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Guide to the Functional Skills reform



About the reform

The government is reforming Functional Skills qualifications in English and mathematics. The reformed qualifications will be available to teach from September 2019.

The new purpose:

“Functional Skills qualifications should provide reliable evidence of a student’s achievements against demanding content that is **relevant to the workplace**. They need to provide assessment of students’ **underpinning knowledge** as well as their ability to **apply this in different contexts**. They also need to provide a foundation for **progression into employment or further technical education** and develop skills for everyday life. In some contexts, Functional Skills qualifications will also play a part in the government’s accountability systems.”

We’re engaging with stakeholders throughout the reform to ensure we have the best possible qualifications and support available for our customers. As well as hundreds of learning resources and support materials, we also have delivery training events, webinars and visits available for our centres to help them feel prepared and confident in their planning and delivery of the reformed qualifications.

Get in touch to find out more - fsreform@ncfe.org.uk





Main changes to the qualifications

Here's an overview of the main changes for both English and maths.

English

- The content will be split into three areas:
 - writing
 - reading
 - speaking, listening and communicationall of which need to be passed in order for the learner to achieve.
- The structured teaching of phonics will now be included in entry level qualifications.
- There will be a spelling assessment (not part of spelling, punctuation and grammar) for entry levels.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed for 50-70% at entry level and 40-45% at levels 1 and 2.
- Contextualisation will be allowed for all internal assessments with the exception of the reading assessments.
- Speaking, listening and communication at levels 1 and 2 will have more structure and come with pass descriptors.
- No dictionaries or spell check enabled equipment will be allowed for writing assessments.
- Learners will only be able to gain a full certificate by achieving all assessments at the same level. You'll no longer be able to achieve one component at a higher level and claim a certificate for a lower level.

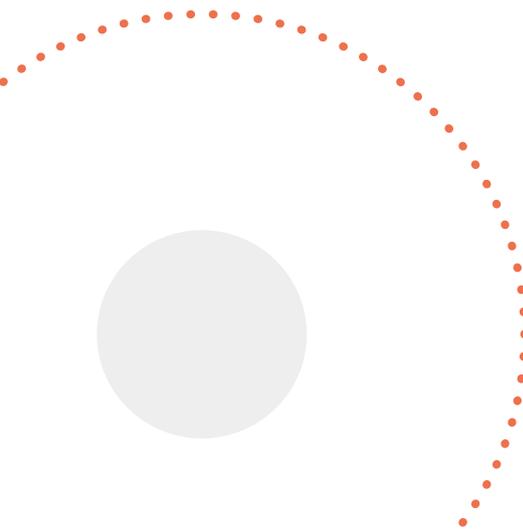
Maths

- The content will be reasonably split into three areas:
 - using numbers and the number system
 - using common measures, shape and space
 - handling information and data.
- A non-calculator section will be added.
- There will be an increased focus on problem solving skills:
 - entry level will be "simple"
 - level 1 this will be "straight forward"
 - and at Level 2 this will be "complex".
- There will be more descriptive guidelines on what content should be assessed as well as an increased focus on underpinning skills.
- Contextualisation for maths entry levels 1 – 3 will be allowed.

Functional Skills reform calendar

MARCH 2019	APRIL 2019	MAY 2019
NCFE Functional Skills newsletter	NCFE support events for the reformed Functional Skills qualifications. 	NCFE English and maths conference 
JUNE 2019	JULY 2019	AUGUST 2019
<p>NCFE support webinars </p> <p>A series of webinars will be hosted, focussing on the changes in subject content in English and maths at all levels</p>		
<p>NCFE support events for the reformed Functional Skills qualifications.</p>		
SEPTEMBER 2019	OCTOBER 2019	Keep up to date with the reform
Reformed Functional Skills qualifications go live - time to start delivery! 	NCFE support events for the reformed Functional Skills qualifications.	<p>If you'd like additional support or information about the reform then get in touch!</p> <p>fsreform@ncfe.org.uk</p>

Email events@ncfe.org.uk to find out when the next events are scheduled.





Visit [QualHub](#)
for our
latest support
information!

Curriculum team support

Our Curriculum team is made up of subject area experts who have teaching expertise as well as great knowledge in successfully preparing learners for assessments.

The team provides day-to-day support for centres as well as hosting webinars and 'delivery days' – events to support delivery staff and provide them with the tools they need.

Delivery days are also a great place for networking and sharing best practice with your peers.

They're highly rated, but don't just take our word for it, hear from some of our past delegates....

"This event was excellent, I came away feeling that not only was I prepared for any immediate changes, but also changes that are probably going to happen over the next 18 months."

Jacqueline Wheeler - NSCQ

"A really valuable day with good information and advice and a good networking opportunity."

Lee Cass, Pathfield School

"We found this training to be informative, covering a lot of information on the day which will set us up for our functional skills delivery next year."

Adrian Tallon - English Football League (EFL)

"The event provided a good opportunity to share good practice with other deliver staff and be briefed on upcoming changes to practice and policy."

Rachel McCarthy - Hampshire County Council

"You have truly revolutionised the level of support offered by NCFE for the Functional Skills qualifications. Thank you!"

Simon Creasey, Fresh Start Education Ltd

"I found this event extremely useful to aid in the development of our next steps to changing functional skills standards."

Heather Bage - Learning Curve

"A very well organised event. A great facilitator and the practical knowledge of classroom delivery was evident. Clear training and useful resources."

Sara Keith, On Course Southwest CIC

"I found this training to be very well organised, the content delivered in an interesting and varied way, and the content appropriate for what I needed. Thank you for such a well-organised training day!"

Lorna Herdman, Jarvis Access to Education Surrey County Council

