



vtct

Handbook

Functional Skills ICT Level 1 & 2

FSIo1

FSIo2



Qualification Codes

Skillsfirst Qualification code	Qualification Title	QAN number
FSI01	Skillsfirst Functional Skills Qualification in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) at Level 1	501/1438/4
FSI02	Skillsfirst Functional Skills Qualification in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) at Level 2	501/1314/8

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1.0 Introduction to Functional Skills

1.1 What are Functional Skills?

Functional Skills have been developed as part of a government initiative to improve the levels of literacy, numeracy and ICT in the UK. The qualifications have been designed to assess skills that can be applied to a learner's life, learning and work.

VTCT currently offers Functional Skills at levels 1 and 2, with flexible, onscreen testing opportunities for all subjects, delivered through Skillsfirst Awards.

1.2 Who is this qualification for?

Functional Skills underpin nearly all forms of 14+ learning in England and are intended for a vast range of different settings.

There are specific rules around the achievement of Functional Skills within Apprenticeship frameworks, as well as an expectation that Foundation Learning and other programmes (e.g. GCE/GCSE) should include opportunities to develop and achieve appropriate Functional Skills qualifications.

1.3 What does the ICT Functional Skill qualification cover?

Competence in Functional Skills ICT is broadly about being able to:

- identify the ICT requirements
- use ICT systems to carry out tasks
- manage information storage
- demonstrate how to minimise the risk of computer viruses
- use search techniques to locate relevant information
- select appropriate information for the task in hand
- enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software
- use data handling software
- use communications software
- combine and present information that are fit for purpose and the audience
- evaluate the use and the selection of the ICT tools and facilities used.

2.0 Qualification Structures

These qualifications can be obtained by the learner completing the single mandatory unit.

Skillsfirst Functional Skills qualification in ICT at level 1 – FSI01

Mandatory components: The learner is required to complete one mandatory unit.

Unit title	Guided Learning Hours
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Level 1	45

Skillsfirst Functional Skills qualification in ICT at level 2 – FSI02

Mandatory components: The learner is required to complete one mandatory unit .

Unit Title	Guided Learning Hours
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Level 2	45

3.0 Qualification details

3.1 Standards for the ICT Level 1 Components with Assessment Weightings:

Skill standard	Coverage and range (indicative)	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT systems</p> <p>Identify the ICT requirements of a straightforward task</p> <p>Interact with and use ICT systems to meet requirements of a straightforward task</p> <p>Manage information storage</p> <p>Follow and demonstrate understanding of the need for safety and security procedures</p>	<p>Use ICT to plan and organise work</p> <p>Select and use software applications to meet needs and solve straightforward problems</p> <p>Select and use interface features effectively to meet needs</p> <p>Adjust system settings as appropriate to individual needs</p> <p>Work with files, folders and other media to access, organise, store, label and retrieve information</p> <p>Demonstrate how to create, use and maintain secure passwords</p> <p>Demonstrate how to minimize the risk of computer viruses</p>	<p>20-30%</p>
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <p>Use search techniques to locate and select relevant information</p> <p>Select information from a variety of ICT sources for a straightforward task</p>	<p>Search engines, queries</p> <p>Recognise and take account of currency, relevance, bias and copyright when selecting and using information</p>	<p>10-20%</p>

Skill standard	Coverage and range (indicative)	Assessment weighting
<p>Developing presenting and communicating information</p> <p>Enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet the requirements of straightforward tasks</p> <p>Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling tasks</p> <p>Use communications software to meet requirements of a straightforward task</p> <p>Combine information within a publication for a familiar audience and purpose</p> <p>Evaluate own use of ICT tools</p>	<p>Apply editing, formatting and layout techniques to meet needs, including text, tables, graphics, records, numbers, charts, graphs or other digital content</p> <p>Process numerical data</p> <p>Display numerical data in a graphical format</p> <p>Use field names and data types to organise information</p> <p>Enter, search, sort and edit records</p> <p>Read, send and receive electronic messages with attachments</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of the need to stay safe and to respect others when using ICT-based communication</p> <p>For print and for viewing on-screen</p> <p>Check for accuracy and meaning</p> <p>At each stage of a task and at the task's completion</p>	<p>50 – 70%</p>

Note: It is important to note the weightings in the right hand column as this reflects the marks provided in the assignments.

3.2 Standards for the ICT Level 2 Components with Assessment Weightings:

Skill standard	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Using ICT systems</p> <p>Plan solutions to complex tasks by analysing the necessary stages</p> <p>Select, interact with and use ICT systems safely and securely for a complex task in non-routine and unfamiliar contexts</p> <p>Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval</p>	<p>Use ICT to plan and analyse complex or multi-step tasks and activities and to make decisions about suitable approaches</p> <p>Select and use software applications to meet needs and solve complex problems</p> <p>Select and use a range of interface features and system facilities effectively to meet needs</p> <p>Select and adjust system settings a appropriate to individual needs</p> <p>Respond to ICT problems and take appropriate action</p> <p>Understand the danger of computer viruses and how to minimize risk</p> <p>Manage files, folders and other media storage to enable efficient information retrieval</p>	<p>20 – 30%</p>
<p>Finding and selecting information</p> <p>Use appropriate search techniques to locate and select relevant information</p> <p>Select information from a variety of sources to meet requirements of a complex task</p>	<p>Search engines, queries and AND / NOT / OR, >, <, >=, <=, contains, begins wit, use of wild cards</p> <p>Recognise and take account of copyright and other constraints on the use of information</p> <p>Evaluate fitness for purpose of information</p>	<p>10 – 20%</p>

Skill standards	Coverage and range (indicative)	Assessment weighting
<p>Developing presenting and communicating information</p> <p>Enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet the requirements of a complex task</p> <p>Use appropriate software to meet requirements of a complex data-handling task</p> <p>Use communications software to meet requirements of a complex task</p> <p>Combine and present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience</p> <p>Evaluate the selection, use and effectiveness of ICT tools and facilities used to present information</p>	<p>Apply a range of editing, formatting and layout techniques to meet needs, including text, tables, graphics, records, numerical data, charts, graphs or other digital content</p> <p>Process and analyse numerical data</p> <p>Display numerical data in appropriate graphical format</p> <p>Use appropriate field names and data types to organise information</p> <p>Analyse and draw conclusions from a data set by searching, sorting and editing records</p> <p>Organise electronic messages, attachments and contacts</p> <p>Use collaborative tools appropriately</p> <p>Understand the need to stay safe and to respect others when using ICT-based communication</p> <p>Organise and integrate information of different types to achieve a purpose, using accepted layouts and conventions as appropriate</p> <p>Work accurately and check accuracy, using software facilities where appropriate</p> <p>At each stage of a task and at the task's completion</p>	<p>50 – 70%</p>

Note: It is important to note the weightings in the right hand column as this reflects the marks provided in the assignments

4.0 Delivering Functional Skills

The time taken to complete the Functional Skills qualifications will vary significantly between learners – dependent upon their previous experience, interests and their exposure to work related activities. Programmes of learning should take factors such as this into account.

During the delivery, it is important to maximise the association with real life situations as the assessments will be based on real life scenarios.

To effectively delivery Functional Skills, centres must ensure that the appropriate teaching, administrative and physical resources are in place.

4.1 Teaching Staff

Teaching staff must:

- Have 2 years experience in teaching/training

Or

- Are working towards an appropriate teaching/training qualification (Cert Ed or Learning & Development trainer units)

Or

- Hold an appropriate teaching/training qualification (Cert Ed or Learning & Development trainer units)
- Have knowledge and experience in the subject being taught to be able to judge the learner's performance against the Functional Skills Standards and to be able to justify their teaching practices
- As a minimum hold the same level of the qualification being taught – but preferably hold a higher level.

4.2 Learners

There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification. However, centres will need to make an initial assessment of each candidate prior to the start of their programme to ensure they are working towards relevant Functional Skills qualifications at the appropriate level.

4.3 Registering learners

In order to enter learners for any of the Functional Skills examinations, centre staff should first register learners with VTCT through our secure online portal **Linx2Online**.

If you don't have a username and password for this portal, please contact VTCT on 02380 684500 or email linx2help@vtct.org.uk.

4.4 Scheduling ICT Functional Skills exams

When taken onscreen, Functional Skills ICT exams can be taken at any time (on-demand). For details on how to schedule and manage onscreen exams please refer to the [SecureAssess/Secure Client Key and Functional Skills User Guide](#). We endeavour to release results for onscreen exams within 4 weeks of them being uploaded to be marked.

Paper based exams are also available once every six weeks. For information on the dates of paper based exams and result release, please refer to the [Functional Skills Exam Delivery Calendar](#), available on our website.

4.5 Preparing learners for the Functional Skills ICT exam

A free onscreen practice test is available to centres. This can be used by staff and learners to familiarise themselves with the onscreen system functionality.

Free paper based practice tests are also available by contacting customerservice@vtct.org.uk.

Mark schemes are available for both onscreen and paper based practice tests.

4.6 Conduct of Functional Skills exams

Functional Skills examinations must be taken under supervised conditions, that is:

- Learners must be continually supervised by a reliable person
- All necessary facilities must be available to learners
- Any time restrictions must be complied with
- Learners work must be independent and unaided

It is recommended as good practice for the invigilator to ensure that learners work/evidence is saved to a secure storage location or device for a minimum period of six months after an exam has taken place. This is particularly relevant for paper-based assessments.

The duration of Functional Skills ICT examinations is 2 hours. The examination is split into two sections:

- Section A - 30 minutes. Internet access is allowed.
- Section B - 1 hour 30 minutes. **Internet access is not allowed** in this section; therefore it is the invigilator's responsibility to disable internet access on the computer on which the exam is taking place before the learner starts.

The document '[Instructions for conducting Functional Skills examinations](#)' includes further information relating to:

- Invigilation
- Test Environment
- Guidance on conducting onscreen exams
- Safe custody of exam papers
- Dealing with malpractice and emergencies

4.7 Pass marks

At both levels 1 and 2, it is anticipated that the pass mark is set at 60% of available marks and that should continue to reflect minimal competence at this level. However this will be confirmed or amended through the awarding process. The marks required to pass may be achieved over the coverage and range as a whole. There is no requirement to achieve 60% of available marks within each component of the coverage and range in order to achieve a pass overall.

4.8 Learner certification process

Functional Skills are 'pass' or 'fail' qualifications, they are not graded. They are also free standing qualifications so each subject will be certificated separately. Certificates are titled by skill and level achieved.

In the case of Functional Skills ICT, Skillsfirst will automatically dispatch a learner's certificate when they have achieved the required pass mark in their examination.

Attainment table points for Functional Skills qualifications are as follows:

- **Level 1 = 12.5 points** (equivalent to GCSE at grades D – G).
- **Level 2 = 23 points** (equivalent to GCSE at grades A* - C)

The points for Levels 1 and 2 are in addition to points allocated for other qualifications such as GCSEs.

4.9 Re-sits

There are no limits on the number of times a learner may re-sit a Functional Skills exam, however a learner must wait at least 30 days from the date of the last exam (or the date uploaded for onscreen exams).

VTCT strongly recommends that a learner receives proper tuition and preparation before any re-sit.

Please note that there is a £13.50 charge for each re-sit.

4.10 Access to Functional Skills ICT

In line with the guidance provided by the Ofqual inclusion sheets for Functional Skills, learners can have access to all forms of equipment, software and assistance that constitute their normal way of working.

However, these **must not** affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

The Functional Skills qualifications criteria require awarding organisations to develop assessment materials that anticipate the needs of candidates with disabilities and which minimise, as far as possible, the need to make reasonable adjustments or exemptions whilst still assessing the skills standards.

Candidates may be permitted access to any of the following when undertaking Functional

Skills ICT assessments:

- Reader/ screen reader
- Scribes
- Practical Assistants
- Word Processors
- Transcripts
- BSL Interpreters
- Oral language modifiers
- Modified question papers (including Braille)
- Extra time
- External device to load personal settings

Exemptions – please note

Disability Discrimination legislation (now incorporated into the Equality Act 2010) permits the granting of exemptions for specific assessment components within qualifications in certain circumstances.

Functional Skills qualifications and assessments have been designed to be inclusive and to minimise any later need to make reasonable adjustments or exemptions.

For full details see the [VTCT Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policy](#) available on the VTCT website.

4.11 Centre Malpractice & Maladministration guidance

Malpractice and maladministration is outlined in the [VTCT Malpractice & Maladministration policy](#) available on the VTCT website.

4.13 Appeals Procedure

The Appeals procedure is outlined in the VTCT Enquiries and Appeals Policy available on the VTCT website.

5.0 Further Support

The following material is available for this qualification:

- Functional Skills ICT practice papers.

Other information is available from:

The **Functional Skills Support Programme** is available free of charge to all schools and post-16 education and training centres. Post-16 support covers colleges, sixth-form colleges and independent training organisations, as well as the secure estate and adult and community settings. For more information about the programme and for contact information, visit www.fssupport.org.

7.0 Summary of the English Functional Skill qualifications

Subject	Level	Total number of tasks	Total length of papers	Type of paper	Open/Closed Mix	Total number of marks	Comments
ICT	1	5	2hrs	Externally set and marked	100% open	50	
ICT	2	5	2hrs	Externally set and marked	100% open	50	