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# Design principles for the Essential Communication Skills qualification

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Applicable for courses commencing teaching  
September 2015

# Design principles for the Essential Communication Skills qualification

<b>Audience</b>	Awarding organisations.
<b>Overview</b>	This document provides the framework for the development of the specification for the Essential Communication Skills (ECS) as a stand-alone qualification for first teaching from September 2015.
<b>Action required</b>	Awarding organisations must use this document as the framework and criteria within and against which to create the detail of the specification for the Essential Communication Skills (ECS) qualification.
<b>Further information</b>	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Qualifications and Regulation Division Department for Education and Skills Welsh Government Tŷ'r Afon Bedwas Road Bedwas Caerphilly CF83 8WT e-mail: <a href="mailto:essentialskillswales@wales.gsi.gov.uk">essentialskillswales@wales.gsi.gov.uk</a>
<b>Additional copies</b>	This document can be accessed from the Qualifications Wales website at <a href="http://www.qualificationswales.org">www.qualificationswales.org</a>

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## Introduction

This document sets out the rationale, structure, aims and learning outcomes, content, assessment, and reporting for the Qualification, for teaching from September 2015.

It provides the framework and criteria within and against which an awarding body or awarding bodies create the detail of the specifications for the Essential Communication Skills at each level.

The design principles are intended to ensure that the revised Essential Communication Skills qualifications:

- are clear and consistently applied
- rigorous and robust
- are developed in response to the findings and recommendations of the Review of Qualifications (RoQ) for 14 to 19 year olds in Wales
- build the strengths of and addresses the weaknesses of the existing Essential Skills Wales qualifications
- focus on the development of the Essential Communication Skills needed for learning, work and life and which are valued by employers and higher education.

Accredited specifications must meet the requirements of the design principles. Existing subject and assessment specifications for Entry Levels 1-3 and Level 4 remain the same and can be accessed at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/qualificationsinwales/qualificationtypesinwales/essentialskillswales/?lang=en>

## Rationale

Essential Skills Wales qualifications will be available in Communication, Application of Number, Digital Literacy and Employability. The introduction of Essential Skills Wales (ESW) in September 2010 brought clarity and consistency to Basic and Key Skills qualifications. In the spirit of the Review of Qualifications 2012, it is the intention to identify one suite of Essential Skills Wales qualifications, to include Essential Skills for Work and Life, to simplify and clarify the qualification offer in this area of learning to ensure the relevance and value of this learning and these qualifications for learners.

On introduction, the new standards and the associated qualifications provided, for the first time in Wales, a single ladder of progression from Entry Level 1 to Level 4 in the skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These standards were developed by converging and drawing on best practice from the standards for Adult Literacy, Adult Numeracy and Adult ICT, and the standards for Key Skills Communication, Application of Number and ICT. It is the intention to retain this coherent ladder of progression supporting the continuing development of these essential skills.

Essential Skills Wales qualifications are applicable to a wide range of programmes, ages, abilities and contexts. They can assist with successful completion in all aspects of education, training, work and life in general. They are therefore appropriate for candidates at all levels, from beginners, students and junior staff through to middle and senior managers. They support the effectiveness of learning and performance both in education, life and at work.

Over time the intention is to reduce the plethora of skills qualifications currently offered in Wales, replacing it with a coherent and comprehensive suite of qualifications that will be offered by a small number of awarding organisations.

### **Strengths and Areas for Development for Essential Communication Skills identified in the Review of Qualifications for 14-19 year olds 2012**

1. Essential Skills Wales qualifications will cover Communication, Application of Number, Digital Literacy and Employability. Essential Skills Wales have an emphasis on transferability of skills and are designed to be applicable across a range of contexts.
2. Employers told the Review that the skills themselves should be an integral part of education at 14 to 19. However, Essential Skills Wales were primarily designed for adult and applied settings rather than schools, and the Review found that it can be difficult for teachers and learners in schools to generate the evidence required.
3. The Review recommends that Essential Skills Wales qualifications should no longer be used at 14 to 16. The proposed new arrangements for assessing literacy and numeracy within the Welsh Baccalaureate, using new GCSEs, are set out in Sections 5 and 6 (pages 29 and 40). A new digital literacy element within the Core of the Welsh Baccalaureate would cover the general IT skills and awareness needed by all learners, but would not use Essential Skills Wales ICT at 14 to 16.
4. For post-16 learners, the Review has concluded that the content and assessment of Essential Skills Wales qualifications should be revisited. The portfolio approach to compiling evidence is widely criticised as burdensome and repetitive and is seen as often taking place at the expense of actual teaching and learning. Assessment for Essential Skills Wales is also perceived as lacking in rigour. Repeated redrafting and high levels of support mean that many learners who attain the qualifications are unable to demonstrate independently the skills expected. Subjective interpretation of the standards leads to inconsistent assessment judgements. A new assessment approach should be developed, including a greater proportion of externality, to increase consistency, reliability and robustness. The assessment method should retain enough flexibility to fit different applied activities and settings, including apprenticeships, for vocational and adult learners. The new qualifications should be trialled during 2014. At the post-16 age group, Essential Skills Wales qualifications will no longer be a requirement within the revised Welsh Baccalaureate.

5. The recent Welsh Government Essential Skills Wales Comparability Study on Communication Skills Levels 1 to 3 (Writing Component) highlighted areas of good practice and shortcomings in awarding organisation practices relating to assessment and verification (both internal and external). Although this study specifically related to Communication, many of the weaknesses described are linked to systems and processes and are therefore equally valid in the context of Application of Number and ICT. Awarding organisations should build on the good practice identified and should address the shortcomings identified as soon as possible, in order to strengthen the current Essential Skills Wales suite of qualifications for the benefit of learners taking the qualifications in advance of changes proposed by the Review.

***Essential Skills Wales (RoQ, 2012, p. 12 – 13)***

***R26*** *The Welsh Government and WJEC should end the use of Essential Skills Wales qualifications at 14 to 16 within the Welsh Baccalaureate.*

***R27*** *The Welsh Government should work with awarding organisations and stakeholders to review the content and assessment of Essential Skills Wales qualifications in communication ... to develop a more robust, consistent and reliable assessment method, with a greater proportion of externality.*

***R29*** *The Welsh Government should ensure that the shortcomings of awarding organisations highlighted in the recent Essential Skills Wales Comparability Study on Communication Skills Levels 1 – 3 (Writing Component, Welsh Government, 2012) are addressed as soon as possible.*

**Work undertaken in collaboration with stakeholders to address the recommendation**

**A range of options were evaluated and a preference was expressed for**

- Essential Skills Wales will only be available at entry level at Key Stage 4 or for alternative provision such as PRUs and special schools;
- The standards for Essential Communication Skills have been revised to clarify and support revised approaches;
- A revised assessment methodology has been specified, using a combination of a Controlled Task and a confirmatory Test with a greater degree of externality;
- The standards and assessments can be accessed in English and/or Welsh;
- A parallel suite of standards for Communication Skills has been created to support the development and evidencing of bilingual competence, i.e. the ability to communicate through both English and Welsh as a part of the same purpose, as

appropriate. This proficiency is also referred to as 'translanguaging' and is highly prized in many workplaces (see Annex 2).

- These bilingual skills support the aspiration in Wales to be a bilingual nation and will be essential employability skills for many people working in public facing environments.

## **Overall structure and aims**

### **Overall Structure**

The new Essential Skills Wales suite will be comprised of:

Essential Communication Skills

Essential Application of Number Skills

Essential Digital Literacy Skills

Essential Employability Skills including Planning and Organisation, Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving and Personal Effectiveness

It is intended that the skills of Communication, Application of Number and Digital Literacy will be offered as stand-alone qualifications whilst the latter skills (Critical Thinking, Planning and Organisation, Creativity and Innovation and Personal Effectiveness) will be offered as one holistic stand-alone qualification, entitled Essential Employability Skills.

All of the Essential Skills qualifications will be offered from Entry 1 to Level 4. There will be clear progression and increased levels of demand through the Levels, and the qualifications at each Level will provide a pathway for learners to develop and consolidate their skills.

### **Aims**

The Essential Communication Skills qualification will enable learners to develop and demonstrate an understanding of and proficiency in essential communication skills that employers and next-stage educators value and that learners need for progression and effective performance in learning, work and life.

All of the Essential Skills will be developed in a variety of ways across the curriculum and throughout learning and life. The aims of the stand-alone Essential Skills qualifications are to:

- structure and consolidate this learning making incidental, naturally occurring practices explicit;
- encourage articulation and analysis of and reflection on the skills and on the learner's own proficiency in them in personalised terms;
- increase confidence and effectiveness in the use and application of these skills;

- develop an understanding of how to transfer skills to new purposes and contexts;
- provide positive and engaging opportunities to further explore, develop, practise and apply the skills, in a range of meaningful and 'real-life' contexts for real-life purposes.

## Essential Communication Skills Levels 1, 2 and 3 tutor/assessor guidance

### About the Qualification

Essential Skills (Wales) are national qualifications. Following recommendations in the *'Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales'* the content of Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualifications in Communication (Comms) and Application of Number (AoN) Levels 1 to 3 has been reviewed and revised and an assessment model, with a greater proportion of externality, has been developed for Levels 1, 2 and 3

In order to achieve the qualification in Communications at Levels 1, 2 or 3, learners must demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both:

- a Controlled Task, and
- a short, confirmatory Test.

The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills and learners will need to show they can utilise those skills in a holistic manner, relevant to real-life circumstances. The purpose of the Test is to confirm learners' underpinning knowledge and skills.

Both the Controlled Task and Test are **summative assessments**. Learners should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at that level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period. Both assessments may be taken only once, however a learner may undertake different Controlled Task[s] or Test[s] at another time within the 24 month period if they do not achieve a pass.

### Controlled Tasks are:

- externally produced by awarding organisations
  - Where centres or learners have particular needs they may submit a proposal to contextualise the Tasks. This would need to be done at least 3 months prior to delivery.
- to be completed within 4 hours for Level 1 and 5 hours for level 2
  - The Task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight week period.
  - Additional reading and research activity (for L2 Speaking and Listening) can take place outside of the maximum hours but must be within the consecutive eight week period.
- internally assessed, by appropriately qualified staff, using the Marking Schemes provided
- internally standardised
- externally moderated by the awarding organisation.



### **Tests are:**

- externally produced by awarding organisations
- to be treated as confidential material by centres
- taken unseen by learners and completely unaided; except for any assistance allowed under the Access Guidance
- externally marked.

### **Communications Tests:**

- Reading
  - 25 minutes to complete at Level 1 and Level 2
- Writing
  - 25 minutes to complete at Level 1 and Level 2

### **Tutor / Assessor Role**

It is important that learners are aware they need to pass both the Controlled Task and the Test in order to achieve an ES(W) qualification. Skills to be acquired and / or developed should be identified by initial assessment (and diagnostic assessment, where appropriate) and an Individual Learning Plan should set out how those skills will be attained. Learners should only undertake the assessments when they have learnt and had an opportunity to consolidate those skills. It is good practice to prepare learners for these summative assessments by, e.g., explaining how the Task and Test are presented and how they will need to utilise their skills. Learners will need to be familiar with the ES(W) Standards, at the level of assessment they are taking, to ensure they are clear of the assessment requirements they must meet.

It is also important learners are aware of the restrictions under which the Controlled Task will be conducted. These are fully explained in the *Controlled Conditions Guidance (TBC)* but include:

- Learners may receive clarification on the given scenario but only if that does not unfairly disadvantage them.
- While their tutor / assessor will be marking their final work, they will not be giving feedback or opportunities for learners to correct their work in terms of overall content, including spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Tutor / assessors may suggest that learners refer back to the standards to ensure assessment requirements have been met but must not identify gaps or shortfalls in the evidence produced.

### **Marking Record Sheet and controlled assessment regulations**

The mark scheme presented is a Marking Record Sheet to support the internal assessment of the Controlled Task. The Marking Record Sheet defines the performance expectations at each level, in accordance with the skill standards.

The Marking Record Sheet includes performance bands, which articulate both the minimum performance expected at the level and performance that is below the skill requirements at the level.

The ES(W) qualification is a pass/fail qualification, which measures overall proficiency against the skill standards at a specified level. Candidates must meet all of the skill standard requirements to achieve the Controlled Task.

The Marking Record Sheet is designed to support a Controlled Task. This is distinct from a portfolio-based assessment, which was used previously for ESW qualifications. Candidates are required to produce work that meets these performance standards independently<sup>1</sup> and under controlled conditions.

The Marking Record Sheet is used to assess a candidate's completed work, once the duration for Controlled Task assessment has concluded. It is not applied in an iterative manner, as it may be with a portfolio-based internal assessment.

Candidates should not be assisted to meet the requirements of the assessment during the Controlled Task. The Controlled Tasks will include relevant candidate instructions, outlining the assessment requirements and providing relevant guidance, to ensure that candidates understand the performance expectations. Acceptable support may include clarifying these expectations for Level 1 candidates, for example. Where candidates require any support during the Controlled Task this must be clearly recorded. This should be limited and must not include advice.

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<sup>1</sup> the term 'independently' refers to the valid assessment of a candidate's individual performance and does not suggest without appropriate access arrangements (e.g. assistive technology or other support in line with their 'normal way of working').

## Essential Communication Skills Level 1 Specification

C1.1 Speaking and Listening			
You must show you can:	Assessment Requirements	You need to know how to:	Guidance
<b>C1.1</b> take part in at least two formal discussions with two or more other people.	At least one of the discussions must be in person.  The two or more other people must not include the assessor.  You must include your preparation for the discussions.  <b>In your discussions, you must show you can:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand and respond to spoken language in at least two different contexts</li> </ul>	a) prepare for discussions so you can say things and provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion b) make clear and relevant contributions to discussions c) respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussion d) use appropriate phrases or gestures in order to join in the discussion e) identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions in at least two different contexts f) pay close attention and respond constructively to what others say g) use strategies to show you are listening and to clarify and confirm understanding	<b>Discussions</b> The discussions must provide opportunities for you to respond to a range of views and beliefs.  In person means that all members of the group must be physically present i.e. face-to-face and not joining via electronic media.  Preparation for discussions may include, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– brief notes</li> <li>– flow charts</li> <li>– spider diagrams</li> <li>– annotated research</li> <li>– a bullet pointed list</li> <li>– or anything that shows evidence of planning and preparation.</li> </ul> <b>Context</b> Contexts can come from an educational setting, workplace or everyday life, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a mock-panel interview</li> <li>– a workplace team meeting</li> <li>– a discussion on the role of a literary character</li> <li>– or a meeting to plan an upcoming event.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speak to communicate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– information</li> <li>– feelings</li> <li>– opinions</li> <li>– questions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> on familiar topics, using appropriate language and in	h) judge when to speak and how much to say i) clearly express statements of fact, opinion, questions, explanations, and descriptions of familiar topics, as appropriate j) use strategies to support what you are	

	two or more contexts.	<p>saying</p> <p>k) present information and ideas in a logical sequence so that it is easy for your listeners to follow and understand</p> <p>l) respond to questions about familiar topics</p> <p>m) clearly convey your feelings and opinions, when appropriate, in a way that is balanced and assertive without being aggressive</p> <p>n) use language appropriate to your listeners and the context.</p>	<p>A team meeting with peers would be a different context from a team meeting with managers. The different contexts should support the learner developing transferable skills.</p> <p><b>Respond constructively</b></p> <p>To respond constructively you do not have to accept everything that other people say but you must be able to explain why you agree or disagree.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies to show you are listening and understanding could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- body language</li> <li>- brief affirmative responses</li> <li>- asking questions to clarify points</li> <li>- repeating/confirming what the speaker has said etc.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies to support what you are saying could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- body language</li> <li>- facial expression</li> <li>- gestures</li> <li>- emphasis etc.</li> </ul>
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<b>C1.2 Reading</b>			
<b>You must show you can:</b>	<b>Assessment Requirements</b>	<b>You need to know how to:</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<p><b>C1.2</b> read, understand and obtain information independently to meet your purpose(s) from at least two different types of documents.</p>	<p>At least one document must contain an image.</p> <p>One document must be at least 250 words long.</p> <p>The second document must be of sufficient length to meet the assessment requirements. The documents must be of different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document types</li> <li>• text types.</li> </ul> <p>You must work independently to extract material from two different documents in order to meet the purpose of your Task.</p>	<p>a) use a variety of strategies to identify the main points and ideas in documents and images</p> <p>b) read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit your purpose</p> <p>c) recognise the purpose of a variety of documents</p> <p>d) use organisational and structural features to locate information</p> <p>e) obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required.</p> <p>f) find the meaning of words and phrases you do not understand.</p>	<p><b>Different documents</b></p> <p>These include using different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document types, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– letter</li> <li>– article</li> <li>– blogs</li> <li>– email</li> <li>– web page</li> <li>– online forum</li> <li>– report</li> <li>– leaflet</li> <li>– brochure</li> <li>– text book</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Text types, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– explanatory</li> <li>– instructive</li> <li>– narrative</li> <li>– descriptive</li> <li>– persuasive</li> <li>– informative</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>There may be an overlap and / or a difference between the text type and the purpose of the document. For example, a description of what is in a portfolio is intended to inform, whilst a description within an advert is intended to persuade. You should be able to distinguish this difference by the vocabulary used and how they are structured.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies to identify the main points and ideas of texts could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using organisational and structural features</li> <li>– skimming to obtain the general gist</li> <li>– scanning to locate specific information</li> <li>– annotation</li> </ul>

			<p>Organisational and structural features to locate information include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- subheadings</li> <li>- menus</li> <li>- paragraphs</li> <li>- contents page or index</li> </ul> <p>To find the meaning of words or phrases you do not understand, you could use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reference materials, such as a glossary or dictionary</li> </ul> <p><b>Inferring meaning</b></p> <p>You must be able to see what a writer means, even when this is not made clear in the text.</p>
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<b>C1.3 Writing</b>			
<b>You must show you can:</b>	<b>Assessment Requirements</b>	<b>You need to know how to:</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<p><b>C1.3</b></p> <p>write two short documents to communicate information to familiar audiences using language that is appropriate to your purpose and audience.</p>	<p>One document must be at least 250 words long.</p> <p>The second document must be of sufficient length to meet the assessment requirements.</p> <p>You must demonstrate all of the required skills in each document.</p> <p>Each document must be of a different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document type</li> <li>• text type</li> <li>• purpose.</li> </ul> <p>For each document, you must include your plan and evidence of your drafting process and checking.</p> <p>In final work, sentences must be formed correctly with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p>Paragraphing must be appropriate.</p>	<p>a) plan and draft writing</p> <p>b) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit your purpose and audience</p> <p>c) make your meaning clear</p> <p>d) construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences using appropriate conjunctions</p> <p>e) organise writing in paragraphs that demonstrate a logical sequence</p> <p>f) judge the relevance of information and the amount of detail to include for your purpose</p> <p>g) use language suitable for purpose and audience</p> <p>h) use relevant images, where appropriate, to help the reader understand your main points</p> <p>i) spell correctly</p> <p>j) use punctuation correctly</p> <p>k) use grammar correctly</p> <p>l) check and, where necessary, revise documents.</p>	<p><b>Plans</b></p> <p>These may include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– brief notes</li> <li>– flow charts</li> <li>– spider diagrams</li> <li>– a bullet pointed list</li> <li>– or anything that shows evidence of planning and preparation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <p>Evidence of drafting could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a printed or electronic draft</li> <li>– an annotated version</li> <li>– an individual log, diary or statement affirming the process of drafting or checking; produced by you, your assessor or another witness.</li> </ul> <p><b>Different documents</b></p> <p>These include using different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document types, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– letter</li> <li>– article</li> <li>– web page</li> <li>– email</li> <li>– official notice</li> <li>– leaflet</li> <li>– brochure</li> <li>– essay</li> <li>– report</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Text types, for example:</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- explanatory</li> <li>- instructive</li> <li>- narrative</li> <li>- descriptive</li> <li>- persuasive</li> <li>- informative</li> </ul>
			<p>There may be an overlap and / or a difference between the text type and the purpose of the document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose, for example:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to explain e.g. the steps needed to complete a Task, such as, how to change a wheel or directions to get somewhere</li> <li>- to instruct, e.g. fire evacuation procedures; how to put a book case together; how to prepare a meal</li> <li>- to narrate, e.g. giving an account of an accident or a night out; what you did on holiday</li> <li>- to describe, e.g. a place, a book, a photograph</li> <li>- to persuade, e.g. a friend to go to an event with you ; a customer to buy something you wish to sell</li> <li>- to inform, e.g. about changes to planned arrangements; about details of an event</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Spelling, punctuation and grammar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You must be able to spell correctly, including specialist words related to your topic and context.</li> <li>- You must use punctuation accurately, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks where appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- You must use grammar correctly, e.g.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- know how to write complete sentences using correct grammar, e.g. subject-verb agreement and accuracy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



			<p>and consistency of tense, e.g. Pete and Allie were going to town but Chris was going to the cinema.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You must know compound sentences can be joined with a wide range of conjunctions to express meanings more precisely e.g. as, and, but, if, so, while, though, since.</li> </ul> <p><b>Checking</b></p> <p>You must check and, where necessary, correct your work in order to ensure that spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct, that it is organised into paragraphs that help the reader to follow what you have written and that your meaning is clear.</p> <p><b>Legibility</b></p> <p>If work is electronically produced it should be of an appropriate font and size. If it is hand-written it must be readable by your intended audience.</p>
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## **Essential Communication Skills Level 1 Amplification of Assessment Requirements**

This is about demonstrating your skills in:

- speaking and listening
- reading
- writing

in familiar contexts, some of which must be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles.

### **Notes**

1. Each level of the skill incorporates and builds on the previous levels. For example, in C1.3, the requirement to 'use punctuation correctly' includes capital letters and full stops (Entry Level 1), question marks (Entry Level 2), and exclamation marks (Entry Level 3).
2. At this level, subject matter and materials should be straightforward, i.e. those that you will often meet in your work, studies or other activities, and which have content put across in a direct way with lines of reasoning and main points being easily identified. However, you will build on the skills at Entry Level 3 by working in a wider range of contexts and topics, reading and writing longer and more varied documents, and by making more judgements about your speaking and your writing.
3. You must show you can apply your skills in the way they are specified in the first column of this amplification section, headed, 'You must show you can:' Your assessment will need you to meet the requirements described in 'Assessment Requirements', the second column. In order to meet these requirements, you will need to have the skills that are listed in 'You need to know how to:' the third column.
4. The 'Guidance' in the fourth column supports the requirements of the first three columns and is intended to advise and help you and your teacher/tutor/trainer in your work. It provides explanations of some of the requirements of the standards that may be useful when you are developing the skill of Communication at Level 1. It is not a mandatory part of the standards.
5. The Mandatory Definitions give the exact meaning of certain words in this section. You must always refer to them when you are developing your skills and preparing for assessment.

### **Assessment**

At Level 1 you will be assessed via a Controlled Task and a short Test to demonstrate your skills meet the Communication Specification. The Controlled Task is designed to assess the application of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way; although each part of the assessment will focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.

The Test confirms your underpinning knowledge and skills.

These assessments will be taken when you have been taught and developed the skills at this level.

There must be evidence that all your work has been assessed and authenticated – there must be records/notes, written by a competent assessor, confirming that your work is your own and that it has achieved the required standard.

### **Access Statement**

For candidates with particular disabilities, reasonable adjustments to the assessment requirements may be allowed in appropriate circumstances. In some cases, exemptions may be permissible. For details, please see the introduction to the standards and the *Controlled Conditions Guidance (TBC)*.

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 1 Controlled Task Specification**

### **Level 1**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both their Controlled Task and an externally assessed confirmatory instrument (hereafter referred to as a Test).
2. The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Test and must show candidates utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
3. The purpose of the Test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.
4. Both the Controlled Task and Test are summative. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at this level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation.
5. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period.
6. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at level 1.
7. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.
8. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
  - a. Level 1 Essential Communication Skills Specification
  - b. Controlled Conditions guidance (TBC)

### **Controlled Task Specification**

#### **Level 1**

The Controlled Task is hereafter referred to as the Task.

Controlled Tasks will be produced by the awarding organisations. However, where centres or learners have particular needs they are able to submit a proposal to contextualise the Tasks. This would need to be done at least 3 months prior to their delivery.

All Tasks must meet the requirements of the Controlled Task Specification and the Essential Communication Skills Specification. A marking guide must be produced to accompany each Task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.

The Task is designed to support the assessment of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way. However, each part of the Task will focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.

The Task will have two separate parts to ensure there are different topics, purposes and audiences. For each part, the Reading will inform a discussion and a written document.

**Duration:** Up to 4 hours. The Task must be designed to be completed in its entirety in a maximum of 4 hours. The Task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight week period.

## **Part 1**

### **Reading**

A source document must be provided which must be of at least 250 words, and contain an image.

The Task must require candidates to independently read, understand and obtain information from this document for a purpose. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the Task. The Task must require candidates to use the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a discussion on the topic and then to write a document on the topic.

### **Speaking and Listening**

#### **Discussion**

Candidates should use their preparation from the Reading Task to inform their discussion.

The Task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. The minimum duration of the discussion must be between 10 – 20 minutes, depending on the size of the group. The discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements.

The Task must require candidates to understand and respond to discussion, communicating at least two from:

- information;
- feelings;
- opinions;
- questions.

## **Writing**

The Task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document must be a minimum of 250 words long and of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the Subject Specification at this level. For this Task, the candidate must use the information they have gained from the Reading assessment activity and may also include content from the Speaking & Listening assessment activity.

The Task must require candidates to:

- produce a plan for what they are going to write
- to draft / check their writing, and
- to produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.

## **Part 2**

### **Reading**

A source document must be provided which must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the ESW Standards at this level. This document must be of a different text and document type from the one used in Part 1.

The Task must require candidates to independently read, understand and obtain information from this document for a given purpose. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the Task. The Task must require candidates to use the information that they have obtained to plan, draft and write a document for a given purpose and audience.

### **Writing**

The Task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document written must be of a sufficient length to give adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the ESW Standards at this level. For this Task, candidates must use the information that they have gained from the Reading assessment activities.

The Task must require candidates to:

- produce a plan for what they are going to write
- to draft / check their writing, and
- to produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.

## **Speaking and Listening**

Candidates should use their preparation from the Reading and / or Writing Tasks to inform their discussion.

The Task must require candidates to understand and respond to discussion, communicating at least two from:

- information;
- feelings;
- opinions;

The Task must require candidates to demonstrate competence in any of these skills which were not required in Part 1.

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 1 Confirmatory Test Specification**

### **Introduction**

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both their Controlled Task and an externally assessed confirmatory instrument (hereafter referred to as a Test).
2. The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Test and must show candidates utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
3. The purpose of the Test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.
4. Both the Controlled Task and Test are summative. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at this level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation.
5. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period.
6. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessment at Level 1.
7. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.
8. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
  - a. Level 1 Essential Communication Skills Specification

### **Test Specification:**

- There are two Tests:
  - one for each component of Reading and Writing
  - each Test will be 25 minutes
- The Test must assess candidates' skills and understanding in meaningful contexts.

- Examples of contexts which provide opportunities to develop suitable questions include:
  - family and home
  - leisure activities, including holidays
  - education and training
  - work
  - community and citizenship
  - media and communications
  - social issues
- There can be only one correct answer.
- Tests should be capable of being delivered onscreen and paper-based.
- The pass mark is 70%.
- A dictionary, including bi-lingual, may be used.
- Tests can be taken at the same time or separately, depending on the needs of the learners and centres, e.g. for re-sitting one Test.

## Level 1 Reading

### Assessment principles:

- There must be 2 different source texts / documents. The two source texts / documents in an assessment must be of different text and document types and draw upon different contexts.
- Each text should be between 30 - 150 words. The length of the combined texts / documents must not exceed 200 words.
- Source materials must be free of any form of bias (for example, gender, ethnicity, or age-related) which might favour or disadvantage any candidate or groups of candidates.
- There should be between 4 - 6 questions on each text.
- The Test will be comprised of 10 questions.
- One of the texts / documents must be able to assess organisational or structural features.
- The Reading assessment at Level 1 consists of entirely Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ).
- There must be one key statement and a minimum of three strong distractors in each MCQ.
- Questions must be written so there is only one correct answer per mark.

### Skills and Marking

ESW Standard	Skills being assessed: The candidate needs to know how to:	Number of questions	Number of marks
C1.2	a) identify the main points and ideas in documents and images	2	1 per question
	b) read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit your purpose	2	1 per question

	<b>c)</b> recognise the purpose of a variety of documents	2	1 per question
	<b>d)</b> use organisational and structural features to locate information	1	1
	<b>e)</b> obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required	2	1 per question
	<b>f)</b> find the meaning of words and phrases	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

## Level 1 Writing

### Assessment principles:

- The Writing assessment at Level 1 consists of Free Response (FRQ) or Multiple Choice (MCQ) questions as identified against each skill. FRQs are defined as those that do not provide the candidate with possible answers / responses as options, as they occur in multiple-choice questions; however there must still be only one correct answer.
- It is not meaningful to assess some aspects of writing skills within this type of Test format and therefore these aspects will be assessed in the Controlled Task. These skills are:
  - C1.3 a, b, c, f, h,
  - The skills of checking and revising documents (C1.3 l) will be assessed in the Test within questions for spelling, punctuation and grammar (C1.3 i, j, k).
- The Writing assessment at L1 will contain between 10 and 16 questions. Questions will be equally distributed between MCQ and FRQ. The marks between MCQ and FRQ do not need to be equally distributed.
- There must be one key statement and a minimum of three strong distractors in each MCQ.
- Questions must be written so there is only one correct answer per mark.

### Skills and Marking

ESW Standard	Skills being assessed: The candidate needs to know how to:	Question type	Number of questions	Number of marks	Examples
<b>C1.3</b>	<b>d)</b> construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences, using appropriate conjunctions:	FRQ	1 - 2	1 - 3	An introductory text. With these two sentences, which is the appropriate conjunction? Put this together as an appropriate compound sentence. 1



					question with 2 marks is both subject-verb agreement + a conjunction, for example.
	<b>e)</b> demonstrate a logical sequence	FRQ	1 - 2	1 per question	Examining a time sequence, putting elements logically. Could be drag / drop or matching. Could be focussed upon organisational aspects, logic in bullets, or organisation in narrative, for example.
	<b>g)</b> use language suitable for purpose and audience	MCQ	1 - 3	1 per question	
	<b>i)</b> spell correctly	FRQ	1 - 4	4 minimum	A piece of text with a number of incorrectly spelt words to proofread, identify errors and write correct alternative.
	<b>j)</b> use punctuation correctly	FRQ	1 - 4	4 minimum	Sentences to punctuate
	<b>k)</b> use grammar correctly	FRQ	1 - 4	4 minimum	Sentences to correct
<b>Total</b>			<b>10 - 16</b>	<b>20</b>	

## Essential Communication Skills Level 2 Specification

C2.1 Speaking and Listening			
You must show you can:	Assessment Requirements	You need to know how to:	Guidance
<b>C2.1</b> A) take part in at least two formal discussions with two or more other people B) give a talk / presentation of at least four minutes, to an audience of at least three people.	<p>At least one of the discussions and your talk / presentation must be in person.</p> <p>The two or more other people must not include the assessor.</p> <p>You must include your preparation for the discussions / talk / presentation.</p> <p>In your talk / presentation, brief notes may be used as a prompt, but you must not read these out.</p> <p>In your talk / presentation you must include the use of at least one image or other supporting material. The supporting material does not need to be visual but cannot be wholly text-based.</p>	<p>a) prepare for discussions and talks / presentations so that you can say things and provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion and talk / presentation</p> <p>b) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits your purpose and situation</p> <p>c) use appropriate phrases and gestures in order to join in the discussion, change the topic or bring it back to the point, without interrupting the speaker, being over-assertive or aggressive, or appearing to be 'taking over'</p> <p>d) support your opinions and arguments with evidence</p> <p>e) summarise information from your reading and from other sources to suit your purpose</p> <p>f) speak clearly in a way that suits your subject, purpose, audience and situation</p> <p>g) keep to the subject and structure your talk / presentation in a logical sequence to help your audience follow a line of thought or series of</p>	<p><b>Discussions</b></p> <p>The discussions must provide opportunities for you to respond to a range of views and sensibilities, and to take the lead in moving discussions forward.</p> <p>In person means that all members of the group must be physically present i.e. face-to-face and not joining via electronic media.</p> <p>In order to move discussions forward you should know, for example, how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– respond to and offer constructive criticism</li> <li>– provide evidence to support opinions and arguments</li> <li>– use appropriate phrases to change the direction of the discussion or refocus the purpose</li> <li>– develop points and open up new ideas</li> <li>– summarise what has been said</li> <li>– ensure there is an agreed / shared understanding.</li> </ul> <p><b>Images and other support materials</b></p> <p>An image or other support materials must be included in the presentation to aid the understanding of the written or spoken word. Images might include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a reflective jacket to demonstrate health and safety in the workplace</li> <li>– a graph to show increased sales</li> </ul>

		<p>events</p> <p>h) use a variety of ways to support the main points of your talk / presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a piece of equipment to demonstrate its use.</li> </ul> <p>Where appropriate, other support materials could be used instead of an image, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- playing music to demonstrate a musical style</li> <li>- providing food to help to explain flavours</li> <li>- passing around swatches of fabric to demonstrate the different qualities in materials.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>In your discussions, you must show you can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and respond to spoken language on at least two different topics and in at least two different contexts</li> </ul>	<p>i) identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions on at least two topics and in at least two contexts</p> <p>j) respond constructively to criticism</p> <p>k) use strategies to show you are listening and to clarify and confirm understanding</p> <p>l) identify the speaker's intentions</p>	<p>These support materials cannot be wholly text-based.</p> <p><b>Contexts</b></p> <p>Contexts can come from an educational setting, workplace or everyday life, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a mock panel interview</li> <li>- a workplace team meeting</li> <li>- a discussion on the role of a literary character</li> <li>- a meeting to plan an upcoming event.</li> </ul> <p>A team meeting with peers would be a different context from a team meeting with managers. The different contexts should support you developing transferable skills.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• speak to communicate:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information</li> <li>- feelings</li> <li>- opinions</li> <li>- questions</li> <li>- instructions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>on familiar and unfamiliar topics, using appropriate language and non-verbal communication.</p> <p>You must cover each of these at least once within the discussions and / or the talk / presentation.</p>	<p>m) use varied vocabulary and expressions to suit your purpose</p> <p>n) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding</p> <p>o) use appropriate strategies including language and non-verbal communication to support what you are saying</p> <p>p) confirm that listeners understand your meaning</p> <p>q) use language and non-verbal communication appropriate to your listeners and the situation.</p>	<p>To respond constructively, including responding to criticism, you do not have to accept everything other people say. However, you must be able to explain why you agree, disagree or reject a point of criticism.</p> <p><b>Respond constructively</b></p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies to show you are listening and understanding could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- body language</li> <li>- brief affirmative responses</li> </ul>

	<p>You must show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarity of expression</li> <li>• that your talk / presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– is well structured</li> <li>– keeps to the point</li> <li>– gives a clear illustration of the main points</li> <li>– uses a variety of strategies to support the main points</li> <li>– is fit for your subject, purpose and audience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• you can help to move a discussion forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– asking questions to clarify points</li> <li>– repeating/confirming what the speaker has said etc.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies to support what you are saying could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– body language</li> <li>– facial expression</li> <li>– gestures</li> <li>– emphasis etc.</li> </ul> <p>You should be able to draw on a range of vocabulary and expressions appropriate to varied purposes and contexts and recognise when members of your audience / group do not understand what you are saying and be able to give more detail or explanation until you are sure they have understood.</p> <p>Strategies to support understanding in your talk / presentation could include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– structuring your talk/presentation to present information and ideas in a clear sequence (e.g. how to start and close the talk / presentation), as well as how to use cues to signal the key points or change track to take your audience with you.</li> <li>– using a style of language to suit the subject and purpose of your talk / presentation, e.g. when giving explanations, instructions, accounts of events, or when presenting an argument</li> <li>– articulating your words clearly</li> <li>– adapting volume, pitch or pace to suit the situation, e.g. taking account of the number of listeners, the room size and the noise level</li> </ul>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- varying your tone of voice to keep audience attention</li><li>- taking into account the nature or status of your audience and how familiar they are to you.</li></ul>
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<b>C2.2 Reading</b>			
<b>You must show you can:</b>	<b>Assessment Requirements</b>	<b>You need to know how to:</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<p><b>C2.2</b></p> <p>read, understand and summarise information independently from at least two different documents about the same subject.</p>	<p>Each document must be at least 500 words long.</p> <p>At least one must contain reasoning and at least one must contain an image.</p> <p>The documents must be of different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document types</li> <li>• text types.</li> </ul> <p>You must work independently to select material from two different documents in order to meet the purpose of your Task.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) use a variety of strategies to identify the main points, ideas and lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference</li> <li>b) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit</li> <li>c) read and understand a wide range of vocabulary</li> <li>d) locate and understand information using organisational features</li> <li>e) find the meaning of words and phrases you do not understand, using reference materials</li> <li>f) use different types of continuous documents to obtain relevant information</li> <li>g) read critically to evaluate information and to compare information, ideas and opinions from different sources</li> <li>h) summarise information from documents.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Different documents</b></p> <p>These include using different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document types, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– letter</li> <li>– article</li> <li>– blogs</li> <li>– email</li> <li>– web page</li> <li>– online forum</li> <li>– essay</li> <li>– report</li> <li>– leaflet</li> <li>– brochure</li> <li>– text book</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Text types, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– explanatory</li> <li>– instructive</li> <li>– narrative</li> <li>– descriptive</li> <li>– persuasive</li> <li>– informative</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>There may be an overlap and / or a difference between the text type and the purpose of the document. For example, a description of what is in a portfolio is intended to inform, whilst a description within an advert is intended to persuade. You should be able to distinguish this difference by the vocabulary used and how they are structured.</p> <p>A document with reasoning contains justifications or arguments for something, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– You are required to wear steel toe-capped</li> </ul>

C2.2 Reading			
			<p>boots on site at all times because they protect your toes from damage if there is an accident.</p> <p><b>Main points</b></p> <p>You must be able to read critically when you are following a sequence of information or ideas and know how to identify points of view when reading an argument.</p> <p><b>Writer's purpose and intentions</b></p> <p>You must be able to identify the purpose of a document, for example, to inform or to persuade, by its use of vocabulary and structure, in order to make judgements about its relevance.</p> <p><b>Summarise</b></p> <p>Summarising involves expressing the essential points of something, e.g. the main facts, ideas, arguments, opinions, in a concise way.</p> <p>The purpose of your reading could be to help you prepare for your talk / presentation or for writing your document. Your ability to summarise would then be implicit in the content of your talk / presentation or one of your documents.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies to identify the main points and ideas</p>

C2.2 Reading			
			<p>of texts could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using organisational and structural features</li> <li>- skimming to obtain the general gist</li> <li>- scanning to locate specific information</li> <li>- annotation</li> </ul> <p>Organisational and structural features to locate information include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- subheadings</li> <li>- menus</li> <li>- paragraphs</li> <li>- contents page or index</li> </ul>



## C2.3 Writing

### You must show you can:

#### C2.3

write two documents, each one communicating different information to different audiences using language that is appropriate to your purpose and audience.

### Assessment Requirements

One document must be at least 500 words long.

The second document must be of sufficient length to meet the assessment requirements.

You must demonstrate all of the required skills in each document.

Each document must be of a different:

- document type
- text type
- purpose.

For each document, you must include your plan and evidence of your drafting process and checking.

In final work, sentences must be formed correctly with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Paragraphing must be

### You need to know how to:

- a) Summarise information from your reading and /or other sources to suit your purpose
- b) Plan and draft writing
- c) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit your purpose and audience
- d) make your meaning clear
- e) construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions
- f) organise writing in paragraphs that help to make meaning clear
- g) structure your writing to help readers follow and understand your main points
- h) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence
- i) use different styles of writing, including formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences

### Guidance

#### Plans

These may include, for example:

- brief notes
- flow charts
- spider diagrams
- a bullet pointed list
- or anything that shows evidence of planning and preparation.

#### Drafting

Evidence of drafting could include:

- a printed or electronic draft
- an annotated version
- an individual log, diary or statement affirming the process of drafting or checking; produced by you, your assessor or another witness.

#### Different documents

These include using different:

- Document types, for example:
  - letter
  - article
  - web page
  - email
  - official notice
  - leaflet
  - brochure
  - essay
  - report
- Text types, for example:
  - explanatory
  - descriptive

appropriate.

- j) spell correctly
- k) use punctuation correctly
- l) use grammar correctly
- m) check and, where necessary, revise documents.

- instructive
- narrative
- persuasive
- informative

There may be an overlap and / or a difference between the text type and the purpose of the document.

- Purpose, for example:

- to explain, such as the steps needed to complete a Task, e.g. how to apply for university or a job; the best way to use a piece of machinery
- to instruct, e.g. telling employees what to do in the event of an accident
- to narrate, e.g. giving an account of a piece of research or project you've undertaken; of an extended trip or work experience
- to describe, e.g. a place, a book, a photograph etc.
- to persuade, e.g. a potential employer you would be the best person for the job; persuading someone else to see your point of view
- to inform, e.g. on H&S issues that have arisen and how to make improvements

### **Summarise**

You must be able to distinguish between what is or is not relevant to your purpose and be able to present the essence of what you have read in a concise way.

### **Structure your writing**

you must know how to organise your written work in a logical and / or persuasive sequence, using

paragraphs and features such as headings and subheadings

### **Styles**

You must be able to use formal and informal language, including, for example, persuasive techniques, technical vocabulary and evidence to support the points you are making, to suit different purposes for writing.

### **Spelling, punctuation and grammar**

- You must be able to spell correctly, including specialist words related to your topic and context
- You must use punctuation accurately, including not only:
  - capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks, where appropriate,but also:
  - commas, apostrophes and inverted commas.
- You must know how to write complex sentences, e.g. using 'because' or 'although', use tenses consistently, as well as ensuring subject-verb agreement, for example: John and Rhys were watching the match when a plane appeared overhead so they decided they would like to go to the air show next week.

### **Checking**

You must check and, where necessary, correct

your work in order to ensure that spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct, that it is organised into paragraphs that help the reader to follow what you have written and that your meaning is clear.

### **Legibility**

If work is electronically produced it should be of an appropriate font and size. If it is hand-written it must be readable by your intended audience.

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 2 Amplification of Assessment Requirements**

This is about demonstrating your skills in:

- speaking and listening
- reading
- writing

in familiar and less familiar contexts, some of which must be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles.

### **Notes**

1. Each level of the skill incorporates and builds on the previous levels. For example, in C2.3, the requirement to 'use punctuation correctly' at Level 2 requires correctly using not only: capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks (from the previous levels), but also: commas, apostrophes and inverted commas.
2. At this level, subject matter and materials should be straightforward, i.e. those that you will often meet in your work, studies or other activities, and which have content put across in a direct way with lines of reasoning and main points being easily identified. However, you will build on the skills at Level 1 by being able to take responsibility for moving a discussion forward, giving a short talk / presentation and reading, summarising and producing longer documents.
3. You must show you can apply your skills in the way they are specified in the first column of this amplification section, headed, 'You must show you can:'. Your assessment will need you to meet the requirements described in 'Assessment Requirements', the second column. In order to meet these requirements, you will need to have the skills that are listed in 'You need to know how to:', the third column.
4. The 'Guidance' in the fourth column supports the requirements of the first three columns and is intended to advise and help you and your teacher/tutor/trainer in your work. It provides explanations of some of the requirements of the standards that may be useful when you are developing the skill of Communication at Level 2. It is not a mandatory part of the standards.
5. The Mandatory Definitions give the exact meaning of certain words in this section. You must always refer to them when you are developing your skills and preparing for assessment.

### **Assessment**

At Level 2 you will be assessed via a Controlled Task and a short Test to demonstrate your skills meet the Communication Standards. The Controlled Task is designed to assess the application of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way; although each part of the assessment will focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.

The Test confirms your underpinning knowledge and skills.

These assessments will be taken when you have been taught and developed the skills at this level.

There must be evidence that all your work has been assessed and authenticated – there must be records/notes, written by a competent assessor, confirming that your work is your own and that it has achieved the required standard.

### **Access statement**

For candidates with particular disabilities, reasonable adjustments to the assessment requirements may be allowed in appropriate circumstances. In some cases, exemptions may be permissible. For details, please see the introduction to the standards and the *Controlled Conditions Guidance (TBC)*.

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 2 Controlled Task Specification**

### **Level 2**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both their Controlled Task and an externally assessed confirmatory instrument (hereafter referred to as a Test).
2. The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Test and must show candidates utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
3. The purpose of the Test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.
4. Both the Controlled Task and Test are summative. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at this level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation.
5. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period.
6. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at level 2.
7. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.
8. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
  - a. Level 2 Essential Communication Skills Specification
  - b. Controlled Conditions guidance (TBC)

### **Controlled Task Specification**

#### **Level 2**

The Controlled Task is hereafter referred to as the Task.

Controlled Tasks will be produced by the awarding organisations. However, where centres or learners have particular needs they are able to submit a proposal to contextualise the Tasks. This would need to be done at least 3 months prior to their delivery.

All Tasks must meet the requirements of the Controlled Task Specification and the Essential Communication Skills Specification. A marking guide must be produced to accompany each Task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the standards.

The Task is designed to support the assessment of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way. However, each part of the assessment will focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.

The Task will have different parts to ensure there are different topics, purposes and audiences. For Part 1, the Reading will inform a discussion and a written document. For Part 2, the Speaking & Listening discussion will inform a written document. Part 3 relates to preparing and delivering a talk / presentation.

**Duration:** Up to 5 hours. The Task must be designed to be completed in its entirety in a maximum of 5 hours. The Task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight week period. Additional reading and research activity (for Part 2: Speaking and Listening and Part 3: Talk / Presentation) can take place outside of the 5 hours maximum but must be within the consecutive eight week period.

## **Part 1**

### **Reading**

Two source documents about the same subject must be provided, each of which must be at least 500 words. One must contain an image and one must contain reasoning. The two documents must be of different text and document types.

The Task must require candidates to independently read, understand and summarise information from these documents for a given purpose. The explicit evidence of this summary must be required in the Writing Task. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the Task.

The Task must require candidates to summarise the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a formal discussion on the topic, and then to write a document on the topic.

### **Speaking and Listening**

#### **Formal Discussion**

Candidates should use their preparation from the Reading Task to inform their discussion.

The Task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. The minimum duration of the discussion must be between 10 – 20 minutes, depending on the size of the group. The discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements.

The Task must require candidates to understand and respond to discussion, communicating, as appropriate, from:

- information;
- feelings;
- opinions;
- questions
- Instructions.

Across the two discussions and talk/presentation (Part 1, 2 and 3), the Task must provide candidates with adequate opportunities to demonstrate competence in all of these skills.

## **Writing**

The Task must require candidates to summarise for a given purpose the information from the two documents in the Reading activity. The Task must require the written document to be a minimum of 500 words.

The Task must require candidates to:

- produce a plan for what they are going to write
- to draft / check their writing, and
- to produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.

## **Part 2**

### **Speaking and Listening**

#### **Formal Discussion**

The Task must require candidates to prepare for, and take part in, a formal discussion on a given topic. This topic should be different from the topic set in Part 1 and should not be heavily dependent on additional reading and research.

The Task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. The minimum duration of the discussion must be between 10 – 20 minutes, depending on the size of the group. The discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the ESW Standards at this level.

The Task must require candidates to understand and respond to discussion, communicating, as appropriate, from:

- information;
- feelings;



- opinions;
- questions
- instructions.

Across the two discussions and talk / presentation (Parts 1, 2 and 3), the Task must provide candidates with adequate opportunities to demonstrate competence in all of these skills.

The discussion should be set up so that it supports the production of a written document on the same topic.

## **Writing**

The Task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document written must be of a sufficient length to give adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the ESW Standards at this level. The Task must require candidates to write a different document type and text type from Part 1 and have a different purpose.

The Task must require candidates to:

- produce a plan for what they are going to write
- to draft / check their writing, and
- to produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.

## **Part 3**

### **Talk / Presentation**

The Task must require candidates to prepare for, and deliver, a talk/presentation of at least four minutes to an audience of at least three people. The Task must require candidates to include an image or other support materials which will enhance the talk/presentation and help audience understanding.

The Task provided does not need to specify the topics or themes for the talk / presentation but may offer suggestions and guidance. The Task should not be heavily dependent on additional reading and research.

The Task must require candidates to include instructions if not already covered in the discussion (in Parts 1 or 2).

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 2 Confirmatory Test Specification**

### **Level 2**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both

their Controlled Task and an externally assessed confirmatory instrument (hereafter referred to as a Test).

2. The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Test and must show candidates utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
3. The purpose of the Test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.
4. Both the Controlled Task and Test are summative. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at this level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation.
5. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period.
6. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at level 2.
7. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.
8. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
  - a. Level 2 Essential Communication Skills Specification

### **Test Specification:**

- There are two Tests:
  - one for each component of Reading and Writing
  - each Test will be 25 minutes
- The Test must assess candidates' skills and understanding in meaningful contexts.  
Examples of contexts which provide opportunities to develop suitable questions include:
  - family and home
  - leisure activities, including holidays
  - education and training
  - work
  - community and citizenship
  - media and communications
  - social issues
- There can be only one correct answer.
- Tests should be capable of being delivered onscreen and paper-based.
- The pass mark is 70%.
- A dictionary, including bi-lingual, may be used.
- Tests can be taken at the same time or separately, depending on the needs of the learners and centres, e.g. for re-sitting one Test.

### **Level 2 Reading**

#### **Assessment principles:**

- There must be 2 different source texts. The two source texts in an assessment must be of different text and document types and draw upon different contexts.
- Each text should be between 75 - 250 words. The combined length of the texts must not exceed 350 words.
- At least one of the texts must include implicit meaning and / or inference, allowing for the assessment of the writer's purposes and intentions, including where these are implicit. For example, with the use of sarcasm, irony etc.
- Source materials must be free of any form of bias (for example, gender, ethnicity, or age-related) which might favour or disadvantage any candidate or groups of candidates.
- There should be between 4 – 6 questions on each text.
- The Test will be comprised of 10 questions.
- The Reading assessment at Level 2 consists of 50% Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), constituting 50% of the marks and 50% Free Response Questions (FRQ), also constituting 50% of the marks, as identified against each skill.
- There must be one key statement and a minimum of three strong distractors in each MCQ.
- Questions must be written so there is only one correct answer per mark.
- FRQs are defined as those that do not provide candidates with possible answers / responses as options, as they occur in multiple-choice questions; however there must still be only one correct answer.

### Skills and Marking

ESW Standard	Skills being assessed: The candidate needs to know how to:	Question type	Number of questions	Number of marks
C2.2	a) use a variety of strategies to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the main points,</li> <li>ii. ideas, including by inference</li> <li>iii. lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference</li> </ul>	MCQ	2	1 per question
		FRQ	2	1 per question
		FRQ	2	1 per question
	b) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit	MCQ	1	1
		FRQ	1	1
	d) locate and understand information using organisational features	MCQ	1	1
	e) find the meaning of words and phrases, using reference materials	MCQ	1	1

<b>Total</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
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## Level 2 Writing

### Assessment principles:

- The Writing assessment at Level 2 consists of Free Response (FRQ) or Multiple Choice (MCQ). FRQs are defined as those that do not provide the candidate with possible answers / responses as options, as they occur in multiple-choice questions; however there must still be only one correct answer.
- It is not meaningful to Test some aspects of writing skills within this type of Test format and therefore these aspects will be assessed in the Controlled Task. These skills are:
  - C2.3 a, b, c, d, f, g, h,
  - The skills of checking and revising documents (C2.3m) will be assessed in the Test within questions for spelling, punctuation and grammar (C2.3 j, k, l).
- The Writing assessment at L2 will contain a maximum of 16 questions. There is no stipulation on the number of MCQ and FRQ within that. However. FRQ must be allocated a minimum of 50% of the total marks.
- There must be one key statement and a minimum of three strong distractors in each MCQ.
- Questions must be written so there is only one correct answer per mark.
- Questions must be written in a way which does not allow skills to interfere with one another.

### Skills and Marking

<b>ESW Standard</b>	<b>Skills being assessed:  The candidate needs to know how to:</b>	<b>Question type</b>	<b>Number of questions</b>	<b>Number of marks</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>C2.3</b>	<b>e)</b> construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions	FRQ / MCQ	Questions may be written against a specific skill or questions may	2 - 4	2 different question types, e.g. 1 drag & drop, matching. One inserting conjunctions (no prompt) and drag & drop put sentence into effective sentence, phrase, using different

			combine skills		clauses etc.
	i) use formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences	MCQ / FRQ		2 - 4	1 question focussing on formal/informal, and one on purpose and audience
	j) spell correctly			4 minimum	
	k) use punctuation correctly	FRQ / MCQ		4 minimum	1 short text to Test each of these elements equally; review and rewrite relevant sections
	l) use grammar correctly			4 minimum	
<b>Total</b>			<b>16 maximum</b>	<b>20</b>	

## Essential Communication Skills Level 3 Specification

<b>C3.1 Speaking and Listening</b>			
<b>You must show you can:</b>	<b>Assessment Requirements</b>	<b>You need to know how to:</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<b>C3.1</b>  A) take part in at least two formal discussions with two or more other people  B) give a talk / presentation of at least eight minutes, to an audience of at least three people.	<p>At least one of the discussions and your talk /presentation must be in person.</p> <p>The two or more other people must not include the assessor.</p> <p>You must include your preparation for the discussions and for your talk / presentation.</p> <p>In your talk / presentation, brief notes may be used as a prompt, but you must not read these out.</p> <p>In your talk / presentation you must include the use of at least one image or other supporting</p>	<p>a) prepare for discussions and talks / presentations so that you can say things and communicate complex information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion and talk / presentation</p> <p>b) take part in a purposeful group discussion to move the discussion forward and work towards agreement, where appropriate</p> <p>c) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits your purpose and situation</p> <p>d) develop points and ideas with a sensitive awareness of others' feelings, beliefs and opinions</p> <p>e) use techniques and identify signals to contribute to the discussion and enable others to contribute</p> <p>f) summarise and synthesise complex information to suit your purpose</p>	<p><b>Discussions</b></p> <p>The discussions must provide opportunities for you to respond to a range of views and sensibilities, take the lead in moving discussions forward, and to show that you are aware that others may have different feelings, beliefs and opinions.</p> <p>In person means that all members of the group must be physically present i.e. face-to-face and not joining via electronic media.</p> <p>You need to be able to move discussions forward, encourage others to contribute and work towards agreement. In order to do so, you should know, for example, how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– respond to and offer constructive criticism</li> <li>– provide evidence to support opinions and arguments</li> <li>– use appropriate phrases to change the direction of the discussion or refocus the purpose</li> </ul>

	<p>material. The supporting material does not need to be visual but cannot be wholly text-based.</p>	<p>g) speak clearly and use language and a style of presentation to suit the complexity, purpose and formality of the situation and needs of the audience</p> <p>h) keep to the subject and structure your talk / presentation in a logical sequence to help your audience follow a line of thought or series of events</p> <p>i) use a variety of techniques to engage the audience, including using images and other material to support or enhance what you are saying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop points and open up new ideas</li> <li>- summarise what has been said</li> <li>- establish whether there is an agreed / shared understanding</li> <li>- recognise when others want to speak and help them to do so</li> <li>- contribute effectively to discussions, e.g. without interrupting the speaker, being over-assertive or aggressive or being too passive and accepting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Complex instructions</b></p> <p>A complex instruction is one that involves communicating a multi-stage sequential process.</p> <p><b>Complex information</b></p> <p>You must be able to communicate information which may, e.g., be challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear. The subject itself does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>Synthesis</b></p> <p>Synthesising involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to</p>
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			<p>present a consistent and coherent interpretation.</p> <p><b>Images and other support materials</b></p> <p>An image or other support materials must be included in the talk / presentation to aid the understanding of the written or spoken word.</p> <p>Images might include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a reflective jacket to demonstrate health and safety in the workplace</li> <li>- a graph to show increased sales</li> <li>- equipment to demonstrate its use.</li> </ul> <p>Where appropriate, other support materials could be used instead of an image, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- playing music to demonstrate a musical style</li> <li>- providing food to help to explain flavours</li> <li>- passing around swatches of fabric to demonstrate the different qualities in materials.</li> </ul> <p>These support materials cannot be wholly text-based.</p> <p><b>Contexts</b></p> <p>Contexts can come from an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests, for example:</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a mock panel interview</li> <li>- a workplace team meeting</li> <li>- a discussion on the role of a literary character</li> <li>- a meeting to plan an upcoming event.</li> </ul> <p>A team meeting with peers would be a different context from a team meeting with managers. The different contexts should support you developing transferable skills.</p> <p><b>Respond constructively</b></p> <p>To respond constructively, including responding to criticism, you do not have to accept everything other people say. However, you must be able to explain why you agree, disagree or reject a point of criticism.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies to show you are listening and understanding could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- body language</li> <li>- brief affirmative responses</li> <li>- asking questions to clarify points</li> <li>- repeating / confirming what the speaker has said etc.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies to support what you are saying could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- body language</li> <li>- facial expression</li> <li>- gestures</li> </ul>
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		<p>- emphasis etc.</p> <p>You must be able to draw on vocabulary and language that is specific to the context in which you are speaking, e.g. technical terms. You must also be able to recognise when members of your audience / group do not understand what you are saying and be able to give more detail or explanation until you are sure they have understood.</p> <p>Strategies to support understanding in your talk / presentation could include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- structuring your talk / presentation to present information and ideas in a clear sequence (e.g. how to start and close the talk / presentation), use cues to signal the key points or change track to take your audience with you.</li> <li>- using a style of language to suit the subject and purpose of your talk / presentation, e.g. when giving explanations, instructions, accounts of events, or when presenting an argument</li> <li>- articulating your words clearly</li> <li>- adapting volume, pitch or pace to suit the situation, e.g. taking account of the number of listeners, the room size and the noise level</li> <li>- varying your tone of voice to keep audience attention</li> </ul> <p>taking into account the nature or status of your audience and how familiar they are to you.</p>
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	<p><b>In your discussions and talks / presentations, you must show you can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand and respond to complex spoken language in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussions on at least two different topics and in at least two different contexts</li> <li>talks / presentations</li> </ul> </li> <li>speak to communicate complex information by providing explanations, expressing feelings and opinions, asking questions and giving instructions on a range of topics and in a range of contexts, using appropriate language and non-verbal communication.</li> </ul> <p>You must cover each of these at least once within the discussions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>j) identify relevant detail in complex spoken language</li> <li>k) understand and follow detailed explanations and complex instructions on a range of topics in familiar and less-familiar contexts</li> <li>l) respond appropriately to enquiries</li> <li>m) give and respond constructively to feedback, including criticism</li> <li>n) use strategies to show you are listening and to clarify and confirm understanding</li> <li>o) identify the speaker's intentions</li> <li>p) use appropriate varied and specialist vocabulary and expressions to suit your topics, purposes and situations</li> <li>q) confirm that listeners understand your meaning</li> <li>r) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding</li> <li>s) use appropriate strategies, including language and non-verbal communication to support what you are saying</li> </ul>	

	<p>and / or the talk / presentation.</p> <p>You must show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarity of expression</li> <li>• that your talk / presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– is well structured</li> <li>– keeps to the point</li> <li>– conveys the main points clearly</li> <li>– uses a variety of strategies to support the main points</li> <li>– can convey meaning to allow listeners to follow the talk / presentation with little difficulty</li> <li>– is fit for your subject, purpose and audience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• you can help to move a discussion forward</li> </ul>	<p>t) adapt your language and what you say to suit different subjects, purposes and situations.</p>	
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<b>C3.2 Reading</b>			
<b>You must show you can:</b>	<b>Assessment Requirements</b>	<b>You need to know how to:</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
read, understand and synthesise information from at least two different documents about the same subject.	<p>One document must be at least 1,000 words long.</p> <p>The other document(s) must be of sufficient length to meet the criteria.</p> <p>At least two documents must communicate complex information or reasoning and at least one must contain an image.</p> <p>You must work independently to select material from at least two different documents in order to meet the purpose of your Task.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) read and understand specialist and complex vocabulary</li> <li>b) use a variety of strategies to identify the main points, ideas and lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference</li> <li>c) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit</li> <li>d) locate and understand information using organisational features</li> <li>e) find the meaning of words and phrases you do not understand, using reference materials</li> <li>f) read critically to compare and evaluate accounts and recognise opinion and possible bias</li> <li>g) select and explore a range of documents to obtain relevant information</li> <li>h) explore and understand complex information and lines of reasoning in documents</li> <li>i) synthesise information from documents.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Main points</b></p> <p>You must be able to read critically when you are following a sequence of information or ideas in document and know how to identify points of view when reading an argument.</p> <p><b>Writer's purpose and intentions</b></p> <p>You must be able to identify the purpose of a text (e.g. to inform, to persuade) by its use of vocabulary and structure, in order to make judgements about its relevance.</p> <p><b>Infer meaning</b></p> <p>You must be able to understand what a writer means, including where they are implicit.</p> <p><b>Complex information</b></p> <p>You must be able to make sense of information which may, e.g., be challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear. The subject itself does not need to be</p>

			<p>complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>Synthesis</b></p> <p>You must be able to go beyond simply summarising findings from reading. Synthesising involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation.</p> <p>The purpose of your reading could be to help you prepare for your talk / presentation or for one of your written documents. Your ability to synthesise would then be implicit in the content of your talk / presentation or one of your documents.</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies to identify the main points and ideas of texts could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using organisational and structural features</li> <li>- skimming to obtain the general gist</li> <li>- scanning to locate specific information</li> <li>- annotation</li> </ul> <p>Organisational and structural features to locate information include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- subheadings</li> <li>- menus</li> <li>- paragraphs</li> <li>- contents page or index</li> </ul>
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<b>C3.3 Writing</b>			
<b>You must show you can:</b>	<b>Assessment Requirements</b>	<b>You need to know how to:</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
<p>write two documents of different types, each one communicating different complex information, using language and formats that are appropriate to your purpose and audience.</p>	<p>One document must be at least 1000 words long.</p> <p>The second document must be of sufficient length to meet the assessment requirements.</p> <p>You must demonstrate all of the required skills in each document.</p> <p>Each document must be of a different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document type</li> <li>• text type</li> </ul> <p>For each document, you must include your plan and evidence of your drafting process and checking.</p> <p>In final work, sentences</p>	<p>a) plan and draft writing</p> <p>b) select and use formats, styles and techniques of writing that are appropriate to communicating your purpose and the complexity of the subject matter to your audience</p> <p>c) organise material coherently to suit the length, complexity and purpose of your document</p> <p>d) use an appropriate style and tone to suit your audience, the degree of formality required and the nature of the subject</p> <p>e) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence</p> <p>f) make your meaning clear</p> <p>g) spell correctly</p> <p>h) use punctuation correctly</p> <p>i) use grammar correctly</p> <p>j) check and, where necessary,</p>	<p><b>Plans</b></p> <p>These may include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- brief notes</li> <li>- flow charts</li> <li>- spider diagrams</li> <li>- a bullet pointed list</li> <li>- or anything that shows evidence of planning and preparation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <p>Evidence of drafting could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a printed or electronic draft</li> <li>- an annotated version</li> <li>- an individual log or diary</li> </ul> <p>affirming the process of drafting or checking.</p> <p><b>Select and use formats</b></p> <p>You must be able to decide on the appropriate format for your writing. This will involve considering document type, text type and purpose.</p> <p><b>Different documents</b></p>

	<p>must be formed correctly with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p>Paragraphing must be appropriate.</p>	<p>revise documents.</p>	<p>These include using different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Document types, for example:</b><table><tr><td>j) letter</td><td>o) essay</td></tr><tr><td>k) article</td><td>p) report</td></tr><tr><td>l) blogs</td><td>q) leaflet</td></tr><tr><td>m) online forum</td><td>r) brochure</td></tr><tr><td>n) web page</td><td>s) text book</td></tr></table></li><li>• <b>Text types, for example:</b><table><tr><td>t) explanatory</td><td>w) descriptive</td></tr><tr><td>u) instructive</td><td>x) persuasive</td></tr><tr><td>v) narrative</td><td>y) informative</td></tr></table></li></ul> <p>There may be an overlap and / or a difference between the text type and the purpose of the document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Purpose, for example:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– to explain, such as the steps needed to complete a task, e.g. how to apply for university or a job; the best way to use a piece of machinery</li><li>– to instruct, e.g. telling employees what to do in the event of an accident</li><li>– to narrate, e.g. giving an account of a piece of research or project you've undertaken; of an extended trip or work experience</li><li>– to describe, e.g. a place, a book, a photograph etc.</li><li>– to persuade, e.g. a potential employer you would be the best person for the job; persuading someone else to see your point of view</li></ul></li></ul>	j) letter	o) essay	k) article	p) report	l) blogs	q) leaflet	m) online forum	r) brochure	n) web page	s) text book	t) explanatory	w) descriptive	u) instructive	x) persuasive	v) narrative	y) informative
j) letter	o) essay																		
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l) blogs	q) leaflet																		
m) online forum	r) brochure																		
n) web page	s) text book																		
t) explanatory	w) descriptive																		
u) instructive	x) persuasive																		
v) narrative	y) informative																		



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– to inform, e.g. on H&amp;S issues that have arisen and how to make improvements</li> </ul> <p><b>Style, structure and tone</b></p> <p>You must be able to use appropriate language, including, for example, persuasive techniques, technical vocabulary and evidence to clearly articulate a sustained, reasoned argument. The organisational structure of your writing, e.g., paragraphs and features such as headings and subheadings, should also support the points you are making. Both language and structure must suit the format and purposes of your writing.</p> <p><b>Synthesis</b></p> <p>Synthesising involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation. This will apply to certain documents, such as reports, where you will need to draw from more than one source.</p> <p><b>Complex information</b></p> <p>You must be able to communicate information which may, e.g., be challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear. The subject itself does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>Spelling, punctuation and grammar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– You must be able to spell accurately and correctly use punctuation and grammar as identified in previous levels and to support (the</li> </ul>
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			<p>purpose of) your writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You must be able to use appropriate sentence construction to communicate complex information effectively, e.g. writing in complex sentences and using subordinate clauses.</li> <li>- You must be able to use punctuation such as semi-colons to support in the communication of complex subject matter.</li> </ul> <p><b>Checking</b></p> <p>You must check and, where necessary, correct your work in order to ensure that spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct, that it is organised into paragraphs that help the reader to follow what you have written and that your meaning is clear.</p> <p><b>Legibility</b></p> <p>If work is electronically produced it should be of an appropriate font and size. If it is hand-written it must be readable by your intended audience.</p>
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## **Essential Communication Skills Level 3 Amplification of Assessment Requirements**

This is about demonstrating your skills in:

- speaking and listening
- reading
- writing

in familiar and less familiar contexts, some of which must be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles.

### **Notes**

1. Each level of the skill incorporates and builds on the previous levels. For example, in C3.3, the requirement to 'use punctuation correctly' at Level 3 requires correctly using not only: capital letters, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, apostrophes and inverted commas (from the previous levels) but also semi-colons, and other punctuation, to support communication of complex subject matter.
2. At this level the subject matter and materials will be complex; i.e. they may be challenging in terms of the ideas they present, have multiple strands, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear. You will have to make sense of and communicate this type of information. You will build on the skills at Level 2 by reading, synthesising and producing longer documents and giving a talk / presentation which lasts for at least eight minutes.
3. You must show you can apply your skills in the way they are specified in the first column of this amplification section, headed, 'You must show you can:'. Your assessment will need you to meet the requirements described in 'Assessment Requirements', the second column. In order to meet these requirements, you will need to have the skills that are listed in 'You need to know how to:', the third column.
4. The 'Guidance' in the fourth column supports the requirements of the first three columns and is intended to advise and help you and your teacher/tutor/trainer in your work. It provides explanations of some of the requirements of the standards that may be useful when you are developing the skill of Communication at Level 3. It is not a mandatory part of the standards.
5. The Mandatory Definitions give the exact meaning of certain words in this section. You must always refer to them when you are developing your skills and preparing for assessment.

### **Assessment**

At Level 3 you will be assessed via a Controlled Task and a Test to demonstrate your skills meet the Essential Communication Skills Specification. The Controlled Task is designed to assess the application of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way; although each part of the assessment will focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.

The Test confirms your underpinning knowledge and skills.

These assessments will be taken when you have been taught and developed the skills at this level.

There must be evidence that all your work has been assessed and authenticated – there must be records/notes, written by a competent assessor, confirming that your work is your own and that it has achieved the required standard.

### **Access statement**

For candidates with particular disabilities, reasonable adjustments to the assessment requirements may be allowed in appropriate circumstances. In some cases, exemptions may be permissible. For details, please see the introduction to the standards and the Controlled Conditions Guidance (TBC).

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 3 Controlled Task Specification**

### **Level 3**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both their Controlled Task and an externally assessed confirmatory instrument (hereafter referred to as a Test).
2. The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Test and must show candidates utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
3. The purpose of the Test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.
4. Both the Controlled Task and Test are summative. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at this level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation.
5. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period.
6. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at level 3.
7. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.
8. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
  - a. Level 3 Essential Communication Skills Specification
  - b. Controlled Conditions guidance (TBC)

### **Controlled Task Specification**

#### **Level 3**

The Controlled Task is hereafter referred to as the Task.

Controlled Tasks will be produced by the awarding organisations. However, where centres or learners have particular needs they are able to submit a proposal to contextualise the Tasks. This would need to be done at least 3 months prior to their delivery.

All Tasks must meet the requirements of the Controlled Task Specification and the Essential Communication Skills Specification. A marking guide must be produced to accompany each Task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.

The Task is designed to support the assessment of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way. However, each part of the assessment will focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.

The Task will have different parts to ensure there are different topics, purposes, audiences and contexts. For Part 1, the Reading will inform a discussion and a written document. For Part 2, the Speaking & Listening discussion will inform a written document. Part 3 relates to preparing and delivering a talk / presentation.

**Duration:** Up to 8 hours. The Task must be designed to be completed in its entirety in a maximum of 8 hours. The Task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight week period. Additional reading and research activity (for Part 2: Speaking and Listening and Part 3: Talk / Presentation) can take place outside of the 8 hours maximum but must be within the consecutive eight week period.

## **Part 1**

### **Reading**

At least two source documents about the same subject must be provided, one of which must be at least 1000 words. At least two documents must communicate complex information or reasoning and at least one must contain an image.

The Task must require candidates to independently read, understand and synthesise information from these documents for a given purpose. The explicit evidence of this synthesis must be required in the Writing Task. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the Task.

The Task must require candidates to synthesise the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a discussion on the topic, and then to write a document on the topic.

### **Speaking and Listening Discussion**

Candidates should use their preparation from the Reading Task to inform their discussion.

The Task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. If there are 3 people in the discussion, the minimum duration must be 15 minutes and 25 minutes for six candidates in the group. Centres may use their discretion for group sizes within this range; however the discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the Subject Specification at this level.

The Task must require candidates to understand and respond to spoken language. This will involve the communication of complex information, as appropriate, by:

- providing explanations,
- expressing feelings and opinions,
- asking questions, and
- giving instructions.

Across the two discussions and talk / presentation (Part 1, 2 and 3), the Task must provide candidates with adequate opportunities to demonstrate competence in all of these skills.

## **Writing**

The Task must require candidates to synthesise the information from the documents in the Reading activity for a given purpose. The Task must require the written document to be a minimum of 1000 words.

The Task must require candidates to:

- produce a plan for what they are going to write
- to draft / check their writing, and
- to produce a final document which is fit for purpose and audience.

## **Part 2**

### **Speaking and Listening**

The Task must require candidates to prepare for, and take part in, a formal discussion on a given topic. This topic must be different from the topic set in Part 1 and should not be heavily dependent on additional reading and research.

The Task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. If there are 3 people in the discussion, the minimum duration must be 15 minutes and 25 minutes for six candidates in the group. Centres may use their discretion for group sizes within this range; however the discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the Subject Specification at this level.

The Task must require candidates to understand and respond to spoken language. This will involve the communication of complex information, as appropriate, by:

- providing explanations
- expressing feelings and opinions;
- asking questions
- giving instructions.

Across the two discussions and talk / presentation (Parts 1, 2 and 3), the Task must provide candidates with adequate opportunities to demonstrate competence in all of these skills.

The discussion should be set up so that it supports the production of a written document on the same topic.

## **Writing**

The Task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document written must be of a sufficient length to give adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the Subject Specification at this level. The Task must require candidates to write a different document type and text type from Part 1.

The Task must require candidates to:

- produce a plan for what they are going to write
- to draft / check their writing, and
- to produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.

## **Part 3**

### **Talk / Presentation**

The Task must require candidates to prepare for, and deliver, a talk / presentation of at least eight minutes to an audience of at least three people. The Task must require candidates to communicate complex information and include an image or other support materials which will enhance the talk/presentation and help audience understanding.

The Task provided does not need to specify the topics or themes for the talk / presentation but may offer suggestions and guidance. There is no requirement that the Task be heavily dependent on additional reading and research. The topic can be related to an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests.

## **Essential Communication Skills Level 3 Confirmatory Test Specification**

### **Level 3**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet national standards in both their Controlled Task and an externally assessed confirmatory instrument (hereafter referred to as a Test).

2. The Controlled Task measures subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Test and must show candidates utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
3. The purpose of the Test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.
4. Both the Controlled Task and Test are summative. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at this level of the national standards. The pass mark is set at a high level to reflect this expectation.
5. Both parts of the assessment, i.e. the Controlled Task and Test, must be completed within a 24 month period.
6. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at level 3.
7. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.
8. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
  - a. Level 3 Essential Communication Skills Specification

### **Test Specification:**

- There are two Tests:
  - one for each component of Reading and Writing
  - each Test will be 25 minutes
- The Test must assess candidates' skills and understanding in meaningful contexts.  
Examples of contexts which provide opportunities to develop suitable questions include:
  - Family and home
  - leisure activities, including holidays
  - education and training
  - work
  - community and citizenship
  - media and communications
  - social issues
- There can be only one correct answer.
- Tests should be capable of being delivered onscreen and paper-based.
- The pass mark is 70%.
- A dictionary, including bi-lingual, may be used.
- Tests can be taken at the same time or separately, depending on the needs of the learners and centres.

### **Level 3 Reading**

#### **Assessment principles:**

- There must be 2 different source texts.
- Each text should be between 150 – 250 words. The combined length of the texts must not exceed 500 words.



- At least one of the texts must include implicit meaning and / or inference, allowing for the assessment of the writer's purposes and intentions, including where these are implicit. For example, with the use of sarcasm, irony etc.
- Source materials must be free of any form of bias (for example, gender, ethnicity, or age-related) which might favour or disadvantage any candidate or groups of candidates.
- There should be between 4 - 6 questions on each text.
- The Test will be comprised of 10 questions.
- The Reading assessment at Level 3 consists of 50% Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), constituting 50% of the marks and 50% Free Response Questions (FRQ), also constituting 50% of the marks, as identified against each skill. FRQs are defined as those that do not provide candidates with possible answers / responses as options, as they occur in multiple-choice questions; however there must still be only one correct answer.
- There must be one key statement and a minimum of three strong distractors in each MCQ.
- Questions must be written so there is only one correct answer per mark.

## Skills and Marking

ESW Standard	Skills being assessed: The candidate needs to know how to:	Question type	Number of questions	Number of marks
<b>C3.2</b>	<b>b)</b> use a variety of strategies to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the main points,</li> <li>ii. ideas, including by inference</li> <li>iii. lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference</li> </ul>	MCQ	1	1
		FRQ	1	1
		FRQ	2	1 per question
		FRQ	2	1 per question
	<b>c)</b> recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit	MCQ	1	1
		FRQ	1	1
	<b>d)</b> locate and understand information using organisational features	MCQ	1	1
	<b>e)</b> find the meaning of words and phrases, using reference materials	MCQ	1	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

## Level 3 Writing

### Assessment principles:

- The Writing assessment at Level 3 consists of Free Response (FRQ) or Multiple Choice (MCQ) questions as identified against each skill. FRQs are defined as those that do not provide candidates with possible answers / responses as options, as they occur in multiple-choice questions; however there must still be only one correct answer.
- It is not meaningful to Test some aspects of writing skills within this type of Test format and therefore these aspects will be assessed in the Controlled Task. These skills are:
  - C3.3 a, b, c, e, f,
  - The skills of checking and revising documents (C3.3j) will be assessed in the Test within questions for spelling, punctuation and grammar (C3.3 g, h, i).
  - The Writing assessment at L3 will contain 2 questions (4 marks) MCQ and 3 questions (16 marks) FRQ.
  - There must be one key statement and a minimum of three strong distractors in each MCQ.
  - Questions must be written so there is only one correct answer per mark.
  - Questions must be written in a way which does not allow skills to interfere with one another.

### Skills and Marking

ESW Standard	Skills being assessed:  The candidate needs to know how to:	Question type	Number of questions	Number of marks	Examples
C3.3	d) use an appropriate style and tone to suit your audience, the degree of formality required and the nature of the subject	MCQ	2	4	1 text to Test each of these elements equally; review and rewrite relevant sections
	g) spell correctly	FRQ	1	4	
	h) use punctuation correctly			4	
	i) use grammar correctly			4	
Total					