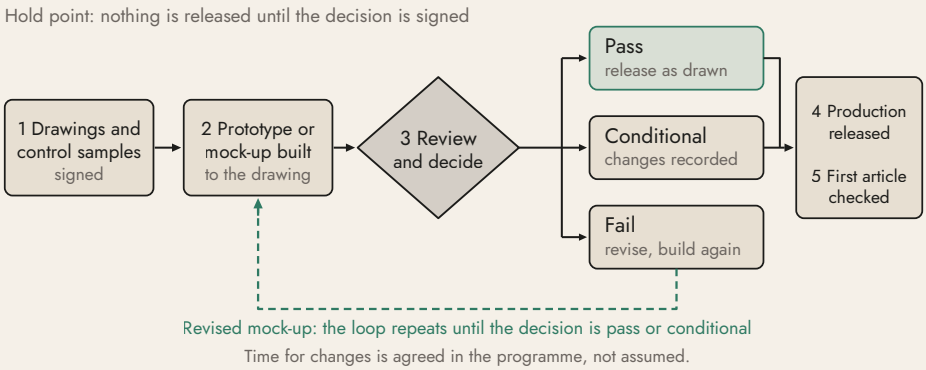
Prototype and *mock-up* approval

What to sign off on a prototype or mock-up, in eight groups, and the wording that releases production.

AT A GLANCE

Check group	What to look at	Pass if	Check it against
1 Fit and dimensions	Sizes, heights, clear openings and gaps, measured with a tape and level, not judged by eye.	Every size is within the tolerance in the specification, [ ] mm, and agrees with the signed site survey.	Drawing revision; survey record; tolerance clause.
2 Finish and colour	Colour, sheen, grain and texture on the real material, viewed as the control sample was.	Matches the control sample within the agreed range, under the named light.	Control sample [S-nn] and its viewing conditions.
3 Comfort and function	The item used as it will be used: sitting, reaching, opening, lifting.	No line on the scoring sheet below the agreed mark; every moving part works.	The brief; the sit-test sheet.
4 Hardware and operation	Hinges, runners, locks, handles: action, noise, alignment, reveals.	Opens, closes and locks as the schedule says; reveals even.	Hardware schedule and sample.
5 Wall and floor interfaces	Where the item meets wall, floor, ceiling and neighbours: scribes, shadow gaps, fixings.	Junctions match the detail drawing; gaps even and as drawn.	Detail drawings; joinery tolerances.
6 Services	Sockets, switches, lighting, ventilation, cable routes, cut-outs, access panels.	Services line up with the drawing and every access panel can be reached.	M&E drawings; appliance data.
7 Fire and compliance papers	Labels, test reports, certificates and claims for the construction shown.	Each paper names the build as made (composite, board, finish) and is in date.	FF&E schedule; fire documentation.
8 Brand standards	The operator's own requirements for the room or item.	The written standard was in hand before the build; each point ticked or listed as a departure.	The operator's document (not public): ask in writing.

Square brackets are placeholders. No tolerance is given: take it from the tolerance clause of your specification, not from a general guide. The criteria are practice, not a standard.



The mock-up gate. Nothing is released until the decision is signed, and the time for changes is agreed, not assumed. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

PROTOTYPE OR MOCK-UP REQUIREMENT

[Maker] is to build [a full-size prototype of item [ref] / a mock-up of [element or room]] to drawing [number, revision] and control samples [S-nn], from [production materials, hardware and finish], for approval before production of [the remaining [number] items] is released. The programme allows [n] working days to build, [n] for review and [n] for one re-presentation. Any difference from production materials is stated in writing before the review.

REVIEW, ATTENDANCE AND CRITERIA

The review is a joint inspection by [designer], [client or operator representative], [maker] and [contractor], on [n] working days' notice. Criteria are in schedule [ref]: sizes within [clause ref]; finish to control sample [S-nn] under [named light] from [distance]; function as scored on [sheet ref]; hardware, interfaces, services and papers as drawn and scheduled; [brand standard ref]. Each group is recorded Pass, Conditional or Fail, with the name of the person who signs it. Photographs with a scale are filed with the record.

RELEASE OF PRODUCTION

Production is not to start until [designer] has signed the record as Pass, or as Conditional with each condition closed in writing. Verbal approval is not approval. The approval covers drawing revision [letter] and items [refs] only. A later change is made only by written variation approved by [designer], stating its effect on programme and the contract sum, and substitution register [ref] is updated.

THE MOCK-UP AFTERWARDS

The approved mock-up is tagged, photographed and kept by [maker] as the benchmark until [practical completion]. It [is / is not] to be installed on site. [If installed: it meets the same specification and evidence requirements as production items, confirmed before the review.] It is not evidence of fire, strength or other compliance, which is shown by the documents in schedule [ref].

TERMS USED

Prototype

A full-size or near full-size working example of an item made before the main run so its proportions, comfort, finish and construction can be checked and signed off. Changes are far cheaper at this stage than once production starts.

Mock-up room

A fully fitted example room built before the roll-out of a hotel or residential scheme so the owner and designer can inspect and approve everything in place. Production of the repeated rooms is normally released only after it is approved.

First article

The first finished item from a production run, inspected and approved against the drawings and samples before the rest is made. It is the production counterpart to a prototype.

Hold point

A point in the programme at which work stops until a named person has inspected it and signed it off. Here, production is held until the mock-up decision is signed.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- RIBA Plan of Work 2020 Overview (RIBA, 2020): read 5 Nov 2026; Stage 4 and Stage 5 text, paraphrased. It does not name prototypes or mock-ups for furniture or joinery.
- Designing Buildings: Samples and mock-ups for construction: commentary, last edited 24 Jan 2022; about construction products, used by analogy.
- Hospitality Net: hospitality consultant opinion piece (12 Dec 2024): commentary: build model rooms early.
- Make Bespoke Studio: Design development; How we work: prototypes for complex or high-value commissions.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/prototype-and-mock-up-approval. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.