



National Qualifications 2008

Internal Assessment Report

Subject: Graphic Communication

Assessment Panel: Technical Education

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification which has taken place within National Qualifications in this subject.

STANDARD GRADE

SG Graphic Communication - 135

ELEMENT / COURSEWORK VERIFIED

Insert details:

ILLUSTRATION & PRESENTATION PORT-FOLIO

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

Insert details relating to specific guidance which should be offered to centres based on the verification of centres.

Include:

- *General comments*
- *Areas of good practice*
- *Areas for further development*

General comments:

Ten centres were selected but only nine were seen. The samples provided a broad quality range of illustration & presentation from excellent **Credit Level** work to lower **Foundation Level** work. There was general consistency of quality (across all 10 topics) within folios at Credit and General levels.

The centres sampled often have obvious strengths and within centres the emphasis can vary according to individual teachers. Samples from centres with more than one teacher presenting the subject, often showed considerable variation in the type of work covered and in the quality of the finished output. The sharing of expertise within a department could lead to more consistent quality across that department.

A few departments adopted a thematic approach; perhaps an initiative designed to prepare candidates for Higher and Intermediate courses. There was more evidence of centres developing their own project work; less reliance on tried and tested (exemplar folio) projects. These folios included some very original project items which were often the best in the folio.

Creative work was stronger this year, especially at Credit Level. There was evidence of excellent graphic design work in those topics that demand a creative input; **(a) 2D & 3D Graphs & Charts;** **(d) Layout & Lettering;** **(e) Display and (i) CAG for Display and Topic (f) Modelling.** The influence of the graphic design work done in the Higher and perhaps even Advanced Higher courses may be filtering down to Standard Grade.

Candidates working at General level often showed an enthusiasm for the creative process. At General Level the quality of work was again consistent across the folio. The accuracy of assessment and conformance to national assessment standards was also consistent across these folios.

Foundation Level candidates normally produced individual items of a General Level quality and, occasionally, Credit Level quality but costly gaps (that attract grade 7) lowered the portfolio grade to Foundation level. Work at this level is always incomplete.

The space for the teachers' comments on the Internal Assessment Flyleaf was far more widely used; in some cases there was more space required than was available on the flyleaf. Teachers took the opportunity to clarify the candidate's input or where extra support was provided by the teacher. This feature always makes verification more straightforward and the additional knowledge can only contribute to accuracy and fairness during verification.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

The '**best grade principle**' of assessing topics was applied consistently. However, centres are still missing opportunities to assess items across several topics. An example is; topic **(a) 2D & 3D Graphs & Charts**. Items here are routinely used as evidence in topics **(d) Layout & Lettering** and **(e) Display**, but are often missed from topic **(i) CAG for Display**, in favour of an inferior computer generated display produced specifically for this topic. Centres are encouraged to examine all items in the folio for suitability across other topics. Verification takes an overview of the entire folio and if an item provides evidence in a given topic we must consider it. Disagreements can occur if the centre has not considered the item for assessment in the given topic.

The size of folios varied across the samples but all within a manageable 8 to 12 items. It is pleasing that centres are reducing the size (number of items) of the folio to leave more time to improve the quality of fewer items or to spend reinforcing skills and knowledge in other areas of the course. 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.

Specific comments on each topic

Topic (a) Graphs and Charts

Often the best example of creative layout and display in a folio, this topic clearly features prominently in course work and its value across the folio is being recognised. It is encouraging to see that most centres recognise this and use these items for assessment across the folio. Graphs & charts are routinely used for assessment in topics **(a) 2D & 3D Graphs & Charts**, **(d) Layout & Lettering**; **(e) Display**, but occasionally missed from topic **(i) CAG for Display**.

Centres are reminded that the recommended number of items (for graphs & charts) is two. Some centres still produce three separate items for this topic.

Clarity, completeness and quality of layout and display (visual impact) are the main criteria for consideration during assessment. Graphs should all come with a title, appropriate quantities and the purpose of the graph should be clear. This year's samples are significantly stronger than in previous

years and demonstrated a quality of design and layout that justified the time and effort put in by candidates.

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.**

Topic (b) Use of Colour

Centres are reminded that assessment is based on two features; **manual application of colour** and notes to **justify the selection of colours**. A written justification is required at all levels. For the first time at verification all centres submitted a written justification for the choice of colours. The written justification builds knowledge that may be tested in the exam papers and provides an opportunity to integrate this theory with practical project work. Manual application of colour was also an improvement on previous years. The colouring media were appropriate and the work was, at least, neat and at best, excellent.

Topic (c) Shading, Toning and Rendering

Coloured pencils and marker pens were again the common manual rendering tools but the work was stronger and more varied in technique than in previous years. Marker pen rendering was more widely found and both **'blocking-in'** and **'strike-through'** techniques were used to good effect. Coloured pencil rendering demonstrated more effective use of tonal scale and the items rendered were more complex in form than those in previous years. Manual rendering techniques are very important to CDT; being widely used at all levels in both Product Design and Graphic Communication. It is evident that a good grounding is given at this level, one that can be built on in S5/6.

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

These topics (like Graphs & Charts) provide opportunities for candidates to produce creative graphic design work. An opportunity so often missed, this year the standard was significantly improved and the route to Higher and Advanced Higher can be seen in the work of the most able candidates. Improvements come via confident, informed teaching and the work sampled demonstrated a more mature grasp of graphic design. Layouts were more sophisticated and the effective use of design elements and principles again featured in work at the top end.

There was a greater variety of layout work in the samples from individual centres, suggesting that a creative approach is being encouraged across all levels. There was very little evidence of Foundation level work in this topic, suggesting that centres may have made significant progress in these creative areas.

Topic (f) Modelling

The models in general, are more complex this year. Other improvements include more consideration given to how the models are fixed on assembly. Such detail, if carried out well, can enhance the assessment.

There was greater use of computers in modelling this year. Some candidates were building models manually and creating graphics on the computer to cut and paste onto the model. Others created a surface development on the computer and cut it on a plotter/cutter for manual assembly with computer generated graphics already in place. Both methods are valid. Encouragingly, candidates are designing their own models and the benefits are evident in both the originality and the quality of their work. This creative approach was again the norm rather than the exception.

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

Topic (g) Computer-Aided Draughting

Centres that tackle this topic well, are clearly preparing their pupils for the Higher and Intermediate courses. Such work can be detailed, accurate and mature in layout and textual information. Conversely, we find that too many Credit level candidates do not include; centre lines, hidden detail, dimensions, view titles or a projection symbol on orthographic work. When these features are found they often don't conform to British Standards. Centres are reminded that dimensions are required at all levels.

Pictorial drawings often provide the best grade in this topic. Perhaps it's the lack of demand for the features listed above that enable candidates to score better with pictorial drawings.

Significantly, there is almost no 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

Centres are reminded that they must specify the candidate's input. State whether; at **Credit Level**, icons have been created by the candidate and saved to the library or, at **General Level**, existing icons have been manipulated (scaled, rotated etc) or, at **Foundation Level**, candidates have used a CAD library. The teacher's comments box on the internal assessment flyleaf is provided for this purpose.

Building drawings (floor plans etc) form the material for the bulk of submissions. These are appropriate and can be tailored to suit the ability of the candidate. However, in some cases centres submitted CAD library drawings that take the form of graphs or posters. These are not as suitable for the purpose of gaining an awareness of how and why a CAD library is used in industry.

Topic (j) Draughtsmanship

Centres are still confused about where the draughtsmanship grade comes from. 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. 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).**