



**National Qualifications 2011
Internal Assessment Report
Graphic Communication**

Standard Grade

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

Standard Grade

Titles/levels of Standard Grade qualifications verified

Graphic Communication (135) — Illustration and Presentation Portfolio

General comments

Six centres were selected, submitted and scrutinised at the central verification event.

There were no re-assessments. However, one centre submitted incorrect arithmetic totals on their sample and was asked to re-calculate them and to check the other folios held in the centre.

There were a limited number of strong Credit level submissions. There was evidence that some candidates are being prepared for Higher level Coursework but this is only true in respect of CAD work, not creative use of DTP or manual illustration.

The use of and reliance on tracing aids, templates and teacher-led learning methods in folio work is still a significant learning and teaching issue. These methods ensure that all candidates are working on the same piece of work at the same time; in short, it makes life easier for the teacher. It also means that able candidates are restricted in the complexity of the work they tackle and it frequently over-stretches less able candidates. The solution is to engage candidates in creative work and allow them to explore and develop appropriate skills at suitable levels.

The Internal Assessment Flyleaf was completed correctly in all but one case. The space for teacher comments was used more frequently than in previous years and the inclusion of separate teachers' notes, when supplied, gave clarity to the candidates' input and made verification easier.

Feedback has been provided to every centre that submitted work for verification.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

The size of folios was more appropriate to the Illustration and Presentation Element this year. Eight to ten items were the norm. This size of folio, provided it is carefully planned, can leave time to improve the quality across fewer items or to improve the candidate's performance in the other two Course Elements.

In some centres there was a disparity in the quality and depth of treatment between manual work and computer-generated graphics. A clear emphasis to one side or the other was evident in several centres. Only two centres from the six sampled, demonstrated creativity and skill across the portfolio.

Additionally, manual graphics and computer-generated graphics were kept entirely separate throughout the folios, eg there was no mixing of manually produced illustrations and computer-generated text and backdrops.

Specific comments on each topic

Topic (a) Graphs and Charts

It is important to note that '2D and 3D Graphs and Charts' is simply the title of the topic, not an instruction to produce evidence of both 2D and 3D work. Neither is there a requirement to produce a manual graph along with a computer-generated graph. The stipulation is that one graph should be computer generated. A second graph can also be computer generated. Samples showed that centres are producing a perfectly good computer-generated graph (often at Credit level) and a second, much weaker, manually produced graph. Centres are also insisting that candidates produce both a 2D and a 3D graph; this, as previously indicated, is not required.

There is more to be gained by producing two computer-generated graphs or by creating a single graph that covers all the requirements: selection of the correct type of graph to suit the purpose, clarity, completeness and quality of layout and display (visual impact). There is merit in employing the time saved by improving other aspects of 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: *Standard Grade Graphic Communication Illustration and Presentation: Advice for Centres*, issued February 2001. This is now available on the [Standard Grade Graphic Communication web page](#) (under Guidance documents).

Topic (b) Use of Colour, and Topic (c) Shading, Toning and Rendering

Colour theory notes to justify the selection of colours (required at all levels) are frequently pitched at a lower level than the colour work they describe. The portfolio provides the ideal opportunity to make practical use of colour and to teach the colour theory required in the KI Element of the Course. Evidence suggests that centres are still not asking candidates to use the terminology appropriate to the level the candidate is working at graphically.

There was a distinct lack of Credit level shading, toning and rendering in this year's submissions. The application of tone and texture to give realism and depth to manual graphics was almost exclusively, with a few notable exceptions, appropriate to General and Foundation levels. Colour mediums employed in the sample include: marker pen, coloured pencil and chalk pastels.

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

There is still confusion regarding the assessment of these topics.

Where the best work in these topics is a computer-generated item, topic (i) CAG for Display, the other two topics must share the same grade. The layout and display techniques for each topic are the same. As are the requirements, at Credit level, for clarity and visual impact. The distinction between topics stems from a time when computers were not readily available and manually produced items were the norm. It was important, at that time, to stipulate the use of computers in some topics.

It appears that centres still demand separate manual and computer-generated work from candidates. It can be beneficial to encourage candidates to mix the media they are working in. Presenting a manually-rendered illustration on a computer-generated backdrop develops manual illustration skills and gives an infinite number of colour options and graphics for use in the backdrop. This method can also encourage creativity, improve the quality of textual information and speed up the process.

There was little evidence that able candidates are being prepared for Higher level in these topics — the lack of creativity being the main issue.

Topic (f) Modelling

There is a disturbing reliance on templates and tracing aids in approaches to teaching this topic. It is always beneficial to encourage candidates to design their own models. It provides candidates with a sense of ownership and challenges able learners whilst meeting the learning needs of less able learners. There were no instances of centres combining modelling with computer-generated surface detail; a challenge that we should be setting our most able pupils. See the recently issued PRINT-IT resource materials. (There is a link on the [Standard Grade Graphic Communication web page](#).) The complexity and quality in this sample rarely reached Credit level.

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

3D modelling software is now the preferred method of producing work in this topic. However, additional features that depend on candidate input: dimensioning, centre lines, text etc, were generally not well done.

SQA's website provides guidance on content and assessment of 3D computer work. Centres are reminded that dimensions are required at all levels.

There was only a single example of Foundation level work in this topic. All other candidates produced either two related views or a pictorial graphic; both starting their assessment at grade 4.

Topic (h) CAD Using a Library

Work for this topic was better and more appropriate than in previous years. All submissions involved architectural floor plans or pneumatics schematics. The work was nearly always complex and accurately set out. In a number of centres it was the most successful item in the folio.

The use of 3D modelling software is now common in this topic and many samples include a pictorial representation (occasionally rendered) of the composite drawing.

Confirmation of the candidates' input was more successfully achieved. A note in the teacher's comments space on the flyleaf, or a comment on the item itself by the candidate, is enough to confirm the candidate's input.

Topic (j) Draughtsmanship

There were anomalies in assessment of topic (j). Teachers must 'look at evidence across the folio' to determine 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. The '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).