

# PROMOTING INCLUSION AND VALUING DIVERSITY THROUGH ASSESSMENT DELIVERY FOR ONLINE LEARNING

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## KEYWORDS

Online learning, Screen capture, assessment, inclusive, diversity, subtitles, equality

## SUMMARY

The assessment delivery method on this course has evolved over the last few years to include further links with practical expectations in practice, required of the sector's registerable Council. As such, going over the assessment for each student in an inclusive but accessible method was an inevitable evolution of the current assessment delivery method.

The new method of assessment delivery uses simple technology to create an audible, visual and accessible support video with further explanation of the assessment brief. One which further values the diversity of students in a contemporary Scotland.

## CONTEXT

The HNC Childhood Practice is a Scottish Social Services Council registerable qualification. The cohort is often networked within the partnership over up to 8 locations within Argyll and Bute. The cohort is relatively large for a VC delivery course (13-20 students) and all students have articulated into the course via the NC Early Education and Childcare or with entry requirement Highers and some relevant experience. The course has integrated assessments across both HN units and Vocational units to fulfil the practical requirements.

All assessments are 100% pass mark and require a combination of practical reflection and observations by the student with an applied evaluation of the theoretical knowledge in a professional context.

## WHAT, WHERE?

Teaching delivery on this course is over two days and covers a variety of Childhood Practice based modules and vocational units. Students are all required to attend placement in which to learn the practical aspect of the practitioner award and implement the theoretical knowledge of children's learning and development. Students' placement can range in service from nurseries, school, Pre-5 to after school care. Assessments are not varied to reflect the different services so students must interpret the assessments to their placement experience whilst meeting the same evidence requirements.

From March 2020, teaching was moved from in centre video conference teaching to WEBEX based teaching. WEBEX teaching is an online virtual Video Conference software that student can access from home laptops from within the Brightspace VLE platform. Prior to WEBEX based teaching students were given access to the assessments via the Brightspace virtual learning environment with instruction and discussion supported further over the video conference teaching platform.



From March 2020, the assessments remained accessible via the Brightspace virtual learning environment. However, to promote inclusivity and flexibility in assessment delivery, the assessments were not only available in written format, but the lecturer recorded an explanation of the assessment brief using screen capture technology (which records audio and a person's screen) and discussed examples of how students could meet the assessment brief within their particular placement setting. This allowed students who were unable to attend the class to also have access to this further explanation. Furthermore, students were able to revisit this as often as required. To further value the diversity of the class in regard to learning style, language, additional support needs or culture, subtitles were added to the recording in both English and, for any student who requested it, translation to another language. The UHI Stream service offers screen capture function to allow the lecturer to explain the various points of the assessment and then subtitles. A text file containing subtitles can be created using Notepad, YouTube Captions or a program such as Subtitle Workshop. Alternative language subtitles can be added when translated via various apps or Word translate then manually adding the transcript using YouTube captions or Subtitle workshop. (note, it is important the assessment questions are not exposed out with the secure UHI location). In addition, font size was increased from 10 to 14, and case studies were changed to reflect a variety of countries of origin- such as names used, the inclusion of individuals' pronouns, with particular attention given to ensuring the diversity of the student cohort was considered where possible. Job roles, activities or celebrations within case studies were diversified and, where possible, were reflective and inclusive of the student cohort. Family structures and gender roles were varied and inclusive of the contemporary structures within modern families, for example, single parent, the same-sex parent, or blended families and so on.

Students were later encouraged to ask any questions about the assessment brief within the module discussion board, however, to ensure less confident students or those students conscious of their spelling or additional support for learning needs, such as dyslexia, felt comfortable to ask questions within the discussion board, the option to make posts anonymously was selected.

### WHY?

Before the move to WEBEX teaching, students would often need assessments explained a few times, this was due to the varied nature of their placements and the often complex combination of their practical planning and implementation using theoretical knowledge. This could sometimes result in in-class time being used to repeat the assessment brief discussion or the lecturer having to explain the assessment for students absent from class at those times. Students new to VC teaching may have been too shy to speak up on VC and ask questions about the assessment brief in their placement context. Furthermore, post-COVID, move to the WEBEX delivery, many students were accessing studies at times that were out with the lecturing staff working day, limiting their access to assessment support.

The inclusive nature of the new assessment delivery method further respected students as an individual in the context in which they are living and studying, and on the impact of these on student's learning needs. Furthermore, it demonstrates a commitment to equality, diversity and promotes a student-centred approach assessment delivery in online learning.



### **DID IT WORK?**

Since the change to this new method of assessment delivery, students can access the explanation of the assessment brief at a time that suits them, in an inclusive context, as many times as they need. Additionally, students that were uncomfortable speaking up in VC or writing in the discussion board, are now able to do so in a format that is less intimidating.

### **WAS IT WORTH IT?**

Initially, it takes more time to create and upload the assessment, however, the time was soon recuperated when less class time was required to go over the brief as students are given access to the assessment and an explanation of its requirements in an inclusive format as often as they need.

**If you wish to submit your own case study, or have any questions about this resource please contact:**

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