Case study: good practice in assessment

Higher Childcare and Development — Glasgow Kelvin College

Introduction

At Glasgow Kelvin College we are now in the second year of delivering Higher Childcare and Development to our NC level 6 Childcare students. We assess the units of the course using SQA's unit assessment support (UAS) package 1 (unit –by-unit approach).

Background

Candidates at this level seldom have any childcare experience and the straightforward unit-by-unit approach suits their needs and abilities. We made a few very minor changes to customise the UAS pack. The changes were so minor that they did not have to be sent to SQA for prior verification.

Why we chose this assessment approach

The assessment approach lends itself well to being arranged into set tasks which can be completed by the candidates in any order. This allows us to implement a flexible approach to teaching and assessment.

Delivering and assessing the course

The *Child Development* (Higher) and *Services for Children and Young People* (Higher) units are delivered in block one and the *Child Development: Theory* (Higher) unit is delivered in block two. The *Child Development: Theory* unit follows on logically from the *Child Development* unit, leading to better understanding of the subject. Candidates are assessed on tasks throughout the block. Work completed in class is used to support assessment and this gives value to classroom activities. Completing the units early in the year supports candidates with their project work.

Specific benefits for candidates

Candidates benefit from personalisation and choice and gain a deeper understanding of their subject. Candidates can combine tasks if they wish: they might produce a report covering all of the evidence requirements.

Less time is spent memorising, for example, milestones of development and this allows candidates to spend more time on more meaningful application of information.

Specific benefits for teaching staff

The assessments are quick and easy to produce and, as they are just an interpretation of the published UAS packs, prior verification is not required. Staff have confidence in the assessments as they are so close to those supplied by SQA. They do not need to manage a high volume of assessments at one time because the approach to assessment was staggered. This approach also allows staff and candidates to focus on preparing for the course assessment because unit work is completed by the end of block two.

Please note: The assessment tasks referred to in this case study can be found in the Centre Produced Prior Verified materials section of SQA's secure website (PV254, 256, 255) via your SQA co-ordinator.