

Moderation Feedback

Assessment Panel:

Technical Education

Qualification area

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

Graphic Communication – Standard Grade

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

The standardisation session, carried out on the first morning, established consistency in applying the national assessment standards. The session is led by the senior moderator and deals with moderation principles, procedures and practice as well as the fine detail of assessment standards.

The number of centres moderated was an increase on last year. 52 centres were selected for moderation (the folios from 11 of those centres had not arrived by the moderation date). Four centres that were not selected for central moderation chose to send in a sample of portfolio work for moderation.

For the first time, moderators had the opportunity to give feedback to centres that were moderated successfully. Previously such feedback (in more detailed form) was only available to those centres that required re-assessment. Feedback was limited to those centres where the moderation proved successful but was very close to the limits of national assessment standards. We confined our comments and advice to areas about which there can be no dispute and are not open to interpretation, e.g. *“the assessment of sub-element (b) Use of Colour, is based on both the selection of colours **and** the manual application of colour. When one or the other is missing the evidence is incomplete and upper grades should not awarded. The candidate should provide a written justification of his/her choice of colours for assessment at all levels.”*

Specific issues identified

Common assessment trends

While there was again a tendency for Credit Level items to be graded generously, strong Credit Level work was evident (and more common) in the following areas; marker pen rendering, use of a CAD Library and Computer-Aided Drawing (orthographic and pictorial). Preparing candidates for Higher and Intermediate 2 levels was evident through the work (from a number of centres) in computer illustration and formal DTP.

Internal assessment was generally accurate. Assessment discrepancies occurred most frequently where the internal assessment was close to a grade boundary (e.g. arithmetic total 24 - 26). The smallest of disagreements at moderation could suggest a grade change. Centres from which the sample contained several such folios may be at a greater risk of an unsuccessful moderation than those with a number of folios in mid-grade arithmetically. Such cases were considered sympathetically and every effort was made to ensure a fair and successful moderation. Only one centre required re-assessment.

Errors in completing the Ex5 (Flyleaf) were more common than in previous years. Centres employed a number of inappropriate approaches to internal assessment. e.g. Grades ‘0’ & ‘8’ were entered and assessment boxes were left blank. Arithmetic mistakes in calculating the overall grade were also more frequent. It is clear that some centres need to make careful reference to the document; **Notes on Internal Assessment and Completion of Internal Assessment Flyleaf**. All such cases (11 in total) were returned to the centres for further remedial action.

When more than one teacher is conducting internal assessments, it is **vital that internal moderation takes place**. Inconsistency across a sample was more common than in previous years and it was evident (due to different signatures on the flyleaf) that more than one teacher conducted the internal assessments. Appropriate advice was provided to those centres.

The space on the Flyleaf for teacher's comments was not well used. Typical examples which may help ensure successful moderation of the sample are:

- explaining the candidate's input in topic (h) CAD using a Library,
- explaining the candidate's input in topic (g) CAD when 3D modelling packages are used,
- describing the candidate's input when specialised graph software has been used in topic (a) Graphs and Charts,
- Identifying where a candidate has been given more teacher support than normal (in all sub-elements).

Feedback to centres

Topic (a) Graphs and Charts

It is clear that centres are making best use of computer technology for **producing** graphs & charts and assisting the **creative process** involved in manipulating the graphic elements (colour, text etc) in order to create effective graphic displays. A number of centres submitted graphs & charts that demonstrated a very high standard of design, layout, production and visual impact.

Topic (b) Use of Colour

The assessment criterion requires that candidates **provide** notes to justify their selection of colours. This written justification, along with the candidate's manual application of colour, determines the grade for this topic. When one or the other is missing the evidence is incomplete and upper grades should not be awarded.

There was an increase in the number of candidates providing a written justification that contained an analysis of colour choice appropriate to Credit and General grades. Most of the evidence for this sub-element conveys elementary reasons for the selection of colours and confines this part of the assessment to Foundation level.

Topic (c) Shading, Toning & Rendering

More centres submitted evidence of strong manual illustration skills in mediums such as coloured pencil and marker pen. There is still, in many centres, an over reliance on photocopied line drawings that are rendered or traced and rendered. The strongest (and most challenging) work is found when the candidate sketches or draws the outline and renders the surface. This approach also provides evidence for **sub-element (j) Draughting**.

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

The flexibility offered by computer software in graphic design has resulted in significant improvement in quality and depth of treatment of these sub-elements. The ease with which candidates can experiment with layout, colour, scale, alignment, position and font size and style has made the creative process easier and is developing the design skills of the user. It is noted also that where the candidate has achieved success in computer generated layout, the quality of the layout on manually produced items follows suit.

An understanding of the principles of graphic design is to be encouraged, especially considering its relevance at Higher and Advanced Higher Levels. Centres are tackling work in those areas that is clearly designed to prepare candidates for progression through levels.

Topic (f) Modelling

From the sample evidence it is clear that many centres have now adopted a creative approach to this topic. The result is that the 3D built models are designed (by the candidates, with teacher support) with a degree of complexity that matches the ability of the candidate. The build quality of these models suggests improved candidate motivation.

Restricting candidates to producing the same model (a common practice) normally presented the most and least able candidates with work that was inappropriate to their abilities. A creative approach, allowing candidates the freedom to design their own models, is by far the most successful and invariably produces a broader band of work that is more complex at the top end and more accurate in assembly and creative in surface detail.

Topic (g) Computer-Aided Draughting

In many centres Credit Level candidates are being prepared for CAD work at Higher Level. CAD features such as; fillets, arcs, arrays and different line types are now commonplace and a number of centres have introduced 3D CAD Modelling to their Standard Grade course.

However, there is limited evidence that General and Foundation Level candidates are being catered for in the same way. These candidates often have to plough through the same drawings at an inappropriate level of complexity and difficulty.

Centres should note that CAD work produced using a step-by-step guide is not appropriate for assessment in this topic. There are now several step-by-step guides on the market that are suitable for building skills and knowledge but **not** for course assessment.

Centres are reminded that dimensioning is required to confirm assessment at all levels.

Pictorial CAD (appropriate at General and Credit Levels) is becoming more common. Architectural drawings (houses and other types of building) occur frequently and can be easily differentiated to suit all ability levels. Candidates use a variety of styles including **isometric**, **perspective**, **oblique** and **planometric**. These drawings are often supplemented in the portfolio by a floor plan in **Topic (h) CAD using a Library**.

Topic (h) CAD using a Library

Assessment for this topic is determined by examining the candidate's input **and** thereafter, examining the complexity and quality of the work produced, e.g. if a candidate creates icons, saves them in a (library) part file and uses them to construct a composite drawing, they will be assessed at Credit Level. However, if the composite drawing has not been accurately assembled (aligned) or if the drawing is very simplistic, then the lower grade (2) would be awarded.

Centres are again reminded that CAD library items must come with a key, legend or a brief note from the teacher to explain the candidate's input. This knowledge is crucial to the assessment for this topic. Centres who did not provide this information frequently had their assessment down-graded.

Topic (j) Draughtsmanship

Centres are again reminded that while assessment is based on draughtsmanship across the portfolio, the grade awarded should not be less than the grade awarded for items that rely heavily on draughting skills; including Topics (g) Computer-Aided Draughting and (f) Modelling.

While there was a reduction in the number of centres relying on photocopies or tracings to aid manual work, some centres still employ this approach when outlining manual illustrations. It becomes difficult, in some cases, to justify the grades awarded for draughtsmanship when there is little evidence in the portfolio. In those centres the orthographic CAD drawing may be the only evidence of the candidates' own, original, draughtsmanship. A creative approach, which integrates drawing, sketching and illustration, provides the best evidence for upper grades.