

Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC Sign Design and Graphics. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit code: F13T 34

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Practical Assignment

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Purpose: This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC Sign Design and Graphics:

- ◆ To meet the changing needs of the sign industry.
- ◆ To provide an award that is recognised by local employers in the sign industry.
- ◆ To provide the sign industry with well-trained competent operatives with the ability to respond to current and future needs.
- ◆ To develop in the student an awareness of the impact of Sign Design and Graphics on society and the environment, and how new technology may improve service to customers.
- ◆ To provide a sound knowledge of the economics, design and practical procedures, production methods and materials which are integral to the subject area.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to the above specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

- ◆ Job Costing and Business Calculations
- ◆ Sign Design and Colour Applications
- ◆ Properties and Applications of Signwork Materials
- ◆ Sign Design and Graphics: Planning and Legislation
- ◆ Fabricated Lettering and Signs
- ◆ Using Software Application Packages

General information for centres (cont)

Core Skills: The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following: Problem Solving at SCQF level 5. There are also further opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communications and IT at SCQF level 5 in this Unit.

Assessment: This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a practical assignment. The developed practical assignment should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the Graded Unit that it covers.

The Graded Unit should be undertaken on an individual basis. Candidates should be encouraged to select an appropriate project that involves them in developing a finished product, which requires the integration and application of a variety of knowledge and skills within a determined time scale.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit code: F13T 34

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

Original date of publication: January 2007

Version: 01

History of changes:

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|-----------------------|------|
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Source: SQA

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Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

Conditions of assessment

The candidate should be given a date for completion of the practical assignment. However, the instructions for the assessment task should be distributed to allow the candidate sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the assessment task. During the time between the distribution of the assessment task instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance. The assessment task should be marked as soon as possible after the completion date. The final grading given should reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion date.

The evidence for the project is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, where each stage has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. Thus any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage.

If a candidate fails the project overall or wishes to upgrade, then this must be done using a *substantially different* project, ie all stages are undertaken using a new project, assignment, case study, etc. In this case, a candidate's grade will be based on the achievement in the *re-assessment*.

At this level, candidates should work independently. It is up to Centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the candidate. For example, Centres may wish to informally question candidates at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked. Centres should ensure that where research etc, is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others that the candidate does not receive undue assistance.

Instructions for designing the assessment task

The assessment task is a project. The project undertaken by the candidate must be a complex task which involves:

- ◆ variables which are complex or unfamiliar
- ◆ relationships which need to be clarified
- ◆ a context which may be familiar or unfamiliar to the candidate

The assessment task must require the candidate to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded Unit has been designed to cover

The project must involve a practical assignment culminating in a finished product, and candidates must demonstrate the application of the skills and knowledge that fall within the context of sign design and graphics. This assessment instrument is not concerned exclusively with practical activity — candidates are provided with a brief that allows them to prepare, plan and demonstrate creative skills.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

The candidate will be asked to:

- ◆ interpret a brief
- ◆ gather information in response to the brief
- ◆ integrate research into the solution
- ◆ produce a product
- ◆ evaluate the product

The practical assignment and the way it is planned should reflect opportunities for the candidate to conduct individual research and development within a brief that reflects the diversity and range of the awarding centre. The brief should allow a degree of choice in the way a project is taken forward so that it may reflect a candidate's interests and personal strengths. The project should also fit centres' available resources. A mentoring system as described in the *conditions of assessment* above, would help the candidate to develop the brief, and ensure the candidate was carrying out appropriate preparation for the task.

The most appropriate approach to the project is one that requires candidates to integrate skills to produce a creative solution to a given brief. The candidate should be asked to research, develop, consider creative solutions and produce a finished product to a commercially acceptable standard.

Each candidate must provide his or her individual responses to each of the stages of the assignment, and assessors must be satisfied that the work has been completed by the individual candidate. This should include thumb nail sketches, developed visuals which could be computer-generated and a narrative which could be in the form of a presentation or log book.

As part of the developmental stage the candidate should give a simulated client presentation. The presentation should be to a panel consisting of a minimum of two people, to allow interaction with the panel where appropriate. The presentation should last approximately 10 minutes.

Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as C — competent, or A — highly competent or B somewhere between A and C. The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

| Grade A | Grade C |
|--|---|
| <p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Has sufficient evidence for the three essential phases of the project, is produced to a high standard and is quite clearly inter-related ◆ Demonstrates a justified interpretation of the brief which shows insight and a high level of creativity and practicality ◆ Is highly focused and relevant to the tasks associated to the project ◆ Has clear and cohesive concepts developed from the brief ◆ Uses language which is of a high standard and appropriate to the concepts of the brief in the written work and oral presentation ◆ Effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills | <p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Has sufficient evidence for the three phases of the project ◆ Demonstrates an acceptable interpretation of the brief ◆ Is focused and relevant to the tasks associated with the brief ◆ Displays satisfactory structured concepts ◆ Uses language which is adequate in terms of accuracy and technical content within the written work ◆ Effectively consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills but this may lack some continuity and consistency |

The project will be marked out of 100. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70% — 100%
 B = 60% — 69%
 C = 50% — 59%

Note: the candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below for each stage of the project in order to achieve the Graded Unit.

Evidence Requirements

The project consists of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

| Project stage | Minimum Evidence Requirements |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Stage 1 — Planning 20% | <p>An Action Plan which contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The candidates interpretation of the brief ◆ Information gathered in response to the brief ◆ Investigation into a variety of solutions ◆ Identification of materials and resources and how they will be accessed ◆ Identification of the stages involved and the timescales for completion of each stage <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage. The candidate should achieve a minimum of 10 out of the allocated 20 marks.</i></p> |
| Stage 2 — Developing 60% | <p>The development of creative solutions to a finished product which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design techniques showing the development of a design from thumbnail sketch eg thumbnails, roughs, working drawings to scale and accompanying notes about materials, fixings, and colours ◆ The ability to integrate research into a finished product ◆ The completed product ◆ Competent presentation skills demonstrated in the client presentation which should encompass the main aspects of the design solution and include information on materials, costs, sign making techniques to be used and colours <p>Written and visual records of the process underpinning the activity should be retained in a portfolio which should contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The plan ◆ Research and development ◆ Documentation of the design process ◆ Alternative design solutions including visuals ◆ Mentoring feedback ◆ Samples of materials and colour combinations <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage. The candidate should achieve a minimum of 30 out of the allocated 60 marks.</i></p> |

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Graded Unit title: Sign Design and Graphics: Graded Unit 1

| Project stage | Minimum Evidence Requirements |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Stage 3 — Evaluating 20% | <p>The Evaluation Report which should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Briefly outline the practical assignment ◆ Review and update the plan in the light of experience ◆ Summarise any unforeseen events and how they were handled ◆ Identify any knowledge and skills which have been gained or developed ◆ Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the practical activity ◆ Determine to what extent the assignment met the original brief <p>The evaluation should consist of approx 500 words.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage. The candidate should achieve a minimum of 10 out of 20 marks.</i></p> |

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Support notes

It is envisaged that this Graded Unit would be started approximately half way through the student's studies with an increasing amount of time being spent towards the end of the course. It should not be seen as a repeat of previous Unit assessments. It is not intended that any new knowledge or skills are taught during delivery of the Graded Unit instead the lecturer's time will be spent discussing individual candidate work.

Time management is an important aspect of planning, developing and evaluating a practical activity and in order to help candidates manage their time effectively, lecturers should consider setting up individual progress reviews with candidates at the start of the Unit delivery time. Lecturers may consider developing a centre proforma to record their discussions with candidates. These discussions or mentoring activities are an essential part of the Graded Unit and should help ensure that candidates keep to timelines and should be included in their portfolio. The Grade finally achieved by the candidates depends on the work submitted. It is therefore very important that staff do not give undue assistance to students. The level of assistance should be fully discussed at Course Team level and any assistance given should be logged in the candidate's mentoring records.

While it is not essential that all delivery takes place in a workshop, lecturers should try to ensure that a flexible approach towards ensuring workshop facilities are available to candidates. The identification of when workshop facilities are required could form part of the candidate's planning activities. Access to computers is likely to be required for accessing the internet for research activities, word processing, working with visuals and possibly for powerpoint.

The Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 5 is embedded in this Unit and clearly seen in the planning, development and evaluation process. Additionally the Core Skill of Communication and IT are signposted. Candidates are required to research information on the internet as part of their practical assignment. This will include interpreting information from local authority sites and researching costs, availability and properties of materials. Candidates will have to interpret and extract the information they require and use this research information to determine what materials are best suited to meet the client brief. They will be required to present a summary of their information and the development process as a client presentation. This is likely to be to two lecturers and should be recorded. This is likely to be an oral presentation and while they could use presentation software, they could also base their presentation on the evidence they have gathered throughout the research and development process. Additionally candidates will have records of discussions with their lecturers. Written communication will be available in the form of their portfolio of design and research evidence and notes of properties. In addition candidates will have to justify their choice of design, materials, colourways and lettering. Use of visuals and sign-specific software is an important aspect of this course. Candidates should be encouraged throughout to use digital images as part of their client presentation boards.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Alternative Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General Information for candidates

Towards the end of your course you will start your Graded Unit. The purpose of this Unit is to bring together many of the different skills you have learnt throughout your course. You will already have studied or be in the process of studying the following Units:

- ◆ Job Costing and Business Calculations
- ◆ Sign Design and Colour Applications
- ◆ Properties and Applications of Signwork Materials
- ◆ Sign Design and Graphics: Planning and Legislation
- ◆ Fabricated Lettering and Signs
- ◆ Using Software Application Packages

This Graded Unit also reflects the main aims of the award. These are:

- ◆ To meet the changing needs of the sign industry.
- ◆ To provide an award that is recognised by local employers in the sign industry.
- ◆ To provide the sign industry with well-trained competent operatives with the ability to respond to current and future needs.
- ◆ To develop in the student an awareness of the impact of Sign Design and Graphics on society and the environment, and how new technology may improve service to customers.
- ◆ To provide a sound knowledge of the economics, design and practical procedures, production methods and materials which are integral to the subject area..

You will be asked to apply some of the skills and knowledge you have learnt in these Units to a practical assignment. As part of this Unit you will be asked to demonstrate your practical skills but you will also have to show how you planned your assignment, how you developed your ideas and how you evaluated what you had produced.

At the start of the Unit you will be given a design brief which you will plan, develop and evaluate to provide a solution — just as you would for a client. The Project will be out of 100 and you have to pass each part of the project to pass the Unit. The marks you get for each part will be added up and you will be given a grade for the Unit. The grade you receive is based on the following:

A = 70% – 100%

B = 60% – 69%

C = 50% – 59%

If you pass, you will not only achieve the Unit but you will also achieve the Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 5.

Throughout the Unit you will meet with your lecturer who will advise you and make sure you are on the right track to achieve your Unit within the given timescale. As part of your assessment you will present your ideas and how you developed your solution and you will present your ideas just as you would to a client.