



Higher National Graded Unit Specification

General Information for Centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the Visual Communication HNC/D Award. 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: Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit code: FA6E 34

Type of Graded Unit: Project

Assessment Instrument: Practical Assignment

Publication date: August 2018

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Unit purpose

This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC/D Visual Communication:

- ◆ Develop a range of contemporary vocational skills within the context of visual communication.
- ◆ Prepare candidates for employment in a visual communication related post and places at HE establishments.
- ◆ Develop specialist technical skills and knowledge.
- ◆ Conduct independent project work involving the integration and application of a variety of skills within a determined time scale.
- ◆ Develop options to permit an element of vocational specialism.

General Information for Centres (cont)

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

It is recommended that the candidate should have completed, or be in the process of completing, 80% of the award including the following Units relating to the above specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

- ◆ *Visual Communication: An Introduction*
- ◆ *Digital Imaging*
- ◆ *Art and Design Context*
- ◆ *Art and Design Project*
- ◆ *Creative Industries: An Introduction*

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 National 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or a Core Skill component as part of this Graded Unit. However, there may be opportunities to develop the Core Skill of Problem Solving.

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. 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 project, which requires the integration and application of a variety of knowledge and skills within a determined time scale. An exemplar instrument of assessment and marking guidelines have been produced to provide examples of the type of evidence required to demonstrate achievement of the aims of the group award covered by this integrative assessment and to indicate the national standard of achievement required at SCQF 7.

Higher National Graded Unit Specification: Instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit Title: Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1

Conditions of Assessment

The candidate should be given a date for completion of the project. 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 through a mentoring process in which the candidate may be encouraged to consider different aspects of their preparation of the project.

Candidates will be entitled to a total of four structured mentoring sessions as follows: one at planning stage, two during the development stage and one before final submission. The mentoring sessions will have written feedback to the candidate (examples within the assessment exemplar). 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.

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing candidates with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Higher National Project-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice, clarification, and guidance during the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, ie at each stage of the project.

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify candidate responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, such instances must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or recording, and be made available to the internal and external verifier.

In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, candidates must be given the opportunity for remediation at each stage of the project.

The evidence for a Higher National Project-based Graded Unit is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, each of which has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means that any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage. The overall grade is derived from the total number of marks *across all* sections, and should reflect the ability of the candidate to work autonomously and the amount of support required. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, candidates who have failed any stage of the project and have been unable to provide the necessary evidence through remediation must be given the opportunity for re-assessment of that stage.

Any candidate who has failed their graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. In the case of project-based graded units, this must be done using a substantially different project.

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

Graded Unit Title: Visual Communication: Graded Unit 1

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Candidates must be awarded the highest grade achieved — whether through first submission or through any re-assessment, remediation, and/or reasonable assistance provided.

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

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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 visual communication. 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. The candidate will be asked to

- ◆ interpret a brief
- ◆ gather information in response to the brief
- ◆ demonstrate the ability to integrate research into creative design solutions
- ◆ produce a product to an acceptable professional standard
- ◆ evaluate the product

The practical assignment and the way it is planned should reflect opportunities for candidates to conduct individual research and development within a choice of briefs. Candidates are provided with a choice of a minimum of four briefs that reflect 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 projects should also fit a centres available resources. A mentoring system as described in the *conditions of assessment* above, would help the candidates to select an appropriate brief, and ensure candidates were 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. Candidates should be asked to research, develop, consider creative diverse solutions by manipulating visual elements and produce a finished product to a professional standard.

Each candidate must provide his or her individual responses to each of the first two stages of the assignment, and assessors must be satisfied that the work has been completed by the individual candidate. This should be presented in the form of a structured annotated sketchbook 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. Suggestions for appropriate questions are contained in the assessment exemplar.

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.

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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 ◆ 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 ◆ 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 ◆ Produces a product to an acceptable standard ◆ Uses language which is adequate in terms of accuracy and technical content within the written 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.

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

Project Stage	Minimum Evidence Requirements
Stage 1 — Planning	<p>The planning stage is worth 15% of the marks. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below in order to pass the planning stage.</p> <p>AN ACTION PLAN which contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The candidate's interpretation of the brief ◆ Information gathered in response to the brief <p>The selection and annotation of suitable research for development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identification of materials and resources and how they will be accessed ◆ Project overview and schedule <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i></p>
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>The developing stage is worth 75% of the marks. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below in order to pass the developing stage. If a candidate does not achieve Stage 2 he/she must resit the Graded Unit selecting an alternative solution from the planning stage and taking it forward to completion.</p> <p>The development of creative solutions to a finished product which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design techniques, ie storyboards, thumbnails, roughs, script (where appropriate) should be produced as design documentation within the project. ◆ The ability to integrate research into a finished product ◆ The completed product ◆ Focus, concentration and confidence in the client presentation <p>A written and visual record of the process underpinning the activity should be contained in an annotated sketchbook or log book which should consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The action plan ◆ Research and development ◆ Documentation of the design process ◆ Alternative design solutions ◆ Mentoring feedback <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage</i></p>

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Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>The evaluating stage is worth 10% of the marks. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below in order to pass the evaluating stage.</p> <p>The evaluation report which should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Briefly outline the practical assignment◆ Identify any knowledge and skills which have been gained or developed◆ Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the product◆ Identify strategies for further development <p>The evaluation should consist of approx 250 words.</p> <p><i>The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>
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Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Update of Conditions of Assessment.	03/08/18

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