Qualification Verification Summary Report
NQ Verification 2018–19

01 ▶ ## Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Graphic Communication
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	June 2019

National Courses/Units verified:

H27X 74   National 4 Graphic Communication Assignment — added value unit
C735 77   Advanced Higher Graphic Communication — IACCA*

**Internally-assessed component of course assessment

02 ▶ ## Section 2: Comments on assessment

Assessment approaches

At National 4, all centres verified used the SQA-provided added value unit materials.

Centres should be aware that the re-assessment threshold for the Graphic Communication AVU is currently set at six out of the eight learning outcomes to successfully achieve a pass at National 4 level.

At Advanced Higher, it was noted that some centres were still allowing their candidates to take on too wide a brief and thus limiting the chances of their candidates achieving high quality work. The candidates then produced quantity rather than quality of work.

Centres are encouraged to engage with the candidates at the outset of the Advanced Higher projects to ensure that realistic briefs are being set.

At Advanced Higher, the most popular option was for candidates to choose a commercial and visual media graphics (CVMG) approach over the technical media graphics approach to their project, with a very few centres opting for a combined approach.

Most candidates kept to the 20 page limit for Advanced Higher.

Assessment judgements

At Advanced Higher level, centres were much more reliable with their assessment judgements than in previous years, however some centres continue to mark too generously across the whole project and not just in one particular area.

Analysis of the graphic brief and initial research

In some cases imaginary clients were quoted. Whilst it is accepted that not all centres are in a position to find real clients for their candidates, we would advise that the class teacher take on this role to make the project more relevant, particularly with feedback, dialogue and presentations.

Producing a graphic specification

Some of the specifications created by candidates were lists of tasks that the candidate will complete. A valid specification should detail the particular graphics that will be created for the audience and any specific features required.

Some candidates are still struggling to identify the graphic requirements and the correct graphic formats to meet the needs of the target audience.

Project planning

For almost all candidates the project planning made no reference to intermediate target setting. The candidate must demonstrate key targets, show how they will help achieve the requirements of the target specification, and specify the resources that would be required at each stage.

Candidates who achieved high marks in this section typically included sub-tasks within their project planning.

Graphic planning and production

Carrying out and using ongoing research

This was handled far better by candidates this year in comparison to previous years, with some opting to display this in a separate section rather than having it occur naturally throughout the project.

Using preliminary graphic techniques to communicate ideas

In most cases the preliminary graphic techniques were valid for creating a graphic solution; however, in a few centres the quality demonstrated by candidates was poor and showed far more limited skill than would be expected at Advanced Higher for the mark awarded, especially within technical graphics projects.

Typically the detail required to make graphic design decisions within these preliminary techniques was poor for both technical graphics and CVMG assignments.

Producing a range of graphic ideas or concepts

Some candidates did not demonstrate a range of possible graphic solutions to satisfy the needs of their chosen target audience(s) and did not show any development of their idea — linked to ongoing research — that would allow the creation of a valid graphical solution or solutions. Some of this could be linked to candidates attempting too wide a brief or taking on too many tasks.

Some candidates chose to demonstrate their use of techniques and technologies in this area to good effect, for example FEA, 3D prints, mock-ups, physical models.

A few centres are using animation here to good effect.

Many candidates did not include relevant details to fully inform the development of further graphics in both TG and CVMG projects.

Producing a graphic solution

It was pleasing to see an increase in the standard and quality of graphics in both technical graphics and commercial and visual media graphics. There was clear evidence of top quality graphics from some centres and candidates.

However, there was also evidence of a few centres marking far too generously in this area for work which was not of the quality expected at Advanced Higher.

Centres are reminded that, for this current course, in a combined approach they must assess the strongest element of the graphic solution: technical graphics or commercial and visual media graphics. It cannot be an aggregate of the two marks.

Generally the technical graphic solutions lacked significant details in terms of dimensions, scale, tolerances, and view types, required for the target audience.

Architectural-type projects typically lacked detail sufficient for construction or further work, this can be linked back to candidates trying to take on too much work, for example drawings for a whole building being worked on, which in most cases for a candidate at this stage of their education may be too daunting.

Commercial and visual media graphics solutions have improved from previous years, however a few lacked significant details in terms of screen resolution, paper size, file types, colour palettes, bleed, crop, or registration information. The target audience would require this information to produce this graphic type.

Planning a client presentation

Typically here the planning for the presentation did not reference how the graphic solution was suitable for the target audience, and was then a presentation of the candidate's journey through the project which would only have been suitable for the assessor rather than the audience initially identified. Resources required often listed only hardware and ignored any software and/or file types etc.

Those centres whose candidates did well here included full details of any presentation content in relation to the audience requirements, provided an effective structure and layout, and then went on to detail all media or resources required.

Producing a client presentation

Some candidates gaining high marks here had used other methods apart from PowerPoint, for example physical representations, videos, film to demonstrate and talk to solutions.

Some presentations did not address the needs of the target audience.

A client presentation should address the specific requirements of that client and how the candidate has generated a solution.

Evaluating the solution and the process

This area had improved from previous years with most candidates providing a thorough evaluation of the project.

Only a very few candidates had make effective use of the 'record of progress' entries or effective references to notes, comments or annotations from project design work, mostly in the form of a diary complete with copies of letters, emails etc. In many cases this was very poorly attempted and in some cases this was retrospective.

03 ▶ Section 3: General comments

Centre staff are reminded to download and use the most up to date versions of the assessment materials and subject documentation.

Whilst almost all centres had provided evidence of, and had engaged in, internal verification processes there were still instances of centres having arithmetic errors in their sample of candidates. Centres are reminded to closely verify not only their judgements but also the arithmetic totals at all levels.

There was evidence from some centres of high quality internal verification, complete with notes on the dialogue between assessor and internal verifier, with clear recording of the outcome of the internal verification process. Evidence of a dialogue between assessor and internal verifier aided the verification process.

Centres should be mindful of the assessment conditions set out in the course assessment specification of the project (Advanced Higher):

The assignment/project will be carried out under open-book conditions, but supervised to ensure that the work is the learner's own.

The assignment/project is designed to discriminate between learners, and therefore would be expected to provide a wide range of marks. Stronger learners should be able to complete the assignment successfully with minimal support and guidance. Weaker learners may not be able to complete all aspects of the assignment within a reasonable time, or may require significant assistance, and so would achieve a lower total mark.

Once the assignment has been completed and assessed, it should not be returned to the learner for further work to improve their mark.

A final point to note is that whilst the assessor may give learners support and guidance, where any significant amount of support is provided this should be reflected in the marks awarded. The learner may be provided with feedback to help them achieve the next stage of the assessment; they are not allowed to be re-assessed on stages already completed.