

“Policing in Europe: Comparing the Structure and Tactics of European Police Forces”

(C Grade)

Introduction

The evidence for all five stages was submitted using SQA templates, including full Assessor feedback at all relevant stages, as well as the Assessor Report. There is evidence of regular meetings between the candidate and the Assessor and also of support from the Modern Studies Department to assist with internal verification. The candidate presented his Proposal to an Internal Verification Panel.

Proposal

The candidate chose a project which is very relevant to his future career aspirations and which relates to his wider school studies. The title is appropriate to his aims and the outline of his project is well conceived. The candidate outlines how he will use his subject knowledge but could perhaps have been more specific about how he plans to construct emails, questionnaires and interview questions in French and Italian.

At this stage of the project, the candidate says that he plans to interview representatives of each police force. He does not state clearly that he plans to interview them in a location outside of his own centre and it is not clear if these interviews will be conducted by telephone or face to face. He should have been more explicit about the learning environments he planned to access.

The skills development section is not fully detailed. For example, the candidate does not expand on the Independent Learning and Problem Solving sections, neither on his strengths nor weaknesses. There should be more focus on how he plans to capitalise on his strengths and improve in the areas he has identified for development.

All of the Grade C criteria have been met as well as two out of three of the Grade A criteria.

Plan

The candidate's timescales are realistic, have clear milestones and are described in a very general manner. He takes into account school holidays and his Prelims as factors which will impact on his timescales. This is recognised in the assessor feedback to the candidate.

He develops clear objectives in line with the original proposal. It now becomes clear that the candidate recognises that he will access learning environments outside of his own centre. While the project is assessed holistically, this should have been made more explicit in the Proposal.

The candidate identifies the research methods he will use. However, these are limited: Modern Studies departmental resources, local library, internet and face to face conversations. More primary research could have been included – questionnaires, surveys – to enhance the interviews and emails he has outlined. This advice was given to him by his Assessor: “You have considered resources and research methods you intend to employ but I suggest you try to widen both your primary and secondary research...”

The candidate identifies dependencies and contingencies but his plans to overcome the anticipated problems could be wider in scope. He does not recognise that he may have to change his plan if he does not get the responses desired. He could have thought about widening his research to police forces in other Francophone countries if he did not manage to make sufficient contact in France.

The method for recording skills development is addressed but this section is weak. The candidate could have outlined how often he planned to update his log, when he would have mentor meetings and the specific skills he wanted to improve. This is recognised in the Assessor Comments: “You need to make good use of your Project Log to help you reflect on the development of your skills at each stage.”

All of the Grade C criteria are met but none of the A criteria has been fully addressed.

Presentation of project findings/product

The candidate presented his Project Findings in the form of a talk backed up by a Power Point Presentation. He does not describe his presentation in great detail although he does justify why he chose this method of presentation. As noted in the Assessor feedback to the candidate, his choice of audience was appropriate, although he could have invited teachers from other departments and also his external partners.

It is also clear from the Assessor’s comments that the candidate has gained a deeper understanding of both French and Italian by applying these two languages in his chosen contexts of citizenship and employability. However, from the candidate’s outline of his presentation, from the Assessor comments and from the discussion at the Quality Forum, there is no evidence that the first two points in the Grade A criteria have been met.

Evaluation of Project

The evaluation of the project is relatively short and is more of a description rather than an evaluation of the Project. The candidate does not offer a lot of detail in terms of his strengths, weaknesses and learning points. He does state that he reached objectives one and three of his plan but could have expanded on this to reflect the more successful parts of his project. The Assessor says that “His communication throughout has been good and his presentation method had been effective”. However, in his evaluation, the candidate does not make reference to the communication that he had with his mentor over the course of the project. This would have added to his evaluation. The candidate is very hard on himself in his evaluation but after discussion at the Quality Forum, it was evident that he used his chosen communication methods effectively and therefore, all of the Grade C criteria, but none of the A criteria, have been met.

Self evaluation

This is a critical evaluation of the candidate’s own skills development. He supports his evaluation with evidence from the project. For example, he reflects on the differences in his ability to use his inter-personal skills with both the Scottish and the French police and on the lack of contact with the Italian police. He does not explicitly make reference to feedback from others but as outlined in the Assessor Report “He sought feedback from myself and his Modern Studies teacher at key stages of his project, especially when he came against problems. He was able to use this feedback and advice to progress his project and he has to be commended for not giving up”. As a result of the Assessor Comments and the discussion at the Quality Forum, it is clear that all of the Grade C but none of the Grade A criteria have been met.

Overview

The candidate worked independently and showed a great deal of autonomy in terms of his own learning. This project could perhaps have been improved if he had sought more advice and acted more readily on the feedback from his mentor.

Although some of the Grade A criteria had been met at different stages of the project, the assessor’s holistic view was that this was not enough to merit a Grade B. The external verification process supported the assessor’s award of a Grade C.