

Moderation Feedback – Postal - 2005

Assessment Panel:

Technical Education

Qualification area

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

**Graphic Communication
Standard Grade**

General comments on moderation activity

The overall standard of work submitted for moderation was on par with that of last year. Two centres produced work of outstanding quality. Many centres have difficulty producing a standard of work that is consistent across all 10 topics.

It was uncommon to find strong Credit Level work across all topics in a folio. From most centres the sample of 4 Credit Level folios showed evidence of work at Credit Level in a few topics, commonly CAD, CAD Library and occasionally Graphs & Charts. The remaining topics displayed evidence at General Level. Very few assessments at Credit Level Grade 1 were confirmed. Only 2 centres provided evidence of strong Credit Level work across all 10 topics. It is felt that many Credit level candidates produce work that is neat and accurate but does not reach Credit Level because the candidates are not engaged in a creative process that offers options that would improve the visual quality of a piece and increase the candidate's input. This is especially true in topics that involve Layout and Graphic Display (manual and CAG) and Graphs & Charts.

At General Level the evidence is normally consistent across the folio. That is, more often than not, all ten topics are assessed at General Level.

It is noted also that Foundation Level candidates often produce work at General Level but gaps in the folio attract grade 7 (often several grade 7's) thus dropping the overall IP grade into Foundation Level. There was little evidence of Foundation Level folios that were complete; showing evidence in all ten topics.

A continuing trend is the excessively large size of a typical folio. Most folios contain between 12 and 20 items. Centres will produce a separate item for each topic and separate items again when the suggested number of items is more than one. The time spent planning and completing too many items is to the detriment of quality and reduces the time spent on the other two elements in the course. Our advice has always been to use items that cover several topics. A folio of 7 or 8 carefully managed items/projects is enough to provide evidence in all ten topics.

Specific issues identified

Common assessment trends

The number of centres making arithmetic errors in completing the Internal assessment Flyleaf was lower than in previous years. Two centres made arithmetic errors in calculating the Illustration & Presentation grade and were not accepted. They are asked to check the arithmetic on all folios held in centre. It is my hope that this will be followed up at the next moderation event by selecting these centres again to ensure that there is no longer any ambiguity regarding completion of the Internal Assessment Flyleaf.

Few centres utilised the space for the teacher's comments on the Internal Assessment Flyleaf. This space is useful if there is a need to clarify the candidate's input or extra support provided by the teacher. Moderators will always look for content in this box when making a decision on the centre's assessment procedures.

Some centres are still ignoring the '**best grade principle**' when assessing individual topics. There is clear evidence that averaging grades is still being done and, more commonly, candidates who don't meet the suggested number of items in any given topic are being penalised.

For example, where the suggested evidence is two items and a candidate produces only one, the grade has, occasionally, been calculated by averaging the first grade plus seven (i.e. $3 + 7 / 2 = 5$). In fact the topic should be assessed at grade 3, awarding the candidate his/her '**best**' grade.

Feedback was provided and I would like to look again at these centres next session (see feedback to centres page 4).

Feedback to centres

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Some centres are still ignoring the **'best grade'** principle when assessing individual topics. There is clear evidence that averaging grades is still being done and, more commonly, candidates who don't meet the suggested number of items in any given topic are being penalised in some centres. For example, where the suggested evidence comprises two items and the candidate produces only one, the grade has, occasionally, been calculated by averaging the first grade plus seven (i.e. $3 + 7 / 2 = 5$). In fact the topic should be assessed at grade 3, awarding the candidate his/her **'best'** grade.

Specific comments on each topic

Topic (a) Graphs and Charts

This is an area in which a computer generated graph (carefully managed by the teacher) can provide evidence in up to 6 topics; typically topics (a) Graphs & Charts, (d) Layout & Lettering, (e) Display, (i) CAG for Display, (h) CAD and (j) Draughting. Some centres have cottoned on to this but most have not. Employing this strategy will cut down on the number of items produced and enable candidates to devote more time to improving the quality of (fewer) items across the folio.

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

The written justification of choice of colours – required at all levels – is more common than in recent years. And, building on last year's evidence, the terminology is more appropriate to the level. Consequently, it was easier to reach agreement with the centre's internal assessment during moderation. Some centres penalised candidates by awarding grade 7 when a written justification had been omitted. Centres are reminded that this assessment is based on the **manual application of colour** as well as the **written justification for the selection of colours**. If one is missing there may still be enough evidence to award a better grade than 7.

Topic (c) Shading, Toning and Rendering

Coloured pencil and marker pen are the two common manual illustration mediums. While marker work is evident in most folios, it is generally not well done. The best grade in this topic invariably comes from the coloured pencil rendering.

The use of photocopied outlines and tracing aids are still a feature in many centres. These approaches restrict the creative input of the candidates and do not lend themselves to differentiated learning. Less able pupils are asked to reproduce techniques that may be too complex and the talents of able pupils are constrained by the restrictive nature of working within photocopied outlines.

There was little evidence of strong Credit Level work.

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

Happily, there is more evidence that candidates are being asked to create their own layouts and displays and this is central to success in these topics. Creative layout work (graphic design) provides the opportunity for our pupils to learn techniques that can be carried through to Higher and Advanced Higher courses. However, work here was the weakest (of the 10 topics) in the folios sampled. Many centres have still not come to terms with the principles of layout and display.

The use of graphic design principles such as; **contrast, alignment, dominance and unity** should be taught and learned here. Aside from one or two notable exceptions, evidence was rooted firmly at General and Foundation levels.

Topic (f) Modelling

While the creative approach is firmly embedded in some centres, it is teacher led in others. There are issues when all students produce the same model (e.g. a garden shed or kitchen unit). This style of delivery may not challenge the most able candidates and the models they produce may not exemplify the full extent of their ability. Encouraging candidates to design their own models can give the pupil ownership of the project and (with careful monitoring at the design stage) is more likely to lead to a complexity of project that matches the ability of the candidate. More than half of all centres moderated employ the strictly controlled, teacher led model.

Centres must refer to the EGRC prior to internal assessment. Credit level requires '*a detailed model of a complex item*'. This should also show surface details (graphics etc).

Topic (g) Computer-Aided Draughting

Work in this topic has improved steadily over the past few years. This year again there is more evidence of complex items drawn in related orthographic views and in pictorial (normally isometric) views.

It should be noted however that when dimensions are added (and they are required at all levels) it is important to ensure they are configured to British Standards. Common errors include; inclusion of too many decimal places,

the millimetre abbreviation attached to the dimension, dimensions breaking a line and incorrect use of diameter and radius dimensioning.

More use could be made of hidden detail. This would add complexity to a drawing and may, for example, help confirm a Credit Grade. While there is no requirement to produce sectioned views, we are seeing more of them at credit level and they add complexity to orthographic drawings.

Topic (h) CAD using a Library

Again there is more evidence that candidates are including a Key or legend but centres are reminded that they must also indicate exactly what the candidate's input has been. Please state whether icons have been created by the candidate and saved to the library. The teacher's comments box on the internal assessment flyleaf is provided for this purpose. Centres that did not provide this information had their assessment for this topic downgraded. A few centres included this information but ignored it during their internal assessments. They were sent feedback to clarify the inconsistency.

Depth of treatment cannot be gauged without information on candidates' input.

Topic (j) Draughtsmanship

Internal assessments were generally accurate this year. The over-reliance of tracing aids and photocopies used as outlines for manual work, limited the evidence from several centres. Assessment in this topic should consider the draughting work across the whole folio in both manual and CAD work.