

Plan, schedule and monitor print production

Overview

This standard is for individuals who work in a print-related environment and who take part in production planning, scheduling and junior management activities. It is not necessary to have overall control of production, but you must have some responsibility for planning, monitoring and taking decisions relating to production control

When an order is received for a print product, there must be an assessment of availability of equipment/materials and if necessary any outwork, to check that the job can be produced on time. Once the order is accepted and the work has been put into production, it is necessary to keep the job's progress under review and deal with any deviations from the schedule that may threaten successful completion of the work by the required date.

Terminology used within this area can have different meanings in different workplaces, so for the avoidance of doubt, the following definitions are used in this standard:

- Task: an activity that forms part of a series of activities involved in production of a job
- Production Plan: a list of all the tasks required to complete a job and the order in which they need to be undertaken
- Production Schedule: a timetable detailing which tasks/jobs will be undertaken on which days. This is sometimes referred to as the machine loading board and aims to obtain maximum efficiency from the production facility ensuring that jobs are completed by the required date. Many companies will now use a software programme within their Management Information System for production scheduling

Staffing arrangements in production planning and control departments will inevitably be organised differently from company to company. The competences set out in this standard are those that are required to plan, schedule and monitor production within a print environment (this can be a manufacturing facility or a print management company). In larger companies, the responsibility for tasks may be divided between several staff, although in such a case it would be essential that those colleagues understand each other's roles and work closely and in co-operation with each other, the ultimate responsibility being with the Production Manager.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Plan job tasks and schedule production

confirm customer's order/final quotation matches any estimates

1. confirm customer's order/final quotation meets tasks required
2. confirm materials required are available to meet specifications
3. confirm outwork required to meet specifications
4. confirm delivery dates following standard operating procedures
5. resolve any differences between customer's orders and job specifications following standard operating procedures
6. check deadlines required for customers supplied items (artwork, proofs, materials) have been agreed and confirmed in writing or by digital means
7. report to customers or relevant colleagues if delivery dates are unachievable
8. produce or obtain a detailed written works instruction, setting out the job specification and all relevant information for production staff and outworkers/suppliers
9. confirm job tasks and sequence of work are achievable
10. create production schedules that make best use of resources within time available for production
11. check progress of jobs against production schedules
12. liaise and confirm with suppliers of materials to ensure timely delivery
13. re-schedule tasks to optimise plant efficiency and meet production deadlines
14. review and maintain working records following standard operating procedures

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. contract law
2. copyright
3. confidentiality
4. health and safety
5. communication
6. safe handling of customer material
7. time sensitive or restricted release dates
8. workplaces policies, procedures and practices
9. choice of processes for any particular product
10. systematic procedures of print production processes
11. materials
12. time and resources
13. resource management
14. quality assurance and control
15. problem solving
16. planned preventative maintenance

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Scope/range

To achieve this standard you will need to show that you understand and can undertake all the roles set out in this unit. If you are the only person organising production in your company, you will be almost certainly be undertaking all the activities stated. If you are part of a team in a large company with shared responsibilities, you will need to show that you are competent to perform any of the activities stated.

You will need to show that you can co-ordinate the supply of materials and outwork in order to keep the production schedule 'on track' and in the event of unexpected delays or problems occurring, that you take responsibility for dealing with some or all of issues. You will need to be a confident communicator and problem solver.

You must show that you can work with production requirements for jobs involving the production processes (from receipt of order to delivery) and linked activities.

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