All delegates agreed that this AC was achieved. They liked the fact that the student outlined some advantages and disadvantages of each method and evaluated those these evaluations could have been linked to specific types of assessment.	Pass
6.1	Delegates felt that 6.1 was achieved, but that it was limited. More could have been said about how to structure a plan, in particular how to formulate an introduction and a conclusion. Delegates felt that the issue of sub-headings wasn't clearly explained and that they wanted the student to indicate that certain disciplines do not require them, e.g. History, English Literature. Regarding reports, delegates felt that 6.1 was also achieved, though the explanation is briefer compared with the previous	Pass

	section on essay planning. The students could have gone on to explain the layout and role of each section in a report, and how they are linked together, culminating in Findings and Recommendations.	
7.1	Plagiarism is clearly defined but, ironically, no source is offered for the definition. However, all delegates agreed that 7.1 was achieved.	Pass
7.2	The consequences of plagiarism are clearly outlined. However, delegates thought that the second half of 7.2 (how to avoid plagiarism) was less fully addressed because the use of plagiarism via paraphrasing was not included. The student seems to suggest that as long as you use your own words, then you avoid plagiarism. Overall, though, delegates felt that since this was a L2 unit, then 7.2 has been met.	Pass
7.3	Here the student does explain the need to reference both direct quotations and paraphrasing. However, the AC asks for 'examples' and only one is offered. Two delegates felt that 7.3 was not fully achieved because of this.	Borderline
7.4	The student describes how to reference websites, books and pictures in a bibliography but it was felt that he/she should also have included journals and possibly other sources as well. Also, the way this section is written seems to imply that each source should be listed separately in a bibliography, which is not the case. Finally, there was the usual discussion about whether the term 'bibliography' or 'reference list' should be used, and though this was not resolved the impression gained was that it depends on the discipline as to which term is used.	Pass

Sample 2 – English Language Writing Skills – booklet comprising summary, formal letter, review, report and bibliography

AC	Comments from delegates and moderators	Consensus decision Pass/ borderline/fail
1.1	Although this student struggles with writing, it was felt that there was enough correct language for 1.1 to be achieved.	Pass
1.2	There is a clear example submitted of a piece of writing which has been annotated and proof-read. The final version is also included, and although it is by no means perfect, there are marked improvements. As a result, all delegates felt that 1,2 is met.	Pass
1.3	The student does attempt to acknowledge sources but there was much discussion about the validity of the sources referenced, as one was the programme itself (Panorama)	Pass

	and one was a source which was not mentioned in the submission, and so its relevance was questionable (Directorate of Information and learning Services , 2013) . Overall, it was felt that 1.3 was met, though poorly.	
2.1	All delegates agreed that this was achieved. The student attempts to set the letter out in a formal manner and there is an attempt at an appropriately formal register.	Pass
2.2	All delegates felt that 2.2 was not met as there is no example of a report in the submission.	Fail
2.3	There is a review of the Panorama programme, and so all delegates felt that 2.3 had been met.	Pass
2.4	All delegates felt that the student had not submitted anything which could be considered an essay, and so 2.4 was not met.	Fail
3.1	The student has written a draft and a final version summary of the Panorama programme, though the AC refers to 'given texts', and only one text has been summarised. Therefore it was felt that there was a borderline achievement of 3.1. All delegates were in agreement on this.	Pass
3.2	The student has attempted a bibliography in Section 5 of the assignment but it only contains three items and one of the items listed (How to Write a Report) has not been cited in the review of the programme, or indeed anywhere else. As a result, delegates felt that there was a lack of understanding shown of the purposes of a bibliography, and therefore 3.2 is only just met.	Borderline

Outcomes from discussion on Course Adaption and Planning in the context of COVID-19 contingencies

The facilitator led a discussion on Course Contingency Planning. The following key points were raised.

- It was felt that both these assignments could be delivered remotely without too many problems. Obviously, the staff at the Learning Resources Centre would not be able to supply students with physical materials and stationery, but otherwise no obstacles presented themselves.
- Although these assessments could be delivered remotely, it was also felt that there is no substitute for face-to-face support and several delegates explained that they had students who were struggling with the IT side of remote learning. For example, they found Teams difficult to manage and did not know how to make best use of it.
- Providers were taking action wherever possible to ensure that learning can continue remotely, but there are still problems to overcome, for example, getting laptops to students who suddenly have to self-isolate.

- One delegate suggested using track changes for proof-reading rather than correcting a piece of work by hand as this would enable it to be refined more easily by students studying at home.
- One delegate recommended Jam Board as being a useful feature of Google Classroom as it enables students to draw documents by hand and then share them.
- Microsoft Teams is used by many providers, but delegates felt that both staff and students were not always using it to its full potential. Also, some students are struggling with the basics of Teams.
- Instagram is proving useful in Art and Design courses, and students particularly like its speed of access.

Agreed recommendations from the event

1. For One Awards - offer opportunities for moderators and provider staff to develop understanding of the extent to which an AC has to be addressed, before it can be deemed to be achieved.

2. For provider staff - ensure that when an AC itself calls for 'example**s**' or 'text**s**' in the plural, more than one example/text is included. A single example/text would not be sufficient for a Pass.

3. For One Awards - To collect and disseminate good practice in the use of Microsoft Teams and other platforms (eg. Google Classroom). In particular, to raise awareness of the potential of these platforms for teaching and learning.

Date report written: 17/11/2020

Name of facilitator: Alison Zucker