



# **Internal Assessment Report 2010: Graphic Communication (135)**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

# Standard Grade

## Titles/levels of Standard Grade qualifications verified

Graphic Communication: Illustration and Presentation Portfolio

### General comments

Seven centres were selected and six were submitted and scrutinised during the central verification event. The seventh was verified at a later date.

Two centres had work returned for re-assessment, while one other calculated their arithmetic totals incorrectly. They have been advised accordingly, with instruction to check the grades of all candidates at the centre. Of the two re-assessments, one centre assessed candidates severely, failing to take account of items that provided better grades than those awarded.

The other re-assessment was caused, unusually, by the centre's internal assessment generating arithmetic totals that were very close to the threshold between grades. This meant that even a small disagreement at verification resulted in a discrepancy when the folio grade was calculated (arithmetic totals of say, 24 to 26 can leave little room for manoeuvre at verification). While it is clear that the internal assessment was not radically out of step with the National Standards, the discrepancies caused, in this instance, a re-assessment. Centres can only be advised to check such assessments carefully and with reference to the extended grade-related criteria before verification.

The team found limited examples of strong Credit level submissions; there was general consistency of quality (across all 10 topics) within folios at Credit and General levels. There were more Foundation level folios in the samples submitted this year, though these always comprised incomplete folios in which missing items (grade 7s) brought folio grades down to Foundation level.

Disappointingly, there is still a reliance on tracing aids when completing manual work. This often reduces the skill levels (sketching and drawing) in the folio and can cause difficulty in arriving at a grade for topic (J) Draughtsmanship.

The internal assessment flyleaf was not completed correctly by all centres; feedback was given to centres where appropriate. The space for teacher's comments was used more frequently than in previous years, but the comments were not always well focused. Advice to verifiers may include information on candidates who received additional support, or a clear statement of candidate input in topic (H) CAD using a Library.

Feedback has been provided for all centres who submitted work for verification.

## **Areas of good practice and areas for improvement**

### **General**

The size of folios ranged from a carefully planned, and well executed, eight items, to an unwieldy and inconsistent 17 items. Centres are advised that reducing the number of items in a folio can leave time to improve the quality across fewer items, or to improve the candidate's performance in the other two Course elements. There was a marked contrast in the quality and depth of work between those centres who produced eight or nine strong items and those who produced 15–17 comparatively weak items.

### **Topic (A) Graphs and Charts**

Graphs were more complete with all elements in place: snappy title, correct choice of graph, quantities, axis, graphic to support the message, and explanatory text to clarify the purpose of the graph. DTP software is now more widely used, but the level of creativity and quality of layout remains largely at General level. Clarity, completeness and quality of layout and display (visual impact) are the criteria for consideration during assessment.

For further information on this topic and topics (D), (E) and (I) Layout and Lettering, Display, and CAG for Display, please refer to the SQA publication *Standard Grade Graphic Communication Illustration and Presentation: Advice for Centres*, issued February 2001. This is available on the SQA website.

### **Topic (B) Use of Colour, and Topic (C) Shading, Toning and Rendering**

Written notes to justify the selection of colours (required at all levels) are crucial to the assessment and are now becoming the norm in folio submissions. However, this aspect of the folio is often poorly tackled, and the levels of justification (language and terminology) are nearly always applicable to Foundation or General levels only. Centres are reminded that assessment is based on two features: manual application of colour, and notes to justify the selection of colours. It is often impossible to agree a grade at verification when one of those features is missing.

Manual work featured less in folios, perhaps in favour of CAG/CAD. Centres are reminded of the need to develop manual illustration skills, and the portfolio is the ideal opportunity to integrate manual illustration techniques with creative layout skills and colour theory.

Coloured pencil and marker pen were the prominent illustration media. Chalk pastels were used but there appears to be a welcome move toward more contemporary illustration media. The quality of shading and toning is fixed firmly in General level with one or two notable exceptions.

### **Topics (D), (E) and (I) Layout and Lettering, Display, and CAG for Display**

The creative combinations of graphic, text, backdrop and space are fixed at a disappointingly low (General or Foundation) level. Many layouts would benefit from consideration of:

- ◆ alignment
- ◆ balance
- ◆ use of line to connect or divide
- ◆ accent colour to unify the layout
- ◆ elimination of dominating, diagonal flashbars (restrict flashbars to horizontal or vertical positions for best effect)

Centres often created a separate item for topic (I) CAG for Display, but ignored this item in the assessment of the other two topics. This can cause issues at verification, and resulted in two re-assessments this year.

These three topics were (without question) the least successful features of folios this year. The lack of creativity is worrying and does not bode well for the prospects of our candidates should they progress through the Intermediate and Higher Courses.

### **Topic (F) Modelling**

Many models were submitted in the flat, surface development state, though most had previously been assembled and fixed. The other method of presenting evidence was via a photograph; both are acceptable. Centres are reminded that modelling should include cutting, assembly and fixing.

The addition of surface detail was more evident at all levels and this detail was, without exception, manually produced. The option of adding computer generated graphics (likely to add complexity) was not apparent in this sample. Centres are advised to try this method of production: see the recently issued PRINT-IT/Pro-skills resource materials ([www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/40314.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/40314.html)) for more information). The student pack gives clear guidance on how this integration of modelling and DTP software may bring success here.

Centres are reminded that assessment is based on: quality of build, complexity of construction, and the inclusion of surface detail.

### **Topic (G) Computer-Aided Draughting**

It is pleasing to note that nearly all the centres in this sample made use of 3D computer modelling, now an accepted method of generating orthographic and pictorial drawings in the Standard Grade Course. (The SQA website provides guidance on content and assessment of 3D computer work).

However, taking this process one step further, by attaching materials and manipulating light sources in an illustration package, would open a route to importing the model into a DTP package and using this as the focus of a CAG display. Only a single candidate, from the 60 whose folios were verified, tackled this level of work. This process will help prepare candidates for the Higher and Intermediate Courses.

Too many Credit level candidates failed to include: centre lines, hidden detail, dimensions, view titles, or a projection symbol on orthographic work. Centres are reminded that dimensions are required at all levels.

Significantly, there was very little evidence of Foundation level work in this topic. All candidates produced either two related views or a pictorial graphic, both starting their assessment at grade 4.

#### **Topic (H) CAD using a Library**

The use of 3D modelling software in this topic is now quite prevalent. This is perfectly acceptable, and the same assessment criteria apply to both 2D and 3D software (there is guidance on the SQA website for this).

Confirming the level each candidate has performed at is the job of the class teacher. Centres are reminded that they must specify the candidate's input accordingly. At Credit level, icons have been created by the candidate and saved to the library; at General level, existing icons have been manipulated (scaled, rotated, etc); at Foundation level, candidates have used a CAD library. The teacher's comments box on the internal assessment flyleaf is provided for this purpose. Centres that do not provide this information will be 'not accepted' as we will not be able to verify the grade awarded.

#### **Topic (J) Draughtsmanship**

Teachers must 'look at evidence across the folio' to determine the draughting grade. This does not mean we take an average grade based on work produced in the other nine topics. Centres should identify the candidate's best example of draughting and award the grade accordingly. This 'best grade' can be based on manually produced work, modelling or CAD drawings. In most folios the best places to look for the draughting grade are CAD drawings, topic (G); and modelling, topic (F).