



**Standard Grade 2013  
Internal Assessment Report  
Graphic Communication**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in Standard Grade qualifications in this subject.

# Standard Grade

Titles/levels of Standard Grade qualifications verified:

Standard Grade Graphic Communication  
Illustration and Presentation portfolio

## General comments

Ten centres were selected for the central verification event. This is on par with last year's verification. Nine centres had presentation numbers large enough to submit twelve portfolios in their sample; only one centre submitted fewer than 12 portfolios.

There was a single Not Accepted decision due to assessment errors and two Not Accepted centres due to arithmetic errors in deriving the mean grade from the arithmetic total.

There were limited examples of strong Credit level work across a folio. There was evidence, in some topics that candidates were being prepared for Intermediate 2 and Higher level Coursework. This applied in respect of CAD work and not the creative use of DTP or manual illustration.

The Internal Assessment Flyleaf was completed correctly in each case. The space for teacher comments was again used infrequently and the inclusion of separate teachers' notes, when supplied, gave clarity to the candidates' input.

Feedback has been provided to all centres which submitted work for verification.

New advice has been issued periodically to support the EGRC for the Standard Grade Graphic Communication Course. Three areas in particular have been revised and exemplified with supporting documents in recent years, and are available from SQA's website:

- ◆ streamlining the portfolio in an effort to reduce the number of items and improve the quality of work by making use of items across several assessment topics
- ◆ a support pack aimed at improving creative DTP layout skills
- ◆ a support pack describing the use of 3D CAD in the portfolio

Advice on changes to approach or content has always been intended to reduce repetition, support the learner in achieving best quality across the folio and inform the teacher of options and modifications. Centres are reminded that this information exists and to keep up-to-date with SQA advice and developments. Check the website for updates at that start of each new session and ensure your centre is working with the latest information to hand.

All centres submitted portfolios that cover the recommended content of the Illustration and Presentation element of the Standard Grade Graphic Communication Course.

Some centres are submitting more items than are recommended in the Illustration and Presentation EGRC:

### **Topic (a) Graphs and Charts**

Some centres submit three or four graphs and charts, one of which is produced manually. Centres are reminded of the more recent advice to submit no more than two examples (or even one good example); and that manual work is not compulsory in this topic.

### **Administration of assessments**

Centres appear to have a better understanding of the obvious differences in complexity of work at different levels. The 'rule of thumb' guides that apply to CAD work appear to be well understood:

- ◆ single orthographic view with dimensions is assessed in Foundation level
- ◆ related orthographic views or a pictorial view moves the assessment into General level at minimum

A number of centres showed inconsistencies in assessment where assessments are possibly carried out by more than one teacher. Such inconsistencies can often lead to a Not Accepted decision and result in additional work for the centre and re-grading of candidates. Inconsistencies are most obvious in CAD work where the entire group may be producing the same or similar CAD drawings.

It is essential that internal moderation of assessment is in place and is rigorous.

## **Areas of good practice**

### **Topic (a) Graphs and Charts**

More use has been made of DTP when producing graphs and charts. The visual quality of CAG-generated graphs is invariably better than the manually produced examples. This is not only because the quality of the images and text is better but because it is simpler to move and scale elements and edit colour schemes etc.

### **Topic (g) Computer-Aided Draughting**

The use of 3D modelling software to produce CAD work is now the norm in this topic. This augurs well for the progression to the next level Intermediate 2 or Higher and it will support the transition into National Courses at National 4 and National 5. The complexity of this work is also higher than it has been in the past with candidates at Credit level now creating complex models.

## **Topic (f) Modelling**

It is good practice to give candidates more scope to design their own model. It provides candidates with a sense of ownership and challenges able learners whilst meeting the learning needs of less able candidates.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

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

These were the weakest topics in terms of quality of work and depth of treatment. Creative work has not improved; there is little use made of layout design principles and colour schemes lack consideration of choice of colours (multi-coloured schemes are common).

Good work stands out. It often comprises a simple layout with strong alignment, good use of line, balance, depth, unity and a carefully planned (reduced) colour scheme.

There is still some 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 of the topics 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) and it was important to stipulate the use of computers in some topics.

### **Topic (g) Computer-Aided Draughting**

While work in this topic has moved forward at some pace, the attention to detail is often lacking. This topic demands a rigorous approach and an adherence to drawing standards that is not always obvious. Features that depend on candidate input: dimensioning, centre lines, text and title blocks etc, are generally not done well.

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

Foundation level work in this topic is not common. Most candidates produced either two related views or a pictorial graphic; both starting their assessment at grade 4.