



# **NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Message Reports**

<b>Verification group name:</b>	<b>Graphic Communications</b>
<b>Levels</b>	<b>N4 – Advanced Higher</b>
<b>Date published:</b>	<b>October 2016</b>

**This Report combines all Verification Key Messages for the academic session 2015-2016.**



## NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 1

01

### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Graphic Communication
Verification event/visiting information	Event
Date published:	March 2016

#### National Courses/Units verified:

H27V 75	National 5	2D Graphic Communication
H27W 75	National 5	3D and Pictorial Graphic Communication
H27V 76	Higher	2D Graphic Communication
H27W 76	Higher	3D and Pictorial Graphic Communication
H27V 27	Advanced Higher	Technical Graphics
H27W 77	Advanced Higher	Commercial and Visual Media Graphics

02

### Section 2: Comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

This is the first year the verification team has verified assessment judgements at all levels of the subject. Centres are becoming more comfortable in adapting and creating their own assessment material for National 5 and Higher, and the verification team encountered a wide range of approaches — most through a portfolio or centre-devised approach. These appeared to be tasks that were well pitched to the level of the candidates and enabled them to access a range of Assessment Standards.

It is beneficial for both internal and external verification if the assessor indicates on candidate material where they felt an Assessment Standard had been achieved or not.

Some centres are incorrectly assessing National 5 Assessment Standard 1.1, which requires sketching, with drawings. This Assessment Standard requires

candidates to complete sketches either manually, or using an electronic sketching method such as tablet and stylus or touch-screen device. Retrospective sketching (tracing) is not acceptable. Centres are advised to be vigilant for such evidence and to record it as not achieving the Assessment Standard.

Centres verified for Advanced Higher had used SQA Unit assessment support pack (UASP) material without any modifications. All candidates had completed more evidence than would be required to achieve Outcomes; often repeating the same skills or responses.

Some centres had chosen to make use of the UASP tasks to arrange visits or use different technologies to aid completion of the task. This was refreshing to see and candidates had made full use of this approach. It is possible for centres to adapt UASP tasks to take account of more local opportunities.

## **Assessment judgements**

Assessment judgements for both National 5 and Higher appeared robust, with most centres' decisions Accepted.

There is evidence that centres are still overly assessing candidates, or demanding that evidence be achieved on specific pages to the exclusion of other items of evidence. Candidates can demonstrate a pass for an Assessment Standard in any aspect of their own work. The verification team identified several instances where candidates had generated sufficient evidence to warrant a pass for numerous Assessment Standards, but as the candidate had not completed them on a specific page, the candidate had not been awarded a pass. This leads to the candidate generating more assessment evidence to achieve Outcomes — many of which they would already have passed if the assessor had rewarded their evidence.

However, at Advanced Higher, many centres had been generous in their assessment judgements with regard to Assessment Standard 1.1 within the Technical Graphics Unit. Most candidates had only described the differences between graphical items. However, to achieve this standard, candidates must make accurate comments regarding specific audience requirements. The terminology of 'audiences' appears to be a challenge for candidates and centres are advised to focus more time to researching and learning the needs of audience and how they can be achieved graphically.

There was also some confusion between Assessment Standards 1.2 and 1.3 of both Units at Advanced Higher. It is important to identify the technologies and the techniques used to generate graphics for specific audiences. On a few samples, centres had incorrectly assessed candidates for Assessment Standard 1.3, which requires techniques, by describing the technologies.

## **Sample composition**

Centres had chosen a broad range of Assessment Standards for verification, and the team saw several centres present material that covered much of the Course

content. It was also noted that centres are using a range of technologies and approaches to enable candidates to generate evidence. Drawing boards, pastels, spirit markers, photography and photo-editing, 2D and 3D CAD, and modern rendering software have all enabled candidates to create high quality evidence.

03

## **Section 3: General comments**

### **Sample format**

All centres presented candidate evidence and material in hard copy. Where candidates had created animations, almost all centres had presented a series of renders or snapshots to storyboard the evidence. Centres are reminded to ensure that all evidence continues to be in hard copy only.

### **Internal verification**

Most centres were correctly entering candidates for the appropriate level.

The verification team noted that all centres had some form of internal verification and quality assurance procedure. There were many centres working with others in their authorities to sample and internally verify evidence and this is proving to be helpful in maintaining and applying national standards. Systems of internal verification have been developed by centres and are increasingly being seen as integral to the effective delivery of Units. There was evidence of dual assessment, cross-marking and sampling. Records to support assessment took a variety of forms including departmental minutes and quality assurance calendars with key dates.

Most centres use individual record-of-work booklets/sheets for candidates with a simple checklist outlining each element of the Outcomes. This is ticked off when each Assessment Standard is achieved. It is good practice to also indicate where the evidence can be found.



## NQ Verification 2015–16 Key Messages Round 2

01

### Section 1: Verification group information

Verification group name:	Graphic Communication
Verification event/visiting information	Event/visiting
Date published:	June 2016

#### National Courses/Units verified:

H27X 74	National 4	Added value unit
C735 75	National 5	Course assignment
C735 76	Higher	Course assignment
C735 77	Advanced Higher	Course project

02

### Section 2: Comments on assessment

#### Assessment approaches

At Advanced Higher, it was noted that many centres were 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 National 4, National 5 and Higher, centres are becoming far more familiar with the assignments and embracing the creative nature of the work within them.

At National 4 and National 5 the most popular assignments are the USB and Aqua J tasks, whilst at Higher the Sports Reception Desk task and the Point of Sale task were most popular.

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

Centres that opt for the combined approach must guard against students producing quantity over quality across the whole assignment and not just at the graphic solution stage.

Most candidates kept to the 10 page limit for National 5 and Higher, and the 20 page limit for Advanced Higher.

## Assessment judgements

The assessment judgements for National 4 were found to be in line with the national standard and in many instances the work produced by candidates at National 4 was found to be equivalent to National 5 standard. Centres are reminded that for next session, 2016–17, they may use their own assessments for the added value unit if they so choose (although, they are encouraged to submit these for prior verification before using them with candidates).

Assessment judgements at National 5 were found to be very much in line with the national standard and verifiers identified many centres where candidates were producing high quality work. In the few centres where generous marking was identified it tended to be across the CAD production, desktop publishing and evaluation sections of the assignment.

At Higher level most centres assessment judgements were found to be in line with the national standard and it was apparent that centres have taken on board most of the advice issued previously for this level. Some centres are still permitting/marketing retrospective planning work such as tracing of CAD drawings etc. Centres are reminded that retrospective planning and tracing is **not permitted** at any level for any course assignment/project, and must not be awarded any marks.

Some candidates at Higher did not produce three different CAD modelling techniques and centres are reminded that not all three techniques are required in the model — some can appear in the scene. Some candidates whilst producing the three techniques did not do so at a level appropriate to Higher. There were still some instances of a candidate producing a 'block' type model for the reception desk then being awarded high to full marks for CAD modelling.

Centres are reminded that BS8888 is the standard to be applied to all CAD drawings and that technical detail should be relevant to the task in hand as many candidates had produced inappropriate sections, some stepped, possibly just because they could, or perhaps they thought that they should and were then awarded marks simply for creating the views.

Higher candidates are required to create a 3D scene as part of the promotional activity. In some cases the quality of illustration was below what should have been achieved. Materials and textures (bump-maps) were often in an incorrect orientation or scale, making the scenes unrealistic and ineffectual.

At Advanced Higher level centres were much less reliable with their assessment judgements, with almost all centres marking too generously across the whole project and not just in one particular area.

### **Analysis of the graphic brief and initial research**

Candidates should specify their target audience clearly as not doing so will make it difficult to create an effective specification and/or a graphic solution. Some initial research did not focus sufficiently enough on the graphical requirements and had little relevance to the needs of the target audience.

### **Producing a graphic specification**

Many 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 were not founded on any documented research while others were found to be too vague to develop any meaningful graphic solution and there was no development of the specification to narrow down the solution achieved.

Typically, candidates did not include technical specifications that would be relevant to the development of a graphical solution. These technical specifications should have been identified within the initial research. Not including required technical specifications makes it challenging for candidates to proceed with the project.

### **Project planning**

For many 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.

The project plans were limited to a range of graphics to be produced, however these were not justified against the specification, or time taken.

Project plans had been created, however some candidates had not made any justification for varying or detouring from the plan. Varying from the plan is acceptable; however candidates should make a record of why they had to do so. Candidates may record this within the project or their record-of-progress, which was all too often missing or not evident.

## **Graphic planning and production**

### **Carrying out and using ongoing research**

Many candidates' ongoing research did not support the development of the graphic solution; there was insufficient justification for the research conducted

and how it contributed to the project. Some had little relevance to the needs of the target audience and did not reference sources within the research materials and/or it was insufficiently detailed to achieve either the development of a graphic solution.

In some cases no information or conclusions impacting the graphic solution could be drawn from the research.

### **Using preliminary graphic techniques to communicate ideas**

In a large number of cases the preliminary graphic techniques were valid for creating a graphic solution; however the quality was substantially lower and showed more limited skill than would be expected at Advanced Higher for the mark awarded.

### **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.

Most candidates had not shown a range of ideas, or developed their initial proposal in a manner which would warrant the marks awarded.

### **Producing a graphic solution**

Centres are reminded that for 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.

The application of drawing standards was significantly weak for this level of presentation.

Commercial and visual media graphics solutions 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.

Some graphic solutions did not address the brief or specification and the overall quality of the graphical solution was insufficient to warrant the mark awarded at Advanced Higher level.

### **Planning a client presentation**

Typically, the planning for the presentation did not reference how the graphic solution was suitable for the target audience and in many cases it was 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.



Some planning for the presentation did not reference the type of presentation that would be created: verbal, audio/video, public display or electronic — or reference the equipment or resources required to produce and present the presentation. This is a crucial decision during the planning process and should be recorded.

### **Producing a client presentation**

Some presentations did not address the needs of the target audience. The candidate presented information that would have little relevance for the audience such as slides of the progress through the projects.

Some presentations lacked focus. 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**

Typically the evaluation did not reference how the graphic solution achieved the requirements of the target audience and did not evaluate the choices made and processes used during the project to create the graphic solution.

Some evaluations only described the tasks and process carried out by the candidate, not their effectiveness in delivering the desired outcome.

03

## **Section 3: General comments**

Whilst almost all centres had provided evidence of, and had engaged in, internal verification processes there were still instances of centres being found to be 'not accepted' at verification due to 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.

At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels, a significant number of centres had not rendered work at an appropriate resolution. This made work pixelated and diminished the quality of the material produced. Candidates at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher should be confident in setting their software to render at a sufficiently high resolution for printing (typically a minimum of 350 dpi at 1:1 scale printing).

Several centres have started using different equipment including hand-scanners and tablet computers to scan or capture work to create presentations. Embracing new technology is at the heart of the new Graphic Communication course, but it is important that scanned work does not lose any of the quality or detail of the original. If in doubt, it can be useful to retain a copy of the original manual work with the rest of the candidates' work. This copy material can be held for viewing and does not form part of the 10 page limit.

Centres should be mindful of the assessment conditions set out in the course assessment specification for the assignment (National 5 and Higher) and the project (Advanced Higher):

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

*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.