Shop drawing *approval* checklist

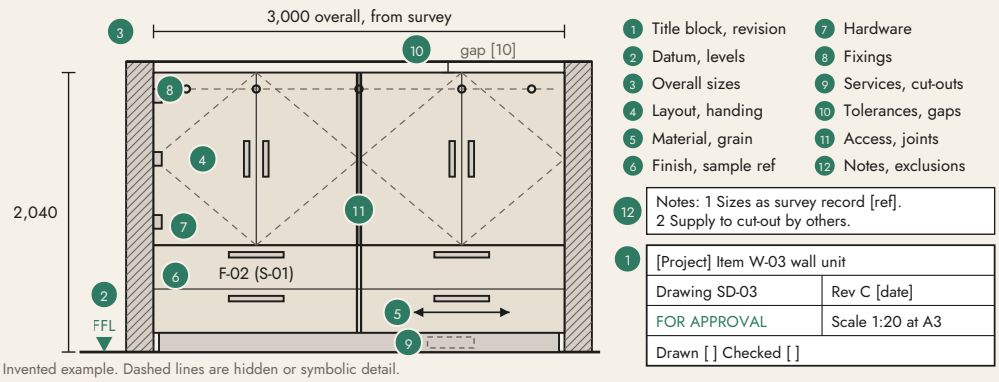
What to check on a joinery or furniture shop drawing before you sign it, keyed to an annotated drawing, with wording that limits your approval to design intent.

Compliance guidance. This is practice guidance, not legal advice. What your approval of a shop drawing commits you to depends on your appointment, the contract and who holds design responsibility. Sources read on 5 November 2026: NBS and a commentary site; no contract form or standard. Take advice before using the wording.

AT A GLANCE

Check	What to look for	Compare it with
1 Title block, revision	Project, item code, drawing number, revision letter and date, status ("for approval"), scale, sheet; what changed since the last revision.	The drawing register; the item code on the FF&E schedule.
2 Datum, levels	Finished floor level stated, heights taken from it, any raised floor or build-up noted.	The survey; the floor build-up on the architect's drawings.
3 Overall sizes	Width, height, depth, scribe allowances, clear openings; whether sizes come from the survey or from the design drawing.	The signed site survey.
4 Layout, handing	Door swings and hinge side, drawer and shelf counts and positions, leaf sizes.	The design drawings and elevations.
5 Material, grain	Species, cut, board and thickness; veneer match and sequence; grain direction marked on each face.	The specification; the veneer layout.
6 Finish, sample ref	A finish reference and a sample reference on every visible face, and a stated finish for insides, edges and backs.	The finishes schedule; the signed control samples.
7 Hardware	Hinge type, number and opening angle; runners and load class; handles; locks; each by reference and finish.	The hardware schedule or specification.
8 Fixings	How the unit is fixed to wall and floor, fixing positions, the wall construction assumed, who confirms it will carry the load.	The wall build-up; an engineer where load matters.
9 Services, cut-outs	Sockets, switches, lighting, ventilation, cable routes, appliance and sink sizes with their cut-out sizes.	M&E drawings; appliance data sheets.
10 Tolerances, gaps	Shadow gaps, scribe pieces, door gaps, flushness and alignment, as numbers. See joinery tolerances.	The tolerance clause of the specification.
11 Access, joints	Where the unit splits, joint positions, assembly sequence, the largest section against the route. See the delivery access survey.	The route measured on site.
12 Notes, exclusions	Assumptions, items "by others", any departure from the design drawings, marked and numbered.	The design drawings; the basis of pricing.

The numbers match the balloons on the drawing. Wording of the stamps varies between firms and contracts: agree it, and what each stamp lets the maker do, in writing.



Invented example. Dashed lines are hidden or symbolic detail.

Twelve numbered checks on a two-bay unit. Sizes and references are invented and the ceiling gap is exaggerated. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

APPROVAL STAMP: LIMITED TO DESIGN INTENT

Reviewed for general conformity with the design intent and specification only. This review does not relieve [Supplier] of responsibility for the correctness of dimensions, quantities, fit, construction, fixing and compliance with the contract documents, or for coordination with other trades. Approval applies to revision [letter] only and not to any later change, whether marked or not. Signed [name, role], [date].

APPROVED AS NOTED

Approved subject to the corrections marked. [Supplier] makes them and issues revision [letter] for record [before manufacture of the affected items / without further review]. Items not marked are approved as drawn.

HOLD POINTS, PROGRAMME AND CHANGE

Manufacture of [items] is not to start until [the site dimensions are verified and signed on survey record [ref]] [and sample [S-nn] is signed]. [Designer] will return each submission within [number] working days of receiving a complete set, marked with one of the four outcomes. An approved drawing changes only by a new revision approved in writing by [designer]; a change to price or programme is agreed as a variation before work changes.

TERMS USED

Approved as noted

A common review outcome meaning the work may proceed once the noted corrections are made, without a further full review. Anything marked 'revise and resubmit' must not be made until reissued.

Prescriptive specification

A specification in which the design team states exactly what products, materials and workmanship are required, leaving the contractor to supply and install them as described. Design responsibility stays with the design team.

Descriptive specification

A specification that states the required result and performance, and leaves a specialist or contractor to design and detail how to achieve it. Design responsibility for that part generally passes to whoever completes it.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- NBS: RIBA Plan of Work 2020 and specification: Dale Sinclair, 17 Jun 2020, read 5 Nov 2026.
- Designing Buildings: Shop drawings; Submittals: commentary, not an authority; read 5 Nov 2026.
- BS 8888: Technical product documentation and specification: paywalled, not read: confirm the current edition.
- Make Bespoke Studio: Design development: drawings and control samples signed before production.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/shop-drawing-approval-checklist. 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.