

CASE STUDY 1 - Development and use of Learner Assessment

Title: Business Research Project (BRP) Stage 3, Level 7 exit award - 2022 - 2023

Theme: Reimagine the BRP to create more meaningful and immediate engagement by learners with the module.

Keywords (2-3 words): Research Questions, Methods, Data Collection

Short Abstract (optional):

An analysis of the challenges of successful learner engagement with the Business Research Project was undertaken by an academic team to enhance learner outcomes and achievement. This analysis included a review of results from previous years, feedback from external examiners and former learners. The key findings were:

- a) lack of learner knowhow in title selection and project direction.
- b) lack of engagement by learners throughout the various project milestones
- c) deficit in learner academic skills, including independent research, academic integrity skills, literature review skills, analysing suitable methodologies and writing up the BRP and final presentation.
- d) ensuring that the academic team had the necessary expertise to supervise the chosen topics.

The Business Research Project carried a weighting of 10 ECTS and learner effort needed to be managed.

Insert Case Study 1 below (in any format - QQI does not prescribe):

Choosing a title for a Business Research Project has presented difficulties and delays for learners and, consequently, for their BRP supervisors. To address the issue, the academic team created a pre-approved list of titles across key subject areas. Learners were allowed to choose their title from the prescribed list - one title per learner - through Calendly. Learners who had ideas for titles other than those on the prescribed list could formally submit their proposal, and once approved, could pursue that project. This review assured a successful resolution of two key issues:-

1. pre-approved titles assured a timelier title choice by learners and supported the selection of supervisors with the necessary expertise to supervise each BRP.
2. supervisor expertise - the pool of supervisors was expanded to include former lecturers who were available to take on a BRP supervisory role.

Previously, learners had been required to engage with the BRP process in the first semester with their BRP topic chosen before December. The BRP milestones could clash with due dates for other pieces of assessments in the first semester, creating undue pressure on learners.

The academic review team decided to re-schedule the Business Research Project solely in the second semester as it carries the same ECTS weighting of 10 ECTS - equal to other modules across the stage.

- Learner engagement was greatly enhanced by having a list of pre-approved titles.
- weekly BRP sessions were timetabled for the full semester allowing, specific tailored lectures to be delivered across all essential academic skills for both ab inicio and advanced entry applicants.
- supervisors had key meeting times timetabled with their individual learners, which supported greater engagement and ensured that the learners received the necessary support and guidance, eliminating previous issues of cancelled or changed appointments with supervisors. All enhancements were reflected both in the BRP handbook and on Moodle.

Outcomes:

- Greater engagement by learners as it allowed their complete focus in semester one
- Nuanced and more logical schedules supporting learners and lecturers better outcomes for ab inicio advanced learners on the programme
- An increased number of successful learners for the BRP project (see Figure 1)

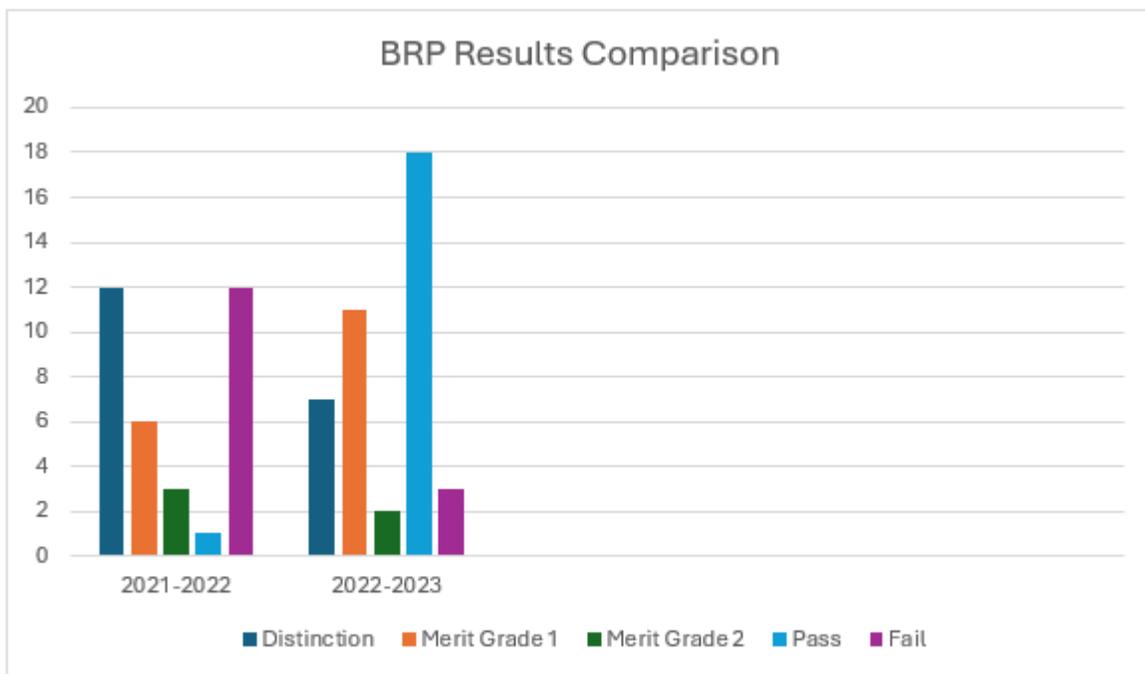


Figure 1: BRP Results