

Overview

This standard is for printers whose job includes preparing image carriers and related consumables (such as blocks, pads, plates, or engraved cylinders) and storing them for reuse.

Image carriers' are the materials which carry an image for transfer directly or indirectly to the substrate. The most common type of image carrier is a plate and these are found in lithography, flexography, die stamping and pad printing. Gravure uses a cylinder engraved with 'cells' and a number of direct impression processes such as letterpress, and embossing uses dies or blocks.

This standard requires the printer to be able to prepare an image carrier for printing, which will usually involve mounting the image carrier into or onto a carrier either by self-adhesive tape or by mechanical means, such as locking a block into a 'chase' using 'furniture' and 'quoins'.

It is not expected that the printer will make the actual image carrier involved in these processes, as blocks, dies, engraved cylinders are usually made by specialists.

Storage of image carriers for re-use may involve cleaning ink from the carrier using appropriate plate cleaner and/or removing adhesive or mounting materials from it. Once ready for storage, the image carrier and any associated pieces have to be carefully protected labelled and filed so they can be quickly located when required again.

Note: This standard is not intended for use by lithographic printers

Performance criteria

Prepare image carriers for printing

- You must be able to:
- P1 ensure the image carriers and your work area are safe and ready for production
 - P2 make sure you have all the information needed for the job
 - P3 identify the correct image carrier(s) and any associated materials for the job
 - P4 check that the image carrier is of the right specification for the printing machine
 - P5 prepare the image carrier for use by securely fitting into/onto any externally-prepared carrier devices, using the correct mounting and backing material where appropriate.
 - P6 make sure the image carrier is located in the right position prior to fitting to the printing machine
 - P7 prepare any associated image transfer materials, such as counter dies or pads, and check that they are in useable condition.

Store image carriers for re-use

- You must be able to:
- P8 identify the image carrier(s) and any associated materials for storage and check that they have not suffered any physical or image damage that would prevent them from being re-used in the future
 - P9 report any image carrier wear or damage to the appropriate person before storing them
 - P10 clean printing ink or mounting adhesives from the image carrier(s), using a suitable cleaning agent that will not cause damage to the image carrier.
 - P11 after removal of ink, make sure that any cleaning residues are washed from the carrier
 - P12 when the carrier is dry and ready for storage, identify the storage location
 - P13 protect the image carrier(s) and other materials with suitable packing/protective material
 - P14 store the carrier(s) in the location provided for that purpose
 - P15 complete the labelling/identification requirements of the carrier(s) and, if required, complete any records that form part of an indexing system

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Prepare and maintain image carriers for printing



Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Health and safety

- K1 your duties and responsibilities for health and safety as defined by any specific legislation covering your job role
- K2 manufacturer's health and safety requirements relevant to your job
- K3 how to stop a machine in the event of an emergency

Communication

You need to know and understand:

- K4 how to communicate with colleagues

Workplace policy and practice

You need to know and understand:

- K5 workplace objectives, priorities, standards and procedures

The identification and assessment of printing options

You need to know and understand:

- K6 the stages in the printing process from pre-press to printed product

Time and resources

You need to know and understand:

- K7 how to maximise productivity

The operation of equipment

You need to know and understand:

- K8 the operation of image carrier mounting equipment

Printing

You need to know and understand:

- K9 the principles of printing and image transfer for the process(es) you use

The causes and treatment of common faults

You need to know and understand:

- K10 raw material faults
- K11 processing faults
- K12 machine faults

Administrative procedures

You need to know and understand:

K13 recording and reporting

Environmental

You need to know and understand:

K14 any specific environmental legislation that covers processes in your company

K15 control of pollution

Quality assurance and control

You need to know and understand:

K16 techniques for controlling quality

K17 equipment for controlling quality in offset lithographic platemaking

Problem solving

You need to know and understand:

K18 sources of information

Materials

You need to know and understand:

K19 the types and characteristics of lithographic printing plates

K20 how to maintain the quality of printing plates during storage and handling

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