SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

External Assessment

Visual Arts
Higher
C06D 12

Practical Assignment

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1. Practical Assignment Course overview

This national project specification provides details of the assessment tasks and the evidence which candidates are expected to produce. It contains a degree of choice in terms of the way the Practical Assignment is taken forward by centres so that it fits available resources and candidates' interests and personal strengths.

The Practical Assignment is not concerned exclusively with practical activity, but is designed to emphasise skills relating to the application of practical skills, and related knowledge and understanding to a situation that involves task management.

Candidates are provided with a brief and are expected to demonstrate attainment relating to:

- interpreting the brief
- gathering information to clarify the brief
- deciding on a product, or activity/event, or performance to develop
- selecting and managing materials/resources
- producing the product, or organising the activity/event or delivering the performance
- evaluating the product or activity/event or performance (through feedback)

Evidence requirements are required as follows:

- a plan of action
- evidence of a product or an organised activity/event or a performance
- evidence which documents the processes underpinning the practical hands-on activity
- evidence showing an extended evaluation of the Practical Assignment

Copies of Units are available from the Scottish Qualifications Authority Customer Contact Centre, telephone 0141-242 2214; fax 0141-242 2244; email customer@sqa.org.uk.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority Helpdesk is available on 0141-242-2214.

Note:

Please note that this specification should always be used in conjunction with the relevant *Arrangements for Project-based National Courses.* The *Arrangements* document lays down the overall requirements for project-based National Courses for the given SGA.

This specification forms part of Section F of the *Arrangements* document.

2. Recommended entry

We strongly advise that candidates should have completed the Units in the National Course prior to embarking on the external assessment. However, there may well be candidates who, for whatever reason, choose to undertake the external assessment on a stand-alone basis. Any such candidates who have not completed or embarked upon the Units of the National Course *prior* to undertaking the external assessment should have demonstrated attainment in (and/or attained) the following qualifications:

- relevant National Units in art and design at Intermediate 2 or Higher

and/or

- at the discretion of the centre

Candidates who achieve the external assessment will not be certificated for the Course until they have successfully completed the component Units.

3. Practical Assignment briefs

The project, submitted in portfolio format, should be based on a theme involving figure composition set in interior and exterior location(s). The work should be technically strong, with drawing from first-hand sources showing good use of different types of media. It should be presented in a logical, coherent manner showing evidence of the exploration and development of the theme through to a final conclusion.

Candidates should select **one** of the following project briefs:

Brief 1

Two–dimensional project

Produce a portfolio of work which encapsulates the chosen theme. The final solution(s) should be highly-finished with a figure composition set either within an exterior or interior location. The supporting sheets should show progression through to the final solution(s).

or

Brief 2

Three-dimensional project

Produce a highly-finished three-dimensional art-form which encapsulates the chosen theme. The supporting portfolio of work should show progression through to the final art-form.

Further details are given in Section 6 of this specification.

Submission notes for project-based National Courses for Visual Arts are available from the Qualifications Manager for this area at SQA.

4. Outcome coverage

The component Units for the Course are:

Unit title	Credit value	Unit number
Figure Drawing	1.0	D9GH 12
Location Drawing	1.0	D9GG 12

Either

Produce a Creative Three-Dimensional Art-form	1.0	D8LY 12

Or

Creative Composition: 2D	1.0	D9GJ 12

All external assessments for project-based National Courses cover a minimum of two thirds of the Outcomes for the component Units. For this Practical Assignment all the Outcomes are covered and these are:

Unit: Figure Drawing

1. Produce drawings of the human figure which demonstrate an understanding of proportion and scale.
2. Produce drawings of the human figure which demonstrate an understanding of structure and form.
3. Produce drawings and studies of the human figure in a variety of poses.

Unit: Location Drawing

1. Produce drawings of interiors.
2. Produce drawings of exteriors.

and either (*for three-dimensional project*):

Unit: Produce a Creative Three-Dimensional Art-form

1. Produce drawings and studies of 3-dimensional forms.
2. Use a range of 3-dimensional media and techniques to explore form.
3. Produce a finished 3-dimensional art-form.

or (*for two-dimensional project*):

Unit: Creative Composition: 2D

1. Select a compositional theme of personal interest for research.
2. Develop a range of drawings/colour studies and compositional ideas related to the theme.
3. Produce a finished composition.

It is strongly advised that candidates should have completed the assessments for the individual component Units before undertaking the external assessment.

5. Subject/occupationally-related knowledge and skills

The Practical Assignment allows candidates to develop and apply skills in:

- planning
- gathering of reference and source material
- creative and imaginative development of ideas
- observational ability
- handling of materials and media
- investigation an development of ideas
- preparation and presentation of work

and develop and apply related knowledge of:

- creative process and thinking
- interpretation of a given brief
- organisational processes and planning
- critical evaluation

6. Candidate Evidence Requirements and allocation of marks

General information

The three stages of the Practical Assignment for all project-based National Courses at Higher are:

- planning
- developing
- evaluating

Here we describe evidence requirements which apply to each of the three stages of the Practical Assignment for all project-based National Courses at Higher. Where there are any specific evidence requirements relating to this Course, these are given later in this section.

Planning

Candidates must produce a 500 word (or equivalent) plan of action. The plan should include an introduction and a main body. Centres should ensure that candidates either already have, or are taught, the necessary skills to devise their own plan before they start the project.

For the introduction of the plan, candidates should:

- provide a rationale for selecting a particular brief
- interpret the brief
- gather information to clarify the brief
- design the aims and objectives of the Practical Assignment

For the main body of the plan candidates should:

- identify information sources
- identify materials and resources
- establish timescales for completion of stages of the Practical Assignment

The plan of action should be produced in a supervised environment although candidates may carry out the preparation beforehand. Candidates may communicate with each other when producing their plans of action but each plan must be tailored to the candidate's own project and the action points should relate to the work to be carried out by the individual candidate.

The work produced should always be the candidate's own. However, teachers/lecturers are expected to provide candidates with advice, guidance and constructive criticism as necessary when they are devising their plans. It is important to note that, as the plan underpins the rest of the project, centres should ensure that no candidate proceeds to the development stage until the candidate has devised a plan that is potentially workable. The level of support that candidates need to devise a viable plan of action will of Course vary from candidate to candidate. Centres should indicate the level of support needed for each candidate on the flyleaf for the project provided by the SQA. This should not inhibit centres from providing constructive comment nor the candidate from acting on their own initiative and taking on board the advice. In some cases, however, if the level of support and intervention given is more than that which would normally be seen as reasonable, the authenticity of the candidate's work may be called into question. If the level of input needed from the teacher/lecturer is above normal (for example, the quality of the plan is such that it would mean that the project would be unworkable if the

plan was not revised) then candidates cannot score more than 20 of the 40 marks allowed for the planning stage.

Developing

Candidates must provide evidence that:

- testifies to the quality of the hands-on practical activity
- documents the processes underpinning the activity

Specific evidence requirements for this Course are given later in this section.

All of the evidence should be produced in a supervised environment. Candidates may communicate with each other but should produce work which can be clearly attributed to the candidate as being his or her own.

Evaluating

Candidates must produce an extended evaluation report which should:

- provide a brief summary of what the assignment was about
- review and update the action plan in the light of experience
- assess the effectiveness of the project plan
- summarise any unforeseen events and how they were handled
- identify knowledge and skills which have been gained and/or developed
- assess the strengths, weaknesses and quality of any hands-on activity
- assess the effectiveness of the research methods used
- determine to what extent the assignment met the original brief

The extended evaluation report should be 1,000 words (or equivalent) at Higher. Candidates may carry out the preparation for the report beforehand.

Candidates at Higher should be allowed up to three hours to complete an extended evaluation (including the summary). This is a generous time allowance and some candidates may require considerably less time — two hours should generally be sufficient.

Candidates should be allowed to take one side of an A4 page of notes (maximum 200 words or equivalent allowed) which they have prepared, into the room with them. They should not be allowed to take a draft of the evaluation report into the room with them. The centre has the responsibility for ensuring that the notes brought in are the candidate's own work.

For this activity the accommodation should be arranged to reflect centre-invigilated conditions and candidates should not be allowed to communicate with each other in any way.

Specific additional information and requirements

Visual Arts: planning and evaluation stages:

See information earlier in this section.

Visual Arts: development stage

Two-dimensional project

Candidates undertaking the 2-dimensional project are required to submit a portfolio of six A2 sheets. The content of the portfolio is outlined below.

Sheets 1 and 2: research (30 marks)
The research sheets should show drawings and sketches of figure/s observed from first hand sources. Candidates should also produce detailed first hand drawings and sketches of interiors and exteriors. Drawings of locations with figures integrated are acceptable. A variety of media and techniques should be explored.

Sheets 3 and 4: exploring compositional elements (40 marks)
Candidates should show progression from sheets 1 and 2 with evidence of the exploration of a variety of compositions that integrate figures and locations. A variety of materials should also be considered at this stage.

Sheets 5 and 6: final solutions (50 marks)
Candidates may submit up to two final solutions and show progression from sheets 3 and 4. Solution(s) should be up to A2 in size and show figure composition set in either an interior or exterior location.

(Total Marks: 120)

Three-dimensional project

Candidates undertaking the 3-dimensional project are required to submit the following portfolio which should contain a minimum of three A2 sheets and 3-dimensional work.

Sheets 1 and 2: research (30 marks)
The research sheets should show first hand drawings of figures and interior/exterior locations. Three dimensional sketches and models may also be made at this stage.

Sheets 3 and 4: exploring compositional elements (40 marks)
Candidates should have the option of producing models and/or 3-dimensional drawings at this stage. Progression from sheets 1 and 2 should be evident.

Sheets 5 and 6: final solutions (50 marks)
Candidates should submit a highly finished 3-dimensional art form. Photographs and/or sketches of the 3-dimensional art-form, set in the proposed interior or exterior location, should accompany the work. Progression from sheets 3 and 4 should also be evident.

(Total Marks: 120)

Specific evidence requirements and assessment arrangements for the Practical Assignment for Visual Arts at Higher

Planning	
Evidence:	Plan of action. 500 words *or* equivalent (40 marks)
Conditions of external assessment	Supervised
Who assesses it?	Plan to be sent to SQA for marking

Developing	
Evidence:	For hands-on work and for processes underpinning the activity: 2-dimensional brief: Portfolio of six A2 sheets or 3-dimensional brief: Portfolio: at least three A2 sheets and 3-dimensional work (120 marks in total for this stage)
Conditions of external assessment:	Supervised
	Transportable evidence: All This is to be sent to SQA for marking

Evaluation	
Evidence:	Extended evaluation report — including summary. 1,000 words *or* equivalent (40 marks)
Conditions of assessment	Centre-invigilated
Who assesses it?	To be sent to SQA for marking

It is important that candidates know that they will be penalised for submitting evidence that significantly exceeds the stated word count.

7. Marking and grading

The assessment evidence for project-based National Courses is marked externally by SQA. The total mark for the Practical Assignment is 200, (this large mark allocation makes it easier to discriminate effectively between performances of candidates across the various parts of the assessment). These marks will be allocated to assessment evidence from the three Practical Assignment stages as follows in *Table A.*

Table A

Practical Assignment Stage	Assessment Evidence	Mark Allocation
Planning	Plan of action	40
Developing	Evidence arising from the hands-on practical activity and from documenting the underpinning processes involved	120
Evaluating	Extended evaluation report	40

To underpin this assessment system there are criteria to which marks are pegged, against which the candidate evidence from each of the three Practical Assignment stages is assessed. The use of such mark categories linked to broad criteria, allow for the aggregation of the various parts of the assessment which do not necessarily have the same weighting in the overall grade. *Table B* overleaf outlines the criteria to be used to assess candidate evidence. Assessors in centres will, for each of the three parts, decide firstly on the broad category of mark which is appropriate and secondly on the precise mark to be given.

Although it is possible for candidates to be given bands 7, 8 and 9 which are described as 'fails', no such categories will appear on candidates' certificates. This information should help centres agree estimates of candidate performance and provide feedback to candidates for remediation purposes.

All National Courses are subject to external marking. External Markers, Visiting Examiners and Moderators will be trained by SQA to apply national standards. As candidate evidence becomes available exemplars will be issued to centres as guidance.

Practical Assignment

Table B

Higher			Plan of action	Practical activity and documented process evidence	Evaluation report
Levels of performance: broad level-related criteria		Equivalence to	Mark range	Mark range	Mark range
Content and scope: Treatment:	appropriate for level excellent	Upper A 85%–100% (Band 1)	34–40	102–120	34–40
Content and scope: Treatment:	appropriate for level consistently thorough	Lower A 70%–84% (Band 2)	28–33	84–101	28–33
Content and scope: Treatment:	appropriate for level thorough in parts	B 60%–69% (Bands 3 & 4)	24–27	72–83	24–27
Content and scope: Treatment:	appropriate for level adequate	C 50%–59% (Bands 5 & 6)	20–23	60–71	20–23
Content and scope: Treatment: OR Content and scope: Treatment:	appropriate for level adequate only in parts basic for level thorough	Fail 40%–49% (Bands 7 & 8)	16–19	48–59	16–19
Content and scope: Treatment: OR Content and scope: Treatment:	appropriate for level generally poor basic for level thorough	Fail Below 40% (Band 9)	<16	<48	<16

Note:
Content and scope: defined as how appropriately or otherwise the candidate interprets the level of demand for the specification
Treatment: defined as how successfully or otherwise the candidate tackles the project

Estimates and appeals

Although these project-based National Courses are externally assessed by SQA, candidates will benefit from estimate grades based on accurate internal assessment of their projects, ie the grade assessors judge a candidate should be awarded, based on all the available evidence. The processes for deciding an estimate grade are similar to the processes the external assessors, eg Markers use for the final assessment. The main benefit of an estimate to an individual candidate is that an appeal can be submitted against an external decision where the estimate given the candidate was at grade C or better. An appeal will not normally be considered for candidates for whom no estimate has been received. The SQA will provide a form for submission of estimates.

For the internal marking process for estimates, internal assessors are expected to:

- Compare candidate evidence arising from each stage of the Practical Assignment to the criteria outlined in *Table B* and decide on the mark category which most accurately describes it.
- Decide on a particular mark for the candidate, within that broad mark category for each stage, depending on how marginal was the decision.
- Maintain a brief record of why a certain mark was given for each of the three Practical Assignment stages (for internal moderation purposes).
- Follow the internal moderation processes within their centre (see the section on internal moderation below).
- Aggregate the internally moderated marks for each candidate. That gives a total mark out of 200.
- Divide that total mark by 2 to give a percentage.
- Convert the overall % mark for each candidate into an estimate grade and band using *Table C*.

Table C

% Mark range	Grade	Band (for estimates)
85–100	A (upper)	1
70–84	A (lower)	2
65–69	B (upper)	3
60–64	B (lower)	4
55–59	C (upper)	5
50–54	C (lower)	6
45–49	Fail (near miss)	7
40–44	Fail	8
Less than 40	Fail	9

- Check the grade already given to candidates against the grade descriptions tabled below, (*Table D*). This is to ensure that candidates have effectively integrated each stage of the Practical Assignment. Please use the grade descriptions as a touchstone against which grades can be checked.
- Provide estimates as bands.

Grade Descriptions for a Practical Assignment at Higher

Table D

A	B	C
Content and scope appropriate for Higher		
Looking at the evidence as a whole:	**Looking at the evidence as a whole:**	**Looking at the evidence as a whole:**
A Practical Assignment at Grade A: ♦ produces high quality, clearly inter-related, documented and product or process-related evidence for the Practical Assignment ♦ is an exercise to which candidates have brought an accurate and insightful interpretation of the Practical Assignment brief ♦ is tightly structured, relevant to the content of the Units and displays a high level of subject/occupational expertise ♦ effectively applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills from the Course Units to complex situations and/or design specifications	**A Practical Assignment at Grade B:** ♦ produces good quality, inter-related, documented and product or process-related evidence for the three essential phases of the Practical Assignment ♦ is an exercise to which candidates have brought an accurate interpretation of the Practical Assignment brief ♦ is well structured and displays a good level of subject/occupational expertise ♦ satisfactorily applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills from the Course Units to situations and/or design specifications with varying degrees of complexity	**A Practical Assignment at Grade C:** ♦ produces adequate, fairly well inter-related, documented and product or process-related evidence, for the three essential phases of Practical Assignment ♦ an exercise to which candidates have brought an acceptable interpretation of the Practical Assignment brief ♦ is reasonably well structured and displays an adequate level of subject/occupational expertise ♦ applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills from the Course Units with some lack of continuity and consistency

Internal moderation

The internal moderator oversees:

- The internal moderation process to ensure consistency of judgement or *reliability of assessment*. This process will vary according to the nature of the evidence and the number of assessors and sites. It is likely to involve agreement trials and/or Marker standardisation. The internal moderator should be a specialist in the subject. (It may be helpful in the first few years of these project-based National Courses to do a cross-subject moderation of samples of like parts such as the plans of action and evaluation reports. Such additional cross-subject internal moderation is however not mandatory.)

- A consideration of whether, in some cases, candidates with similar overall marks/bands have been fairly treated. For example, some candidates may have produced more fully integrated projects than others. This may lead to a reconsideration of marking of the individual components for some candidates.

- Finalisation of estimate grades and submission of candidate evidence. A form will be available for this purpose.

(See *Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* or *Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Secondary Schools*, SQA June 1999 for further information relating to internal moderation. A guide to good practice for internal moderation is also under development.)

Submitting candidate evidence to SQA

Specific information on this part of the process will be circulated to centres. Where materials have to be sent to SQA for marking you will be provided with any necessary packaging materials.

The following must be sent to SQA for the Practical Assignment:

- plan of action
- all transportable evidence
- extended evaluation report

Note: In addition, centres will be expected to submit all notes used by candidates during write-up sessions.

8. Ensuring evidence is authentic

The following methods should be used to ensure that the evidence produced by a given candidate is all their own work. These methods are for use outwith any situation where the candidate's work will be produced under supervised or invigilated conditions already stipulated by SQA (eg the plan of action and the evaluation).

Development stage

This should be completed under supervised conditions. Where work is undertaken by candidates under conditions which are unsupervised (eg completion of work for location drawing out of school or college hours) such work should be signed and dated on a daily basis by the candidate, and on completion of all work by the teacher/lecturer.

9. Investigating tools

Candidates are expected to make use of the following information sources during the Practical Assignment:

Information sources

- the local environment — interiors and exteriors
- books, eg history, anatomy
- newspapers, eg about local arts/gallery exhibitions, reviews
- TV — general arts programmes
- exhibitions — local/national — libraries/museums/galleries/colleges
- teaching/lecturing staff
- the local community — arts organisations/groups, gallery owners, curators

Accessing information

- personal visits/meetings
- written correspondence
- sketchbooks/scrapbooks/photographs (candidate's own)

The methods of research must be discussed and agreed with the lecturer. Candidates should be realistic in the demands they may make on those they approach for information; guidance from the lecturer may be needed in this area. Centres should be aware of the need to be sensitive to the negative as well as the positive effects that telephone calls, visits and so on may have on organisations and individuals. It may be more appropriate to use the Internet, desk-based research and/or draw upon candidate's previous learning and experience, rather than for each individual to make a personal approach to an organisation or individual. However, the final decision on the most suitable approach lies with candidates and their lecturers.

References supplied by candidates

Please note that it is legitimate for candidates to quote from information sources such as articles (in print or stored electronically) or books. Such quotations must be placed within quotation marks followed by the reference, including the chapter and or section and page number. Texts referred to should be included in the bibliography.

The following format for references should be used:

Books
Author's surname, followed by forename or initials, title of book (in italics or underlined), place of publication, name of publisher, year of publication.

For example:
Barton, T, *Fieldwork for Geographers*, London: Edward Arnold, 1985

Articles
Author's surname, followed by forename or initials, title of the article (in inverted commas), title of the periodical (underlined or in italics), volume number, part number, year of publication, page number(s).

For example:
Sugden, DE, 'Perspectives on the Glaciation of Scotland', *SAGT Journal No. 17*, 1988, pp 4–10.

Maps and Diagrams
Sources should be given on each map and diagram and should be stated in the same format as for books and articles, as appropriate.

For example:
Microsoft Encarta 1997

Internet
If a website has been used then the address (URL) must be disclosed.

For example:
www.sqa.org.uk

It is important to note that unacknowledged copying will be penalised, usually by cancellation of the candidate entry.

10. Materials and resources

Candidates are expected to select from the following techniques, materials, media and resources as appropriate:

- collage
- printmaking
- dry brush
- ink wash
- scraffitti
- frottage
- wet on wet
- torn and cut paper
- tissue
- string and threads
- wire
- straw
- card
- wire
- chicken wire
- plaster
- paperclay
- clay
- plastics
- metal
- stone
- wood
- watercolour
- govache
- acrylic
- A4/A5 sketchbooks
- variety of paper
- pencil
- pastel
- crayon
- ink
- pen
- charcoal
- soapstone
- balsa
- polystyrene
- carved plaster

11. Core Skills

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.