National Occupational Standards

Sector: Printing and Digital Media – Pre-Press Processes

Occupation: Pre-Press Machine Assistant

MQF Level: 1

Units:

- PREMA 101: Improvement of individual performance at work with guidance.
- PREMA 102: Maintain equipment in working order
- PREMA 104: Assistance in the operation of pre-press machines.
## PREMA 101: IMPROVEMENT OF INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE AT WORK WITH GUIDANCE

*In order to compete successfully, printing companies need to be constantly vigilant on their quality as well as to keep up to date with technology and best practice. One of the ways in which organisations improve is by helping their people to acquire new skills and knowledge either individually or as part of a team.*

### Performance Criteria
The candidate must have the necessary skills and knowledge to:
1. Communicate with work colleagues and customers for self-improvement.
2. Work and communicate efficiently to customer satisfaction.
3. Communicate with superiors to review personal development plans.

### Required Knowledge

**Level 1 Pre-press assistant has basic knowledge of:**

1. Communication procedures and principles of personal development planning and training.
2. Workplace policy and practices:
   a. Workplace objectives, priorities, standards & procedures;
   b. The range of work carried out in the workplace;
   c. The working practices existing in the workplace;
   d. The key job roles in the graphic and printing communications industry and their main purposes.

### Required Skills

**Under supervision level 1 Pre-press assistant is able to:**

1. Review the current situation through advice from colleagues and managers at work or from customers.
2. Seek constructive feedback from others, including colleagues, customers and own manager/trainer, on how own performance at work can be improved;
3. Identify the way in which own service could have been improved and where it could have provided in better service;
# PREMA 102: MAINTAIN EQUIPMENT IN WORKING ORDER.

The candidate must show that all of the statements in each element have been covered and must be the result of real work activities in actual production situations.

## Performance Criteria

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. Carry out safe working practices using appropriate equipment.
2. Perform preventive maintenance and cleaning of equipment.
3. Identify which consumables and components need replacements.
4. Dispose of waste materials and cleaning agents in a safe manner.

## Required Knowledge

**Level 1 Pre-press assistant has basic knowledge of:**

1. The risks of handling machinery, cleaning materials, lubricants and replacing components.
2. Own responsibilities for cleaning machines - what is permitted and what is not.
3. The company’s requirements and industry’s guidelines for the safe handling and use of hazardous substances.
4. The production schedule and how this affects cleaning operations.
5. The importance to use cleaning methods that are safe, avoid harming the environment and meet manufacturers’ requirements.
6. The company's procedures for the safe disposal of waste.

## Required Skills

**Under supervision level 1 Pre-press assistant is able to:**

1. Clean own equipment:
   a. Switch off the machinery and/or use the appropriate safety precautions before cleaning it;
   b. Use the appropriate cleaning equipment and materials for the machine;
   c. Use cleaning methods which are safe, avoid harm to the environment and which follow the manufacturer's instructions;
   d. Clean the machines at the indicated times;
   e. Dispose of used cleaning agents and waste materials (cleaning agents, solvents and lubricant, production debris, and soiled materials) safely.
2. Under supervision, assist in replacing components during scheduled maintenance as well as during normal operations.
## PREMA 103: POSSESS FUNDAMENTAL KNOWLEDGE ON PRINTING MATERIALS; PRESS AND POST-PRESS PROCESSES

*The candidate is required to have a fundamental knowledge of the variety of modern communication technologies and be able to identify different printing substrates and the processes involved in the printing industry.*

### Performance Criteria
The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. Understand the different type of modern communication technologies.
2. Distinguish between different types of print media and the differences in paper.
3. Be aware of the processing line from pre-press to post-press on the company.

### Required Knowledge

**Level 1 Pre-press assistant has basic knowledge of:**

1. The technologies available in the company to convey information.
2. The ability of the printing industry to use different media to convey data or information.
3. The different printing substrates available.
4. Basic paper specifications.
5. The production processes available within the company and the sequence of work from pre-press to post-press.

### Required Skills

**Under supervision level 1 Pre-press assistant is able to:**

1. Distinguish between the different forms of communication technologies (print, electronic and multi-media).
2. Distinguish between the different types of print media used.
3. Distinguish between the range of printing substrates available for printing.
4. Relate to and understand the differences in paper substance, caliper, size and grain direction.
5. Relate to the processing line from pre-press to post-press in the company and identify the various processes used in the company.
**PREMA 104: ASSISTANCE IN THE OPERATION OF PRE-PRESS MACHINES.**

The candidate must show that all of the statements in each element have been covered and must be the result of real work activities in actual production situation.

**Performance Criteria**
The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. Be able to handle, use and store the printing plates correctly.
2. Assist in the operation of a pre-press machine effectively.
3. Identify machinery faults and act accordingly.

**Required Knowledge**

**Level 1** Pre-press assistant has basic knowledge of:

1. The correct location of the plates for the job.
2. The printing machines used in the company and the related plate sizes.
3. Handling plates safely and protect for storage;
4. The risks associated with working on computers and plates setting machinery.
5. The commonly occurring faults with pre-press equipment
6. The safe operation of pre-press machinery and emergency shut down procedures.
7. Sending, receiving and retrieving data files.
8. The principles of artwork design and requirements for the printing and post-press processes.
9. The company’s reporting procedures and sources of advice.

**Required Skills**

**Under supervision level 1** Pre-press assistant is able to:

1. Check the job specifications and identify the plates and materials to be used for the job.
2. Locate and retrieve the correct plates for the job according to company’s procedure.
3. Check that the plates are suitable for the job and the machine is ready to be used for production.
4. Handle the plates carefully so that damage does not occur to the carriers or to the surfaces.
5. Protect the plates for storage and use company’s procedures to store the plates efficiently.
6. Promptly report problems either relating to machine faults or material supply.
7. Check that there are no risks and take all the necessary precautions to prevent any injuries.
8. Ensure that the equipment is safe and ready for production.
9. Stop the machine in an emergency situation.
10. Use the appropriate software to send, receive or retrieve data files from customers.
11. Assess received artwork files to see if there are any major mistakes including missing or corrupt images, fonts, etc.

12. Examine output to check if it matches with job specifications or accepted proof for the job.

13. Identify the person(s) who are able to advice on the job requirements and report back according to company’s procedures.

14. Identify or assist to correctly identify processing and mechanical faults which:
   a. affect the quality of the image;
   b. produce shortfall in output;
   c. create risks to health and safety.

15. Promptly report faults and give constructive help to colleagues who are correcting faults.

16. Assist to check that the machine is safe to operate once faults are corrected.