

Criteria for Functional Skills Qualifications



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The criteria

Introduction

1. The following criteria will be used as the basis for the development and accreditation of all functional skills qualifications.

Content

Titling

2. Functional skills qualifications must be titled as follows.
 - 2.1 (Awarding organisation name) functional skills qualification in (English / Mathematics / Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at (Entry 1 / Entry 2 / Entry 3 / Level 1 / Level 2).

Subject matter of functional skills

3. Functional skills are the fundamental, applied skills in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT) which help people to gain the most from life, learning and work.
4. Functional skills qualifications are available in English, ICT and mathematics at the following levels: Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, level 1 and level 2. Each qualification is separate and assessed independently. Functional skills subject criteria for English, mathematics and ICT specify the skills standards, coverage and range for the qualifications at each level.

Assessment

5. Assessment must be consistent with the levels set out in the skills standards and with the associated coverage and range specified within the functional skills subject criteria. In addition, it must:
 - 5.1 provide realistic contexts, scenarios and problems;
 - 5.2 specify tasks that are relevant to the context;
 - 5.3 require application of knowledge, skills and understanding for a purpose;
 - 5.4 require problem solving;

- 5.5 assess process skills and the outcome of their application in different contexts.
6. Assessment must be designed to assess a single level. The assessment must provide a reliable measure of proficiency at that level by providing significant evidence of meeting the requirements of the functional skills subject criteria at the specified level.
 7. Assessment at Entry level contains three sub-levels: Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3. Assessment must be targeted at a specific sub-level. Awarding and certification should be available at the sub-levels.
 8. Assessment must be entirely open response or predominantly open response. The functional skills subject criteria for English, mathematics and ICT specify the maximum proportion of fixed-response assessment permitted for the assessment of each qualification.
 9. In assessments, other than those relating to functional skills ICT qualifications, the inclusion of any ICT elements must not interfere with the assessment of the primary skill.
 10. In assessments, other than those relating to functional skills mathematics qualifications, the inclusion of any mathematical elements must not interfere with the assessment of the primary skill.
 11. In assessments, other than those relating to functional Skills English, the language used must be accessible to learners operating at least a level below the primary focus of assessment content.
 12. Assessment specifications and mark schemes must show how the assessments relate to the requirements of the functional skills subject criteria for English, mathematics and ICT.
 13. Assessment must be mark based, with the exception of the speaking, listening and communication component in English.
 14. Assessment must indicate the level of detail required and display the number of marks available per assessment item/task. Mark schemes must specify the performance evidence that is necessary to display the full range of marks.

External and internal assessment

15. Entry levels 1, 2 and 3 in English, mathematics and ICT, and levels 1 and 2 English in speaking, listening and communication, are assessed by controlled

assessment and must comply with the functional skills controlled assessment requirements.

16. At Entry levels 1, 2 and 3, assessment must be externally specified by the awarding organisation and must be internally marked, except in the case of e-assessment where electronic marking is required. Assessments at the Entry levels can be internally contextualised and/or adapted according to the controlled assessment regulations.
17. At levels 1 and 2, assessment must be externally set by the awarding organisation and externally marked by the awarding organisation, with the exception of the speaking, listening and communication components of functional skills English.

Certification and Reporting

18. Where a candidate's performance is sufficient to meet the level requirements, a Functional Skills qualification pass certificate is awarded. No grades are issued for these qualifications.
19. In functional skills English, a formal statement of results must be available to candidates and must report the level at which the qualification has been awarded as well as the level at which each of the assessment components has been achieved.
20. Functional skills qualification certificates must positively report the assessment component/s that has/have been passed to achieve the qualification.

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