



**Standard Grade 2012
Internal Assessment Report**

Graphic Communication

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Standard Grade qualifications in this subject.

Standard Grade

Titles/levels of Standard Grade qualifications verified:

Standard Grade Graphic Communication: Illustration and Presentation

General comments

The sample demonstrated a broad quality range of Illustration and Presentation (IP) from good Credit level work to Foundation level graphics.

There was general consistency of quality (across all 10 topics) in folios at Credit and General levels. Foundation level folios sometimes had gaps in topic coverage that caused arithmetic totals to rise and the IP grade to drop.

Assessment was less accurate this year; three centres were asked to re-assess their folios and errors in completing the internal assessment flyleaf were more common. Those centres that had folios returned were also asked to check the folios held in their centre.

Verification feedback was appropriate and was provided to all centres that had their assessments verified.

The space for the teachers' comments on the internal assessment flyleaf was more frequently used, though not always to best effect. It is an opportunity to clarify the candidate's input or where extra support was provided by the teacher. The verification team has a responsibility to maintain and apply national standards and we do this most effectively when the candidate's input is unambiguous. This additional communication input always makes verification more straightforward and the additional knowledge can only contribute to accuracy and fairness during verification.

The size of folios was more consistent, normally within a manageable 10 to 12 items. This is to be encouraged as it gives candidates more time to improve the quality of work in the folio and to devote to the other two elements in preparation for the Course exam. Folios could easily be reduced further to 8 or 9 items with careful planning.

A few centres padded folios with manual drawings produced on the drawing board. Centres are reminded that this type of work is assessed in the Course examinations and should not be included in the portfolio.

Topic (a) Graphs and Charts

Graphs were more complete this year; there was greater use of a legend to explain the purpose of the graph. Centres encouraged a stronger thematic link; using graphics creatively to support a theme, product or message. The Fairtrade competition graphs were among the strongest at verification. The Fairtrade resource pack, which promotes creativity, has been put to good use in several

centres. Fairtrade material also helped candidates who work further down the presentation levels (see Areas of good practice, below).

Topic (b) Use of Colour and Topic (c) Shading, Toning and Rendering

Assessment is based on two features: **manual application of colour** and notes to **justify the selection of colours**. Centres made better use of notes to justify the use of colours and these were pitched at a higher level than we have had before. Integrating colour theory with creative graphic design work is surely the best way to learn.

The manual application of colour remains relatively weak with little evidence of strong Credit level illustrations.

Topics (d) Layout and Lettering, (e) Display and (i) CAG for Display

In terms of verification, this was the most problematic area in the portfolio. Centres often failed to take account of items produced for other related topics. For example, a computer-generated graph may be used across four topics and help reduce the size of the folio but too many centres miss this opportunity. It can also cause disagreement at verification if a graph provides the best grade across four topics but is missed by the centre. The verification team will look for these cross-topic opportunities and centres should do the same. In fact, it would be **useful** if centres planned the use of an item (a graph or chart) so it can be assessed over multiple topics; it would help reduce the size of the folio.

There was, however, some excellent work which will prepare candidates well for the next level. Thankfully, the excessive use of clip-art is diminishing but more challenge and creativity would be welcome.

Topic (f) Modelling

This was the most disappointing topic at this year's verification. There is not enough challenge, not enough creativity, excessive reliance on traced templates and, too frequently, every candidate in the sample producing the same item. It fails to differentiate, fails to deliver design opportunities and often results in the weakest item in the folio. Less able learners are stuck with a dull and difficult project and able learners have no creative or problem solving opportunities to challenge them.

Topic (g) Computer-Aided Draughting

It appears that 3D modelling is now the norm for CAD at Standard Grade. Clearly the experience gained by teachers at Higher and Advanced Higher has informed the work produced at Standard Grade. It is becoming more complex, there is stronger pictorial work and greater use of 3D modelling which can only be good. 3D modelling develops problem solving skills and augurs well for progression to the next level. There are still assessment issues around conformance (or not) to British Standards: lack of centre lines, hidden detail, dimension types and customised title blocks, all crucial to assessment. Potentially good CAD work is

let down by the lack of BS detail. Teachers need to encourage the kind of rigour that makes a good drawing an excellent one.

Topic (h) CAD using a Library

Most centres used building drawings (floor plans etc) to demonstrate skills in the use of a CAD library. These are appropriate, can be differentiated to suit the ability of the candidate and are suitable for the purpose of gaining an awareness of how and why a CAD library is used in industry. There was challenging work in this year's sample but also too many limiting schematic diagrams.

Centres are reminded of the need to specify the candidate's input by encouraging the use of a key or legend or by using the flyleaf to explain what the candidate has done. This was more common and always encouraged agreement at verification.

Topic (j) Draughtsmanship

Assessment here often failed to reflect the best draughting in the folio. Too many centres are averaging the work across the folio. The instruction is to 'look across the folio' for 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. Generally this grade is linked to either CAD work or the Model; both reliant on draughting skills.

Administration of assessments

There was a greater emphasis on the part of some centres to explain how assessments were arrived at. Either by describing the level of support the candidate had or by explaining the candidate's input in topics where it is difficult to award a grade without this knowledge, eg Topic (h) Use of a CAD library. Such advice always supported agreement at verification and often demonstrated a greater understanding of assessment by the centre.

Centres often have obvious strengths and within centres the emphasis can vary according to the relative strengths of individual teachers. Samples from centres with more than one teacher presenting the subject have shown considerable variation in the type of work covered and in the quality of the finished output. A common, department-wide, approach to portfolio development and assessment is bound to lead to greater consistency and hopefully a better understanding of the assessment criteria and how it should be applied. While this is the most common approach, it is by no means universal and occasionally folios from a centre appear so disconnected that they could be from different centres. Teachers must ensure they communicate effectively with others presenting the same subject, and as soon as possible in their presentation period, if they feel they need to.

Areas of good practice

There was evidence of centres innovating and developing their own project work and, paradoxically, centres where there is little to distinguish a 2012 folio from a 1992 folio. The reliance on dated (exemplar folio) projects remains a concern. The strongest folios included some very original project items which tapped into the creative talents of our candidates with excellent results. Such projects were normally the best in the folio.

The excellent Fairtrade competitions have generated a first class response from our talented candidates who make best use of the student pack and the Fairtrade website. The result was excellent graphic design work in those topics that demand a creative input: **(a) 2D and 3D Graphs and Charts; (d) Layout and Lettering; (e) Display and (i) CAG for Display**. The Fairtrade-driven work has also helped improve the quality of work of lower General and perhaps Foundation level candidates. The concise nature and clarity of the data offered on the website and in the student support pack may support learning in less able learners.

Topic (f) Modelling

There is opportunity for a strong design and problem solving element that combines drawing board and computer skills, but it seems to have stalled. This was perhaps the most disappointing topic in the samples that were verified.

The Fairtrade competition pack offers a '**table-talker**' model which fulfils all the criteria and comes with a concise student guide. It could lift the quality and challenge of this topic instantly. Teachers need to opt into this type of project work in a spirit of creativity and challenge; we are not seeing this presently.

Specific areas for improvement

Topic (a) Graphs and Charts

Disappointingly, some centres still complete one strong graph and supplement it with a graph of much poorer quality, presumably to conform to the '**two graph**' **evidence requirement**. Centres should note that it is **not** a requirement to produce two graphs, it is a suggestion only. This would be a good place to begin for those thinking of reducing the size of the folio and improving quality.

Topic (b) Use of Colour and Topic (c) Shading, Toning and Rendering

Marker pen, coloured pencil and chalk pastel were all used. The marker pen work was blocked-in and generally flat. Using black and white rendering pencils to create light, shade and texture would lift the graphic, the quality and the grade. The choice of items to render is largely limited to traced items developed two decades ago. It would be good to see innovation in this area; strong work has been developed in some centres around the country but it is slow to filter out.