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NCFE Level 1 and 2 Functional Skills Qualifications in English

(603/5058/1and 603/5054/4)

Qualification Specification

Contents

Section 1

About these qualifications

About these qualifications

This Qualification Specification contains details of all the components and assessments required to complete these qualifications.

To ensure that you're using the most up-to-date version of this Qualification Specification, please check the version number and date in the page footer against that of the Qualification Specification on QualHub.

If you advertise these qualifications using a different or shortened name, you must ensure that learners are aware that their final certificate will state the full regulated qualification title.

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Support Handbook

This Qualification Specification must be used alongside the mandatory Support Handbook on the Qualifications page on QualHub, which contains additional supporting information to help with the planning, delivery and assessment, such as:

- definition of Total Qualification Time (TQT)
- quality assurance
- staffing requirements
- assessment
- qualification support
- equality and diversity
- equal opportunities.

This Qualification Specification contains all of the qualification specific information you will need that is not covered in the Support Handbook.

Qualification summary	
Qualification title	Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification in English
Qualification number (QN)	603/5058/1 603/5054/4
Aim reference	60350581 60350544
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	66
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	55
Minimum age	There is no minimum age requirement for registration.
Qualification purpose	*From the Department for Education's Functional Skills English Subject Content:* A key aim for Functional Skills English specifications is that they should enable the learner to develop confidence and fluency in, and a positive attitude towards, English. Learners should be able to demonstrate their competence in English by using it in real-world situations as well as demonstrating a sound grasp of basic English knowledge and skills. The purpose of Functional Skills English Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications are to prepare for work, study and life. Achievement of the qualification demonstrates the ability at an appropriate level to read, write, speak, listen and communicate in English, and to apply these skills effectively to a range of purposes in the workplace and in other real life situations.
Aims and objectives	*From the Department for Education's Functional Skills English Subject Content:* Functional Skills English qualifications at these levels indicate that learners should be able to speak, listen, communicate, read and write clearly, accurately, confidently, and with effectiveness. They should be able to: • Listen, understand and make relevant contributions to discussions with others in a range of contexts • Apply their understanding of language to adapt delivery and content to suit audience and purpose • Read a range of different text types confidently and fluently, applying their knowledge and understanding of texts to their own writing • Write texts of varying complexity, with accuracy, effectiveness, and correct spelling, punctuation and grammar • Understand the situations when, and audiences for which, planning, drafting and using formal language are important, and when they are less important. Learners should be able to use these functional skills autonomously, applying them to a range of formal and informal contexts, in the workplace and in real life. A key aspect of developing knowledge and skills in English, at Level 1 and 2, is to be able to communicate with confidence, effectiveness and with an increasing level of independence.
Grading	Pass/Fail

Re-sits	Re-sits are available. It is recommended that re-sits are booked no earlier than 2 weeks following the receipt of results, to allow for further teaching and learning to take place.
Assessment method	These qualifications are each assessed via 2 external assessments and one controlled assessment. The external assessments cover: • Reading • Writing The external assessments are task-based and invigilated. Once the completed assessments are returned to NCFE, they are marked by NCFE examiners. The controlled assessment covers: • Speaking, Listening and Communicating The controlled assessments take place in a controlled environment. They are internally assessed, internally quality assured and externally quality assured. Controlled and external assessment tasks use a unique theme. Each theme is carefully selected so that the tasks are realistic and relatable to everyday contexts.
Additional assessment requirements	Assessments can be held over different sittings. A range of Speaking, Listening, and Communicating assessments are available for selection.
Staffing requirements	Controlled assessments do not require additional staffing requirements. Please refer to the NCFE Support Handbook for generic staffing requirements.
NCFE support	Support with Functional Skills delivery includes: • sample papers and exemplar materials • automated Feedback for Reading and Writing assessments, delivered onscreen • access to Skills Forward initial and diagnostic assessment tools • Curriculum Team webinars and events, in which advice and guidance is provided to assist with the delivery of Functional Skills.
Progression	Learners who achieve Functional Skills English at Level 1 could progress to: • NCFE Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification in English • NCFE Level 2 Award in English • NCFE Level 2 Certificate in English
Regulation information	These are regulated qualifications. The regulated numbers for these qualifications are 603/5058/1 and 603/5054/4.
Funding	These qualifications may be eligible for funding. You can find out if any NCFE qualification is eligible for funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Direct Claim Status (DCS)

These qualifications are eligible for DCS.

For more information, including DCS criteria and how to meet the required quality standards, please visit QualHub.

Entry guidance

These qualifications are designed for learners who want to improve their everyday English abilities in preparation for life and work. These qualifications may also be studied by learners as part of their vocational apprenticeship.

There are no specific recommended prior learning requirements for these qualifications.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that these qualifications are appropriate for the age and ability of learners.

Skills Forward initial and diagnostic assessments will assist in determining what level a learner is working to. Each learner will then receive an individual skills plan to help progress to that level. NCFE recommends delivering a Skills Forward initial and diagnostic assessment to learners prior to registration.

Learners registered on these qualifications shouldn't undertake another qualification at the same level with the same or a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding eligibility.

Achieving these qualifications

Functional Skills English qualifications at Levels 1–2 are comprised of 3 mandatory components per level:

- **Speaking, Listening and Communicating** – Internally Assessed
- **Reading** – Externally Assessed
- **Writing** – Externally Assessed

The order in which a learner attempts the component assessments is at the centre's discretion.

For a learner to achieve the qualification and be awarded their certificate, they must obtain a Pass grade in the assessment for each component.

Mixing component levels

In accordance with Ofqual's Functional Skills English Conditions and Requirements all components must be attempted at the same level. This means there can be no variations of levels for individual learners.

Transfer of Achievement

Transfer of achievement is where a learner has completed an English component with another Awarding Organisation, but is no longer able to achieve the overall Functional Skills English qualification with that Awarding Organisation and has since been registered to an NCFE Functional Skills qualification.

Transfer of achievement is permitted for the 2019 reformed Functional Skills qualifications, subject to receipt of the appropriate evidence. It is not permitted between legacy Functional Skills and the 2019 reformed Functional Skills.

Following successful transfer of achievement, that learner would not be required to re-sit the assessment for a component they have already completed.

Further details on the transfer of achievement process (and the transfer of achievement application form) can be found via QualHub.

How the qualifications are assessed

These qualifications are assessed internally or externally, depending on the component.

Controlled assessments are designed and provided by NCFE and delivered to the learner under controlled assessment conditions. The completed controlled assessment is marked by the Assessor.

External assessments are designed by NCFE and scheduled by the centre. Upon completion of the external assessment, the assessment is marked by NCFE and the results are released within the results timeframe.

External assessment

The following components are externally assessed:

- **Reading**
- **Writing**

The external assessments are comprised of a short-answer question paper, set and marked by NCFE. The assessment assesses learners' knowledge, understanding and skills based on the subject content of these qualifications.

Centres must not assess or internally quality assure external assessments or provide any feedback to the learner about their performance in the external assessment. NCFE has multiple feedback options that are available post results release.

The external assessments are administered under specified assessment conditions, and last for the following durations:

	Level 1	**Level 2**
Reading	60 minutes	60 minutes
Writing	60 minutes	60 minutes

The external assessment hours must be delivered in accordance with the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments. There will be specific tasks that learners must complete within this time.

For guidance on conducting external assessments, please refer to our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments, available via QualHub.

On demand assessment

Centres can choose the date, time and location of assessments. The assessments for these qualifications are available through our online assessment platform.

Onscreen assessment

Prior to delivering onscreen assessments, centres must complete the registration form available via QualHub.

Assessments are completed via the online assessment platform, which must be downloaded to the device prior to beginning the assessment.

Prior to attempting the external assessment on a device, **it is essential that the centre ensure that device meets the technical specifications** as specified in the Technical Specification document available on QualHub.

Assessments are scheduled using the online assessment platform. Once the assessment has been scheduled a keycode will be provided, once that keycode is entered into the platform, the assessment will begin.

Assessments can also be downloaded for sitting on an offline device, either by downloading the assessment to a device which will not be offline at the time of the assessment, or by downloading the assessment to a USB stick which will later be plugged into an offline device.

For more information about onscreen assessment, visit QualHub.

Paper-based assessment

Entries must be submitted via the Portal 10 working days before the date of assessment.

Late entries are permitted up to 5 days before the assessment date, an administration fee will apply. For details of fees, please refer to the current Fees and Pricing Guide available via QualHub.

Centres must return all external assessment material and learner work to NCFE one working day after the external assessment has taken place.

Functional Skills Live Bank

At the time of scheduling an assessment, NCFE allocates a Functional Skills assessment from a live bank of different question papers. These question papers each have their own unique theme and topic, and remain comparable to one another through rigorous Quality Assurance processes.

If a re-sit is required a learner will be allocated a different assessment from the live bank.

Results

For paper-based assessments:

- Results are issued as per the results release date on the marking window timetable.

For onscreen assessments:

- Past the initial awarding period results are issued **6 working days** after the date of the assessment's successful upload to NCFE's onscreen assessment system.

If external assessment paperwork is not completed accurately by the centre, this may lengthen the time required to issue a result.

Enquiries about results

If a result is not interpreted as a valid reflection of a learner's ability, an enquiry about a result can be submitted in line with our Enquiries and Appeals about Results and Assessment Decisions Policy, which is available via QualHub.

To ensure the integrity of assessments within the live bank, **completed assessment papers cannot be returned.** A selection of retired assessments will be made publicly available as sample papers.

Controlled assessment

The following component is internally assessed:

- **Speaking, Listening and Communicating**

Each learner is required to undertake one controlled assessment for this component.

NCFE provides the assessment, mark schemes and any source materials that learners will need to use during their assessments.

The controlled assessment is administered under specified assessment conditions, and lasts for the following duration:

	Task	Level 1	Level 2
Speaking, Listening and Communicating	1. Presentation	5 minutes	8 minutes
	2. Question & Answer Session	3–5 minutes	3–5 minutes
	3. Group Discussion	4–6 minutes	5–6 minutes

The duration for each task is per learner being assessed.

Centres must record all Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments, this can be recorded via an audio/video method. If it is not appropriate for learner's to be recorded via these methods, please contact NCFE for guidance: functionalskills@ncfe.org.uk

Controlled Assessments must be attempted within controlled conditions, under the supervision of an assessor, as per the Regulations for the Conduct of Functional Skills Controlled Assessments.

Speaking, Listening and Communicating tasks can occur over separate sittings, provided the Regulations for the Conduct of Functional Skills Controlled Assessments are adhered to.

The centre may choose the date, time and location of the controlled assessment. NCFE do not require notification of the assessment scheduling details.

Following completion of the assessment, the Assessor is to mark all learner responses using the mark schemes provided, in line with any mark scheme instructions.

Any work submitted for controlled assessment must be completed during scheduled assessment hours in accordance with the scheme of work, and must be authenticated and attributable to the learner. All work produced must be the learner's own.

In practice, this means that the assessment will be completed in normal class time within scheduled assessment hours and kept separate from any teaching and learning hours.

Accessing assessment materials

Assessments are downloadable via QualHub, where materials are hosted and contained within password locked files.

Instructions on how to obtain file passwords and access the live controlled assessment materials can be found via QualHub.

Assessments must be stored securely until the date of assessment and must not be shared with learners, as per the Regulations for the Conduct of Functional Skills Controlled Assessments.

Contextualisation

Centres may contextualise (amend) NCFE set tasks in order to make the scenarios more relevant and engaging for their learners.

The act of contextualising is completed by the centre, and must be approved by NCFE in advance of the assessment.

Functional Skills Speaking, Listening and Communicating controlled assessments at each Level **can be contextualised.**

For instructions and guidance on how to contextualise SLC assessments, please refer to the Functional Skills Writing Guide – Adapting NCFE Devised Controlled Assessment Activities.

Controlled Assessment Retirement Cycle

New assessments will be made available at the start of each academic session.

When new assessments are made available, the oldest assessments are retired. **From the retirement date, new attempts for that assessment are not permitted**. The Regulations for the Conduct of Functional Skills Controlled Assessments, available via QualHub, provides further detail on this cycle.

Section 2

Subject content and assessment guidance

Subject content and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of these qualifications.

The Functional Skills subject content is provided by the Department for Education, who stipulate that Awarding Organisations must create Functional Skills qualifications that rigidly adhere to this content.

The English subject content can be accessed from the Department for Education directly, from their Functional Skills English Subject Content webpage. The official documents also contain a glossary of terms and some additional information regarding the subject content.

Referencing for the subject content uses the following coding:

L1	Level 1
L2	Level 2
1	Speaking, Listening and Communicating
2	Reading
3	Writing

For assessment delivery instructions and guidance, please refer to the Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery, the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments and the Regulations for Conduct of Functional Skills Controlled Assessments on QualHub.

English Level 1 Subject content and assessment

Level 1 Speaking, Listening and Communicating

Learners must be taught speaking, listening and communicating using of a variety of texts. This should include simple narratives, information and instructions, short statements, explanations, discussions, questions and exchanges.

Learners must meet the requirements of each subject content statement in line with the Pass level descriptor.

Pass level descriptor:

Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level:

- consistently
- effectively
- to an appropriate degree for that level

Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.

Reference	Subject content statement	Assessment weighting
L1.1.1	Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations	Each subject content statement is equally weighted
L1.1.2	Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts	
L1.1.3	Respond effectively to detailed questions	
L1.1.4	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics	
L1.1.5	Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence	
L1.1.6	Follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject	
L1.1.7	Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium	
L1.1.8	Respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions, using appropriate language for interjection	

Level 1 Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment

Task	Task content	Duration
1	**Presentation** The learner is provided with a choice of topics. Following a period of preparation, the learner will conduct a presentation to an audience. This task is to be completed by each learner being assessed. Questions cannot be asked to the presenter while they are presenting.	5 minutes
2	**Question and answer session** During the question and answer task, learners will take the role of either the presenter or the audience. Each learner being assessed to is to take the role of the presenter, for the duration specified. Once their presentation has finished, the learner must invite questions about their topic from the audience, responding to each question in turn. Learners must respond to a minimum of 3 questions. Members of the audience who are being assessed, must ask a minimum of one pertinent question each.	3–5 minutes (per learner)
3	**Group discussion** A group consisting of a minimum of 3 learners are instructed to discuss a topic designed to elicit discussion. The topic title and aim for the discussion is provided. Prior to the discussion, each learner is to express their own points of view about the given topic. Following the sharing of individual points of view, an open discussion occurs where everyone is expected to take full part. In order to facilitate the assessment, the Assessor can act as chair, or if appropriate within the group dynamic, a learner may volunteer for the role.	4–6 minutes (per learner)

The pre-release activity should be distributed to learners **up to 2 teaching weeks** prior to assessment. These are **not** an assessment component and can therefore be read, and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation. Learners should be given a suitable amount of time to prepare

There are no numerical marks awarded for Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments. To obtain a pass, the learner is required to sufficiently evidence their ability to meet each scope of study in line with the Pass Level descriptor. The assessor records this on the Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR).

Level 1 Reading

Learners must be taught using of a variety of texts. This should include a range of straightforward texts on a range of topics and of varying lengths that instruct, describe, explain and persuade.

Reference	Subject content statement	Assessment weighting (approx.)
L1.2.9	Identify and understand the main points, ideas and details in texts	16.67%
L1.2.10	Compare information, ideas and opinions in different texts	10.00%
L1.2.11	Identify meanings in texts and distinguish between fact and opinion	13.33%
L1.2.12	Recognise that language and other textual features can be varied to suit different audiences and purposes	13.33%
L1.2.13	Use reference materials and appropriate strategies (eg using knowledge of different word types) for a range of purposes, including to find the meaning of words	6.67%
L1.2.14	Understand organisational and structural features and use them to locate relevant information (eg index, menus, subheadings, paragraphs) in a range of straightforward texts	10.00%
L1.2.15	Infer from images meanings not explicit in the accompanying text	6.67%
L1.2.16	Recognise vocabulary typically associated with specific types and purposes of texts (eg formal, informal, instructional, descriptive, explanatory and persuasive)	13.33%
L1.2.17	Read and understand a range of specialist words in context	6.67%
L1.2.18	Use knowledge of punctuation to aid understanding of straightforward texts	3.33%

Level 1 Reading assessment

Activity	Activity content	Marks	Duration
1	**Reading task** The learner is tasked with reading one contextualised sources document. To gain marks the learner is required to answer a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the document contents.	13–15	
2	**Reading task** The learner is tasked with reading one contextualised sources document. To gain marks the learner is required to answer a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the document contents.	13–15	60 minutes
3	**Comparison** The learner is tasked with making a comparison between each of the contextualised sources from activity one and activity 2.	2–3	
		30	

Level 1 Writing

Learners must be taught using of a variety of texts. This should include straightforward texts such as narratives, instructions, explanations and reports of varying lengths.

Reference	Subject content statement - Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	Assessment weighting (approx.)
L1.3.19	Use a range of punctuation correctly (eg full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, possessive apostrophes)	15.00%
L1.3.20	Use correct grammar (eg subject-verb agreement, consistent use of different tenses, definite and indefinite articles)	15.00%
L1.3.21	Spell words used most often in work, study and daily life, including specialist words	15.00%

Reference	Subject content statement - Composition	Assessment weighting (approx.)
L1.3.22	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly, coherently and accurately	15.00%
L1.3.23	Write text of an appropriate level of detail and of appropriate length (including where this is specified) to meet the needs of purpose and audience	10.00%
L1.3.24	Use format, structure and language appropriate for audience and purpose	20.00%
L1.3.25	Write consistently and accurately in complex sentences, using paragraphs where appropriate	10.00%

Level 1 Writing assessment

Activity	Activity Content	Marks - Composition	Marks - SPaG	Overall total	Duration
1	Writing composition - The learner is tasked with completing a writing activity, based on a contextualised scenario.	11	9	40	60mins
2	Writing composition - The learner is tasked with completing a writing activity, based on contextualised scenarios.	11	9		
		Total 22	Total 18		

Each writing activity requires the learner to provide a response tailored to a specific type of document, as directed by the task instructions.

In preparation for completing the writing activities, learners should become familiar with the following writing features:

- format
- language
- purpose
- audience
- structure

Further detail on those features are in the tables below.

Format	
Document types	**Characteristics** *(Characteristics listed in bold are vital to the associated document type. For example, an email cannot be sent without the use of a recipient's address)*
Formal letter	• **sender's address** • recipient's address • date • salutation • close • signature/sign-off
Advertisement feature	• **heading** • sub-heading • strapline • bullet points • attribution • columns
Review	• **heading** • sub-heading

	- strapline - bullet points - attribution - columns
Email	**recipient's address** - subject title - salutation - close
Leaflet	**heading** - sub-headings - bullet Points - indentation - numbering
Formal report	**heading** - sub-headings - bullet points - indentation - numbering
Language	- formal - informal
Purpose	- persuasive - descriptive - explanatory - instructional
Audience	- workplace - familiar real life situations
Structure	- beginning - middle - end

Learners **must not** have access to an external aid in relation to spelling, punctuation and grammar when taking an assessment for the Writing component. Such external aids include dictionaries and spelling and grammar checking software.

English Level 2 Subject content and assessment

Level 2 Speaking, Listening and Communicating

Learners must be taught speaking, listening and communicating using of a variety of texts. This should include short narratives, explanations and instructions, discussions, straightforward information and instructions.

Learner must meet the requirements of each subject content statement in line with the Pass level descriptor.

Pass level descriptor:

Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level:

- consistently
- effectively
- to an appropriate degree for that level

Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.

This should include extended narratives and information (information may be on technical, concrete or abstract topics), discussions, detailed explanations and presentations, all of varying lengths.

Reference	Subject content statement	Assessment weighting
L2.1.1	Identify relevant information from extended explanations or presentations	Each subject content statement is equally weighted
L2.1.2	Follow narratives and lines of argument	
L2.1.3	Respond effectively to detailed or extended questions and feedback	
L2.1.4	Make requests and ask detailed and pertinent questions to obtain specific information in a range of contexts	
L2.1.5	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and effectively, providing further detail and development if required	
L2.1.6	Express opinions and arguments and support them with relevant and persuasive evidence	
L2.1.7	Use language that is effective, accurate and appropriate to context and situation	
L2.1.8	Make relevant and constructive contributions to move discussion forward	
L2.1.9	Adapt contributions to discussions to suit audience, purpose and medium	
L2.1.10	Interject and redirect discussion using appropriate language and register	

Level 2 Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment

Task	Task content	Duration
1	**Presentation** The learner is provided with a choice of topics and following a period of preparation, the learner will conduct a presentation to an audience. This task is to be completed by each learner being assessed. Questions cannot be asked to the presenter while they are presenting.	8 minutes
2	**Question and answer session** During the question and answer task, learners will take the role of either the presenter or the audience. Each learner being assessed to is to take the role of the presenter, for the duration specified. Once their presentation has finished, the learner must invite questions about their topic from the audience, responding to each question in turn. Learners must respond to a minimum of 3 questions. Members of the audience who are being assessed, must ask a minimum of one pertinent question each.	3–5 minutes (per learner)
3	**Group discussion** A group consisting of a minimum of 3 learners are instructed to discuss a topic designed to elicit discussion. The topic title and aim for the discussion is provided. Prior to the discussion, each learner is to express their own points of view about the given topic. Following the sharing of individual points of view, an open discussion occurs where everyone is expected to take full part. In order to facilitate the assessment, the Assessor can act as chair, or if appropriate within the group dynamic, a learner may volunteer for the role.	5–6 minutes (per learner)

The Pre-Release Activity should be distributed to learners **up to 2 teaching weeks** prior to assessment. These are **not** an assessment component and can therefore be read, and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation. Learners should be given a suitable amount of time to prepare

There are no numerical marks awarded for Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments. To obtain a pass, the learner is required to sufficiently evidence their ability of meeting each scope of study in line with the Pass level descriptor and the assessor records this on the Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR).

Level 2 Reading

Learners must be taught using of a variety of texts. This should include a range of straightforward and complex texts on a range of topics and of varying lengths that instruct, describe, explain and persuade.

Reference	Subject content statement	Assessment weighting (approx.)
L2.2.11	Identify the different situations when the main points are sufficient and when it is important to have specific details	10.00%
L2.2.12	Compare information, ideas and opinions in different texts, including how they are conveyed	10.00%
L2.2.13	Identify implicit and inferred meaning in texts	13.33%
L2.2.14	Understand the relationship between textual features and devices, and how they can be used to shape meaning for different audiences and purposes	13.33%
L2.2.15	Use a range of reference materials and appropriate resources (eg glossaries, legends/keys) for different purposes, including to find the meanings of words in straightforward and complex sources	6.67%
L2.2.16	Understand organisational features and use them to locate relevant information in a range of straightforward and complex sources	10.00%
L2.2.17	Analyse texts, of different levels of complexity, recognising their use of vocabulary and identifying levels of formality and bias	13.33%
L2.2.18	Follow an argument, identifying different points of view and distinguishing fact from opinion	13.33%
L2.2.19	Identify different styles of writing and writer's voice	10.00%

Level 2 Reading assessment

Activity	Activity contents	Marks	Duration
1	**Reading component** The learner is tasked with reading one contextualised sources document. To gain marks the learner is required to answer a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the document contents.	6–9	60 minutes
2	**Reading component** The learner is tasked with reading one contextualised sources document. To gain marks the learner is required to answer a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the document contents.	6–9	
3	**Reading component** The learner is tasked with reading one contextualised sources document. To gain marks the learner is required to answer a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the document contents.	6–9	
4	**Comparison** The learner is tasked with making a comparison between source documents in previous activities.	6–8	
		30	

Level 2 Writing

Learners must be taught using of a variety of texts. This should include straightforward and complex texts such as articles, narratives, explanations and reports of varying lengths.

Reference	Subject content statement - Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	Assessment weighting (approx.)
L2.3.20	Punctuate writing correctly using a wide range of punctuation markers (eg colons, commas, inverted commas, apostrophes and quotation marks)	13.64%
L2.3.21	Use correct grammar (eg subject-verb agreement, consistent use of a range of tenses, definite and indefinite articles) and modality devices (eg to express probability or desirability)	13.64%
L2.3.22	Spell words used in work, study and daily life, including a range of specialist words	13.64%

Reference	Subject content statement - Composition	Assessment weighting (approx.)
L3.3.23	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly, coherently and effectively	13.64%
L3.3.24	Write text of an appropriate level of detail and of appropriate length (including where this is specified) to meet the needs of purpose and audience	9.09%
L3.3.25	Organise writing for different purposes using appropriate format and structure (eg standard templates, paragraphs, bullet points, tables)	13.64%
L3.3.26	Convey clear meaning and establish cohesion using organisational markers effectively	4.55%
L3.3.27	Use different language and register (eg persuasive techniques, supporting evidence, specialist words), suited to audience and purpose.	9.09%
L3.3.28	Construct complex sentences consistently and accurately, using paragraphs where appropriate	9.09%

Level 2 Writing assessment

Activity	Activity Content	Marks - Composition	Marks - SPaG	Overall total	Duration
1	Writing composition - The learner is tasked with completing a writing activity, based on a contextualised scenario.	13	9	44	60mins
2	Writing composition - The learner is tasked with completing a writing activity, based on contextualised scenarios.	13	9		
		Total 26	Total 18		

Each writing activity requires the learner to provide a response tailored to a specific type of document, as directed by the task instructions.

In preparation for completing the writing activities, learners should become familiar with the following writing features:

- format
- language
- purpose
- audience
- structure

Further detail on those features are in the tables below.

Format	
Document Types	**Characteristics** *(Characteristics listed in bold are vital to the associated document type. For example, an email cannot be sent without the use of a recipient's address)*
Formal letter	**sender's address** - recipient's address - date - salutation - close - signature/Sign-off
Advertisement feature	**heading** - sub-heading - strapline - bullet points - attribution - columns
Article	**heading** - sub-heading - strapline - bullet points - attribution - columns
Email	**recipient's address** - subject title - salutation - close
Leaflet	**heading** - sub-headings - bullet points - indentation - numbering
Formal report	**heading** - sub-headings

	• bullet points • indentation • numbering
Language	• formal • informal
Purpose	• persuasive • descriptive • explanatory • instructional
Audience	• workplace • familiar real life situations
Structure	• beginning • middle • end

Learners **must not** have access to an external aid in relation to spelling, punctuation and grammar when taking an assessment for the Writing Component. Such external aids include dictionaries and spelling and grammar checking software.

Evidence requirements

For Speaking, Listening and Communicating only, at each Level, the following types of evidence will be sampled by the External Quality Assurer during a quality assurance visit.

For Level 1 and Level 2 evidence **must** include:

- Learner observation and achievement records (LOaAR)
- Either a copy of the contextualised activity, or a log that indicates which NCFE activity was attempted
- Any audio/visual recording relating to the assessment or marking of the assessment

Section 3

Additional information and centre support

Additional information

Resource requirements

Reading assessments require the use of a dictionary

Sample and exemplar materials

These are available to download via QualHub. New materials are added at the beginning of each academic session.

Sample papers are also available in-browser, and can be scheduled via the online assessment system. These sample papers are available for learners to familiarise themselves with the online assessment system.

If Assessors would like to mark sample onscreen assessments and provide feedback, the learner must not submit the sample assessment after responding to the tasks. This allows for the assessor to begin marking immediately. If the learner submits the sample assessment, the responses will not be viewable to the Assessor.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

Learners who require reasonable adjustments or special considerations, including British sign language (BSL) and sign supported English, should discuss their requirements with their Tutors.

For more information on the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy, please visit QualHub.

External assessment feedback

NCFE provides 3 different feedback options for the External Assessments:

	Details	**Availability**	**Price**
Automated	All onscreen English Level 1 and Level 2 external assessments will provide a comprehensive breakdown of learner performance mapped to the subject content, provided in percentages.	Onscreen assessments only	Free
Compact	Feedback mapped to the subject content, providing the learner's total marks available with the marks gained by the learner for that respective subject content area. In addition to the mark information is a high-level indication of how the learner did not gain marks	Paper-based and onscreen assessments	Fees available via QualHub
Rich	Feedback is produced by the Chief Examiner, and provides a detailed and thorough analysis of learner performance with guidance on how to address performance gaps.		

Examples of all feedback options are available via QualHub.

Skills Forward

Skills Forward provides a comprehensive eLearning solution for Functional Skills that incorporates Ofsted and ESFA compliant assessments, detailed skills diagnostics, video tutorials, progression tracking and innovative resources to aid skills development and workforce productivity.

Skills Forward boasts a range of additional market-leading products:

- The One Assessment is a revolutionary initial assessment which will assess a learner's levels in both English and maths in under 30 minutes.
- SkillsPortfolio is a bespoke digital portfolio that manages the complete end-to-end learner journey and allows the tutor to assess remotely, monitor learning progress, create dashboard reports and manage your quality assurance.
- SkillsWork is an employability assessment with supporting resources, that embed the Gatsby Career Benchmark and are mapped to the key skills identified by the CBI.

Further information can be obtained from QualHub.

Curriculum team

The Curriculum team provides dedicated support to centres approved to deliver Functional Skills. The purpose of this support is to assist Assessors with the teaching of Functional Skills subject content, and ensure Assessors have full understanding of the qualification's delivery.

Curriculum team activities include:

- upfront centre support including: webinar and centre visits
- Functional Skills delivery events
- video tutorials.

The Curriculum and Teaching Support page on QualHub is regularly updated and will keep centres informed on new Curriculum guidance.

Chief Examiner reports

The Functional Skills English Chief Examiner produces a report covering learner performance at Levels 1 and 2. This report identifies trends and raises awareness of common mistakes.

The Chief Examiner will also make suggestions to assist with learner performance.

These reports are available via QualHub

NCFE Functional Skills news and updates

Sign up to the NCFE Functional Skills news and updates mailing list (via QualHub) in order to receive regular information regarding NCFE's Functional Skills service.

Learning resources

We offer a wide range of learning resources and materials to support the delivery of our qualifications. Please check the Qualifications page on QualHub for more information and to view available resources.

Examples of Functional Skills resources include:

- schemes of work
- lesson plans
- teaching resources
- videos
- PowerPoints
- learner question and answer worksheets
- learner checklists
- Assessment preparation workbooks
- Functional Skills posters.

Contact us

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** **To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.***