

## Checking a prepress proof

A prepress proof is created by the printer from the designer's file.

They are made by opening the artwork file in a software program that separates the colours and imposes the pages ready for print. Because the file has been through another process, a proof is produced as a final check.

It is important to remember that because the proofs do not use the actual printing inks the colours may not be accurate.

Prepress proofs are the final opportunity to pick up errors or problems, however this is not the time to redesign or rewrite the report. Changes should be kept to a minimum as they may be costly and can cause production delays – that said, it is cheaper to fix a flaw at this stage before printing plates are made and the job is on the press.

Once you have checked the proofs and marked-up changes, if you have any, you will be asked to sign and date the proof indicating that it is 'approved to print,' 'approved to print with corrections' or 'corrections required, new proofs required.'

### Hints:

- Start by comparing each page of the proof with the final laser pages or PDF of the 'approved to print' document to make sure that they match and no major elements such as headers, images, graphics etc. are missing.
- Do not 'read' the document, instead check each element – images, fonts, footers – separately, working your way through the document from beginning to end. This is the best way to avoid missing any omissions or errors.
- Never assume – always circle any errant type, lines or blemishes, even if you are unsure if they are on the original file or just marks on the proof – it is always best to get them checked in case they need to be removed.

### Checklist:

- ✓ **Version control:** check that all corrections made on last round of artwork or proofs have been made.
- ✓ **Fonts:** check that the fonts used throughout the report have not changed or updated incorrectly.
- ✓ Check that **headers/footers and page numbers** are not missing or obscured.
- ✓ Ensure that all **images** are in the correct position, are cropped accurately and have correct captions.
- ✓ Check that all **graphs** are in the correct position with correct titles/figure headings.
- ✓ **Placement:** compare the first and last line of text on each page with your 'approved to print' copy of the document to make sure that no text has moved on or become hidden.
- ✓ Check all **headlines** for accuracy.
- ✓ Check **margins** for consistency.
- ✓ Check the **alignment** of type, images and rule lines where they cross over on facing pages.

