

Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC/HND Printing. 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: Printing: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit code: F1E4 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 Printing:

- ◆ Provide knowledge of the processes and disciplines within the modern printing industry environment.
- ◆ Equip students with the broad based and specialist technical skills necessary for operating within printing management or printing production processes or print finishing and bookbinding.
- ◆ Equip students with skills in information technology areas used in printing pre-press and management.
- ◆ Provide students with an understanding of current developments within the printing and related industries.

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:

- ◆ F0P2 34 *Single Colour Offset Litho Printing*
- ◆ F0P8 34 *Design for Print: Digital Workflows and Desktop Publishing*
- ◆ F0PF 34 *Print Finishing Processes*
- ◆ F0PP 34 *Printing Production Processes*
- ◆ D7LW 34 *Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing*

General information for centres (cont)

Core Skills: The achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:
Problem Solving at SCQF level 5.

Assessment: This Graded Unit will be assessed by the use of a Practical Assignment. The 'fleshed-out' 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.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit code: F1E4 34

Graded Unit title: Printing: Graded Unit 1

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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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

Graded Unit title: Printing: 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*, if this results in a higher grade.

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

Assessment is based on the **product** and the **process**.

Candidates must:

- ◆ Interpret a brief
- ◆ Develop a production schedule
- ◆ Choose a topic from those provided
- ◆ Gather information relative to the topic
- ◆ Develop the topic
- ◆ Design the layout
- ◆ Carry out the practical production work through, pre-press, printing and print finishing stages
- ◆ Evaluate the product and the process

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

The project brief should sample the listed technical areas and processes from the mandatory Units:

Unit Title	Technical areas/Processes
F0P2 34 <i>Single Colour Offset Litho Printing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Paper transport systems on a lithographic sheetfed press ◆ Correct setting of a feeder, a delivery system, inking and damping system and printing pressure on a lithographic press ◆ Production of single colour prints
F0P8 34 <i>Design for Print: Digital Workflows and Desktop Publishing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Application of typographic rules to the formatting of a word-processed file to be used in a desktop publishing application ◆ Evaluate and modify bitmap and vector image files to be used for print output ◆ Generate industry standard files for remote proofing and printing
F0PF 34 <i>Print Finishing Processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify and select materials and equipment used in print finishing processes ◆ Evaluate the methods of print finishing processes and products ◆ Produce finished printed products
F0PP 34 <i>Printing Production Processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Procedures used in digital work flows ◆ Application of the basic principles of print production by the major printing processes ◆ Produce and evaluate finished products
D7LW 34 <i>Communication: Using Information Technology and Desktop Publishing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Formatting documents using a word-processing application ◆ Document creation using industry standard desktop publishing software ◆ Research and production of a short communication using desktop publishing software

This assignment could involve the candidate in planning and producing a single monochrome item of printed work, maintaining a working log book and evaluating the project.

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

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.

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Produces documented evidence for the planning stages of the work. and shows an in depth knowledge of each stage ◆ Produces evidence for the production of the work which demonstrates consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills through an integrated approach ◆ Produces well structured evidence of the control and evaluation of the project work ◆ Effectively applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills from the course Units to complex work ◆ Produces documented evidence for the planning stages of the work and shows an in depth knowledge of each stage 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Produces documented evidence for the planning stages of the work. ◆ Produces evidence for the production of the work and demonstrates a reasonably integrated approach ◆ Is well structured and displays control and evaluation of the project work ◆ Applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills with some lack of continuity and consistency ◆ Produces documented evidence for the planning stages of the work.

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.

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

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 1 — Planning 25%	<p>Produce a plan which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Analysis of the brief, identifying the stages of production required to fulfil it. ◆ An assessment of the resources required at each stage of production which should include reference to equipment, software and materials. ◆ Identification and assessment of a topic in terms of suitability and availability of source material. ◆ A production schedule incorporating timescales and resource availability. ◆ Justification for the approach taken in the plan. <p>The plan should be 1,000–1,500 words long or equivalent.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage and must achieve at least half of the allocated marks for the Planning stage.</i></p>
Stage 2 — Developing 50%	<p>Produce a single colour printed publication incorporating the following production stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design a layout which uses a style appropriate to the subject. ◆ Prepare source material with reference to the planned production requirements. ◆ Produce finished artwork incorporating text, bitmap and vector graphics, with reference to the planned production requirements. ◆ Print the document with reference to the planned production requirements. ◆ Finish the document with reference to the planned production requirements. <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage and must achieve at least half of the allocated marks for the Developing stage.</i></p>

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

Project stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 3 — Evaluating 25%	<p>Produce an objective review of the quality of own work which includes: An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the original plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A review of the plan and modifications made in order to effect improvements to own work, referencing work log book. ◆ An objective evaluation of the technical quality achieved at each stage. ◆ Identification of any problems encountered and any skills gained. ◆ An indication of how the integrative nature of the assignment enhanced understanding. <p>The evaluation should be 750–1,000 words or equivalent.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage and must achieve at least half of the marks allocated to the Evaluating stage.</i></p>

Support notes

Some suggested products for this project might be:

- ◆ An eight pp A6 single colour booklet, saddle stitched and flush trimmed
- ◆ A six panel A4 leaflet, z fold or gate fold
- ◆ An eight panel A4 leaflet, cross fold

STAGE 1 — PLANNING

The candidate could be asked to analyse the brief and prepare a production schedule with reference to:

- ◆ Availability of resources
- ◆ Appropriate materials

The candidate could be asked to choose one topic from the list supplied with reference to:

- ◆ Personal interests and previous experience
- ◆ Availability of source material for text and graphics

Additional Guidance on Grading

This stage is worth **25 marks**. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified to pass the planning stage. The planning stage could be assessed by a short planning document and an individual interview. The tutor's role is as a facilitator and so to gain high marks the candidate must demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in planning activities.

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

For the planning stage the marks must be allocated in the following way:

- ◆ Up to **four marks** for the analysis of the brief and identifying the stages of production. For full marks the candidate must present a clear description and thorough analysis of the requirements of the brief, this would be demonstrated by the relevance of the stages of production identified.
- ◆ Up to **four marks** for the assessment of resources required to fulfil the brief. The candidate should clearly state what resources are required, to complete each stage of production, as well as their function.
- ◆ Up to **four marks** for identifying a topic, suitable to fulfil the brief, which has an appropriate degree of resources available. This would be demonstrated by inclusion of a bibliography of sources.
- ◆ Up to **eight marks** for the generation of a production schedule. Timetabling and planning should reflect an efficient use of resources and take into account their availability at appropriate stages of production.
- ◆ Up to **five marks** for the justification of the approach taken in the plan and for developing and adhering to realistic timescales. To gain full marks the candidate would be expected to fulfil the following criteria:
 - First interview with facilitator no later than two weeks from commencement of project. Candidate should have identified a suitable topic and the relevant production stages necessary to fulfil the brief.
 - Second interview with facilitator to examine the production schedule and the first draft of the plan, including evidence of rationale and method. Further interviews at the discretion of the facilitator.

Submission and completion date has to be established and adhered to.

STAGE 2 — DEVELOPMENT

It is anticipated that the candidate would carry out the following tasks:

- ◆ Design a layout with reference to the source material:
 - Gather source material for text and graphics
 - Research and create a suitable design for the product
 - Create the layout in a desktop publishing package
- ◆ Prepare the source material with reference to production requirements:
 - Edit the text using professional software
 - Edit the graphics for crop, scale, resolution and mode using professional software
- ◆ Make up the document with reference to production requirements:
 - Prepare a style sheet
 - Import the text and graphics
 - Prepare the file for output
 - Digitally proof the file, check, correct and reproof as required

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

- ◆ Print the document with reference to production requirements:
 - Make plates
 - Make ready the press
 - Obtain pass sheet approval
 - Run the job
 - Wash up

- ◆ Finish the document with reference to production requirements:
 - Carry out finishing processes as required by the nature of the job

Additional Guidance on Grading

This stage is worth **50 marks**. The candidates must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified to pass the production stage. Assessment is based on practical work.

- ◆ Up to **five marks** for the production of a suitable layout design. For full marks the candidate would have to show identification of an appropriate style for the chosen topic, extensive thumbnail sketches exploring possible layout solutions and a final planned layout in a DTP package. Candidates who make poor decisions regarding style or who fail to adequately explore layout solutions should be awarded lower marks.
- ◆ Up to **five marks** for the preparation of source material. The material gathered for the project should be prepared to meet the requirements of the chosen pre-press and printing software and hardware. Full marks should be awarded to candidates who prepare material which seamlessly integrates into their prescribed workflow and meets all of the technical specifications for the printing process. Candidates who prepare files, which only meet the main technical requirements for the printing process, should be awarded lower marks.
- ◆ Up to **15 marks** for the production of finished artwork. Candidates who produce appropriate artwork showing a high degree of first time accuracy, measured by the production of pre-flight reports, proofs and a contract proofs, should be awarded a high mark. Candidates who require multiple proofs due to serious faults should be given a pass on completion of all remedial work and signing of a contract proof by the lecturer.
- ◆ Up to **15 marks** for the production of multiple printed copies. Candidates who produce appropriate plates, pass sheets and final prints showing a high degree of first time accuracy should be awarded a high mark.
- ◆ Up to **10 marks** for the final finishing production stages. The final printed sheets should be passed through the relevant finishing stages to meet the requirements, specified in the brief, for the finished product. High marks should be awarded to candidates who accurately identify and implement the appropriate finishing techniques to a high technical standard. A lower pass mark should be awarded to candidates who identify and implement the appropriate finishing techniques to an acceptable technical standard.

STAGE 3 — EVALUATION

The candidate would be expected to evaluate and review the project with reference to:

- ◆ Working log book
- ◆ Technical quality of each production stage

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

Additional Guidance on Grading

This stage is worth **25 marks**. The candidate must achieve the minimum criteria specified to pass the evaluation stage. The tutor's role is as a facilitator and so candidates should demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in evaluating activities. The marks for this stage should be allocated in the following way:

- ◆ Up to **five marks** could be given to those candidates who are able to review the quality of their own work with some reflection shown. Candidates who can identify areas of new learning and can relate the activity to the plan, including identification of gaps or omissions should be awarded a high mark. Full marks should be awarded to candidates who can identify the impact of any new learning on their practice.
- ◆ Up to **five marks** for a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the original plan and analysis of whether the plan was sufficient in meeting the aims of the activity. High marks should be given where a candidate has detailed changes and improvements to their original plan. Candidates who show that changes to the original plan resulted in improvements in technical quality should be awarded full marks.
- ◆ Up to **10 marks** should be given for the review of the whole project identifying any modifications or improvements, including recommendations, which would be achievable and realistic if implemented in future, analogous activities. The candidate who does this should receive full marks. A candidate who identifies some modifications or improvements but does not always relate them to the plan should receive a pass mark. The candidate who does not identify any modifications or improvements and who has not related the evaluation of their work across the whole project should not pass this section.
- ◆ Up to **five marks** should be awarded for identification of the way the project integrates knowledge and understanding of the core Units of the HNC Printing. Full marks should be awarded to the candidates who identify skills gained and integration of theory and practice during the project. A candidate who does not identify any new or enhanced knowledge and skills should not pass this section.

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 alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on 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

This Unit provides you with the opportunity to complete a project which involves planning, producing and finishing a single item of print.

You will be provided with a brief that has to be satisfied, however this will still give a good degree of scope for you to use your own ideas.

The project will enable you to bring together the various practical and theoretical skills that you have gained via study involved in the mandatory Units of the course.

The work on your project will enable you to extend your problem solving skills in both the planning and production stages of the project and for you to explain the decision making processes that you used.

The final stage of the project will involve you in providing an evaluation of your work both in the planning and production of your project.