

Commentary on candidate 1 evidence

Project title: Women's prisons in Scotland

Proposal

The proposal was clear and topical and had opportunities for skills development, for collaborative working and for accessing less familiar learning environments.

Knowledge and skills from different subject disciplines were identified and the broad context of economic development was highlighted. The skills analysis was competent with strengths and weaknesses in different areas identified.

All of the C criteria have been met and the argument for the chosen subject also means that the A criterion for 'justification of the proposal' can be met. The assessor comments were supportive and highlight the topicality of the subject area.

However, the restricted range of learning environments and limited broad contexts mean that the A criterion for a 'proposal which sets creative and challenging goals' cannot be met. Nor can the A criterion for 'substantial links' and 'connections across disciplines' be met.

To achieve these additional A criteria, the candidate would have needed to have accessed a wider range of environments, for example, the Scottish Government, the Law Society of Scotland and university researchers working on rehabilitation methods. The candidate could also have widened the scope of the research to include comparisons with approaches to rehabilitation in other countries. Finally, the candidate could also have mentioned that the capacity of the Bella Centre is 16 inmates and that the capacity of HMP & YOI Stirling is 117.

Plan

The plan included a timeline but it is rather limited and did not acknowledge or include other activities such as holidays, prelims, university applications, etc. The assessor feedback stated that the plan could have been a little more detailed.

The resources needed for the project were identified in the plan but as above, they were limited and this is commented on by the assessor.

Methods for monitoring progress and for presenting the project were indicated.

All of the C criteria in the plan have been met. The A grade criterion for 'careful selection and effective use of research/investigation techniques' has been awarded but it is not entirely clear why this was the case since the project is really reliant on contacts being made with staff at the Bella Centre and at HMP & YOI Stirling.

There is no real detail in relation to contingencies and dependencies and so these A grade criteria have not been met. In this section the candidate should really have considered alternative planning methodologies should the originally intended research not prove possible to complete.

The criterion 'Outline the process for achieving own identified development needs' could have been awarded but this has no bearing on the overall grade.

Presentation

The presentation, which lasted 10 minutes, comprised a PowerPoint to fifth and sixth year students and a Modern Studies teacher. Flash cards were used for some of the text and a QR code for anonymous feedback was provided at the conclusion.

The candidate stated that almost everyone used the opportunity to provide feedback and so this aspect, which was commendable, was a great success. The assessor acknowledged this in their comments.

All of the C grade criteria have been met for the presentation along with the A grade criteria 'critical thinking, analysis and reflection' and for a 'deepening of

understanding through the application of subject knowledge'. The A grade criterion for 'skilful and creative use of resources' has not been met.

Evaluation

The candidate provided a critical and justified evaluation of the project along with an evaluation of the communication and presentation methods. The candidate acknowledged the importance of sticking to the intended timeline and also explained that more effort could have been made to contact staff at the Bella Centre and HMP & YOI Stirling.

The candidate provided detail associated with the audience feedback collected and articulated that this will be taken forward in future presentations. This clearly demonstrates that the candidate gained a great deal from the different stages of the project work. The evaluation is incisive and well-balanced and is clearly linked to the project aims.

There is no assessor comments provided but it is clear that all of the C and A grade criteria have been met.

Self-evaluation

The candidate provided an honest and reflective self-evaluation that clearly linked to the specified generic/cognitive skills. The candidate articulated that they were able to use existing subject knowledge and that they were able to build on this. Skills associated with presenting were developed along with skills associated with sticking to an intended timeline. The candidate stated that they acted on feedback provided and they also identified their development needs.

All of the C and A criteria have been met. It is not clear why the assessor has not awarded the A criterion for 'justified use of feedback' and 'identification of development areas'. There are no assessor comments in this section.

Overview

This project was awarded a B grade overall. All of the C grade criteria have been met along with some of the A grade criteria. It was clear that the candidate learned a lot from the different stages involved in the project and this is articulated in the self-evaluation. The candidate's presentation skills will undoubtedly improve as a result of the project.

The project itself was topical but the range of external learning environments were limited from the start. If this issue had been tackled at the outset, the project could have been much better.

The assessor comments which were given were helpful but they could have been expanded upon. There are no assessor comments in the evaluation or self-evaluation sections of the assessor report and the comments in the 'Additional comments/overview' section are directed to the candidate and not the internal/external verifiers. Verification is reliant on the assessor comments which should indicate the thought process behind grading decisions.