



# **PRESS MACHINE OPERATOR – MQF/EQF LEVEL 2 INFORMATION HANDBOOK**

**ON**

**The process of validation of informal and non-formal  
learning for Press Machine Operators**

### **The Assessment Board:**

The Assessment Board is appointed by the Minister responsible for Jobsplus by means of Article 26 of the Employment and Training Services Act 2018 to ascertain proficiency or competency in a particular occupation.

This handbook describes the competences that candidates need to possess before sitting for the Press Machine Operator validation process. Successful candidates acquire an *Award as Press Machine Operator* pegged at Level 2 of the Malta Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework.

### **Eligibility:**

Candidates who are interested in acquiring the *Award as Press Machine Operator* can apply for their knowledge, skills and competences to be assessed, recognised and validated if they possess the necessary competences and skills as defined in this handbook.

The prospective candidate must have **3 years experience** in the respective field. This is in line with S.L. 327.432 of 2012 which regulates the Validation of Informal and Non-formal Learning. The Assessment Board may request a reference letter to confirm the years of experience claimed by the candidate and reserves the right to contact the Institution and/or referee at will.

The Assessment Board is free to contact the Institution and/or referee at will in order to confirm experiences and training claimed by the candidate.

### **Initial Assessment Plan:**

The Assessment Board will conduct an induction session for candidates interested in acquiring the *Award in Press Machine Operator* and review the portfolio and the experience presented to plan the appropriate assessments according to the individual's experience and needs. During the induction session, the candidate is also instructed on how to collect evidence used as a proof of their practical experience.

Evidence sources may include:

- Work Activity
- Witness Testimony
- Health & Safety Documents/ Reports/ Procedures
- Photographic Evidence / Risk Assessments / Instructions
- Work-based confirmation of evidence not observed by assessor.

## **Assessment Criteria:**

The Assessment Criteria for the validation process are based on the National Occupational Standards. Following is an abstract of the list of competences that the candidate must possess prior to applying for the validation process. For further information you can download the National Occupational Standards by clicking [here](#).

### **PMO 201: IMPROVE INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE AT WORK**

1. Communicate with work colleagues for self-improvement
2. Work and communicate effectively with customers for their satisfaction
3. Share responsibility with superiors to review and prepare personal development plans

### **PMO 202: CONTRIBUTES TO MAINTAINING EQUIPMENT IN WORKING ORDER**

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 that are safe, avoid harm to the environment and which follow the manufacturer's instructions.
  - d) Clean and lubricate 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. Update records of machine maintenance.
3. Routinely examine machinery for defective components or excessive wear.
4. Identify machine components that need replacing.
5. Assist in removing and replacing machine components using safe and approved methods.
6. Restore machine to safe operating condition after replacing components.
7. Keep accurate records of the components removed and replaced.

### **PMO 203: POSSESS GOOD KNOWLEDGE ON PRINTING MATERIALS; PRE-PRESS AND POST-PRESS PROCESSES**

1. Understand the different forms of communication technologies (print, electronic and multimedia). Distinguish between the different types of print media used.
2. Distinguish between the range of printing substrates available for printing.
3. Address problems that could arise in offset litho and post-press production from the quality of paper.
4. Relate to the processing line from pre-press to post-press in the company.
5. Ensure that outputted work is according to specifications for post-press processes.

#### **PMO 204: POSSESS GOOD KNOWLEDGE ON PRINTING PLATES AND INKS**

1. Identify between image and non-image areas of the plates and the interaction of these with the damping solution and ink.
2. Protect and store plates prior to printing:
  - a. handle plates carefully so that damage does not occur;
  - b. check that the conditions are suitable for storing plates in terms of light, heat, humidity and cleanliness;
  - c. store plates at the press side under the conditions approved by the company;
  - d. keep the storage area at the safe light level, so that the plates do not deteriorate;
3. Retrieve plates for printing:
  - a. to examine the plates under approved lighting conditions;
  - b. select and carefully check that the plates have the correct images and colour (s) for the job;
  - c. thoroughly check that the plate's processing and quality of image meet production's requirements;
  - d. clean the plates, using approved methods and materials so that they are fit for production work;
  - e. use approved methods and materials to make any modifications which it is his job to make;
  - f. identify and report to the appropriate person any modifications outside own responsibility.
4. Check that there are enough materials of the right type for the job.
5. Maintain batch-to-batch consistency within the tolerance level by own company.
6. Produce the number of batches required in time to meet production needs.
7. Handle inks, solvents and varnishes safely
8. Check, through correctly using an approved test, that the mix meets the specification.
9. Produce the sample with the minimum of wastage.
10. Clearly and correctly mark the container and store inks in accordance with own company's procedures.
11. Store inks, solvents and varnishes in the approved containers and in conditions that minimise deterioration in quality.
12. Keep storage areas safe to use and easy to access
13. Dispose of any stock that is no longer fit for purpose, safely and in a way that avoids harm to the environment.
14. Understand the influence of ink additives as well as to pH buffering, alcohol and other additives to the water dampening solution on surface tensions and ink drying time.

#### **PMO 205: PREPARE SHEET-FED OFFSET-LITHOGRAPHIC MACHINES**

1. Check the readiness/availability of paper and plates for the job.
2. Identify the job details either from the job instructions or from a sample of the job.
3. Set the paper transports for different type of paper stocks so that:
  - a. the job stock is loaded, fed and forwarded without misses or doubles and in register control;
  - b. the transport operates safely and efficiently at the required running speed;
  - c. sheets are delivered squarely and form an even pile.
4. Report promptly problems either relating to mechanical faults or material supply.
5. Check the absence of risks and take all the precautions necessary to prevent injury whilst setting the paper transports or fitting plates.

6. Ensure that the machine and work are safe and ready for production and stop the machine in an emergency situation.
7. Regularly check that the blankets, inking and damping rollers are in working condition and set to the correct pressure specifications.
8. Regularly check that the machine is clean enough to prevent marking or damage to the product during operation.
9. Regularly clean components and equipment.
10. Ensure that all guards are correctly fitted, that none of the safety barriers have been compromised and that the machine is safe to operate.
11. Maintain a list of consumables that are likely to identify those parts that may be required at short notice.
12. Identify the person(s) who are able to advise on the job requirements and report back according to company's procedures.

#### **PMO 206: OPERATE SHEET-FED OFFSET-LITHOGRAPHIC MACHINES**

1. Start the job and check the details needed for the job.
2. Keep up the supply of sufficient paper, ink, fountain solution and other consumables throughout the run and promptly report to management if the materials provided are not correct or sufficient.
3. Run the offset litho machine at the required speed, safely and efficiently to produce work containing text only.
4. Obtain approval for the pass sheet.
5. Regularly check that the quality standards are maintained and test quality output either visually, by touch or electronically aided;
6. Identify problems by examining materials supplied; examining printed output; checking machine settings and checking the condition and operation of the machine.
7. Stack work safely using the approved method.
8. Promptly report any shortfalls in production or report problems in maintaining image quality
9. Follow the correct procedures for the removal of waste.
10. Forward work to the next state of the process without damage.
11. Accurately identify faults which:
  - a. affect the quality of the image;
  - b. produce shortfall in output;
  - c. create risks to health and safety.

**Mode of Assessment:**

A candidate will be assessed on all the above listed competences. Assessment will be made up from different components, namely:

**A. Practical Work**

Practical work could be assessed by a task created to simulate the work environment. During the practical test a candidate will be asked to perform a number of tasks in line with the assessment criteria. Assessment can either be held in a simulated workshop or on site. Information on the assessment venue will be provided by Jobsplus prior to the assessment. Multiple sessions might need to be scheduled.

**B. Knowledge and Understanding**

Candidates will be assessed on knowledge and understanding orally during an interview and/ or in writing through a written test paper.

**C. Interview to verify product evidence and supplementary evidence**

During the interview the Board will continue assessing candidates in relation to their knowledge, skills and competences in the respective occupation. Candidates are encouraged to present photographic evidence, workbooks or logbooks to illustrate their work.

To successfully pass from the assessment, candidates need to proof their competences in all enlisted criteria as defined in the National Occupational Standards. Following assessment candidates will receive a formal result slip issued by Jobsplus in collaboration with MFHEA. The result slip will indicate whether the candidate has obtained a Pass or a Fail in all criteria. Nonetheless persons who fail any of these criteria will have the possibility to sit for a re-sit.

**Resits:**

Candidates who do not pass from any of the enlisted criteria will be guided for further development in the failed criterion/criteria.

The areas of further development may include:

- Health & Safety Course (Safety Card)
- MCAST / Jobsplus Training Programmes
- On-Site Training
- Evidence of Training

The failed criterion/criteria will be communicated in the result slip issued by Jobsplus. Date, time and venue of re-sit would be communicated to the candidate by Jobsplus. The candidate will be guided by the Assessment Board with respect to the areas for improvement prior to the re-sit.

**Appeals:**

Candidates who fail the assessment and wish to contest the decision taken by the Assessment Board can submit a formal request for further feedback to Jobsplus. An appeal can be lodged within 10 working days from the result slip issued by Jobsplus. In the eventuality that the candidate's final result is changed following the appeal, a new result will supersede the previous one.