



**BPP**

# **Functional Skills** **Learner Handbook**

## **2024**



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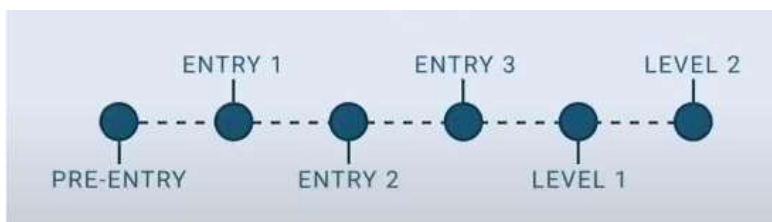
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## What are Functional Skills Qualifications?

Functional Skills (FS) qualifications teach post-16 and adult learners in England how to apply practical Maths and English skills to real-life and vocational contexts. Learners can study for the qualifications in practical ways and apply core skills to real-life situations. Successive governments have championed these flexible courses to equip people with the essential skills they need to succeed.

Functional skills qualifications are available in the following levels:



BPP learners are required to pass **Level 2 Functional Skills** qualifications.

Functional skills forms part of **all apprenticeship frameworks** and all new apprenticeship standards – although learners who already have obtained the level required by the apprenticeship will be exempt from undertaking them.

We aim at BPP to complete your **Level 2 Functional Skills course/s** within the first **6 months** of you being on programme, this can be achieved in as little as **6 weeks**. To help fit your FS course around work and other study commitments, you can complete the programme when you have time available. You may decide to commit an hour every week, or intensively study to complete the entire programme in a few weeks.

Once you have completed the initial & diagnostic assessment, we will be able to estimate the number of guided learning hours required (Please see Page 6).

## ESFA Functional Skills Exemptions

The **Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)** requires that every learner must supply evidence of recognised prior learning which is acceptable by the **ESFA standards**.

ESFA recognises GCSE grade 4 or C and above as a 'standard pass' in all subjects and the learner will be exempt from Functional Skills.

ESFA treat some qualifications in math's, English language and literature as equivalent to GCSE grade. If you already hold one of these qualifications, you won't need to undertake the English and/or math's Functional Skills element of the apprenticeship. Please find a full list of **ESFA accepted evidence** in **Appendix 1**.

GCSE Grading	
New Grading Structure	Old Grading Structure
9	A*
8	
7	A
6	
5	B
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

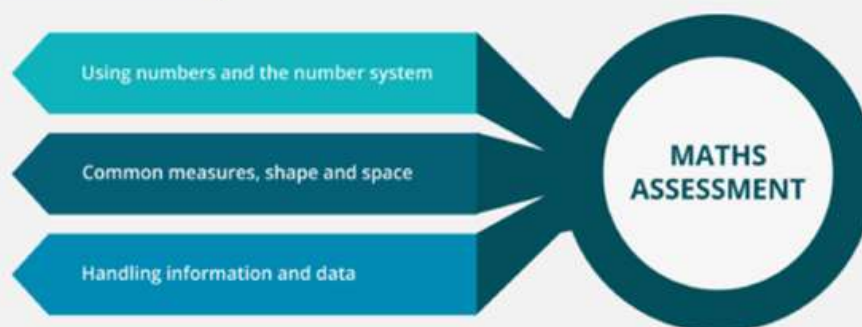


Our Functional Skills (FS) Delivery team consists of Sally- Anne Feather, the programme leader, Rebecca Bissett the Functional Skills Coordinator. Camille Maltais and a team of dedicated administration staff and Kathleen MacDonald our Maths specialist and Rebecca Roberts our English specialist.

## Level 2- Maths Course Content

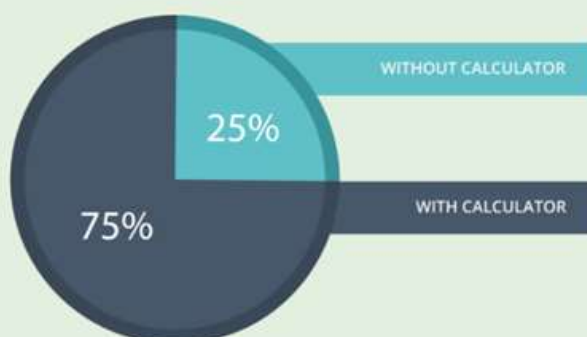
### Maths

The maths assessment will cover 3 separate content areas



The assessment takes the form of 1 paper, with 2 sections.

Section 1: 25 minutes  
Section 2: 1 hour 20 minutes



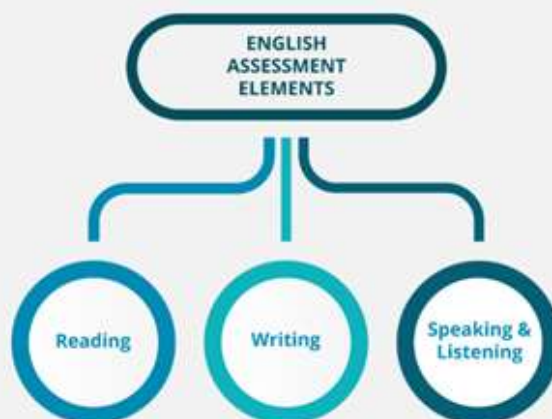
The assessment is allocated to questions or tasks that must be completed with or without a calculator.

## Level 2- English Course Content

### English

The English assessment has three components, Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening.

Learners will need to take all 3 elements at the same level.



#### Reading

The assessment takes the form of 1 paper. Externally marked by City and Guilds.

1 hour

#### Writing

The assessment takes the form of 1 paper. Externally marked by City and Guilds.

1 hour 20 minutes

#### Speaking and Listening



Speaking, listening and communicating assessments are internally assessed by BPP

The candidate will need to take part in 3 activities as part of a group:

1. A formal discussion on an unfamiliar topic
2. A presentation/ extended explanation on a familiar topic
3. A discussion in response to another person's presentation or extended explanation, or a recorded presentation



## Preparing for Functional Skills Assessments

### 1. BKSb

If you enjoy **independent learning**, BKSb could be the right direction for you? Modules can be accessed anytime, around other work commitments. You can designate an hour a week or opt for a more intensive programme. You can track your targets easily, to ensure the successful completion of your programme. The Functional Skills team will regularly monitor your progress and contact you when you're ready to complete your mock exam.

### 2. Online Webinars

If you prefer to **interact with tutors**, with the capacity to ask questions, attending live weekly webinars maybe a better approach for you? Tutors will monitor your progress and refer you to a mock examination when you're ready. We also have booster sessions where you can find out more about the exams and Preparation sessions where you will be talked through strategies to thrive under exam pressure.

### 3. Watching back Online Webinars

Online webinars will also be recorded, if you cannot attend designated time slots due to other commitments. You can **watch the recordings back anytime**. We can monitor if you have viewed the entire webinar and can review your progress when you complete the **progress check** on BKSb.

## How are Functional Skills Assessed?

Functional Skills assessments are graded as either a 'pass' or 'fail'. There are no proxies and no portfolio elements for these qualifications.

Level 2 assessments can be taken **online remotely**.

Remote assessments are booked through the Functional Skills inbox- [FunctionalSkills@bpp.com](mailto:FunctionalSkills@bpp.com), available all year round once the learner has successfully passed a mock exam. Assessments can be booked Monday- Friday with 5 working days' notice. Assessment time slots are 8.30am, 11.30am and 4.00pm.

## Guided Learning Hours

At BPP we believe it is very important to set your expectation from the start. When you have completed the Initial & Diagnostic Assessment, we can assign you a learner's pathway, with an estimation on required guided learning hours. You can opt to complete 1 hour per week, or for a more intensive programme, if you want to complete the course quickly.

Pathway	Description	Hours
<b>Fast Track</b>	<p>All modules are above a Level 2.3. No upskilling required. Learners moves to a mock exam.</p> <p>2 hours initial &amp; diagnostic assessment 2-3 hours mock exam prep 2 hours mock exam 2 hours formal exam</p>	<p><b>8- 9 hours</b></p> <p>+ 4 hours Speaking and Listening</p>
<b>Accelerated</b>	<p>One module requires upskilling on BKSb/ VLE to Level 2.3, before learner proceeds to a mock exam.</p> <p>2 hours initial &amp; diagnostic assessment 6 hours to upskill 1 module. 2-3 hours mock exam prep 2 hours mock exam 2 hours formal exam</p>	<p><b>14- 15 hours</b></p> <p>+ 4 hours Speaking and Listening</p>



Pathway	Description	Hours
Standard	<p>Two modules require upskilling on BKS/ VLE to Level 2.3, before learner proceeds to a mock exam.</p> <p>2 hours initial &amp; diagnostic assessment  12 hours to upskill 2 modules.  2-3 hours mock exam prep  2 hours mock exam  2 hours formal exam</p>	<p><b>20- 21 hours</b></p> <p>+ 4 hours Speaking and Listening</p>
Extended	<p>Three or more modules require upskilling on BKS/ VLE to Level 2.3, before learner proceeds to a mock exam.</p> <p>2 hours initial &amp; diagnostic assessment  6 hours to upskill 1 module (maximum of 7 modules 42 hours)  2-3 hours mock exam prep  2 hours mock exam  2 hours formal exam</p>	<p><b>26- 51 hours</b></p> <p>+ 4 hours Speaking and Listening</p> <p><b>Total 55 Hours</b></p>

## Appendix 1

### ESFA Functional Skills Exemptions

Acceptable current and prior equivalent qualifications for English and maths minimum requirements in **level 2 to 7 apprenticeship standards and frameworks**

Qualifications	English*****	Maths	Minimum acceptable grade
GCSE*	Any GCSE with English in the title	Any GCSE with Mathematics in the title	C or 4**
International GCSE	Any International GCSE with English in the title	Any International GCSE with Mathematics in the title	C or 4
Functional Skills level 2	English	Mathematics	Pass
Key Skills level 2	Communication (Literacy)	Application of Number (Numeracy)	Pass
A Level	Any A Level with English in the title	Any A Level with Mathematics in the title	E or Ordinary Grade (pre-1986)
AS Level	Any AS Level with English in the title	Any AS Level with Mathematics in the title	E
Core Maths level 3***		Mathematical Studies	E
		Using and Applying Mathematics	
		Quantitative Problem Solving	
		Quantitative Reasoning	
		Mathematics in Context	
		Mathematics in Work and Life	
Pre-U Certificate	Literature in English	Mathematics	P3
		Further mathematics	
Free-Standing Mathematics level 2		Level 2 Free-Standing Mathematics Qualification - Foundations of Advanced Mathematics	C
O Level	English language	Mathematics	C (pre-1975 evidence of a Pass)
	English literature		
CSE	English	Mathematics	1

Qualifications	English*****	Maths	Minimum acceptable grade
British Sign Language**** (Regulated Qualifications Framework level 2) (Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework level 5)	British Sign Language		Pass
Essential Skills Wales level 2	Essential Communication Skills or Essential Skills Wales in Communication	Essential Application of Number Skills or Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	Pass
Essential Skills (Northern Ireland) level 2	Certificate in Essential Skills Communication	Certificate in Essential Skills Application of Number	Pass
Scottish Advanced Higher (SCQF level 7)	English	Mathematics	C
Scottish Higher (SCQF level 6)	English	Mathematics	C
Scottish National 5 (SCQF level 5)	English	Mathematics	C
		Life skills Mathematics	
		Applications of Mathematics	
Scottish Intermediate 2 (SCQF level 5)	English	Mathematics	C
Scottish Standard Grade Credit (SCQF level 5)	English	Mathematics	2
Scottish National Certificate Unit (SCQF level 6)	Communication		Pass
Scottish Core Skill Unit (SCQF level 5)	Communication	Numeracy	Pass

Qualifications	English*****	Maths	Minimum acceptable grade
Scottish Workplace Core Skill Unit (SCQF level 5)	Communication	Numeracy	Pass
Scottish National Unit (SCQF level 5)	Literacy	Numeracy	Pass
Scottish Ordinary Grade (SCQF level 5)	English	Mathematics	C
IBO Middle Years Programme level 1/level 2 Certificate	Language and Literature	Mathematics	Grade 3
		Mathematics - Extended	
International Baccalaureate Diploma	Standard or Higher-level qualification in:	Standard or Higher-level qualification in:	Grade 3
	English A: Literature	Mathematical Studies	
	English A: Language and Literature	Mathematics	
	Or English Literature and Performance	Further Mathematics	
English and maths qualifications at higher levels			
English and mathematics qualifications at a higher level (e.g., level four and above) will be acceptable. For Scotland this would be an English or Mathematics qualification at SCQF level 7 and above (e.g., Advanced Higher)			
For overseas qualifications			
Overseas qualifications will be acceptable where there is clear evidence, from NARIC (via a certificate/statement of comparability) that the qualification is an equivalent level to the minimum requirements for English and maths and there is additional comparison information that confirm the qualification is an equivalent of GCSE English and/or maths (A* to C).			