



**National Qualifications 2011
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 NQ Units verified

Graphic Communication (Higher): Thematic Presentation

General comments

The Guidance on Assessment documents are an essential part of the internal assessment process. It is therefore extremely important that teachers/lecturers are familiar with these documents. These documents can be found on the Graphic Communication page of SQA's website.

These are reviewed each year to take on board concerns raised by centres and issues that arise during the verification period. As such, they may contain changes from the previous year. It is strongly recommended that centres familiarise themselves with these documents each year, prior to commencing with the coursework.

Teachers/lecturers should make use of the exemplar material on SQA's website. This material will assist in the understanding of the national standard.

This year SQA chose to focus on verifying the Higher Thematic Presentation.

Higher

There appeared to be some evidence that the Understanding Standards events may have had a positive effect on the application of the assessment guidelines. There were fewer Not Accepted centres this year, which was a significant improvement on previous years.

All centres sampled were using dedicated 3D modelling software.

There was a range of different DTP packages used, from some that were fairly basic to high-end commercial software. The quality of the software did not have a significant effect on the quality of candidate performance, but the more advanced software did allow more creative work to be attempted. The ability of the candidate and quality of learning and teaching are the most significant factors.

Student Records continue to improve, but there remains a large variation in standard and there were still cases where candidates did not complete them at all.

Teachers/lecturers make assessment decisions based on their knowledge of what the candidate has done but as this is unclear to the verifier, it is important that the Student Records are completed properly as this gives candidates the opportunity to give additional information/description that is to their benefit. There were occasions where this additional information directly affected the outcome of the verification. Without it, the centre would have been Not Accepted.

Important points to note

Presenting centres must ensure that their software can fulfil all the requirements of the Course prior to starting.

Teachers/lecturers should be aware of the following important points:

- ◆ At Higher, it needs to be reinforced that instruments, straight edges, tracing or other drawing aids, cannot be used to assist in manual freehand sketching. It is disappointing that these practices continue, especially when maximum marks are often being awarded.
- ◆ Manual sketching at Higher must not be done retrospectively. In a number of cases, the sketches are tracings of the finished CAD drawings. This practice is unacceptable and would receive no marks.
- ◆ DTP planning at Higher, and planning and development at Advanced Higher, must not be done retrospectively either. All planning should be completed prior to beginning the electronic production.
- ◆ Draughtsmanship, annotation and correct application of British Standards (BS) conventions need to be improved in CAD work across all levels. This includes line thickness, sizes of dimensions, font sizes, fonts used, name boxes and borders. This has improved but it still requires attention.
- ◆ All CAD drawings (orthographic and pictorial) must be line drawings and not rendered. This is a particular concern for those using 3D software. It may look visually pleasing to have rendered CAD drawings but no marks can be awarded for this practice.
- ◆ Candidates must take more care over the completion of the flyleaf/Student Record at each level. It gives candidates the opportunity to clarify how parts of a drawing/document were produced. This aids the verification process and helps to ensure that the candidate receives maximum credit for their work.

Advanced Higher

Even though Advanced Higher was not verified this year, the following points from last year still need to be reiterated:

- ◆ At Advanced Higher, the description of modelling techniques requires more detail and clarity, as this is where the marks are awarded. Without this the model has no value, so it must be treated as crucial documentation for the awarding of marks. Candidates must also use the techniques listed in the Guidance on Assessment document.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that, when using 3D modelling packages at Advanced Higher, the performance criteria of the Unit requires surface modelling to be covered.

Areas of good practice

Higher

Section A: Manual

This section is worth one-third of the total marks and therefore should be given the attention that it deserves. It needs to be reiterated that no retrospective work is permitted in this section.

There continues to be a lack of analytical sketching to show technical detail. The purpose of the orthographic sketches is to enable candidates to produce CAD drawings. The sketches need to have enough dimensions to enable the candidate to produce CAD drawings. These should also conform to British Standards conventions for dimensions.

The best pictorial sketches show details at different scales, a section, a cut-away, etc and not just a single sketch of the item.

There was some excellent DTP planning (thumbnails). The best had evidence of:

- ◆ consideration of various layouts
- ◆ annotation including opinions, details of graphic items, text justification, etc
- ◆ some sketched graphics
- ◆ main headings
- ◆ possible colour scheme

There was a slight improvement again in the quality and detail of the visuals at Higher this year. It should be noted that these must not be done retrospectively. The best practice displays annotations that include:

- ◆ dimensions of margins, columns, etc
- ◆ all fonts
- ◆ all colours
- ◆ at least one graphic item sketched and rendered to a high quality

In addition, main headings and sub-headings are drawn in colour and the overall appearance is neat and accurate.

Section B: CAD

Generally, the CAD work was of a good standard, but there were also examples that were of a very poor standard for Higher. Most candidates are now making a more appropriate choice of theme (item). If the item has at least three parts this results in better CAD drawings. In addition, the choice of item can influence the scope of DTP work. Therefore, careful consideration should go into the choice of item.

The best practice has evidence of variation in line type and uses various font sizes appropriately throughout the drawing. An appropriate scale is used to show the object. The scale should not be so small that the drawing is unclear or too large resulting in a cluttered drawing. Also, if it is a complex item then hidden detail is shown on component views rather than the assembled view. For technical detail there is a section, exploded view, scaled detail or a cut-away. The best tend to have three of them.

Section C: Presentation

Rendering

By using a 3D modelling package very high quality, realistic rendered objects can be produced. However, it is sometimes difficult to confirm what materials and lights had been applied when candidates do not fill in the Student Record properly. Some points to note are:

- ◆ Creative use of lighting created superior quality images.
- ◆ The most effective layouts show examples of the object from different viewpoints rather than a single rendered object.
- ◆ Leaving outlines on rendered pictorial views is still a fault with candidates using some 3D packages.

DTP

The DTP items were mostly very good in terms of quality and marking. As in previous years, the same points should be noted:

- ◆ As seen last year, the quality of paper used by some centres helped enhance the DTP items. There was a significantly higher standard produced by those who used photo-quality paper.
- ◆ Many candidates do not put enough thought into the size of fonts used; mostly the problem is the use of a font that is too large for the document. This can make a marked difference to the quality of the DTP piece. Simple research of the type of item they are producing would help.
- ◆ Even though design principles and elements are not formally assessed until Advanced Higher, these should still be considered at this level. They are fundamental for good design in DTP.
- ◆ Where the planning is good, this is reflected in the quality of the DTP item. The DTP item must be related to the theme and should not have only tenuous links.

The additional promotional graphic

There are still many candidates not putting enough effort into this area, and this is reflected in the quality of the work. The candidate should be doing some planning, even though this is not awarded marks, as it will help in the production of a higher quality item. Some good examples were a magazine advert and a magazine front cover. The poorer items were a poster with just an image and a name — much more is required to achieve the available marks.

Specific areas for improvement

The following areas require improvement:

- ◆ Use of British Standards conventions in both manual and CAD drawings
- ◆ General draughtsmanship
- ◆ Use of design principles/elements in DTP work
- ◆ The additional promotional graphic
- ◆ Information included in the Student Record