

Technical Description

Visual Merchandising

Skill 44



WorldSkills International, by a resolution of the Competitions Committee and in accordance with the Constitution, the Standing Orders, and the Competition Rules, has adopted the following minimum requirements for this skill for the WorldSkills Competition.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Name and description of the skill competition

1.1.1 The name of the skill competition is

Visual Merchandising

1.1.2 Description of the associated work role(s) or occupation(s)

A visual merchandiser creates window and interior displays in shops and department stores, thus is essentially responsible for the “look” of the retail outlet. The chief aim of a visual merchandiser is to maximize sales by communicating with the target audience and creating a positive atmosphere. The visual merchandiser communicates directly with the target audience through their designs and creates a positive impression which in turn impacts on the sales revenue of the business. While it is not possible to precisely measure the impact of the visual merchandiser’s displays, it is accepted that they are an increasingly important element of the marketing and sales mix of a successful retail business.

The visual merchandiser works in retail outlets, which are part of a group with central support functions, and in small independent shops where there is greater personal autonomy and responsibility. The activities a visual merchandiser undertakes are based on interpreting and researching a brief, creating a design, and implementation – working with the products and their props.

Work organization and self-management, communication and interpersonal skills, problem solving, innovation and creativity: the ability to develop original ‘eye-catching’ concepts with the WOW factor which positively engage the target market and attention to detail/perfection are the universal attributes of the outstanding visual merchandiser.

The visual merchandiser may work in teams or alone, depending on the size of the business. In medium to large businesses they work very closely with marketing and sales teams. Whatever the structure of the work, the trained and experienced visual merchandiser takes on a high level of personal responsibility and autonomy. From understanding the goals and targets of marketing and sales departments, interpreting the brief correctly and understanding the behaviour of target markets, to creating a display with the WOW factor, every stage in the visual merchandising process matters. Displays have a close relationship with sales revenues.

With the globalization of visual imagery and the international mobility of people, the visual merchandiser faces rapidly expanding opportunities and challenges. For the talented visual merchandiser there are many commercial and international opportunities; however, these carry with them the need to understand and work with diverse cultures, trends, and fashions. The diversity of skills associated with visual merchandising is therefore likely to expand.

1.1.3 Number of Competitors per team

Visual Merchandising is a single Competitor skill competition.

1.1.4 Age limit of Competitors

The Competitors must not be older than 22 years in the year of the Competition.

1.2 The relevance and significance of this document

This document contains information about the standards required to compete in this skill competition, and the assessment principles, methods, and procedures that govern the competition.

Every Expert and Competitor must know and understand this Technical Description.

In the event of any conflict within the different languages of the Technical Descriptions, the English version takes precedence.

1.3 Associated documents

Since this Technical Description contains only skill-specific information it must be used in association with the following:

- WSI – Code of Ethics and Conduct
- WSI – Competition Rules
- WSI – WorldSkills Occupational Standards framework
- WSI – WorldSkills Assessment Strategy
- WSI online resources as indicated in this document
- WorldSkills Health, Safety, and Environment Policy and Regulations
- WorldSkills Standards and Assessment Guide (skill-specific)

2 The WorldSkills Occupational Standards (WSOS)

2.1 General notes on the WSOS

The WSOS specifies the knowledge, understanding, skills, and capabilities that underpin international best practice in technical and vocational performance. These are both specific to an occupational role and also transversal. Together they should reflect a shared global understanding of what the associated work role(s) or occupation(s) represent for industry and business (www.worldskills.org/WSOS).

The skill competition is intended to reflect international best practice as described by the WSOS, to the extent that it can. The Standard is therefore a guide to the required training and preparation for the skill competition.

In the skill competition the assessment of knowledge and understanding will take place through the assessment of performance. There will only be separate tests of knowledge and understanding where there is an overwhelming reason for these.

The Standard is divided into distinct sections with headings and reference numbers added.

Each section is assigned a percentage of the total marks to indicate its relative importance within the Standards. This is often referred to as the “weighting”. The sum of all the percentage marks is 100. The weightings determine the distribution of marks within the Marking Scheme.

Through the Test Project, the Marking Scheme will assess only those skills and capabilities that are set out in the WorldSkills Occupational Standards. They will reflect the Standards as comprehensively as possible within the constraints of the skill competition.

The Marking Scheme will follow the allocation of marks within the Standards to the extent practically possible. A variation of up to five percent is allowed, if this does not distort the weightings assigned by the Standards.

2.2 WorldSkills Occupational Standards

Section		Relative importance (%)
1	Work organization and management	10
	The individual needs to know and understand: • Health and safety legislation, obligations, regulations, and documentation • The situations when personal protective clothing including footwear must be used • The purposes, uses, care, maintenance, and safe/secure storage of hand/electric tools and equipment • The purposes, uses, care and safe/secure storage of materials • ICT programmes for 2D and 3D design • Techniques of time management to support productivity • The principles of ergonomics to support efficient workflow	

Section		Relative importance (%)
	• The significance of sustainability and environmentally friendly work practices • The value of managing one's own continuing professional development	
	The individual shall be able to: • Follow health and safety standards, rules, and regulations • Identify and use the appropriate personal protective clothing, including safe footwear as required • Select, use, clean, maintain, and store all tools, paint brushes, and equipment safely/securely • Select, use and re-use materials including mixing paints, effectively/efficiently, and store safely, securely, and sustainably • Plan, schedule and re-prioritize work as the need arises to meet deadlines • Work well under pressure to meet the demands of the business • Maintain safe and ergonomic working practices • Maintain sustainable working practices • Keep the working area clean and tidy • Discard waste ecologically • Keep up to date with fashion, trends, and developments in the industry and society.	
2	Communication and interpersonal skills	5
	The individual needs to know and understand: • The roles and requirements of colleagues and professionals related to visual merchandising, e.g., brand managers • The importance of building and maintaining productive working relationships with colleagues across the organization e.g., marketing and sales • Techniques for effective teamwork • The educational/social responsibility role of visual merchandising • Communication with the customer through design • Negotiation methods e.g., purchasing materials • Techniques for resolving misunderstandings and conflicting demands • The features of successful presentations.	
	The individual shall be able to: • Accurately determine the needs and aspirations of target audiences: internal and external customers • Communicate visually through storytelling and design with customers • Build and maintain trust of target audiences: internal and external customers	

Section		Relative importance (%)
	• Consistently manage effective verbal, and written communications with colleagues • Listen, reflect, and respond positively and constructively to feedback from colleagues and external customers • Professionally present ideas, rationale, and designs/displays to colleagues and related departments/professionals • Reflect on and respond appropriately to questions and ideas from colleagues.	
3	Problem solving, innovation, and creativity	15
	The individual needs to know and understand: • The common types of problem which can occur within visual merchandising work e.g., improvisation of props • Diagnostic approaches to problem solving • Boundaries for resolving problems safely e.g., referring to an electrician • Creative thinking techniques to generate inventive and sustainable designs • Latest/future trends and fashions • the meaning and implications of plagiarism.	
	The individual shall be able to: • Recognize problems swiftly and follow a self-managed process for resolving • Pro-actively re-prioritize internal customers' problems as the situation demands • Recognize the boundaries of own expertise/responsibility and refer to appropriate colleagues • Gain inspiration e.g. through reviewing books/magazines/the internet, city/shop visits, films, exhibitions, and professional literature • Maintain an "open mind" whilst accurately determining the needs of the target audience, internal, and external customer • Use imagination and inspiration to generate original ideas without plagiarism • Develop and maintain the confidence "to be different" • Keep up to date with ICT programmes for 2D and 3D design • Lead changes in design for an organization.	
4	Interpret and research brief	10
	The individual needs to know and understand: • The concept of visual merchandising: communicating with the target audience by attracting, connecting, and engaging with customers to maximize sales	

Section		Relative importance (%)
	• The roles of related departments/professionals and their focus/needs e.g., marketing and sales targets • The creative process: research, inspiration, storytelling, look and feel to develop a concept for a design • The floor plans and sizes of areas to be used for display purposes • Target market consumer behaviour and aspirations • The common factors which determine themes, to include seasons of the year, current fashions/trends, special events, and promotions • The composition of images to present design ideas online or offline.	
	The individual shall be able to: • Conduct research based on lifestyle concepts, trends, and store attributes • Identify and effectively use research tools e.g., internet • Research briefs, themes, and products/brands to design unique displays • Research and develop display ideas based on a creative process to meet client/organizational goals/target market needs and aspirations • Evaluate current trends in display design, equipment, and materials • Develop original concepts based on a creative process which clearly meet client/organizational goals/target market needs and aspirations • Create and professionally present clean, professional mood boards or look and feels with sketches, images, and colour fabric charts to clients, colleagues, managers and related departments/professionals.	
5	Design	20
	The individual needs to know and understand: • The creative process: research, inspiration, storytelling, look and feel, develop a concept for design • The full range of applications of IT programs e.g., Photoshop, Illustrator and Sketch-up • Technological developments and how to exploit them • Rendering • Graphic design/2D design • Design of props and spaces/3D design.	
	The individual shall be able to: • Make 2D and 3D designs, e.g., displays and windows with props and text based on a creative process • Visualize and accurately 'translate' ideas, and designs based on concept and storytelling • Demonstrate brand empathy	

Section		Relative importance (%)
	• Produce scale drawings by hand and by computer using Photoshop and Illustrator • Work within the available budgets • Professionally present visuals and look and feel to colleagues, managers and related departments/professionals and gain “sign off”.	
6	Implementation	40
	The individual needs to know and understand: • Principles of window display to include use and effectiveness of colour shapes and text, utilization, and most efficient use of space, balance, grouping, and product dynamics, focus, and specific use of lighting • The objectives of window display: to achieve brand compatibility, effective display of products, impact, drama, commerciality, and aesthetics • Materials and their purposes/characteristics e.g., wood, MDF, PVC, glue, and paints • Communication with the customer based on storytelling and styling • Visual Merchandising is both on-line and off-line.	
	The individual shall be able to: • Select and display merchandise according to their characteristics, interpretation of the original concepts and briefs by using storytelling and styling • Present a range of products to include fashion, accessories, tableware, and books • Collect, present, and support the merchandise to communicate effectively with the target markets by storytelling and styling • Handle all merchandise, mannequins, and materials with care including furniture, plinths, and support structures • Accurately and efficiently plan task breakdowns for installation, including timings • Select, tint, and paint pure and clean surfaces to decorate walls, fixtures, and panels • Use different types of materials and tools to measure and cut precisely, finish display and make sure they are safe and solid to last for the time agreed • Cover floors and walls with materials as appropriate • Professionally construct self-designed props, to enhance the theme, support the merchandise and communicate effectively with the target markets and make sure they are safe and solid to last for the time agreed • Collect and style products, dress, and style mannequins for maximum effect to enhance themes, support the merchandise, and communicate effectively with the target markets by storytelling and styling	

Section	Relative importance (%)
• Select and place all products, props, materials, and mannequins in an effective composition in windows or instore displays to enhance themes, support the branding of the merchandise, and communicate effectively with the target markets by storytelling and styling • Make photographs of the same or similar displays to post on-line together with off- line displays • Maximize space and layouts of areas to best advantage • Make creative use of lighting, allocate spotlights, and adjust lighting as required to ensure merchandise is highlighted appropriately on-line and off-line • Review displays and photography to ensure they are aesthetically pleasing and have the WOW factor • Evaluate the effectiveness of window displays and photography in supporting the intended merchandise and brands • Check the final standard of installations for display and photography and ensure they are complete, safe, neat, clean, tidy, and professional • Ensure displays are finished on time and stay intact for the time agreed • Analyse feedback and respond appropriately, making suggestions for improvements.	
Total	100

3 The Assessment Strategy and Specification

3.1 General guidance

Assessment is governed by the WorldSkills Assessment Strategy. The Strategy establishes the principles and techniques to which WorldSkills assessment and marking must conform.

Expert assessment practice lies at the heart of the WorldSkills Competition. For this reason, it is the subject of continuing professional development and scrutiny. The growth of expertise in assessment will inform the future use and direction of the main assessment instruments used by the WorldSkills Competition: the Marking Scheme, Test Project, and Competition Information System (CIS).

Assessment at the WorldSkills Competition falls into two broad types: Measurement and Judgement. For both types of assessment, the use of explicit benchmarks against which to assess each Aspect is essential to guarantee quality.

The Marking Scheme must follow the weightings within the Standards. The Test Project is the assessment vehicle for the skill competition, and therefore also follows the Standards. The CIS enables the timely and accurate recording of marks; its capacity for scrutiny, support, and feedback is continuously expanding.

The Marking Scheme, in outline, will lead the process of Test Project design. After this, the Marking Scheme and Test Project will be designed, developed, and verified through an iterative process, to ensure that both together optimize their relationship with the Standards and the Assessment Strategy. They will be agreed by the Experts and submitted to WSI for approval together, to demonstrate their quality and conformity with the Standards.

Prior to submission for approval to WSI, the Marking Scheme and Test Project will liaise with the WSI Skill Advisors for quality assurance and to benefit from the capabilities of the CIS.

4 Assessment Design and Practice

4.1 General guidance

This section describes the role and place of the Marking Scheme, how the Experts will assess Competitors' work as demonstrated through the Test Project, and the procedures and requirements for marking.

The Marking Scheme is the pivotal instrument of the WorldSkills Competition, in that it ties assessment to the standard that represents each skill competition, which itself represents a global occupation. It is designed to allocate marks for each assessed aspect of performance in accordance with the weightings in the Standards.

By reflecting the weightings in the Standards, the Marking Scheme establishes the parameters for the design of the Test Project. Depending on the nature of the skill competition and its assessment needs, it may initially be appropriate to develop the Marking Scheme in more detail as a guide for Test Project design. Alternatively, initial Test Project design can be based on the outline Marking Scheme. From this point onwards the Marking Scheme and Test Project should be developed together.

Section 2.1 above indicates the extent to which the Marking Scheme and Test Project may diverge from the weightings given in the Standards, if there is no practicable alternative.

For integrity and fairness, the Marking Scheme and Test Project are increasingly designed and developed by one or more Independent Test Project Designer(s) with relevant expertise. In these instances, the Marking Scheme and Test Project are unseen by Experts until immediately before the start of the skill competition, or competition module. Where the detailed and final Marking Scheme and Test Project are designed by Experts, they must be approved by the whole Expert group prior to submission for independent validation and quality assurance. Please see the Competition Rules for further details.

Experts and Independent Test Project Designers are required to submit their Marking Schemes and Test Projects for review, verification, and validation well in advance of completion. They are also expected to work with their Skill Advisor, reviewers, and verifiers, throughout the design and development process, for quality assurance and in order to take full advantage of the CIS's features.

In all cases a draft Marking Scheme must be entered into the CIS at least eight weeks prior to the Competition. Skill Advisors actively facilitate this process.

4.2 Assessment Criteria

The main headings of the Marking Scheme are the Assessment Criteria. These headings are derived before, or in conjunction with, the Test Project. In some skill competitions the Assessment Criteria may be similar to the section headings in the Standards; in others they may be different. There will normally be between five and nine Assessment Criteria. Whether or not the headings match, the Marking Scheme as a whole must reflect the weightings in the Standards.

Assessment Criteria are created by the person or people developing the Marking Scheme, who are free to define the Criteria that they consider most suited to the assessment and marking of the Test Project. Each Assessment Criterion is defined by a letter (A-I). **The Assessment Criteria, the allocation of marks, and the assessment methods, should not be set out within this Technical Description. This is because the Criteria, allocation of marks, and assessment**

methods all depend on the nature of the Marking Scheme and Test Project, which is decided after this Technical Description is published.

The Mark Summary Form generated by the CIS will comprise a list of the Assessment Criteria and Sub Criteria.

The marks allocated to each Criterion will be calculated by the CIS. These will be the cumulative sum of marks given to each Aspect within that Assessment Criterion.

4.3 Sub Criteria

Each Assessment Criterion is divided into one or more Sub Criteria. Each Sub Criterion becomes the heading for a WorldSkills marking form. Each marking form (Sub Criterion) contains Aspects to be assessed and marked by Measurement or Judgement, or both Measurement and Judgement.

Each marking form (Sub Criterion) specifies both the day on which it will be marked, and the identity of the marking team.

4.4 Aspects

Each Aspect defines, in detail, a single item to be assessed and marked, together with the marks, and detailed descriptors or instructions as a guide to marking. Each Aspect is assessed either by Measurement or by Judgement.

The marking form lists, in detail, every Aspect to be marked together with the mark allocated to it. The sum of the marks allocated to each Aspect must fall within the range of marks specified for that section of the Standards. This will be displayed in the Mark Allocation Table of the CIS, in the following format, when the Marking Scheme is reviewed from C-8 weeks. (Section 4.1 refers.)

TOTAL MARKS	STANDARDS SPECIFICATION SECTION	CRITERIA								TOTAL MARKS PER SECTION	WSSS MARKS PER SECTION	VARIANCE	
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H			
		1	5.00								5.00	5.00	0.00
		2		2.00					7.50		9.50	10.00	0.50
		3								11.00	11.00	10.00	1.00
		4			5.00						5.00	5.00	0.00
		5				10.00	10.00	10.00			30.00	30.00	0.00
		6		8.00	5.00				2.50	9.00	24.50	25.00	0.50
		7			10.00				5.00		15.00	15.00	0.00
			5.00	10.00	20.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	15.00	20.00	100.00	100.00	2.00

4.5 Assessment and marking

There is to be one marking team for each Sub Criterion, whether it is assessed and marked by Judgement, Measurement, or both. The same marking team must assess and mark all Competitors. Where this is impracticable (for example where an action must be done by every Competitor simultaneously, and must be observed doing so), a second tier of assessment and marking will be put in place, with the approval of the Competitions Committee Management Team. The marking teams must be organized to ensure that there is no compatriot marking in any circumstances. (Section 4.6 refers.)

4.6 Assessment and marking using Judgement

Judgement uses a scale of 0-3. To apply the scale with rigour and consistency, Judgement must be conducted using:

- benchmarks (criteria) for detailed guidance for each Aspect (in words, images, artefacts, or separate guidance notes). This is documented in the Standards and Assessment Guide.
- the 0-3 scale to indicate:
 - 0: performance below industry standard
 - 1: performance meets industry standard
 - 2: performance meets and, in specific respects, exceeds industry standard
 - 3: performance wholly exceeds industry standard and is judged as excellent

Three Experts will judge each Aspect, normally simultaneously, and record their scores. A fourth Expert coordinates and supervises the scoring, and checks their validity. They also act as a judge when required to prevent compatriot marking.

4.7 Assessment and marking using Measurement

Normally three Experts will be used to assess each Aspect, with a fourth Expert supervising. In some circumstances the team may organize itself as two pairs, for dual marking. Unless otherwise stated, only the maximum mark or zero will be awarded. Where they are used, the benchmarks for awarding partial marks will be clearly defined within the Aspect. To avoid errors in calculation or transmission, the CIS provides a large number of automated calculation options, the use of which is mandated.

4.8 The use of Measurement and Judgement

Decisions regarding the choice of criteria and assessment methods will be made during the design of the competition through the Marking Scheme and Test Project.

4.9 Skill assessment strategy and procedures

WorldSkills is committed to continuous improvement including reviewing past limitations and building on good practice. The following skill assessment strategy and procedures for this skill competition take this into account and explain how the marking process will be managed.

General Assessment Criteria to include:

- Research skills
- Adherence to the Client Brief
- Design
- Design presentation skills
- Prop making skills including quality and finish - 2D and 3D
- Product handling skills
- Creation of a cohesive whole in regards how products and props relate in display area

5 The Test Project

5.1 General notes

Sections 3 and 4 govern the development of the Test Project. These notes are supplementary.

Whether it is a single entity, or a series of stand-alone or connected modules, the Test Project will enable the assessment of the applied knowledge, skills, and behaviours set out in each section of the WSOS.

The purpose of the Test Project is to provide full, balanced, and authentic opportunities for assessment and marking across the Standards, in conjunction with the Marking Scheme. The relationship between the Test Project, Marking Scheme, and Standards will be a key indicator of quality, as will be its relationship with actual work performance.

The Test Project will not cover areas outside the Standards or affect the balance of marks within the Standards other than in the circumstances indicated by Section 2. This Technical Description will note any issues that affect the Test Project's capacity to support the full range of assessment relative to the Standards. Section 2.1 refers.

The Test Project will enable knowledge and understanding to be assessed solely through their applications within practical work. The Test Project will not assess knowledge of WorldSkills rules and regulations.

Most Test Projects and Marking Schemes are now designed and developed independently of the Experts. They are designed and developed either by the Skill Competition Manager, or an Independent Test Project Designer, normally from C-12 months. They are subject to independent review, verification, and validation. (Section 4.1 refers.)

The information provided below will be subject to what is known at the time of completing this Technical Description, and the requirement for confidentiality.

Please refer to the current version of the Competition Rules for further details.

5.2 Format/structure of the Test Project

The Test Project is a single Test Project assessed in stages.

It consists of a basic brief which is circulated prior to the Competition and a specified client brief, which remains secret until C1.

5.3 Test Project design requirements

Test Projects should reflect the purposes, structures, processes, and outcomes of the occupational role they are based on. They should aim to be a small-scale version of that role. Before focusing on practicalities, SMTs should show how the Test Project design will provide full, balanced, and authentic opportunities for assessment and marking across the Standards, as set out in Section 5.1.

The Test Project is completed individually. Each Competitor is given one instore display, a working area, and storage space.

The Test Project task is to build an instore brand campaign.

Competitors are provided with an identical set of materials and tools. In the spirit of sustainability they will share some large electric tools.

The products supplied by the sponsor may be the same for each Competitor or they may differ. They will, however, be from the same sponsor.

5.4 Test Project coordination and development

The Test Project MUST be submitted using the templates provided by WorldSkills International (www.worldskills.org/expertcentre). Use the Word template for text documents and DWG template for drawings.

5.4.1 Test Project coordination (preparation for Competition)

Coordination of the Test Project/modules will be undertaken by the Skill Competition Manager.

5.4.2 Who develops the Test Project/modules

The Test Project/modules are developed by an Independent Test Project Designer (ITPD) in collaboration with the Skill Competition Manager.

5.4.3 When is the Test Project developed

The Test Project/modules are developed according to the following timeline:

Time	Action
Fifteen (15) months prior to the Competition	The ITPD is identified and a Confidentiality Agreement between WSI and the ITPD is organized.
Four (4) months prior to the Competition	The basic brief is circulated via the WorldSkills website.
No later than two (2) months prior to the Competition	The Test Project documents are sent to the WorldSkills International Skills Competitions Administration Manager.
At the Competition on C1	The special client wishes about the product presentation are presented to Competitors and Experts.

5.5 Test Project initial review and verification

The purpose of a Test Project is to create a challenge for Competitors which authentically represents working life for an outstanding practitioner in an identified occupation. By doing this, the Test Project will apply the Marking Scheme and fully represent the WSOS. In this way it is unique in its context, purpose, activities, and expectations.

To support Test Project design and development, a rigorous quality assurance and design process is in place (Competition Rules sections 10.6-10.7 refer.) Once approved by WorldSkills, the Independent Test Project Designer (ITPD) is expected to identify one or more independent expert(s), and trusted individuals initially to review the Independent Test Project Designer's ideas and plans, and subsequently to verify the Test Project, prior to validation.

A Skill Advisor will ensure and coordinate this arrangement, to guarantee the timeliness and thoroughness of both initial review, and verification, based on the risk analysis that underpins Section 10.7 of the Competition Rules.

5.6 Test Project validation

The Skill Competition Manager coordinates the validation of the Test Project/modules and will ensure that it can be completed within the material, equipment, knowledge, and time constraints of Competitors.

5.7 Test Project circulation

The basic brief is circulated four (4) months prior to the Competition via the WorldSkills website. No technical or detailed information about the Test Project/modules is shared.

5.8 Test Project change

Due to the Test Project being circulated prior to the Competition, an Independent Test Project Designer must develop a 30% change as required by WorldSkills. The specific client wishes constitute the 30% change, which is presented to Experts and Competitors at the Competition on C1.

5.9 Test Project translation and use of Interpreters

The Test Project documentation and the Mark Summary Form for this skill competition are translated into the language of the Competitors' choice using an approved AI platform. It is the responsibility of the Technical Delegate to request the translation, and in which language, via the official process managed by WSI.

The Secretariat will manage the process. **Refer to Competition Rule 10.12.**

The following applies:

- Interpreters may be present during the Test Project briefing for Competitors.
- Interpreters are allowed to be used for communication as per **Competition Rule 6.13.**
- Interpreters and Experts are not allowed to review the translated documents prior to their release as per section **5.4.3**

6 Skill management and communication

6.1 Discussion Forum

Prior to the Competition, all discussion, communication, collaboration, and decision making regarding the skill competition must take place on the WorldSkills skill-specific Discussion Forum. (<http://forums.worldskills.org>). Skill related decisions and communication are only valid if they take place on the WorldSkills Discussion Forum. The Chief Expert (or an Expert Lead appointed by the Skill Management Team) will be the moderator for this Discussion Forum. Refer to the Competition Rules for the timeline of communication and competition development requirements.

6.2 Competitor information

All information for registered Competitors is available from the Competitor Centre (www.worldskills.org/competitorcentre).

This information includes:

- Competition Rules
- Technical Descriptions
- Mark Summary Form (where applicable)
- Test Projects (where applicable)
- Infrastructure List
- WorldSkills Health, Safety, and Environment Policy and Regulations
- Other Competition-related information

6.3 Test Projects and Marking Schemes

Circulated Test Projects will be available from www.worldskills.org/testprojects and the Competitor Centre (www.worldskills.org/competitorcentre).

6.4 Day-to-day management

The day-to-day management of the skill competition during the Competition is defined in the Skill Management Plan that is created by the Skill Management Team. The Skill Management Team comprises the Skill Competition Manager, Chief Expert, and the Expert Leads. The Skill Management Plan is progressively developed in the six (6) months prior to the Competition and finalized at the Competition. The Skill Management Plan can be viewed in the Expert Centre (www.worldskills.org/expertcentre).

6.5 General best practice procedures

General best practice procedures clearly delineate the difference between what is a best practice procedure and skill-specific rules (section 9). General best practice procedures are those where Experts and Competitors CANNOT be held accountable as a breach to the Competition Rules or skill-specific rules which would have a penalty applied as part of the Issue and Dispute Resolution procedure including the Code of Ethics and Conduct Penalty System. In some cases, general best practice procedures for Competitors may be reflected in the Marking Scheme.

Topic/task	Best practice procedure
Assessment	• All Experts will undertake Mandatory Assessment Training, should any Expert be found to not understand how to assess professionally, the Skill Competition Manager and Chief Expert have the right to remove them from the marking team in consultation with the Competitions Committee Delegate. The Expert is allowed to observe marking to gain experience, but cannot comment or interfere in the marking process. • Experienced Experts are allocated to lead marking teams. These leaders are allocated by Skill Competition Manager and Chief Expert. • Whilst undertaking assessment, the Skill Competition Manager, Chief Expert have the right to observe marking and remove any Expert who does not understand the marking criteria, is marking inconsistently, or marking with prejudice or personal preference. This is done in consultation with the Competitions Committee Delegate.

7 Skill-specific safety requirements

7.1 Personal Protective Equipment

Refer to WorldSkills Safety Policy and Regulations for Host country or region regulations.

Task	Safety glasses with side protection	Heat protective gloves	Sturdy shoes with closed toe and no heel	Ear plugs or ear protection	Dusk mask	Protective gloves
General PPE for safe areas			√			
Painting			√			
Positioning hot lights		√	√			
Used with electric tools for sawing/ drilling/ sanding	√		√	√	√	√

8 Materials and equipment

8.1 Infrastructure List

The Infrastructure List details all equipment, materials, and facilities provided by the Competition Organizer.

The Infrastructure List is available at www.worldskills.org/infrastructure.

The Infrastructure List specifies the items and quantities requested by the Skill Management Team for the next Competition. The Competition Organizer will progressively update the Infrastructure List specifying the actual quantity, type, brand, and model of the items. Note that in some cases details of specific materials and/or manufacturer specifications may remain secret and will not be released prior to the Competition. These items may include those for fault finding modules or modules not circulated.

At each Competition, the Skill Management Team must review and update the Infrastructure List in preparation for the next Competition. The Skill Competition Manager must advise the Director of Skills Competitions of any increases in space and/or equipment.

At each Competition, the Technical Observer must audit the Infrastructure List that was used at that Competition for the upcoming WorldSkills Competition.

The Infrastructure List does not include items that Competitors and/or Experts are required to bring and items that Competitors are not allowed to bring – they are specified below.

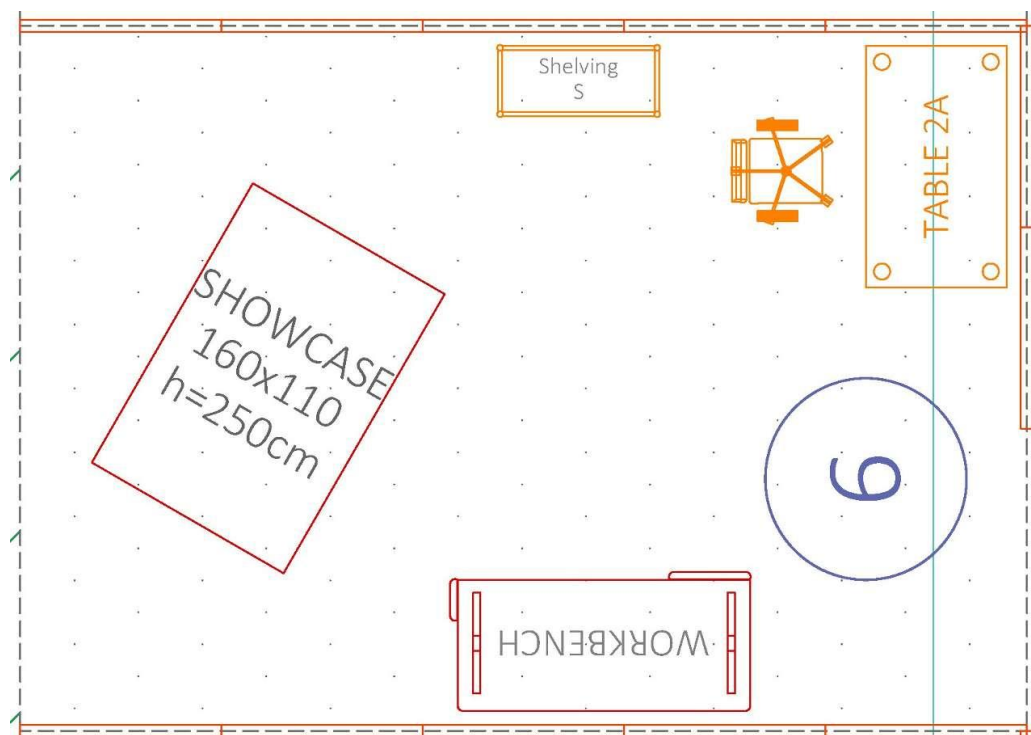
8.2 Material or manufacturer specifications

Specific material and/or manufacturer specifications required to allow the Competitor to complete the Test Project will be supplied by the Competition Organizer and are available from www.worldskills.org/infrastructure located in the Expert Centre. However, note that in some cases details of specific materials and/or manufacturer specifications may remain secret and will not be released prior to the Competition. These items may include those for fault finding modules or modules not circulated.

Each Competitor will be provided with the same core materials and tools from the Infrastructure List;

- A Sponsor will provide product to inform the design and use in the display installation;
- A client brief supporting the Test Project will be communicated on C1;
- Surprise materials will be shown to Competitors at the start of C1 after reading the Test Project;
- A lottery system will determine the surprise material allocated to each Competitor;
- The type of surprise material depends on the product offer by a sponsor and the theme/trend selected, which will stay secret until C1.
- The materials will be a range of different types of materials, in order to support innovation of design, prop making and implementation. This also allows more diversity and style choice for each Competitor;
- The quantity of materials will be enough to allow choice for the Competitor but not include excess to encourage minimum waste and support sustainability.
- The Competitors' use of materials, tools, and products must demonstrate a strong awareness of sustainability.





9 Skill-specific rules

9.1 General notes

Skill-specific rules cannot contradict or take priority over the Competition Rules. They do provide specific details and clarity in areas that may vary from skill competition to skill competition. This includes but is not limited to personal IT equipment, data storage devices, Internet access, procedures and workflow, and documentation management and distribution. Breaches of these rules will be solved according to the Issue and Dispute Resolution procedure including the Code of Ethics and Conduct Penalty System.

9.2 Skill-specific rules

Task	Skill-specific rule
Use of technology – USB, memory sticks	• Chief Expert, Experts, Competitors, and Interpreters are not allowed to bring or use personal memory sticks, they are only allowed to use memory sticks provided by the Competition Organizer. No other memory sticks are to be inserted into the Competitor computers. If personal items are brought into the workshop they must be locked in the personal locker and can only be removed at the end of each day. The Skill Competition Manager and Workshop Managers are exempt from this rule. • The Skill Competition Manager and Workshop Managers can take memory devices outside the workshop only the in case of needing IT support to test if a device is faulty or corrupted. • Memory sticks or other portable memory devices are to be submitted to the Chief Expert at the end of each day for safe keeping and must not be taken out of the workshop.
Use of technology – personal laptops, tablets and mobile phones	• Experts and Interpreters are allowed to use personal laptops, tablets, and mobile phones in the Expert room only, but most of the time they must be on the competition floor. • The Skill Competition Manager and Chief Expert are allowed to use these devices outside the Expert room when undertaking competition duties. • Competitors are not allowed to bring personal laptops, tablets, or mobile phones into the workshop. If personal items are brought into the workshop they must be locked in the personal locker and can only be removed at lunch time and the end of each day.
Use of technology – personal photo and video taking devices	• Skill Competition Manager, Chief Expert, Experts, Competitors, and Interpreters are allowed to use personal photo and video taking devices to take photographs at the conclusion of each competition day.

Task	Skill-specific rule
Competition Etiquette	• No Experts or Interpreters are allowed to loiter near Competitor workstations during competition time as it may potentially distract Competitors.

10 Expert knowledge and experience

10.1 Requirements

Experts appointed for this skill competition must have the following knowledge and experience for the appropriate occupation or work role as documented in **section 1.1.2**.

- Passed the industry specific Test
- 5 minimum years on-the-job training and/or a third level qualification in visual merchandising
- 3 years minimum industry and/or teaching experience in visual merchandising
- Ability to research, conceptualise, and design window and instore displays
- Knowledge of VM fundamentals as regards product handling - fashion, non-fashion
- Experience of various elements of retail - fashion, non-fashion
- Ability to assemble, dress, style, and accessorise mannequins - male, female, child
- Ability to group mannequins in a window display or instore setting
- Knowledge of how to handle products to create vignettes, set up promotional/campaign areas, window and instore displays
- Knowledge of colour - its usage in Visual Merchandising
- Capability to create floor plans, planograms using SketchUp/CAD/Illustrator and/or other software
- Ability to cross merchandise products. to create add on sales
- Strong awareness of sustainability practices

11 Visitor and media engagement

11.1 Engagement methods

Following is a list of possible ways to maximize visitor and media engagement:

- Test Project descriptions communicating to a wider audience the nature of visual merchandising;
- Enhanced understanding of Competitor activity;
- Competitor profiles;
- Try-a-Skill, e.g. mannequin styling, basic grouping of product;
- Interaction with the media
- Make a time lapse movie to demonstrate the complete process of developing a window display.

12 Sustainability

12.1 Sustainable practices

This skill competition will focus on the sustainable practices below:

- Provision of “green” materials where possible, use of recycled material for prop use.
- Encourage recycling waste to the Competitors. Separate bins for paper, plastic etc.
- Purchase material which can be send back when unused.
- Create a storage room with material and let Competitors enter this storage according to a lottery order and chose one item/material a time, this process can be repeated till they all have the items they need for the module.
- Shared central space will have one plotter per five Competitors and one printer A3 colour per five competitors.
- Shared central space will have large water sinks one per five Competitors, storage for fabrics and vinyl and tables to cut fabrics and vinyl

13 References for industry consultation

13.1 General notes

WorldSkills is committed to ensuring that the WorldSkills Occupational Standards fully reflect the dynamism of internationally recognized best practice in industry and business. To do this WorldSkills approaches a number of organizations across the world that can offer feedback on the draft Description of the Associated Role and WorldSkills Occupational Standards on a two-yearly cycle.

In parallel to this, WSI consults three international occupational classifications and databases:

- ISCO-08: (<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/>)
- ESCO: (<https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>)
- O*NET OnLine (www.onetonline.org/)

13.2 References

Your WSOS (Section 2) appears most closely to relate to Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers: <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/27-1026.000>

or Visual Merchandiser:

<http://data.europa.eu/esco/occupation/35eb0aa6-b40d-449d-9390-> .

Adjacent occupations can also be explored through these links.

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The following table indicates which organizations were approached and provided valuable feedback for the Description of the Associated Role and WorldSkills Occupational Standards in place for WorldSkills Shanghai 2026.

Organization	Contact name
Hermes South Asia Pte Ltd	Andy Seet, Regional Visual Merchandising Manager
RMIT University	Sue Robinson, Lecturer

14 Appendix

14.1 Appendix information

Not applicable.