

17 Functional Skills

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1 Introduction

Functional Skills qualifications are available in English and Maths at Entry Levels 1–3 as well as Levels 1 and 2. Functional Skills Digital is available at Entry Level 3 and Level 1. This section will assist you with your Functional Skills registrations. For further information or guidance please visit our [Functional Skills qualifications page](#).

This part of the manual gives instructions and information on the administrative procedures for learners on Functional Skills qualifications.

The following areas are covered:

- registration and approvals
- reporting achievement
- claiming certification
- quality assurance.

It is important that this information is made available to the examinations officer/administrator, all coordinators and members of staff responsible for the preparation of documents for enrolment, registration and reporting achievement of vocational qualifications.

For further guidance on the topics covered in this document, please see our [Functional Skills: Support Index](#).

2 Registration and approvals

2.1 Approvals

Existing Pearson approved centres can run all accredited qualifications but you will need to apply for a programme number to allow you to make registrations. To obtain a programme number please log into Edexcel online.

2.2 Responsibility for registration

When a centre has enrolled learners onto an approved programme, learners must then be formally registered with Pearson so that quality assurance can be implemented, achievement can be reported and awards issued. Responsibility for the registration of learners and for the payment of fees lies with the approved centre.

No assessment activity can take place until learners are registered onto the qualification.

2.3 Registration deadlines

Functional Skills is available throughout the academic year. Since 1 September 2019, there has been no deadline for registrations to be made under the reformed qualifications but we advise centres to complete registrations within 6 weeks of enrolment onto the programme and no later than three weeks before the scheduled assessment.

You can make registrations through [Edexcel online](#). Please see the following articles for guidance [Making Individual Registrations](#) / [Making Bulk Registrations](#).

We have two EDI formats to support registrations: EDIFACT and JCQ. EDI Basedata can be located on our webpage, [EDI and basedata](#) under 'BTEC (including vocational Entry Level and ESOL)'.

If you require more information on making registrations via Edexcel Online or EDI, please see our [Vocational registrations webpage](#).

2.4 Periods of registrations

Registrations must be made before the end date given for qualification approval. Registrations are valid for a period of up to five years or until the issue of certificates, whichever is the earlier. A learner may only be certificated during this time. For qualifications accredited by the regulator, the final date is specified as shown on our website.

Where a registration exceeds the five-year expiry limit, the learner must be re-registered on a currently approved programme.

2.5 Registration

To register your learners for the Functional Skills English, Mathematics, and/or Digital Functional Skills you will need to log in to Edexcel online. For further details about this process and for guidance on booking tests please see the [Entry Level Functional Skills Administration Guide](#) and [Level 1 & 2 Functional Skills- Administration Guide](#).

2.6 Registration Amendments

Centres can amend learner registrations on Edexcel Online. A step by step guide can be found in the following article, [Amending Vocational Registrations](#).

2.7 Deletion of registrations

Learner registrations will not normally be deleted, or fees refunded, once registrations have been accepted by Pearson. A new learner cannot replace an individual who has been registered but has subsequently left the programme. For guidance on how to delete your learners please see the following article, [Registrations: Processing/Requesting a Deletion](#).

However, we are aware that there may be learners who drop out from programmes early on and we will accept requests for the deletion of learners under the following circumstances:

Programmes that follow the academic year

For programmes that follow the academic year, i.e. enrolment in September/October and completion in June/July, we will accept requests to delete learner registrations until **31 December** (previously 31 January), provided the learner has not completed any units and no test bookings have been made. After this date, you will need to withdraw the learner instead.

Programmes that do not follow the academic year

This refers to all programmes that enrol learners at any time other than September/October (including roll-on roll-off and onscreen tested programmes). Provided no units have been completed and no test bookings made we will accept a request for deletion, if we are notified via [The Support Portal](#) within two months of the date that we received the learner registration. For example, if a learner is registered on 1 March, we will accept a request for deletion up until 1 May.

2.8 Withdrawal of learners

Centres should advise us of all learners who have withdrawn from programmes. Withdrawal can be made through Edexcel Online, or via an EDI/A2C amendment file, and can take place throughout the year. Withdrawal does not result in a credit back of any fees. Withdrawn learners may be reinstated via Edexcel Online at no extra charge. Please see [Withdrawing Learner Registrations](#) for guidance on how to complete this process.

3 Functional Skills Qualifications

Several Functional Skills qualifications include some elements of external assessment (an assessment that is set and marked by Pearson). Other assessments are set and assessed by staff in the centre, and the outcomes are then quality assured and reported to Pearson.

For external assessments that are taken via onscreen tests, centres are required to install appropriate supporting software. For further details please refer to the [Onscreen Testing](#) page on our website.

For more information please visit our [Functional Skills qualification page](#).

The following sections explain the differences between Entry Level English and Maths, Level 1 & 2 English and Maths and Digital.

3.1 Entry Level Functional Skills

All Entry Level English and Mathematics assessments are set by Pearson and assessed by staff in the centre, and the outcomes are then externally verified and reported to Pearson. Results are graded 'Pass' or 'Fail', however only 'Pass' grades will appear on certificates.

The following programmes are available:

3.1.1 Entry Level Functional Skills English (2019):

Specification Title	Paper type	Availability
English at Entry Level 1 QN: 603/4286/9	Externally set, on-demand assessment, internally marked and externally verified.	Paperbased, on-demand
English at Entry Level 2 QN: 603/4287/0	Externally set, on-demand assessment, internally marked and externally verified.	Paperbased, on-demand
English at Entry Level 3 QN: 603/4288/2	Externally set, on-demand assessment, internally marked and externally verified.	Paperbased, on-demand

The assessment structure for English comprises three units: Reading, Writing and Speaking, Listening and Communicating, which are assessed separately.

The Reading and Writing papers are available to download from Pearson.

For the Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment centres devise their own assessments, in line with Pearson's guidance. For more information please see the [Entry Level English Specification](#).

Learners must pass all assessments before the qualification can be awarded.

3.1.2 Entry Level Functional Skills Mathematics (2019):

Specification Title	Paper type	Availability
Mathematics at Entry Level 1 QN: 603/4269/9	Externally set, on-demand assessment, internally marked and externally verified.	Paperbased, on-demand
Mathematics at Entry Level 2 QN: 603/4265/1	Externally set, on-demand assessment, internally marked and externally verified.	Paperbased, on-demand
Mathematics at Entry Level 3 QN: 603/4266/3	Externally set, on-demand assessment, internally marked and externally verified.	Paperbased, on-demand

The mathematics assessment is a single assessment which comprises two sections – a non-calculator section (calculator prohibited) and a calculator section (calculator permitted). For more information please see the [Entry Level Mathematics specification](#).

3.1.3 Accessing secure assessment material

Entry Level English Reading, English Writing and Mathematics assessments are available for download from our website via [Secure Tests](#).

Access to live assessment material is restricted to a centre's Exams Manager/Officer/Assistant or Head of Centre; only staff with these job roles will be able to access the live assessment materials.

It is important to note that live assessment materials are updated from time to time, therefore, assessments must be downloaded from the secure area each time learners attempt the assessment, to ensure that the most recent version is used. Assessments must be printed no earlier than 2 weeks before the live assessment is due to take place to allow time for contextualisation.

3.1.4 Invoices for Entry Level

We will issue invoices and credit notes once entries have been processed. Both paper copy and online invoices are available. To access invoice details online please log into Edexcel online.

3.2 Level 1 and 2 Functional Skills (Paper-based / Onscreen On-Demand tests)

Functional Skills is available in both paper-based and onscreen on demand formats for English and Mathematics at levels 1 and 2. Results are graded 'Pass' or 'Fail', however only 'Pass' grades will appear on certificates.

Assessments can be booked via Edexcel Online, please see the following article for a step-by-step [Booking a test on Edexcel Online](#).

The following Level 1 and 2 programmes are available:

3.2.1 Functional Skills English (2019)

Specification Title	Paper type	Availability
English at Level 1 QN: 603/4289/4	Internally-set and assessed Speaking, listening and communicating assessments. Externally-set, Reading and Writing on-demand assessment.	Paperbased, on-demand Onscreen, on-demand
English at Level 2 QN: 603/4290/0	Internally-set and assessed Speaking, listening and communicating assessments. Externally-set, Reading and Writing on-demand assessment.	Paperbased, on-demand Onscreen, on-demand

The assessment structure for English comprises three units: the Speaking, Listening and Communicating unit, which is assessed internally, the Reading unit and the Writing unit, which are both assessed externally. For more information please see the [Level 1&2 English Specification](#).

Centres can submit a claim for the Speaking, Listening and Communication unit provided they have a registered Lead Internal Verifier on OSCA who has been through the standardisation materials and is accredited for the current academic year. For further information regarding registering on OSCA and the standardisation materials please see our [OSCA Step-by-step Guide Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 English](#).

Please note: OSCA accreditation is required annually for all Level 1 & 2 English Lead Internal Verifiers and is essential for certification. If OSCA is not completed, we cannot issue Level 1 and Level 2 English certificates.

For the new English specification, once all three units have been completed you will need to make a full award claim on Edexcel Online to enable a certificate to be issued.

3.2.2 Functional Skills Mathematics (2019)

Specification Title	Paper type	Availability
Mathematics at Level 1 G,QN: 603/4267/5	Externally set, on-demand assessment	Paperbased, on-demand Onscreen, on-demand
Mathematics at Level 2 QN: 603/4268/7	Externally set, on-demand assessment	Paperbased, on-demand Onscreen, on-demand

The assessment structure for Mathematics comprises one external paper-based/onscreen on demand Assessment with two test sections – a non-calculator section (calculator prohibited) and a calculator section (calculator permitted). For more information please see the [Level 1&2 Mathematics Specification](#).

3.2.3 Paper-based on demand tests

Functional Skills is available as paper-based on demand for English (Reading and Writing) and Mathematics at levels 1 and 2. This service/offer gives you the flexibility to book paper-based assessments at a time and date that is convenient for your learners. Assessments need to be booked a minimum of 14 days in advance for a specific time and date, but they can be used up to 5 days after the scheduled exam date if you have any learner absences.

Any unused question papers, including test booklets, should not be returned but must be collected, accounted for, and securely destroyed immediately. The date and time of doing so must be recorded. Spare copies of papers must not be issued to anyone, including teaching staff.

For more information, please refer to qualifications.pearson.com/fs

Paperbased test invoices

Paperbased test results

Test results will be available via Edexcel Online within 28 days of Pearson receiving the test script. Learners can be entered to resit on the same day the initial results are received.

3.2.4 Onscreen testing

We offer onscreen on demand tests for Functional Skills in English (Reading and Writing) and Mathematics across Level 1 and 2 qualifications.

Onscreen tests can be taken at any point in the year by arrangement with Pearson. Registered learners can be booked onto an onscreen test any time up until two hours before the test is scheduled to begin.

For more information about onscreen Functional Skills tests please visit qualifications.pearson.com/fs

Onscreen test invoices

Invoices will be generated on a learner completing an onscreen test, and a result being uploaded to Pearson. There are no late entry or withdrawal charges for these onscreen tests. In addition, there is no charge for tests not taken.

Onscreen test results

Test results will be available via Edexcel Online within 28 days of Pearson receiving the test file. Learners can be entered to resit on the same day the initial results are received.

3.2.5 Functional Skills unit codes

For details of the unit codes for our paper-based on demand offer, please refer to our Functional Skills Homepage qualifications.pearson.com/fs

3.3 Digital Functional Skills (2023)

The following programmes are available:

Specification Title	Paper type	Availability
Digital Functional Skills at Entry Level 3 QN: 610/3359/5	Externally set, on-demand assessment	Onscreen (online only), on-demand
Digital Functional Skills at Level 1 QN: 610/3358/3	Externally set, on-demand assessment	Onscreen (online only), on-demand

The assessment structure for Digital comprises one external assessment using a computer. Each assessment comprises two sections, a test section and a task section. Results are graded 'Pass' or 'Fail', however only 'Pass' grades will appear on certificates. For more information please see the [Digital Functional Skills Specification](#).

Assessments can be booked via Edexcel Online, please see the following article for a step-by-step [Booking a test on Edexcel Online](#).

Invoices will be generated on a learner completing an onscreen test, and a result being uploaded to Pearson. There are no late entry or withdrawal charges for these onscreen tests. In addition, there is no charge for tests not taken.

3.3.1 Running Digital Functional Skills assessments

If you haven't run Onscreen Digital FS tests before, then you must complete the [Onscreen Testing Declaration Form](#) before you can run live tests.

The assessment for Digital Functional Skills takes place using the Digital FS online test player, this is different to the test player used for English and Maths. For software installation guidance, please see: [Digital Functional Skills: Software Installation Guide](#).

For step-by-step instructions on accessing and administration of Digital Functional Skills assessments please see the following article, [Digital FS Portal, Pearson Assessor Dashboard \(PAD\) and Data Files - Test Walkthrough](#).

3.3.2 Digital Functional Skills Results

To ensure we have sufficient learner evidence to support the award process, our usual 28-day SLA for returning Functional Skills results will be extended to 56 calendar days for Digital Functional Skills. Test results will be available on Edexcel Online.

4 Reporting learner achievement

4.1 Reporting learner achievement

Results can be reported via EDI or Edexcel Online for every learner who has achieved the internally assessed elements of the programme and also where they have withdrawn from the programme. If they have already been deleted you do not need to report them.

After standards verification, if your centre is given a full release to certificate by the Standards Verifier, you can continue to verify and make claims for the controlled assessments for your learners for the remainder of the academic year. Certification release lasts for the academic year in which the Standards Verifier visit takes place.

For further details, please refer to [Reporting vocational achievement](#).

4.2 Claims For Functional Skills English

Once a learner has completed and passed all the necessary units to obtain the Functional Skills English qualification, you will need to enter unit results into Edexcel Online and make a full claim for certificates to be issued. Please see the following articles for a step-by-step of how to do this, [Reporting Entry Level Functional Skills Achievement](#) and [Claiming SLC \(Level 1&2\) Achievement Functional Skills English](#).

Please note for Level 1 & 2 English: OSCA accreditation is required annually for all Lead Internal Verifiers and is essential for certification. If OSCA is not completed, we cannot issue Level 1 and Level 2 English certificates.

4.3 Claim deadlines

The deadline to claim certificates for candidates completing the 2026/27 assessments is 31 August 2026.

Please note: The final OSCA window for 2026/27 will open in July and the standardisation activity must be completed by 31 July in order to be eligible for certificates for Level 1 & 2 Functional Skills English.

4.4 Dates for results reporting

For programmes following the academic year, **we'll issue awards by 15 August** if we've received your results by 5 July, unless there is a query over the result or your centre is deferred.

Certificate deferrals occur where we haven't received a standards verifier or external examiner report, or where a centre or learners at the centre have been blocked for certification.

Claims and results for success reported after 5 July may be issued after 15 August.

Note: Results should be submitted immediately at the end of each summer term, as the results submitted to Pearson are used, in some instances, to create the performance and league tables. If you have not reported early enough to enable Pearson to process the results by the end of July, you may find your outcomes are incorrect in these tables.

You can report results via Edexcel online or EDiFact EDi.

5 Certification

Functional Skills qualifications are graded 'Pass' or 'Fail'; however, only 'Pass' grades will appear on certificates.

Certificates will normally arrive in centres within 14 working days of results being issued on Edexcel online.

5.1 Entry Level Certificates

Once a claim has been made, and results have been verified by your Standards Verifier, we will release certificates for eligible learners.

5.2 English, Mathematics (Level 1/2) and Digital (E3 -L1) Certificates

Once a learner has completed and passed all the necessary units to obtain the Functional Skills qualification and received a result on Edexcel Online, our system will automatically issue a certificate.

If you wish to merge the onscreen and paper-based results for Functional Skills, it is no longer necessary

to complete a spreadsheet for learners. Results are now merged automatically.

5.3 Certificate retention

It is no longer necessary to return uncollected certificates to us. They may be destroyed (in a confidential manner) after retention for a period of no less than 12 months from the date of issue.

Centres that do not have a means of destroying certificates confidentially may return them to our Manchester office. A record of certificates that have been destroyed should be retained for four years from their date of destruction.

Centres must comply with any request from us to return a certificate. Certificates remain the property of the awarding bodies at all times.

6 Post-results services

6.1 Review of Marking and Moderation (RoMM)

For Functional Skills (onscreen and paper-based on demand), Review of Marking and Moderation (RoMM) requests can be submitted only by sending an email to FSonscreenPRS@pearson.com

The window for centres to apply for the Post-results services opens on the day a result is issued for a test and closes 10 working days after the result was issued. Centres are advised to submit applications at the earliest opportunity, as applications cannot be made after the window has closed.

6.2 Access to Scripts (ATS)

This service is not available for onscreen and paper-based on demand assessments as tests are live for an extended period of time. To maintain the security of test papers, content must be kept secure at all times.

6.3 Results Plus (R+)

[ResultsPlus](#) is available for Functional Skills Maths and English, Levels 1 and 2 and Digital Functional Skills, Entry Level 3 and Level 1. ResultsPlus for Functional Skills gives you insight into your learners' performance, enabling you to identify areas of weakness for an individual or a cohort, view pass or fail rates and pinpoint areas that need development.

7 Access arrangements and Special Consideration

7.1 Access arrangements

Before an examination or assessment, you can apply for access arrangements on behalf of a candidate with special needs. For more information, please see our support page on [Access arrangements](#).

For guidance on suitable access arrangements available for Functional Skills, please refer to the following article [Access Arrangements: Guide for Functional Skills Access Arrangements](#).

7.2 Special consideration

- Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment that compensates candidates who were suffering from a temporary illness or condition or who were otherwise disadvantaged at the time of the examination.
- Exams officers may apply for special consideration on a candidate's behalf. For Functional Skills paper-based and onscreen tests, you will need to complete and sign [JCQ form 10](#) and send it to uk.special.requirements@pearson.com.

8 Completion of quality assurance processes required for certification

8.1 External verification requirements

All Entry Level Functional Skills programmes and Level 1 & 2 English Functional Skills programmes are operated on the basis that appropriate quality checks are completed prior to certification.

Certification claims should only be made when centres have been verified externally by Pearson.

Pearson reserves the right to suspend certification by a centre on a programme/unit if there are any concerns over standards, quality assurance or centre management.

Centres must allocate a Quality Nominee within Edexcel Online who will act as a point of contact for centre quality and be responsible to oversee completion of quality assurance activities.

8.2 Deadlines for external verification

The deadline for external verification of Level 1 & 2 Functional Skills English is **30 June 2027**.

The deadline for external verification of Entry Level Functional Skills is **31 July 2027**.

8.3 Guidance on Quality Assurance

Please refer to the published resources available from the [FS Quality Assurance](#) section of our course materials for full details of the quality assurance processes within Functional Skills.

9 Guidance on administrative processes

We have published all current administrative guidance on our website, which provides the necessary information to carry out these processes. This will be particularly helpful for new exams officers undertaking these administrative tasks.

Please see below to find the relevant guidance:

- For a list of our guidance articles for Functional Skills, covering everything from approvals and registrations, access arrangements, regulations and exam administration, to results and certification, please see our [Functional Skills: Support Index](#).
- Guidance on conducting assessments can be found below:
 - For Entry Level Functional Skills, please see the following article [Entry Level Functional Skills: Instructions For the Conduct Of Controlled Assessment](#)
 - For Level 1 and 2 English and Maths Functional Skills assessments, please see the following article [Functional Skills English, Maths: Instructions For The Conduct Of Examinations \(ICE\)](#)
 - For Digital Functional Skills, please see the following article, [Digital Functional Skills: Instructions for Conducting Examinations \(ICE\)](#)
- Our Onscreen tests for Level 1 and 2 English and Maths require the use of our Pearson Onscreen Platform (POP). Please refer to our [onscreen testing guidance](#) on how to install the platform and deliver these onscreen tests.
- [How and when to report learner achievement](#)