

Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:

Technical Education

Qualification area

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
included in this report**

Graphic Communication – Advanced Higher

General comments re entry numbers

The increase of 89% on the previous year's number is a reflection on how well teachers and students perceive the course. It is apparent that many centres are allowing small numbers to follow the course gaining success despite multi-level teaching and in many cases 50% or less teacher contact time.

General comments

The success of the Advanced Higher Course should be noted and every effort made by SQA to continually monitor the content of the course. SQA must ensure the course does not fall behind with technology but at the same time ensure all centres have the ability to follow the course with minimum in-service and equipment purchase.

Future considerations should be given to consider possible options to the course such as WEB design and Animation. These however will only be possible when electronic copies of the evidence can be submitted to SQA.

It was noted that the mean mark for the Computer-aided Graphic Presentation was up by almost 2 marks whilst the Computer-aided 3D Modelling Presentation was down by almost 2 marks. The reduction in the mean mark of the test may be due to the large increase in candidates and the increase in new centres presenting the course.

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of awards

The distribution of awards indicates that a high level cohort of students followed the course. The main population was tending towards the top half of the distribution of grades. This may be due to the student being better prepared for the examination, more confidence in completing the folios, improved assessment guidelines and/or teachers being better prepared. There is no doubt that the course is attracting a high standard of student.

Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

No significant changes.

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

C – 104
B – 123
A – 143
Upper A – 170

General commentary on grade boundaries

Notional percentage cut-offs for each grade

Question papers and their associated marking schemes are designed to be of the required standard and to meet the assessment specification for the subject/level concerned.

For National courses the examination paper(s) are set in order that a score of approximately 50% of the total marks for all components merits a grade C (based on the grade descriptions for that grade), and similarly a score of 70 % for a grade A. The lowest mark for a grade B is set by the computer software as half way between the C and A grade boundaries.

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

<p>The grade boundary for “C” was one mark lower than 2001. This is to acknowledge that the paper may have been a little more difficult for that level of student due to the introduction of a design type question. However, it was felt that the more able student would have found the paper to be of a similar degree of difficulty as in 2001. Therefore the boundaries remained unchanged for B and A</p>

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

If this Question paper time is to be reviewed and decreased, consideration should be given to decreasing the Technical Drawing element by one question. If the time is to remain the same, decrease the Technical Drawing and increase the knowledge element.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Almost all candidates performed well in the “Technical Drawing” type questions. Most candidates gained more than half marks in this area.

Question 7

A fair number of candidates did not find the true lengths nor completed the development by adding the back section of the holder.

Question 8

A varied response with a large number getting the plan and end elevation correct but using the wrong dimension for the width of the panel. Very few candidates indicated fold lines on the development. Several students did not read or understand that it was a square prism and a cylinder.

Question 9

Generally this question was well done. A small number of students demonstrated very little understanding of the topic.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

The theory questions in general were poorly attempted, in particular questions 2b and 6c. There was a clear indication that the candidates were not fully aware of the Design principles and elements with regard to a DTP document. The candidate’s responses were not full enough to justify full marks in many cases.

It was apparent that very few centres had issued coloured pencils for the examination. This in no way effected the marking of this examination but may, depending on the question paper, effect the potential marks attainable in future years.

The sketching for question 3 in general terms was very poor and lacked detail.

Questions 1 – 6 appeared to be more difficult for the students to answer.

Areas of common misunderstanding

- The meaning of Distant Lighting.
- Colour Separations
- Registration marks
- Tracking

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

- Teach the “Technical Drawing” as formal lessons nearer the end of the year.
- Ensure students have a deeper understanding of 3D modelling. Students should be able to explain how to create an object and not just go through the actions.
- Formally teach the Design Principles and Design Elements as appropriate to the Computer-aided Graphic Presentation.
- In general terms a great deal of very good teaching and learning is taking place in schools and colleges and should be commended.