

Identify the main features of quality assurance and quality control systems

A quality product or service is one that satisfies the requirements of the customer. **Quality control** is usually concerned with identifying defective products and preventing them from reaching the customer, whereas **quality assurance** is concerned with all aspects of company activities, from initial customer enquiry to delivery of the product or service.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance system will be concerned with continuously improving the product or service by identifying the reasons why failures occur and taking steps to improve the system to reduce or eliminate repetition of the same failures. A quality assurance system will usually include the following procedures:

- (a) Control of suppliers
- (b) Checking goods being delivered
- (c) Detailed operating procedures
- (d) A system for tracing production and controlling documentation
- (e) Arrangements for dealing with non-conforming products
- (f) Arrangements for internally auditing the quality system and procedures
- (g) Calibration and machine maintenance

Quality Control

Quality control will often form part of a quality assurance system and will usually include the following techniques:

- (a) Inspection
- (b) Testing
- (c) Sampling
- (d) The use of input and output controls

Equipment used for maintaining quality standards in desktop publishing and pre-press:

- (a) Densitometers: transmission and reflection
- (b) Dot meter
- (c) Colour reference books/swatches (pantone)
- (d) Calibrated ruler
- (e) Colour management software

To maintain reliable and consistent quality of output from equipment, it must be cleaned, lubricated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

External Standards Used To Measure Quality

A quality assurance system can be designed to meet external standards, such as ISO9000. Companies with such a system may choose to be externally assessed against the standard with a view to being accredited.

There are other British (BS) and International (ISO) standards, which have relevance to the printing and graphic communications industry, such as viewing conditions for colour measurement.