

NCFE Level 1 Technical Award in Graphic Design (603/0844/8)
NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Graphic Design (603/0845/X)

Assessment window: 11 February 2019 – 8 March 2019

Paper Number: P000707

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:

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

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the full qualification content.

Grade Boundary Information

Each learner's external assessment paper is marked by an Examiner and awarded a raw mark. During the awarding process, a combination of statistical analysis and professional judgement is used to establish the raw marks that represent the minimum required standard to achieve each grade. These raw marks are outlined in the table below.

| Max Mark | Level 2 Distinction | Level 2 Merit | Level 2 Pass | Level 1 Distinction | Level 1 Merit | Level 1 Pass | NYA |
|----------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----|
| 90 | 73 | 56 | 40 | 31 | 22 | 14 | 0 |

Grade boundaries represent the minimum raw mark required to achieve a certain grade. For example, if the grade boundary for the Pass grade is 25, a minimum raw mark of 25 is required to achieve a Pass.

| Max UMS Score | Level 2 Distinction | Level 2 Merit | Level 2 Pass | Level 1 Distinction | Level 1 Merit | Level 1 Pass | NYA |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----|
| 200 | 160 | 140 | 120 | 80 | 60 | 40 | 0 |

** In order to ensure that levels of achievement remain comparable for the same assessment across different assessment windows, all raw marks are converted to a points score based on a uniform mark scale (UMS). For more information about UMS and how it is used to determine overall qualification grades, please refer to the qualification specification.*

Administering the External Assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment. Learners may require additional pre-release material in order to complete the Tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our Regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the Tasks and these are highlighted within the Qualification Specific Instructions Document (QSID).

Standard of learner work

This was the first external assessment completed for the Level 1/Level 2 Graphic Design Technical Award with the standard of work for the vast majority of learners meeting the expected standards. The outcome of this being positive and will impact on overall achievement of the qualification.

There was a good understanding of the tasks and expectations of evidence requirements by centres; however, there was some misinterpretation for task 1, where learners had spent considerable time presenting research, mood board and existing product analysis. Whilst this may help the learners to interpret the requirements of the brief, it is not possible to award the research any marks against the mark scheme.

There was a mix of digital evidence and physical hard copy evidence submitted. The vast majority of evidence submitted was collated and presented well, with clear labelling of tasks. Mislabeling of evidence was considered during the marking process. There were some instances where developmental work could also be located in evidence presented for task 3 and, again, this was considered as evidence marked against task 2, with examiner taking a holistic approach where necessary.

The vast majority of learner evidence provided substantial written work that would have taken considerable time to complete. The sufficiency of the written work in many cases outweighed the creative responses, initial ideas, development, and final design. Whilst tasks 1 and 2 did require communication of ideas, annotations and how the ideas meet the values and the requirements of the brief the focus of the brief was on the creative intentions, ideas, development and final idea rather than substantive written work that could potentially not be graded, in many cases is descriptive and does not meet the mark scheme. The written work produced was considered holistically for task 4.

Evidence outcomes were individual, and all learners responded well to the brief with very limited misinterpretation of the requirements of the overall brief. Learners achieved higher grades through accurate interpretation of the brief with very good exploration of the graphic design components with very good skill level evident. High achieving learners used the bullet points listed for task 4 with reviews being detailed and accurate.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment

Malpractice

There were no reported instances of malpractice in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to take this opportunity to advise learners that instances of malpractice (for example, copying of work from another learner) will affect the outcome on the assessment.

Maladministration

No instances of maladministration were reported in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment document in this respect.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

In the vast majority of cases the tasks were labelled correctly and effectively. There was a mix of both digital and hard copy evidence submitted. In some cases both digital and hard copy were provided, this is not necessary and only one format is required.

Where referencing was most effective learners had clearly identified the task number that the evidence referred to. In some cases, evidence was not clearly or accurately labelled; in these cases examiners considered the evidence provided in relation to the task given in the external assessment paper.

Learners are clearly informed to label each task separately within the Regulations for the Conduct of the External Assessment document. 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 which task, this may limit the marks awarded for that task.

Learners should also be instructed to attempt all tasks in the paper, and these should be clearly referenced. Any tasks not attempted or not referenced cannot be awarded marks and may limit the marks awarded for the associated task/s.

Evidence creation

The external assessment is based on internally assessed units 1, 2, and 3. Therefore, learners should only be registered for the external assessment after sufficient mandatory unit content of these units has been delivered. The overwhelming majority of learners seemed to be well prepared and demonstrated valid understanding from all units.

It was excellent to see a good mix and balance of traditional techniques and digital techniques being used to respond to the brief and to experiment with the graphic design components. There was a wide variety of approaches to the visual presentation of the ideas, development, and final design idea, with a variety of disciplined approaches being shown, ranging from use of Photoshop, Illustrator and other digital manipulation software packages, to learners using hand drawn techniques that were transferred into a digital software package to develop further, to learners using purely traditional techniques such as hand drawing and stencil making.

In the majority of cases the evidence submitted was valid and sufficient however there was a large proportion of learners that had presented research and product analysis for task 1; this was not required and was not given as a task, whilst learners could access the internet to find inspiration it was not asked that learners present their research. In many cases this resulted in limited initial ideas in response to the brief, as learners relied on their research to constitute as initial ideas rather than their own creative responses and ideas.

Where learners achieved higher grades it was evident to see the development of ideas from task 1 through to task 3 with learners experimenting with all 6 graphic design components and clearly showing

this in the evidence presented by adding titles or annotations to the evidence clearly showing how and what graphic design component had been experimented with.

Throughout the majority of learners' evidence, there was a significant amount of written work that outweighed the creative content. The written work was considered against the appropriate task, and holistically for task 4, however in the vast majority of cases the written work was descriptive and focused on describing the process rather than how the ideas meet the requirements of the brief. Centres are reminded that the external assessment is 10 hours and learners should focus on the requirements of the task rather than providing extensive written descriptions that potentially took considerable amount of time.

The use of templates or handouts is not permitted for any external assessment task, inclusive of planning documentation to advantage learners.

Responses of the Tasks within the Sections of the external assessment paper

Task 1

This task required learners to respond to the brief with their initial graphic design ideas, how the ideas meet the requirements of the brief, and how the ideas meet the company values. In the majority of cases learners responded appropriately.

The external assessment paper did state that learners could access the internet but the task does not require learners to present their research. It is acknowledged that the research helps the learners to research ideas, existing products, and to inform their ideas: the research is not awarded any marks as per the mark scheme and tasks given. It is evident that many learners spent considerable time completing and presenting their research and completing detailed existing product analysis and mood boards. This time would have been better spent evidencing their own ideas.

Where learners achieved marks, initial ideas were presented in the form of thumb nail sketches and in some cases it was clear how the research had informed their initial ideas. Learners' evidence showed considerable amount of originality and creativity in response to the brief and in the vast majority of cases how the ideas met the requirements of the brief and the company values were well considered.

Task 2

This task required learners to experiment with the graphic design components, annotate the experimentation stating how the ideas use the graphic design components and show all experimentation including rejected ideas.

Learners achieved higher grades by completing all tasks given on the external assessment paper and it was clear and explicit which components were experimented with, through clear annotations and descriptions. In some cases it was open to interpretation whether the components had been experimented with, which caused problems for examiners if they had to use their judgement on whether the components had been experimented with or not.

The experimentation ranged from traditional techniques such as hand drawing, use of marker pens, pencils, stencils, lino cutting that in many cases the learners then transferred in to a digital software package to develop and experiment with further. There was also significant evidence of learners using

the digital software packages to complete all the experimentations and development. All forms of technique were acceptable and provided an eclectic selection of evidence which was great to see.

All learners seemed to have at least a basic understanding of the graphic design components which again is great to see. There was a small percentage of learners who provided evidence of more craft/textiles based evidence such as tie-dye and foiling, these techniques are not dismissed as relevant to the graphic design experiments and creative intentions if they are relevant to the overall intentions and interpretation of the brief. To be presented as evidence of experimentation with the graphic design components is a misinterpretation of the qualification and of the graphic design components.

Where learners achieved higher marks, there was clear evidence of development and refinement of the ideas and experimentation that clearly linked with the initial ideas and intentions evidenced for task 1.

Task 3

For this task, learners were asked to produce a final logo that was a combination of imagery and typography, used the graphic design components and used the ideas developed in task 2.

There was very limited misinterpretation of the task. The overwhelming majority of learners created and presented a logo. In some minor cases, the final design was considered more to be a poster or other visual representation other than a logo and showed limited understanding of the requirements of the brief.

Where learners had completed this task, all had used a combination of typography and imagery, used the ideas developed in task 2 and used the graphic design components.

Learners achieved higher grades by showing good evidence of meeting the requirements of the brief and a good level of skill shown. Again, a good mix and balance of learners presenting their final ideas using traditional or digital techniques, both being acceptable and appropriate and in the vast majority of cases, seemingly the learners worked to their strengths.

Where learners had used digital software, a good proportion of learners made clear to the examiners what skills were used and evidenced this with screenshots of the process and design choices made. This was helpful in considering the skills used.

There was evidence of basic use of the graphic design components with minimal skill for the required standard of the qualification with the completed designs showing little understanding of the brief. The final logo design was not sufficiently developed from the initial ideas and experimentation in tasks 1 and 2 and would not be a suitable solution to the design brief.

Task 4

This task required learners to evaluate their own graphic design created in task 3 in relation to the brief. A bullet point list was provided for the learners and where learners achieved high grades the bullet point list was used to provide evidence and was clearly labeled with the bullet points as titles.

In some cases, the learners did not provide evidence of how they responded to the challenges presented by the brief, which would not provide opportunity for the learners to achieve higher grades.

In the vast majority of learner evidence presented, there was a significant amount of written work that

was not relevant to the tasks given. This evidence was considered and marked against task 4, and examiners used a holistic approach to marking this evidence.

In many cases the written work provided throughout the evidence, and the evaluation provided for task 4 were descriptive narratives rather than evaluating the choices made, the use of the graphic components, the skills used, the challenges faced and how the design meets the requirements of the brief.

Where learners achieved higher grades the evaluations focused on and gave detailed conclusions about the appropriate use of the graphic design components, and good descriptions of the processes used to resolve the challenges faced by the brief in the final design.

Chief Examiner:
Date:
