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Functional Skills criteria for ICT

Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, level 1 and level 2

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Introduction

Functional Skills qualifications in information and communication technology (ICT) assess three interrelated skill areas:

- Using ICT systems
- Finding and selecting information
- Developing, presenting and communicating information

Functional Skills qualifications in ICT are available at Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3, level 1 and level 2. The criteria for these qualifications specify the requirements in terms of skill standards and coverage and range at each level. At each level of the qualification these subsume the previous level's skill standards and coverage and range, supporting a progression-based suite of skills qualifications.

These criteria should be used in conjunction with the Ofqual's *'Functional Skills qualifications criteria'* (Ofqual/09/4558) publication, which outlines common features of all Functional Skills qualifications, and the controlled assessment regulations for the qualifications (see Ofqual's separate Appendix A: *'Controlled assessment regulations for functional skills: Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3 in English, mathematics and ICT. English speaking, listening and communication at Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3 and level 1 and level 2'*.)

In completing assessment leading to a Functional Skills qualification in ICT, candidates can have access to all forms of equipment and software that constitute their normal independent way of working, provided that these do not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Skill standards and assessment weightings

1. Functional Skills qualifications in ICT must require candidates to demonstrate their ability in relation to:

Entry 1

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interact with ICT for a given purpose • follow recommended safe practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise and use interface features • minimise the physical stress of seating, lighting and hazards • keep access information secure by using password 	20-30%
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find given information from an ICT-based source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text message, voicemail and on-screen information 	10-20%
<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter and edit single items of information • use ICT-based communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and correct simple errors • label an image • receive and open electronic messages 	50-70%

Entry 2

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interact with ICT for a purpose • follow recommended safe practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use computer hardware • use software applications for a purpose • recognise and use interface features • minimise physical stress • keep access information secure by using password • understand the need to stay safe 	20-30%
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use ICT-based sources of information • find specified information from ICT-based sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple search facilities 	10-20%
<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter and edit information for a simple given purpose • bring together two given types of information • use ICT-based communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple editing and formatting techniques • for print and for viewing on screen • identify and correct simple errors • read, send and receive electronic messages 	50-70%

Entry 3

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interact with and use an ICT system to meet given needs • store information • follow safety and security practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use correct procedures to start and shut down an ICT system • use input and output devices • use software applications to meet needs and solve given problems • recognise and use interface features • change simple software settings • open and save files • know how to insert and remove media • use and change passwords • minimise physical stress 	20-30%
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple searches to find information • select relevant information that matches requirements of given task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • search stored information • search web-based sources of information 	10-20%
<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter and develop different types of information to meet given needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter, edit and format information, including text, graphics, numbers or other digital content, to achieve the required outcome 	50-70%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring together different types of information for a given purpose • use ICT-based communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insert and position graphics or other digital content to achieve a purpose • process numbers to meet needs • for print and for viewing on screen • check for accuracy and meaning • check suitability of information • read, send and receive electronic messages • use contacts • understand the need to stay safe and to respect others when using ICT-based communication 	
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Level 1

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the ICT requirements of a straightforward task • interact with and use ICT systems to meet requirements of a straightforward task in a familiar context • manage information storage • follow and demonstrate understanding of the need for safety and security practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use ICT to plan and organise work • select and use software applications to meet needs and solve straightforward problems • select and use interface features effectively to meet needs • adjust system settings as appropriate to individual needs • work with files, folders and other media to access, organise, store, label and retrieve information • demonstrate how to create, use and maintain secure passwords. • demonstrate how to minimise the risk of computer viruses 	20-30%
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use search techniques to locate and select relevant information • select information from a variety of ICT sources for a straightforward task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • search engines, queries • recognise and take account of currency, relevance, bias and copyright when selecting and using information 	10-20%
<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p>		50-70%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet the requirements of straightforward tasks use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task use communications software to meet requirements of a straightforward task combine information within a publication for a familiar audience and purpose evaluate own use of ICT tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply editing, formatting and layout techniques to meet needs, including text, tables, graphics, records, numbers, charts, graphs or other digital content process numerical data display numerical data in a graphical format use field names and data types to organise information enter, search, sort and edit records read, send and receive electronic messages with attachments demonstrate understanding of the need to stay safe and to respect others when using ICT-based communication for print and for viewing on screen check for accuracy and meaning at each stage of a task and at the task's completion 	
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Level 2

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
Using ICT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan solutions to complex tasks by analysing the necessary stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use ICT to plan and analyse complex or multi-step tasks and activities and to make decisions about suitable approaches 	20-30%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select, interact with and use ICT systems safely and securely for a complex task in non-routine and unfamiliar contexts • manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select and use software applications to meet needs and solve complex problems • select and use a range of interface features and system facilities effectively to meet needs • select and adjust system settings as appropriate to individual needs • respond to ICT problems and take appropriate action • understand the danger of computer viruses and how to minimise risk • manage files, folders and other media storage to enable efficient information retrieval 	
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use appropriate search techniques to locate and select relevant information • select information from a variety of sources to meet requirements of a complex task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • search engines, queries and AND/ NOT/OR, >,<,>=,<=, contains, begins with, use of wild cards • recognise and take account of copyright and other constraints on the use of information • evaluate fitness for purpose of information 	10-20%

<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet requirements of a complex task • use appropriate software to meet the requirements of a complex data-handling task • use communications software to meet requirements of a complex task • combine and present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience • evaluate the selection, use and effectiveness of ICT tools and facilities used to present information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply a range of editing, formatting and layout techniques to meet needs, including text, tables, graphics, records, numerical data, charts, graphs or other digital content • process and analyse numerical data • display numerical data in appropriate graphical format • use appropriate field names and data types to organise information • analyse and draw conclusions from a data set by searching, sorting and editing records • organise electronic messages, attachments and contacts • use collaborative tools appropriately • understand the need to stay safe and to respect others when using ICT-based communication • organise and integrate information of different types to achieve a purpose, using accepted layouts and conventions as appropriate • work accurately and check accuracy, using software facilities where appropriate • at each stage of a task and at the task's completion 	<p>50-70%</p>
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Scheme of assessment

2. Functional Skills qualifications in ICT must be single component qualifications with assessment that focuses on the three interrelated skill areas identified in the skill standards.
3. Specifications for Functional Skills qualifications in ICT must allocate a weighting of 100 per cent to external assessment at levels 1 and 2.
4. Assessment must be internally marked at Entry levels 1, 2 and 3. All internal assessment must comply with the controlled assessment regulations (see appendix A).
5. Awarding organisations must provide guidance to centres on how to administer and contextualise the internal assessment, including advice on use of practical resources, tutor mediation and other relevant assessment arrangements. This must comply with the controlled assessment regulations (see Appendix A).
6. Assessment must focus on functionality and the effective application of the three interrelated ICT skill areas in purposeful contexts and scenarios that reflect 'real-life' situations.
7. Assessment must assess all of the skill standards and sample the coverage and range.
8. Specifications must reflect the assessment weightings outlined in the skills standards.
9. Assessment of Functional Skills qualifications in ICT must include a minimum of 80 per cent open response assessment.
10. The duration of the assessment leading to a Functional Skills qualification in ICT at levels 1 and 2 must be a minimum of two hours and a maximum of three hours. At Entry levels 1, 2 and 3, the duration of the assessment should be a minimum of one hour and must not exceed two hours.

Appendix B: Functional Skills ICT: Inclusion Sheets

Inclusion statement for Functional Skills ICT Qualifications

In completing assessment leading to Functional Skills ICT qualifications, candidates can have access to all forms of equipment and software that constitute their normal way of working, provided that these do not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

The Functional Skills qualifications criteria require awarding organisations to develop assessment materials that anticipate the needs of candidates with disabilities and which minimise, as far as possible, the need to make reasonable adjustments (whilst still assessing the skills standards) or exemptions.

For details of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for Functional Skills ICT qualifications, please see the JCQ publication *"Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration, General and Vocational Qualifications"*.

The table below summarises arrangements to which candidates can have access in meeting the requirements of Functional Skills ICT qualifications.

Does the assessment allow the use of these access arrangements?

Access arrangements	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Reader/ screen reader	Yes	
Scribes	Yes	
Practical Assistants	Yes	For assessment of the application of the skills described by the standards, a practical assistant may switch on the computer and insert a disk at the candidate's instruction but must not perform any skill for which marks are credited. (For more detail please see commentary against individual skills standards below). Assistants can be used in written assessments.
Word Processors	Yes	
Transcripts	Yes	
BSL interpreters	Yes	
Oral language modifiers	Yes	
Modified question papers (including	Yes	

Braille)		
Extra Time	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

Skill standards and assessment weightings

Entry 1

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
Using ICT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> interact with ICT for a given purpose follow recommended safe practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and use interface features minimise the physical stress of seating, lighting and hazards keep access information secure by using password 	20-30%
Finding and selecting information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> find given information from an ICT-based source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> text message, voicemail and on-screen information 	10-20%
Developing, presenting and communicating information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enter and edit single items of information use ICT-based communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and correct simple errors label an image receive and open electronic messages 	50-70%

Entry 2

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interact with ICT for a purpose • follow recommended safe practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use computer hardware • use software applications for a purpose • recognise and use interface features • minimise physical stress • keep access information secure by using password • understand the need to stay safe 	20-30%
<p>Finding & selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use ICT-based sources of information • find specified information from ICT-based sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple search facilities 	10-20%
<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter and edit information for a simple given purpose • bring together two given types of information • use ICT-based communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple editing and formatting techniques • for print and for viewing on screen • identify and correct simple errors • read, send and receive electronic messages 	50-70%

Entry 3

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interact with and use an ICT system to meet given needs • store information • follow safety and security practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use correct procedures to start and shut down an ICT system • use input and output devices • use software applications to meet needs and solve given problems • recognise and use interface features • change simple software settings • open and save files • know how to insert and remove media • use and change passwords • minimise physical stress 	20-30%
<p>Finding & selecting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple searches to find information • select relevant information that matches requirements of given task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • search stored information • search web-based sources of information 	10-20%
<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter and develop different types of information to meet given needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter, edit and format information, including text, graphics, numbers or other digital content, to achieve the required outcome 	50-70%

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<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p>		50-70%

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Level 2

Skill standards	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select, interact with and use ICT systems safely and securely for a complex task in non-routine and unfamiliar contexts • manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select and use software applications to meet needs and solve complex problems • select and use a range of interface features and system facilities effectively to meet needs • select and adjust system settings as appropriate to individual needs • respond to ICT problems and take appropriate action • understand the danger of computer viruses and how to minimise risk • manage files, folders and other media storage to enable efficient information retrieval 	
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<p>Developing, presenting and communicating information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet requirements of a complex task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply a range of editing, formatting and layout techniques to meet needs, including text, tables, graphics, records, numerical data, charts, graphs or other digital content 	50-70%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use appropriate software to meet the requirements of a complex data-handling task • use communications software to meet requirements of a complex task • combine and present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience • evaluate the selection, use and effectiveness of ICT tools and facilities used to present information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process and analyse numerical data • display numerical data in appropriate graphical format • use appropriate field names and data types to organise information • analyse and draw conclusions from a data set by searching, sorting and editing records • organise electronic messages, attachments and contacts • use collaborative tools appropriately • understand the need to stay safe and to respect others when using ICT-based communication • organise and integrate information of different types to achieve a purpose, using accepted layouts and conventions as appropriate • work accurately and check accuracy, using software facilities where appropriate • at each stage of a task and at the task's completion 	
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