



**National Qualifications 2012
Internal Assessment Report**

Graphic Communication

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

National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified:

Computer-Aided Graphic Presentation (AH)

Computer-Aided 3D Modelling Presentation (AH)

General comments

The accuracy of internal assessment varied widely from centre to centre. Most centres had a good or excellent grasp of assessment on or close to the national standard. Others suffered from a range of failings that included: using the wrong assessment guides and internal marks forms; applying an older assessment scheme (that allocates marks incorrectly); failing to provide enough detail in the student record (a vital piece of assessment information); and those who simply failed to grasp the national standard.

There was a higher occurrence of centres whose assessment errors were self-correcting at verification; with +/- marks cancelling out in the final calculation. While this did not result in disagreement, all of these centres were given detailed advice to help guide subsequent internal assessment.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

The guidance documents used to inform internal assessment are reviewed and, if necessary, updated each year (the newest documents are available on SQA's website and changes are also intimated in the annual subject update letter). It is therefore, vital that centres use the current guidance documents. There were instances of centres using out-of-date documents and, as a result, applying the wrong assessment scheme and allocating marks incorrectly.

Centres are urged to ensure they check that the documents: **NQ Guidance on Assessment – Computer-Aided 3D Modelling Presentation** and **Guidance on assessment – Computer-Aided Graphic Presentation**, are current. Centres should also confirm that the documents on which marks are recorded (the **student record** for each folio and the **attached marks sheet**) are current as these can change in line with assessment changes. These checks are important whether verification is requested or not.

Evidence Requirements

A significant challenge in preparing Course material for assessment is the preparation and inclusion of a student record for each folio. This student record is part of the Course assessment and is vital in confirming marks during verification. The record is prepared by the candidate under the guidance of the teacher. It should be a routine part of presenting the Course and be built into normal teaching and learning.

The benefit of preparing an accurate and detailed student record, other than encouraging agreement at verification, is to reinforce the knowledge of 3D modelling techniques in preparation for the Course exam.

It is clear that many centres do not appreciate the importance of this piece of Coursework and do not devote sufficient time to its planning and preparation. It is best started when the 3D modelling begins so it can be built up over a period. If it is left to the end of the Course, students run out of time and often can't remember the detail required to compile a successful student record — this is when disagreement at verification occurs.

Administration of assessments

It is clear that those centres whose internal assessments apply the national standard accurately and consistently have:

- ◆ used the current documentation and assessment guidelines
- ◆ accessed the assessment exemplar folios on SQA's website and read the support notes
- ◆ understood the importance of complexity (appropriate to Advanced Higher)
- ◆ understood the importance of quality of work (appropriate to Advanced Higher)

In other cases it is apparent that few, and on occasion, none of the above assessment checks have been made. These cases result in disagreement, and normally a 'Not Accepted' decision, at verification.

Areas of good practice

Computer-Aided 3D Modelling Presentation

Modelling techniques and student record

This was occasionally complete, clear and well presented, and demonstrated the candidates' input effectively. The majority of centres encourage candidates to produce a student record but often to a standard incompatible with Advanced Higher level. The student record must be seen as an integral part of the Coursework that is taught, learned and produced with time set aside for this purpose.

Many centres are still confused about aspects of modelling techniques. Common errors include confusing modelling techniques with modifications and edit commands. The marks for each are allocated separately. If teachers don't know the difference between the two, neither do the candidates and assessment is compromised; samples were Not Accepted at verification for errors in this area. Fillet, chamfer, mirror, shell, array etc are all editing commands and cannot be accepted as modelling techniques.

For the full range of marks in the use of solid primitives it is expected (in the interest of achieving a complexity appropriate to Advanced Higher level) that

more than one solid primitive is inserted and edited. For further information please refer to the guidance document on solid primitives which can be found on SQA's website.

The generous marking of 3D modelling techniques is common-place. A simple geometric shape (circle or square) extruded into a cylinder or cuboid and with no edits, only attracts one mark. The complexity and quality of work determines the marks awarded. The expectation is that Advanced Higher level will require a degree of complexity greater than that found in most Standard Grade or Intermediate work.

The presentation of the methods used to create modelling techniques (the student record) varies enormously. Some centres present their student record on **A3 sheets** using **large, clear images** that have been well annotated — this is to be commended. The method communicates the processes used clearly and effectively and leaves no room for doubt at verification. **Furthermore, it should be noted that the 30 marks available in this section (modelling techniques) are derived entirely from this evidence, not from the other (orthographic or isometric) pages in the folio. If this evidence is missing or poorly explained, it will be to the detriment of the candidate.**

Other centres produced a student record that was **poorly annotated** with graphic images that were **too small** and **lacked clarity**. It can be very difficult to agree the centres assessments when the modelling techniques cannot be verified. Several centres had their submissions returned for re-assessment due to issues with the quality or accuracy of this evidence.

There is guidance on modelling techniques and assessment, on SQA's website.

Orthographic views

Adherence to British Standards is poor in many centres. Common errors or omissions include: centre lines, dimension styles and the use of 1st angle projection (the Course requires 3rd angle projection).

This year there were several instances of marks being awarded when there was no evidence in the folio; sections and stepped sections were the most common missing features. Orthographic views should be produced as line drawings and not rendered.

Pictorial views

Showing hidden detail on any pictorial view is incorrect. Selecting an angle similar to one of the prescribed pictorial views is recommended. Pictorial views should be produced as line drawings and not rendered.

Annotation and dimensioning

Centres are reminded that, to help gain full marks, the candidate must customise his/her own title block. An appropriate font size and style should be used for view titles in formal orthographic drawings when full marks are awarded. All views should be titled appropriately.

Visualisation

When applying lights to a scene, centres are reminded that evidence of the light sources used and directional and intensity changes are demonstrated visually and recorded in writing. This work makes agreement at verification much more likely.

Computer-Aided Graphic Presentation

Analysis

Analysis of grid structure and type specification, design elements and design principles is without doubt the weakest area across both folios. A poor understanding of design elements and principles was evident and candidates often demonstrated a limited vocabulary and knowledge throughout. The focus of the analysis must be to firstly, identify each principle or element and then to describe the effect each element or principle contributes to the layout.

Much of the evidence at verification points to a standard and quality that gains no more than one mark from four in each assessment area.

Planning and development

Outline specification

Specifications that were awarded full marks generally followed the recommended template, using sub-headings: Target Market, Purpose, Message, Design Features. This gave candidates a means of navigating through the process of compiling a specification.

Candidates who do not follow this format (often producing a single paragraph) can have difficulty composing a suitable specification.

Thumbnails

This was a strength in some centres but many paid lip-service to the processes. Graphic design should be a creative process preparing creative layout ideas and annotating the layout ideas to include evaluation and decision making.

Annotation was especially weak. It is here that candidates should be building their knowledge of design elements and principles and developing creativity. There was little evidence of this in most samples that were verified.

Visuals

Layout detail

This was tackled well in many centres with excellent information on the grid structure of the intended layout, complete with the correct terminology and full dimensioning.

Many centres have not grasped the importance of planning the structure of the intended layout.

Graphic items and text

Marks here are awarded for the evidence in the visuals. It is an opportunity to build knowledge of font styles and sizes (useful in preparing for the Course exam) and to develop and demonstrate sketching and illustration skills. It provides an area in which the skills depend less on the use of technology and more on the application of manual skills. This may well provide opportunities that can open the Course to candidates with a broader range of skills.

Candidates did not provide enough information of font styles and sizes to be used in their publication. Work produced in this area must not be done retrospectively.

Implementation and presentation

Creation of an electronic template

While there were some good examples, many centres did not submit a template. To justify full marks the candidate should show clear evidence that a grid and guidelines have been used to set up the layout and annotation to confirm that the structure was created prior to starting DTP work. The most effective means of achieving this is by using screen capture with the grid and guidelines visible and annotated. These are the most readily achievable two marks in the folio but evidence often falls short of full marks through lack of understanding of what is required.

Integration of text and graphics

Creative and Effective use of Design Elements

Creative and Effective use of Design Principles

The above areas of assessment are, for many candidates, the heart of the folio/project work. It is here that we should find scope to encourage creativity through exploring the use of the DTP software and the creative application of design elements and principles.

A handful of centres produced creative layout work that was complex, dynamic and of a commercial quality. Those centres clearly built creativity over the years and the results suggest that their pupils develop levels of creativity, problem solving, planning, research, motivation and confidence that sets their work apart. It reflects, on the part of their teachers, good knowledge of subject, thoroughness in planning, awareness of the options and opportunities and excellent teaching and learning.

Sadly, the majority of submissions fell in the 'Unit standard and below' assessment band in this section.

The evidence seen at verification was, from all but a handful of centres, disappointing. Common quality issues include: inappropriate text size (too large); poor understanding and use of colour; clumsy layouts; limited use of DTP features; pixelated graphics; and unadventurous grid structure.

Evaluation and modifications

This work was more effectively executed. Candidates benefit from a structured template that directs them to consider modifications and use of design elements and principles etc. Those who prepare a single paragraph without sub-heads tended to lack focus.

Presentation

Production of hard copy/ presentation to client

When full marks are awarded by the centre it is expected that a folded copy of the magazine will be produced and that correct imposition of page order will be evident. This was rare in the samples seen and resulted in frequent disagreement at verification.

The magazine should not be mounted on card. It does not make best use of an expensive resource, neither does it allow the pages to be folded; a requirement when presenting a copy to a professional standard.

Specific areas for improvement

See above. Improvements can be made throughout the folio. The issues that need addressed in the areas outlined above, without fail, relate to three factors:

- ◆ The teachers' understanding of the processes
- ◆ The quality of the work our candidates produce
- ◆ The complexity of the work our candidates produce

Improvement will come when there is a better understanding, in our classrooms, of Course content, including the complexity and the quality that Advanced Higher candidates need to produce and the assessment processes that need to be understood and applied.