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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 communication
 all 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 speaking, listening and communication.
- Speaking, listening and communication at levels 1 and 2 will have more structure and come with pass descriptors.
- No dictionaries or spell check enabled for writing assessments.
- No spiky profile will be allowed.

Maths

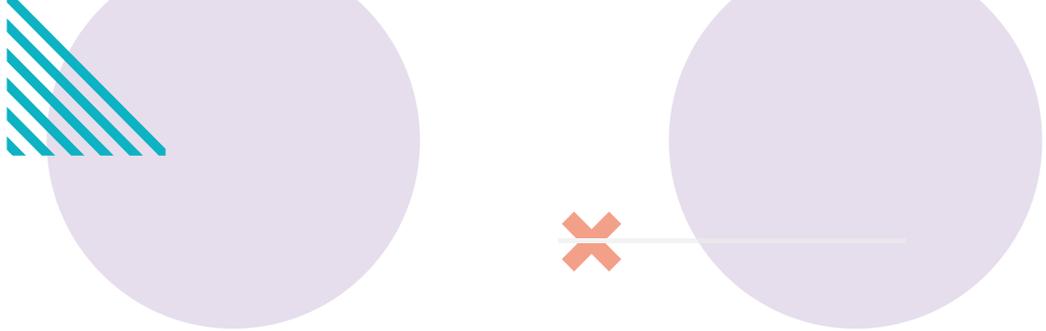
- The content will be reasonably split into three areas:
 - using numbers and the number system
 - using common measures, shape and space
 - handling information and data.
- A non-calculator section will be added.
- There will be an increased focus on problem solving skills:
 - entry level will be “simple”
 - level 1 will be “straight forward”
 - level will be “complex”.
- There will be more descriptive guidelines on what content should be assessed as well as an increased focus on underpinning skills.



Functional Skills reform calendar

MAY 2018	JUNE 2018	JULY 2018	AUGUST 2018
<p>Functional Skills reform content released by DfE.</p> <p>Supporting consultations held with AOs and Ofqual on the assessment and operational delivery of reformed Functional Skills.</p>	<p>AOs start developing reformed Functional Skills qualifications until October in line with the DfE and Ofqual consultations.</p> 	<p>NCFE Functional Skills reform webinar</p> 	<p>NCFE Functional Skills resources on www.qualhub.co.uk</p> <p>The resources complement and support the delivery of English and maths entry level - level 2 qualifications.</p> 
SEPTEMBER 2018	OCTOBER 2018	NOVEMBER 2018	DECEMBER 2018
<p>NCFE Functional Skills delivery training days Held around the country, the training days are a great opportunity to meet with subject experts to expand on your knowledge and understanding.</p>	<p>AOs submitting reformed Functional Skills qualifications proposals to Ofqual.</p>		<p>NCFE support webinars A series of webinars will be hosted, focussing on the changes in subject content in English and maths at all levels.</p> 
			<p>NCFE Functional Skills newsletter</p> 





JANUARY 2019		FEBRUARY 2019		MARCH 2019		APRIL 2019	
<p>Reformed Functional Skills qualifications made available between now and August to support curriculum and delivery planning.</p>		<p><u>NCFE support webinars</u> 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>			
MAY 2019		JUNE 2019		JULY 2019		AUGUST 2019	
<p>NCFE Functional Skills conference</p> 		<p><u>NCFE support webinars</u> 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		Keep up to date with the reform					
<p>Reformed Functional Skills qualifications go live - time to start delivery!</p> 		<p>You can find Functional Skills news and updates on our website ncfe.org.uk/functional-skills</p>					

Events

We host roadshows across the country to support delivery staff and heads of department in the planning and teaching of Functional Skills qualifications. These events are CPD accredited training sessions and you get to expand on your knowledge and understanding of the qualifications as well as networking with subject experts and like-minded practitioners.

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

"Overall, an enjoyable training day. The facilitators were very comprehensive and friendly, as well as being on hand to answer any queries members of the group had. Well worthwhile!"

Robert Watts - K2 Development



"Very knowledgeable delivery of information, with a real and personable approach. Sympathetic to individual delegates varying work environments and needs."

Kass Court – Supajam

"This event was excellent, it met all of my expectations; the facilitators were able to answer all my questions. This will help me greatly with my delivery and management of exams."

Tina Brooks - B4Box

“I found this event extremely useful to aid in the development of our next steps to changing Functional Skills standards.”

Heather Bage - Learning Curve

“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

“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)

“This was a great day, delivered with real passion to the subject. Looking out for the next event.”

Chris Walker - Sigma UK

“I really enjoyed the event. It was well structured and planned and the content was relevant and well delivered. A good balance of activities and opportunities to network and share ideas.”

Andrew Thorley - Fit UK

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



