

Functional Skills – Q&A

September 2015

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND APPROVED ANSWERS

General

Q - How will you communicate further information to us?

A - Information will be available on the website, knowledge base and the Skills e-update for those who have subscribed. If you would like to subscribe please email: teachingskills@pearson.com with "sign-up" in the subject heading.

Q - When do the amended exam times come into effect?

A - The new times come into effect from 1st September 2015

Q - Will all changes be on-screen as well as paper-based?

A - Yes

Q - Are paper-based on-demand test going to be available at the times we require for learners?

A - This is something we are exploring, more information will be given as soon as we have it.

Q - Will extra time be available for those who need it for various reasons?

A - Yes you can apply for extra time. Further details can be found here: <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/special-requirements/special-consideration.html>

Q - Will these new exam formats also be applied to the on-screen tests? Will all the Reading docs be placed at the front?

A - Yes, as approved by Ofqual, the on-screen will be the same as the paper-based.

Q - Will it be clear for learners to identify which text the questions relate to?

A - Yes, each question will state what text the learner is to use when answering the question.

Q - Will Reading text papers be removeable?

A - No we are not offering this, they will be at the beginning of the question paper.

Q - How many SAMs will be available on the website in September?

A - One set for each Level 2 unit for English and one set for both Level 1 and Level 2 units for maths.

Q - Will further SAMs become available soon?

A - No but practice tests will be released in February, as the current papers are retired.

Q - Why are the old SAMs still available on the website?

A - The old SAMS are being removed.

Q - Will you still be sending out EDI papers to ex-EDI learners?

A - Learners who registered before 31st January 2015 will be tested using the EDI papers.

Q - When will updated mocks be available?

A - February 2016

Q – Are the new tests compatible with the POP platform?

A – Yes.

Q – Will Results Plus be rolled out for Online testing results?

A – This is currently in development and is being tested and as yet we cannot provide a completion date. However, we can confirm that it will not be available in September, <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/Services/ResultsPlus.html>

Q – Will there be a breakdown for the test results of the new tests?

A – This will not be possible for onscreen tests until Results Plus development is completed. There will be a quarterly report provided encompassing all entries throughout the quarter. Reports will be available for paper/series based tests.

Q – Will there be detail on failed tests as to where incorrect answers were given?

A – Results Plus provides a breakdown and is available for series based but not for on-screen tests.

Q – Are you providing more flexibility for paper-based exams and faster turnaround?

A – We are working on introducing an On-demand offer for our paper-based exams and increasing turnaround of results, however, we can't provide a definitive launch date. We will provide an update to all centres during the second half of the academic year.

Q – Will the SV visit every year in relation to S&L or will direct claims be put in place after a successful visit?

A – Visits are being increased for SL&C, however, centres need to have OSCA in place in order to release certificates

Q – Will there be more details on pass rate?

A – A centre report is published at the end of each series which provides detail on how learners performed on each question. This is not available for on-screen tests but an end of quarter report is.

Q – Will there be feedback specifically for those who have failed?

A – Results Plus is available for series based, we do not have a service for on-screen as the papers are live.

English

Q – How many SAMs will be available to use across all components in English?

A – One per component, e.g. on for Reading Level 2 and one for Writing Level 2. There are separate SAMs for on-screen and paper-based.

Q – Will students be marked down for not answering in full sentences?

A – We do not mark students down but they will not be able to achieve full marks if they fail to answer in full sentences.

Maths

Q – Will calculators have to be scientific

A – All our papers have always shown a scientific calculator but candidates should bring the calculator they are most familiar with to the exam, scientific functions are not needed

Q – One hour and thirty minutes will not be long enough for Level 2 maths learners, will this be reviewed?

A – This has been investigated and reviewed and we have determined that the time allocated to learners is sufficient for the to fully engage with and answer each question on the test. In addition the number of questions on the paper (12) has not increased but the mark allocation has.

Q – Can students as invigilators if they don't understand the non-math vocabulary?

A – No but they can use a dictionary.

ICT

Q – Are there any planned changes for ICT at Entry level 2, 3 and Level 1 and 2?

A – At the moment there are no changes planned, however, there will be a review of the ICT qualifications across all levels. We will provide any updates / notifications on our website.