

Functional Skills

Welcome to our Functional Skills newsletter,
keeping you up-to-date with all the latest developments.
September 2008

Funding Updates from the Learning Skills Council (LSC)

The LSC has issued the final draft paper on 'Funding Guidance for 2008/09'. A published paper will be issued in September 08. [Click here](#) to download the paper in full.

Key highlights for Functional Skills:

- Funding for Functional Skills for 16-18 and adult learners is included in the agreed 2008/09 allocations.
- Where Functional Skills has been awarded as a free standing qualification i.e. no other Skills for Life qualification has been awarded, this achievement will be included in the count towards the 2010 PSA target and 2020 Leitch targets.

Key changes to Key Skills Funding:

- For 16–18-year-old full-time learners, the SLN values for the key skills of Communication, Application of Number and IT are no longer incorporated within the funding for entitlement.
- Funding is available for Key Skills qualifications at a listed rate for all part-time learners aged 16–18 and learners over 19. The basic skills programme-weighting in relation to key skills are shown in the [table](#).

Important Notice on Centre Eligibility

Participation in the Functional Skills pilot has been limited by the [QCA](#) and only those centres who meet the criteria below will be able to put students forward for assessment until summer 2010.

Those eligible include:

- ✓ Centres in consortia offering Diplomas from Sept 08 (Gateway 1 centres).
- ✓ 3 centres from each consortium to offer Diplomas from Sept 09 Gateway 2, (there will be exceptions for larger consortia).
- ✓ All Further Education Colleges involved in Key Skills.
- ✓ Some centres with adult cohorts.
- ✓ Centres taking part in the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) pilot including Adult FLT.
- ✓ A limited number of Apprenticeships.

Please note there is some flexibility for centres without adult learners who may have circumstances preventing them from joining a consortium, i.e. Pupil Referral Units.

If you do fall into this category please complete our [EOI form](#).

NEWS ALERTS

NEW Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications

From January 2009 we will be offering centres the chance to pilot Entry Levels 1- 3 Functional Skills in English, mathematics and ICT. Entry Level Functional Skills are suitable for learners in FE, adult training centres, workplace learners, 14- 19 year-olds and learners in special or community learning. To join the pilot, please complete our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Entry Level highlights include:

- ✓ Administration of tests in a familiar environment when the learner is ready for assessment.
- ✓ A qualification constructed using an achievement model to support confidence and confirm success.
- ✓ Short test per unit with no portfolios.
- ✓ Tests accessible from Edexcel for on demand assessment.
- ✓ An External Verifier appointed to assist you with assessments that are internally marked and externally verified.
- ✓ One registration fee for each subject. This covers all three Entry Levels and free re-sits.

Functional Skills for Adults

A new functional skills assessment model is currently being developed for adult learners, in order that more flexible modes of assessment are offered. Available from September 2009 we aim to offer wider assessment windows, quicker results and onscreen assessment. To express an interest in the adult model email us at: fspilot.recruitment@edexcel.org.uk

Join our Development Programme

If your centre is not in any of the eligible categories but you still want to keep up-to-date with developments, then join our Functional Skills Development Programme by emailing us at: fsdevelopment@edexcel.org.uk

All centres on our Development Programme will receive:

- Email updates and termly newsletters
- Access to teaching and learning resources exclusive to Edexcel
- Free briefings and access to subject-specific training during 2008/09.

Tell us about your Functional Skills Pilot experience!

We are looking to document schools, colleges and training providers who are currently working with us to offer Functional Skills. Those involved will form 'case study centres' that provide a fantastic opportunity for us to raise the awareness of education, training and qualifications. If you are on our pilot programme and would like to take part, please email us at fsdevelopment@edexcel.org.uk

QCA updates

QCA would like your views on how English, mathematics and ICT should be taught in 2010. To have your say visit http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_18259.aspx. The regulators will use the results of this consultation to develop criteria for GCSE qualifications for first teaching from 2010.

Exam Feedback

Pass marks and the Principle Examiners report from our first successful test series this June are now available on [our website](#). Feedback from examiners assessments and pilot centre questionnaires will be fed back to QCA in the autumn term for evaluation.

Update on ICT test series for 2008/09

Following your feedback on the exams process, we have now scheduled a 3-day window for the ICT test. Please see updated guidance on the conduct of this test on [our website](#).

If you think any of your colleagues would be interested in our newsletter, please pass this on.

Prize winners

Congratulations to our 3 prize draw winners who each received £50 M&S vouchers for completing our adult alternative pilot model questionnaire:

- Christina Kirby, Centre Co-ordinator - East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust
- Donna Wilmhurst, Key Skills Manager - South Downs College
- Sue Heaney, Specialist Key Skills & Functional Skills Tutor - Eccles College

Supporting Functional Skills

Training Events

From October 2009 subject-specific training will be available to all pilot centres. For those of you on our Development Programme we will be commencing a series of half-day briefing sessions early in the Spring term. For a FREE Functional Skills briefing to suit the needs of your centre or consortia please send your request to fsdevelopment@edexcel.org.uk

Ask the Expert

If you have a specific-subject Functional Skills query, our Ask the Expert email service will put you in direct contact with subject experts who will answer your question within 48 hours.

Email:

English - functionalskillenglish@edexcelexperts.co.uk

ICT - functionalskillsict@edexcelexperts.co.uk

Maths - functionalskillsmaths@edexcelexperts.co.uk