

Functional Skills

What are Functional skills?

Functional Skills have been a mandatory component of apprenticeships since October 2012

Achieving a Functional Skills qualification demonstrates that an apprentice has all the skills they need in English and maths to be able to engage with their programme.

Functional Skills provide learning tools that enable apprentices to:

- Apply their knowledge and understanding to everyday life;
- Engage competently and confidently with others;
- Solve problems in both familiar and unfamiliar problems;
- Develop personally and professionally and
- Secure a broader range of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours that are needed in the working world

Functional skills are assessed on a pass or fail bases and a level 2 FSQ is the equivalent to a level 4+ GCSE grade (C and above for the old GCSE grade framework).

The table below demonstrates the levels you can at which you can achieve a FSQ and what this equates to:

Functional Skill Grade	GCSE Equivalent
Entry Level 1-3	Below GCSE Level
Level 1	Equivalent to GCSE 1-3 Grade
Level 2	Equivalent to GCSE Grade 4+

What Level of Functional Skills do I need for the Level 4 Data Analytics Apprenticeship?

You need to attain a Functional Skill Level 2 (or equivalent)

N.B Learners who already have obtained the level required by the apprenticeship will be exempt from undertaking them. **You must hold proof of certification for this to apply and send across to sams@projectingsuccess.co.uk**

Q..“I sat an exam some time ago that proves my ability to work at a particular level in English and maths. I do not have a copy of the certificate, but I have achieved a higher vocational and professional qualification, like a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Will this be accepted as evidence to fulfil the Functional Skills requirements?”

A.. No. As the End-Point Assessment Organisation, we must ensure that you have achieved the required qualification. You must produce evidence to that effect. Evidence of this achievement is most commonly a copy of the qualification certificate.

If this evidence cannot be provided, you will automatically be enrolled onto Functional Skills.

Functional Skills

Do I have to pay for the FS exams if I have not achieved them already?

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funds apprentices to achieve qualifications in English or maths (or both) if they do not already meet the minimum requirements for certification.

How is BKSb used for Functional Skills?

The BKSb solution allows for easy integration of English and Maths Functional Skills eLearning into the workplace and doesn't impact heavily on the working day.

The *BKSb Initial Assessment* and *Diagnostic Assessment* is used to inform enrolment to the appropriate English and Maths Functional Skills level, and produce an Individual Teaching Learning & Assessment Plan (TLAP) and targets to fill skill gaps.

Independent learning is encouraged, mirroring the independence of an apprenticeship, thus allowing individuals to work at their own pace through the *BKSb Learning Resources, Skill Checks*, and *Revision Scenarios* to upskill and check knowledge. A dedicated Functional Skills Tutor is also available providing workshops and 1-1s where needed.

What do the Functional skills exams consist of?

All exams are sat remotely on a day and time of your convenience using a Proctor system

Maths

- Non Calculator 40 mins
- Calculator 1 hour 50 mins

English

- Reading 1 hour paper
- Writing 1 hour paper
- Speaking, listening, and Communicating 30 minutes

The awarding body for Functional skills are Highfield Qualifications

PASS MARKS – Approximately 65% (Approximate as taken on the average that day!)

SLC - Speaking, listening, and communicating

Learners must complete 2 tasks under controlled assessment conditions to meet the requirements of the Speaking, Listening and Communicating component at Level 2. Each task should cover a different topic:

1. FORMAL PRESENTATION AND Q&A (15 minutes)

2. GROUP DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

Discussion and presentation groups need a minimum of 3 participants and should consist of no more than 5 participants

Functional Skills

ENGLISH READING EXAM

- More Functional
- Not like GCSE Exams – this can catch people out!
- Exam consists of reading through 3 texts on a topic and answering 12 questions on it e.g.
- Purpose of texts
- Organisational devices
- Styles of Writing
- Bias
- Compare and Contrast

So, this exam is all about examining texts and what makes them audience appropriate.

ENGLISH WRITING

- More Functional
- Again not like GCSE Exams.
- 2 tasks.....a short scenario provided and then you either have to :
- Write a Letter
- Write an E-Mail
- Write a Report
- Write an Article

So, this exam is all about format, structure and presenting logical information.

MATHS

- More Functional
- More like GCSE Exams but does not go into heavy topics of trigonometry, Pythagoras etc
- Maths non-calculator – 40 minutes
- Maths Calculator – 1 hour 50 minutes

MATHS TOPICS INCLUDE (NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST)

- Basics of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
- Fraction work (adding fractions mostly) or Fraction of an Amount
- Percentages – including budgeting
- Simple Interest and Compound Interest
- Formula
- Working with shape and Measure – Area, Perimeter and Volume
- Median and Mode
- Probability
- Ratio
- Problem Solving
- Graphs and charts including scale

When do I have to complete the Functional skills exams?

- If your BKSB IA's and Diagnostics are L2.9 we can put you forward to sit mocks straight away.
- You need to score 75% upwards in your mocks to be booked for the live exam.

Functional Skills

- If your IA's and Diagnostics are lower than this, then initially we can set you work to do on BKSb to improve your score

Help to get you there:

- Dedicated FS Tutor
- BKSb Learning Resources
- Workshops
- 1-1's
- Activities

All Functional Skills qualifications must be completed **before** the Portfolio completion stage of the apprenticeship. Failure to pass the exams will mean that you are unable to complete the apprenticeship.