

### NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Graphic Design (600/6907/7)

Assessment window: 06 February - 28 April 2017

This report contains information in relation to the external assessment from the Chief Examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment window.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally perform well as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment- V Certs
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

It's important to note that learners shouldn't sit the external assessment until they've taken part in the relevant teaching of the unit to ensure they are well prepared for the external assessment.

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### Administering the external assessment

The external assessment (both supervised and invigilated) must be independent from the teaching of the unit. Work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Any stimulus materials used by the centre during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Learners must complete all of the tasks independently.

The completion of the supervised tasks (Tasks 1, 2 and 3) must be sat in accordance with the [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments – V Certs](#). These tasks can be supervised by the Teacher and can be sat in a normal classroom environment. The tasks within the supervised period do not need to be invigilated. However, the supervised tasks must be treated independently from the teaching of the unit and learners must complete all tasks independently. This means the supervised tasks must not be Teacher led.

The completion of the invigilated tasks (Tasks 4, 5 and 6) must be invigilated and sat in accordance with the [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs](#). It's important that the external assessment is sat in accordance with the specified conditions.

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### Standard of learner work

The examiners noted examples of work in response to the brief Afternoon Tea, which were both creative and engaging. Some delightful work was seen in individual ACs with some particularly strong work in AC3. Many learners took a consistent approach to the brief and remained focused on the external factors. Unfortunately, in some submissions, AC3 and often AC4 were not seen to have provided sufficient evidence of learner's performance at Pass grade. Reflecting on the broad scope of work submitted, the examiners noted the following points:

- The evidence presented for Task 1 did not consistently communicate the learners own ideas. Learners were often distracted by collecting print or internet images.
- The evidence provided for Task 2 often described what had been completed so far but neglected to include a satisfactory plan. Where a plan was indicated, it was sometimes found to have been written in the past tense.
- For evidence to be awarded at least a Pass grade in Task 3, it should contain sufficient evidence of experimentation on which learners can base reliable selections.
- The standard of some work for Task 4 was seen to be good with sufficient and reliable links made to the brief.

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### Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment- V Certs

#### Malpractice

Examples of malpractice may include evidence of learners being given templates to work through to create evidence, or the submission of identical learner responses (either written work or audio files). All malpractice issues will be investigated.

It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs, to ensure the integrity of the qualification and to ensure that malpractice does not take place.

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#### Maladministration

Examples of maladministration may, for example, include the presence of unauthorised people during the invigilated element of the assessment. Any concerns will be investigated.

It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs, to ensure the integrity of the qualification and to ensure that maladministration does not take place.

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### Referencing of external assessment tasks

Most learners provided evidence which was reliably referenced to tasks. The requirement for the referencing of individual tasks is stated in the paper. Instructions in the External Assessment paper states that tasks should be clearly labelled and distinguished from each other. Failure to follow this requirement may have significant implications for the awarding of learner grades if examiners are not easily able to identify which evidence relates to each task.

Some learner evidence was not seen to consistently apply reliable referencing. For example, some work was not seen to be referenced to a specific task and some work appeared to be referenced to more than one task. This issue was raised in the previous Chief Examiners report. Unfortunately, again during this window some evidence was referenced to multiple tasks. This has the potential for confusion and it presents a risk of disadvantage to learners. Tasks which are not clearly referenced may not be able to be awarded and a grade of NYA will be recorded. This will result in an overall grade of NYA for the external assessment despite the referencing of some items of work or the quality of other items of work to meet the grading descriptor at a minimum of a Pass.

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### Evidence creation

The qualification aims to develop a broad and comprehensive understanding of graphic design, and develop a significant knowledge core which spans the vocational sector. This external assessment paper was concerned with the design of a graphic to be used in a café called Afternoon Tea. While learners often remained focused of the theme of a Café, some research activity was devoted solely to coffee and coffee branding. This may well have distracted learners from communicating the idea of Tea and any of the associations of afternoon tea.

The brief provided a structure and context for the design of a graphic based on the theme Afternoon Tea. Many learners recognised that the paper required an understanding of both branding and signage. This was described by the external factors.

Most learners approached the paper with confidence and a strong sense of familiarity with café branding and logos. Learner evidence which did not remain focused on the brief however, was seen to risk not achieving a grade in some or all of the assessment criteria.

Learners are advised to avoid time spent on activities which are not required by the paper. For example, where learners appeared to have spent considerable amounts of time on logo research, this was seen by examiners to have often frustrated the communication of the learner's own ideas.

In some submissions evidence for Task 1 and Task 2 was combined. This has the potential to frustrate the marking process. Whilst examiners are determined to apply a fair and reliable grade for each task, it is not possible in such cases, to determine which evidence applies to

which task. Where Tasks 1 and 2 were clearly referenced, Task 2 was sometimes presented in a way which did not clearly indicate the learner's competence.

Some evidence was difficult to read, was not coherent or lacked focus or sense, or did not sufficiently reflect on progress so far.

Task 3 would benefit from learners clearly indicating their selections rather than listing or illustrating graphic design equipment.

Task 4 required learners to develop ideas and solutions in response to external factors. Among those learners who were graded NYA for this Task, ideas were not seen to be sufficiently developed for deployment in a café, and/or one or more of the external factors had been misinterpreted or neglected.

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### Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

#### Task 1 – A.C 1.1

Learner's evidence included examples of the work of other graphic designers. Learners also included examples of logos associated with the theme "Afternoon Tea", and examples of Tea or Coffee Shop signage. Examples of both brand leaders and independents were often included in this task. Where learners sought to use this material for inspiration, some good examples of control over line, colour and shape were seen. The challenge of the question was to use the formal elements of visual language to communicate ideas based on the theme "Afternoon Tea". Where learners focused their research on well-known coffee chains, the resulting imagery was not always seen to be consistent with the brief.

Research which appeared to rely solely on well-known brands often led to predictable results or ideas which were not well developed. Tasks became more purposeful where learners had taken their own photographs of tea shops or cafes. Learners were seen to have taken into account the external actors specified in the brief, as they recorded examples of A-boards, exterior windows and interior walls. This often resulted in evidence in Task 4 which demonstrated a convincing placement of a graphic design in its physical location. Examples of work in both digital and physical form were seen by the examiners. Learners achieving a Pass grade or above were seen to have used a range of approaches to the application of visual language. This often resulted in the communication of a range of different ideas.

Most learners did not neglect the typography element of the paper. However, learners are reminded that font lists or samples are not to be confused with typographic design. Some learners used a variety of media creatively. This included work with spattering, staining, printmaking, collage, observational drawing, continuous line drawing and blind drawing. However, the creative potential of this work was not consistently recognised by learners or developed in the remaining tasks.

### Task 2 – A.C 1.2

Much of the evidence presented for this task was not seen to be consistent with the standard of other tasks. Whilst considering potential difficulties many learners were not seen to have identified challenges that were presented by the brief. Instead, learners were often seen to describe the challenges and potential restrictions found in their own centre. This work was not seen to be a satisfactory response to the task as such restrictions could be generic and not specific to the current brief.

The challenge of this task was for learners to demonstrate that they understood if the work they had completed so far addressed the requirements of the brief, and understand what they needed to do to achieve this. Many of the submissions marked by the examiners were not seen to satisfactorily demonstrate recording or planning. Task 2 was sometimes presented in a way which did not clearly indicate the learner's competence. Some evidence was difficult to read, was not coherent or lacked focus or sense, or did not sufficiently reflect on progress so far. These submissions were graded NYA.

Where the learner had identified particular characteristics in their work, too often they were described in terms of personal taste or individual preference. Learners are required to make judgements about their work in the way that line, shape, colour, tone, texture or typography, for example, communicate ideas in response to the brief. Indicating that something is "liked" or that the learner is "pleased" does not show sufficient awareness of strengths and weaknesses in order to make steady progress. Some learners neglected to include a satisfactory plan which made connections between activities over time. Where a plan was included, it was sometimes found to have been written in the past tense.

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### Task 3 – A.C 1.3

In Task 3 learners would secure a Pass grade by clearly indicating their selections of graphic materials, techniques and equipment to meet the design brief and its specifications. Where grading was frustrated in this task, learners were seen to simply provide lists or illustrations of standard graphic design equipment. Learners were required to state the reasons for their choices. Where learners did not present evidence of selections, a grade of NYA was recorded.

This task required experimentation with graphic design materials, techniques and equipment and the selection of those which the learner judged to be the best to address the design brief. The design brief required a graphic in response to the theme – Afternoon Tea. The challenge of the brief was to show how the graphic would appear on an A-board, an interior wall and on an exterior window pane. Many examples of experimentation with graphic materials sought to explore visual language and test the qualities of the learner's ideas. This was welcomed by the examiners. Sometimes learners were seen to continue to develop ideas in this task. Whilst this is not discouraged at all, grades will be only be awarded where graphic materials have clearly been selected **following** their use.

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### Task 4 – A.C 1.4

Task 4 required learners to develop ideas and solutions in response to external factors. Among those learners who were graded NYA for this task, ideas were not seen to be sufficiently developed for deployment in a café, and/or one or more of the external factors had been misinterpreted or neglected. Ideas are required to be developed for this task. Ideas which were seen to be copied from the work of other designers sourced in Task 1 were not seen to be satisfactorily developed. Initial ideas which were recorded in Task 1 and which were not progressed were not seen to be satisfactorily developed. Ideas which appeared for the first time in Task 4 and which were not progressed were not seen to be satisfactorily developed.

In some submissions, an A-board had been interpreted as any display board or sprung exterior sign. To achieve a Pass in this task learners are required to work with the external factors described in the brief and an A-board was required. Where this was not included in the evidence a grade of NYA was recorded. In other submissions, the graphic displayed on an A-board, interior wall, or exterior window pane was not included in the evidence. In such cases a grade of NYA was recorded.

Some satisfactory and well-presented graphic design evidence was seen in this task. Those learners who achieved a Pass grade produced graphic design work, which was clearly adapted to the external factors described in the brief. Some of the best work had benefited from the research activity in Task 1.

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### Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded to give due attention to the assessment windows of the external assessment. It's not advisable for learners to sit the external assessment early in their programme.

It's far more appropriate to enter learners once they have taken part in the relevant teaching to ensure they are well prepared.

Centres would be in a better position to prepare their learners for the external assessment following the support of an external moderation visit for the internally assessed units.

**Chief Examiner:** Andy Small  
**Date:** 7 July 2017