

# The reform of Functional Skills English

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October 2018



# Training Overview

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# **Timelines**

<b>31 August 2019</b>	<b>Last registration on legacy Functional Skills</b>
<b>01 September 2019</b>	<b>First registration/teach on reformed Functional Skills</b>
<b>September 2019</b>	<b>First assessment on reformed Functional Skills</b>
<b>12 July 2020</b>	<b>Last assessment on legacy Functional Skills</b>
<b>30 June 2020</b>	<b>Last SV visit for legacy Functional Skills</b>
<b>31 August 2020</b>	<b>Last certification on legacy Functional Skills</b>

September 2019	Introduction of Pearson's Reform Webinars, for up to date information on the reforms
February 2019	Introduction of Pearson's Reform Surgery Webinars, offering centre the opportunity to ask their burning questions
May 2019	Reform Functional Skills launch events
May 2019	Network Events
Summer 2019	Getting Ready to Teach events

# **Key Changes**

# The Purpose of Functional Skills

**“Functional Skills qualifications should provide reliable evidence of a student’s achievements against demanding content... [and] provide a foundation for progression into employment or further technical education and develop skills for everyday life.”**

There is now more focus on employment and educational progression within the qualifications.

# Introduction of spelling tests at Entry Level

- Entry level Functional Skills English will now include discrete spelling tests at all three levels. These will be comprised of words supplied by the DfE in the annex of their reformed Functional Skills standards.
- In addition to this, these words will also be included in the reading texts as the learners need to be able to read and understand the words as well as spell them.

# No longer allowed dictionaries or spell check on all writing papers

- With the reformed Functional Skills, learners will no longer be allowed access to dictionaries or spell checks on the writing paper.
- However, at each level, there will be a discrete dictionary based question on the reading paper.

# Speaking and Listening

- There have been changes to the speaking and listening assessments across the levels. More emphasis has been placed on the listening skills of the learners.
- Level 1 and 2 have the same tasks with different assessment criteria, This means they can be assessed at the same time.

## Task 1

- Mini presentation – learners present for approximately 4 minutes and then answer questions – all learners must ask at least one question.

## Task 2

- Formal group discussion – set up as currently.

# Monitoring Visits

- As part of the new regulations put in place by Ofqual, monitoring visits will now occur every year, instead of every three years for levels 1 and 2. At entry level, there will also be a need for the SV to observe Speaking and Listening assessments as part of their visits.

# New Content

- Pearson has produced a mapping document that maps the legacy Functional Skills to the reformed Functional Skills to the GCSE (9-1) for ease of understanding for practitioners.
- There is new content across all levels and there has also been movement of content across the levels, content in higher levels have now become part of lower levels.

# Entry Level

## Writing

- Spelling Tests
- Grammar and punctuation tasks
- Sequencing of the alphabet
- No drafting requirement
- Changes to the marking layout to make life easier

 1	 1	 3	 2	 1
E3.1	E3.1	E3.18	E3.2	E3.2
3	5		0	0

## Reading

- Spelling lists incorporated into the reading texts
- Purpose of texts introduced at E3

## Speaking and Listening

- New tasks such as following instructions

# Reading

## Level 1

- Compare information, ideas and opinions in different texts
- Identify meanings in texts and distinguish between fact and opinion
- Recognise that language and other textual features can be varied to suit different audiences and purposes
- Understand organisational and structural features and use them to locate relevant information
- Infer from images meanings not explicit in the accompanying text

## Level 2

- Understand organisational features and use them to locate relevant information in a range of straightforward and complex sources
- Follow an argument, identifying different points of view and distinguishing fact from opinion
- Identify different styles of writing and writer's voice

# Writing at Level 1 and 2

- Two tasks: one longer, one shorter
- Same mark scheme for both tasks albeit with different marks
- Suggested length incorporated into the task



# **Considerations for Centres**

# Guided Learning Hours

- Guided Learning Hours have been set by the DfE. The new GLH will be 55 hours, for both English and maths at all levels. This is an increase of ten hours.

# Progressing Learners

- For learners that progress, the progression between the legacy and the reformed will be more difficult as the increase in content will see changes to the assessments.

# Transition Period

- Ofqual have set a maximum transition period of one year for dual running of the legacy and the reformed Functional Skills. This will provide potential challenges for providers.

# Spikey Profiles

- With the reformed Functional Skills English, Ofqual will no longer allow centres to use spikey profiles with learners. This means learners will need to complete all three elements of the Functional Skills English at the same level.

# Transference of Credits

- Ofqual have stipulated that there will be no transference of credits between the legacy and the reform Functional Skills English. What this means is that if a learner does not complete all three elements on the legacy by the 31 August 2020, they will have to complete all three elements again on the reform.

# Contexts

- Pearson has been carrying out research on appropriate contexts for the reformed Functional Skills. These will be in place for our assessments and resources from September 2019.

**Games Social media Planning a party**  
**Holidays Renting a flat Sporting events**  
**Personal Budgeting Shopping Fundraising**  
**DIY Finding a job Decorating**  
**Health and fitness Buying a car**  
**Mobile phones Budgeting Healthcare**  
**Music Festivals Learning to drive**

# Apprenticeship Learners

Pearson would suggest centres will need to make a decision on which Functional Skills to enter learners on, for learners starting on programme from July onwards. There are three important dates to consider:

- 31 August 2019, the last date to register learners on the legacy Functional Skills
- 1 September 2019, the first date to register learners on the reformed Functional Skills
- 31 August 2020, the date learners need to have completed their legacy Functional Skills.

The date of 31 August 2020, is a hard and fast date set by Ofqual, by which the learners will need to achieve the legacy or they will need to move onto the reformed. The difference between the two means this transition will not be easy for learners.

Similarly for learners who need to achieve Level 1, and take Level 2, centres need to be aware that the registration for the Level 2 is likely to be on the reformed and so success will be more difficult.

# Possible Scenarios

## Scenario 1

- Shanika is studying on a Level 2 apprenticeship programme and starts in July 2019. She will need to pass Level 1 Functional Skills English and maths and, as a minimum attempt level 2. In this scenario, the provider has two options:

### Option 1

- Register the learner straight away for level 1 and teach to the legacy standards. They will have until 31 August 2020 for Shanika to complete level 1. Shanika completes level 1 in October 2019. The provider will now need to register her for Level 2 on the reformed standards.

### Option 2

- Wait until the 1 September 2019 and register the learner on the reformed Functional Skills. In this scenario there is no deadline from the qualification to complete.

# Possible Scenarios

## Scenario 2

- Atif is studying on a level 3 apprenticeship and starts on 1 August 2019. He will need to pass Level 2 Functional Skills English. The provider registers him straight away and he completes reading and speaking and listening by 31 August 2020 on the legacy standards. Unfortunately, he doesn't pass his writing. In this scenario, Atif will need to be then reregistered on the reformed standards and complete all three elements again.

## Scenario 3

- James has completed Level 1 Functional Skills English and will progress onto Level 2. The centre has decided whether to register him on the legacy before 31 August 2019 or on the reformed from 1 September 2019 onwards. If registered on the legacy, he will need to complete by 31 August 2020 or he will need to be reregistered on the reformed Functional Skills and start again.

# **Assessment**

# Entry Level

The Entry Level assessments will be available as controlled tasks downloadable from our website as they are now.

# Levels 1/2

The Level 1 and 2 assessments will be available on demand either paper-based or onscreen as they are now.

## Proposed Assessment Length (subject to Ofqual approval)

Level	Reading	Writing	SLC
Entry 1	45 min	50 min	10-15 min
Entry 2	45 min	50 min	15-20 min
Entry 3	45 min	50 min	20-25 min
Level 1	60 min	60 min	30 min
Level 2	75 min	60 min	40 min

# Sample Assessments

- We plan to have two sample assessments for each level for reformed English and Maths available for first teach in September 2019.
- The first set will be available from April / May 2019; the second from the summer.
- For levels 1 and 2, both sets will be available paper based and onscreen.

# ExamWizard

- As part of the reform ExamWizard will be updated.
- Will include entry level Functional Skills for English and maths.
- Existing content will be mapped across to the reformed Functional Skills at the appropriate level.

# ResultsPlus

- ResultsPlus will continue as per the current offer.



**There's so much  
more to learn**

ALWAYS LEARNING