



**Guide to Centre Assessment  
grades for Functional Skills  
qualifications in 2020**

**v1 May 2020**

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## Introduction

**This document covers all Functional Skills assessments; legacy and reformed, English, mathematics and ICT Level 1 and Level 2.**

Ofqual's proposed approach, in line with the directive from the Secretary of State for Education, is that all Functional Skills learners due to complete an assessment between 20 March 2020 and 31 July 2020 should receive a calculated result (rather than an adapted or postponed assessment), where there is sufficient evidence to support this.

Skillsfirst has been working closely with Ofqual and other awarding organisations (AOs) to agree common guidance for centres, this is confirmed in this document.

This document is intended to support centres in carrying out the centre assessment grading process for Functional Skills learners.

**Centre Assessment Grade (CAG)** is the term used throughout this document to refer to the evidence-based, provisional, judgement of a learner's component result which a centre submits to the awarding organisation.

The information in this document provides guidelines to support centres, however it is not exhaustive. Skillsfirst reserves the right to make discretionary judgements that may not be detailed within this document if they deem it necessary.

Please be aware this document is liable to change, therefore please ensure you are referring to the most recent version.

## 1. Terms for Functional Skills qualifications calculated results process

The following terms governing this process have been agreed by all AOs offering Functional Skills qualifications:

1. This is a **one-off, time-limited process** offered to minimise disruption caused by measures taken by government in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic so that as far as possible, learners due to take assessments during this period are not disadvantaged.
2. Centres are permitted to make **one submission**, and this must cover **all learners expected to take Functional Skills assessments between 20 March and 31 July 2020**.
3. Once a submission has been made by a centre, Skillsfirst **will not consider any subsequent submission** by that centre (except as part of issue resolution requested by Skillsfirst).
4. There will be **no second submission for 'fail' learners**. For externally assessed components, an opportunity to sit the exam will be offered to all learners who do not pass the component, as soon as possible after the learner's final calculated result has been released by Skillsfirst.
5. For final calculated results that have been approved by Skillsfirst, there will be no right of appeal by the centre or learner against the **result**. An appeal based on whether the **process** was followed will be offered, on the basis that incorrect information or procedures were not followed properly, or fairly, in arriving at a calculated result. This is in line with the outcome of Ofqual's consultation *on Exceptional Arrangements for Assessment and Grading in 2020 (VTQs)*,
6. Skillsfirst reserves the right to review evidence used by centres to reach judgements about CAGs on request. This may be through a quality assurance of the centre's submission and/or through routine external quality assurance activities when these resume.
7. As part of quality assurance of a centre's submission, Skillsfirst may ask the centre to reconsider its submitted CAGs, but Skillsfirst will not itself take action to change CAGs for any learner without the agreement of the centre.
8. Skillsfirst will take all reasonable steps to support centres in resolving quality assurance queries about a centre's submission, but as a last resort, may reject all, or part of the submission.
9. It is expected that for a range of reasons related to the current situation, some centres may not be able to participate. These may include for example:
  - Centres with furloughed staff
  - Centres that are operating at the limits of their capacity, such as for example, healthcare providers.

In such cases, every effort will be made to minimise disadvantage to learners, but delaying assessment may be unavoidable.

## 2. Scope

This guidance covers CAGs for the following qualifications.

### Legacy Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 qualifications:

- Mathematics
- English
- ICT

### Reformed Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 qualifications:

- Mathematics
- English

### 2.1 Eligible learners

Centres should submit CAGs for all Functional Skills learners affected by the Covid-19 disruption.

This is defined as **all learners who they would expect to have taken the assessment / exam between 20 March and 31 July 2020.**

This includes:

- learners attempting the assessment / exam for the first time
- learners resitting the assessment. It is acknowledged that learners may have both attempted for the first time and resat an exam /assessment during this period.

Centres must **NOT** submit CAGs for any learner they would not expect to have taken the exam / assessment during this period.

### 2.2 Component submissions

Centres must submit CAGs at the component level.

**Functional Skills English qualifications** at each level (Level 1 and Level 2) comprise three separately-assessed components: Reading; Writing and Speaking, Listening and Communication. This applies to both legacy and reformed Functional Skills English qualifications

**Functional Skills Mathematics qualifications** at each level (Level 1 and Level 2) comprise one component. This applies to both legacy and reformed Functional Skills Mathematics qualifications. Assessment for reformed Functional Skills consists a single component assessed in two parts, a non-calculator and a calculator section.

**Functional Skills ICT** at each level (Level 1 and Level 2) comprise one component.

### 3. Head of centre responsibilities

#### 3.1 Role of the Head of Centre

The centre assessment grade process for Functional Skills qualifications must be overseen and signed off by the Head of Centre.

The Head of Centre's responsibilities are to ensure:

- only staff who have taught the learner whose provisional component result is being judged are involved in judging that learner's result
- all of those who are judging CAGs are briefed on the process as outlined in this document and are familiar with the requirements of this document and associated materials to support the process (ie the relevant Functional Skills standards for the subject and level being judged and where applicable the Pass Descriptors for that subject and level (see Appendix B))
- that there is sufficient valid evidence available to underpin the judgements to be made by teachers **before** any CAGs are judged
- that teacher judgement takes into account any reasonable adjustment that would be made to the assessment in respect of a learner with a disability
- that judgements are evidence-based and as far as possible, free of any bias in respect of any learner with a protected characteristic, or any other factor (for example character, appearance, social background or special educational needs) that does not relate to their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject
- that where more than one member of staff is involved in teaching an individual learner for any component, that these members of staff work together to agree the CAG
- that where more than one member of staff are responsible for teaching any Functional Skills component, that these staff work together to standardise their judgements in the way described in Section 6.6.

The Head of Centre must contact Skillsfirst to discuss additional support and options before any CAG is judged where:

- no member of staff is available who has taught any learner whose component CAG is being judged
- no evidence is available to support judgement of a CAG for any learner.

CAGs must not be submitted based on judgements made by staff, other than those who have taught the learner the component for which the CAG is submitted.

**CAGs must not be submitted for any learner where there is no valid evidence on which to base the judgement.**

Once the process has been completed, the Head of Centre must sign off a single submission covering all Functional Skills learners whose CAGs they plan to submit. This single submission must cover **all** Functional Skills components that the centre intends to submit at **all** levels offered for both legacy and reformed qualifications (where applicable). Submissions cannot be staggered or submitted in batches. Sign off is in the form of a declaration (supplied by Skillsfirst) that the process has been followed in full. The Head of Centre should provide as much narrative as possible to support submissions, including any disparages, in relation to historic achievement rates and the achievement profile of the CAGs.

Failure to follow this process and or produce evidence upon request, may result in a sanction, and or malpractice / maladministration investigation in line with our sanction, malpractice / maladministration policies.

The Head of Centre declaration includes:

- for all learners, confirmation that
  - for all components where a CAG is submitted, only staff with experience of teaching that component to the learner(s), provided their CAG
  - at least one piece of valid evidence (see Appendix A) per learner was used to reach the CAG judgement
- an indication of the types of evidence used for the component
- confirmation that the Head of Centre has overseen a sense check comparing the numbers and proportions of pass and fail CAGs for each component, with expectations about how each cohort of learners would perform under normal circumstances
- a description of any factors which account for divergence between historic achievement rates and the achievement profile of the CAGs
- total number of learners for whom a CAG has been judged
- total number for whom a 'pass' is recommended
- total number for whom a fail is recommended (SLC not applicable)
- the types of evidence used to support the process
- CAGs for all learners have been based on a minimum of one piece of high trusted evidence per learner, or in the case of medium or low trusted evidence, more than one piece of trusted evidence has been used (see Appendix A)

### **3.2 Sense checking the submission**

This process covers any Functional Skills assessment which would have taken place **between 20 March and 31 July 2020**.

As part of a final sense check ahead of submitting CAGs to Skillsfirst, the Head of Centre must oversee a comparison between:

#### ***For all components:***

- the number of CAGs submitted for each component and
- the number of results they submitted for each component for an equivalent historic period (eg 20 March – 31 July 2019). Approximate figures may be used where it is not possible to generate exact figures.

Any variance between the two, for any component included in the submission, should be accounted for.

#### ***For examined components:***

The Head of Centre should oversee a sense check comparing the numbers and proportions of pass and fail CAGs for each component, with expectations about how each cohort of learners would perform under normal circumstances. A comparison with centre records for an equivalent period of time (eg 20 March – 31 July 2019) should be used for this. The extent of the similarity should be noted and known factors to account for this fed back to Skillsfirst as part of the submission.

## 4. The process for calculating results

The process for calculating results for Functional Skills qualifications will follow the structure outlined below:

- centres to ensure eligible learners are registered on the appropriate reformed Functional Skills qualification(s) before 31 May 2020
- teachers use evidence and professional judgements to make CAG judgements for each component a learner would have been entered for during the period of 20 March and 31 July 2020
- where more than one teacher provides CAGs for learners for any one component, these grades must be standardised to ensure a consistent approach has been followed for all learners within a centre (see Section 6.6)
- where a teacher considers that a learner would have been on the borderline between passing and failing the assessment, but the teacher feels unable to reach a definitive judgement, it is recommended that:
  - where possible, such cases are discussed as part of a standardisation activity
  - particular attention is paid to the pass descriptor provided by Skillsfirst (where this is available for the component being considered (see Appendix B))
  - comparison is made between the evidence for that learner and evidence considered for other learners felt to be around the borderline, but where it was possible to reach a pass or fail decision
- the centre must perform a final check on CAGs before they are submitted. This process must be overseen by the Head of Centre and a declaration (provided by Skillsfirst) must be signed by the Head of Centre to confirm that:
  - CAGs are reasonable and that considerations have been made about equality, accuracy and evidence
  - CAGs have been checked against performance for your centre in a similar period in previous years and asked to
  - any discrepancies have been accounted for
- pass and fail CAGs are confirmed to Skillsfirst (where applicable).

We will not ask you to submit evidence to us as part of the initial submission process, but you will need to retain this evidence for a minimum period of time six months.

- Skillsfirst will carry out a quality review of submitted CAGs
- if we identify any concerns which are not sufficiently addressed in the declaration, we will contact you to discuss our concerns and ask you to review your CAGs, or provide further clarification or evidence
- if it is not possible to resolve our queries with you, we will not be able to accept your submissions and in these cases, adaptation or delay may be unavoidable
- Skillsfirst will release calculated results.

The timescales below should help centres to plan staff resource to support with the CAG process.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Process</b>
Up to and including 31 May 2020	Centres to ensure all learners are registered by this date
1 June – 29 June 2020	Window for submission of CAGs spreadsheet <b><i>Please note, only one submission per centre will be accepted.</i></b>
1 June – 30 July 2020	Skillsfirst quality assurance checks are conducted <b><i>Please note, to ready judgements, we reserve the right to review evidence used by centres. All evidence must be retained and made available to us upon request, for a minimum of six months</i></b>
15 June - 31 July 2020	Calculated results will be released on a rolling basis with the aim that results will be processed as quickly as possible

It is expected that for a range of reasons related to the current situation, some centres may not be able to participate. These may include for example:

- centres with furloughed staff
- centres who are operating at the limits of their capacity such as for example, healthcare providers

In such cases, every effort will be made to minimise disadvantaging those learners' however delaying assessments may be unavoidable.

If a centre believes they are not able to participate for whatever reason, please contact Skillsfirst **as soon as possible** to discuss this.

## 5. Evidence and making centre assessed grades (CAGs) judgements

### 5.1 Types of evidence and level of trust

For each learner, the teacher judging the CAG must consider all available valid evidence which demonstrates the learner's progress towards the learning aims of the qualification. The evidence should be used in conjunction with the teacher's professional expertise, to form a judgement about whether the learner would pass or fail the component. All available evidence should be used and the minimum requirement for judging a learner's CAG, is that there must be at least one piece of valid evidence available.

We will only make our decisions of calculated results based on a minimum of one piece of high trusted evidence per learner. In the case of medium or low trusted evidence, there is a requirement of more than one (see Appendix A for further information).

The following forms of evidence should be used to support judgement, where these are available:

- Head of Centre declaration is mandatory for all submissions and cannot be used in isolation for a learners CAG evidence (see Appendix C)
- results of centre-marked attempts at Functional Skills practice tests which has been internally moderated (**high trusted evidence**)
- results of mock Speaking, Listening and Communication assessments which have been internally moderated (**high trusted evidence**)
- previous attempts at a live exam (based on feedback previously supplied by Skillsfirst after failed exams), together with additional learning evidence (**high trusted evidence**)
- results of centre-marked attempts at Functional Skills practice tests which have not been internally moderated (**medium trusted evidence**)
- results of mock Speaking, Listening and Communication assessments which have not been internally moderated (**medium trusted evidence**)
- on-programme learning evidence (**medium trusted evidence**)
- formative assessment results. Formative assessment is defined as assessment undertaken to check learning has taken place and assess progress towards the Functional Skills level. This can be centre-devised or a commercially-available product. This does **not** include initial and diagnostic assessment (see below) (**medium trusted evidence**)
- any other learner work towards the qualification (ie work they have independently undertaken in class or at home) (**low trusted evidence**)
- learner work demonstrating the skills assessed by Functional Skills qualifications that has been completed in support of another qualification learning aim (**medium trusted evidence**)
- Assessor records (**medium trusted evidence**)
- Evidence of GLH being met (**low trusted evidence**)

Results of initial and diagnostic assessment can be used, but only in the following ways:

- as a benchmark to gauge progress made towards the component requirements by the learner (**low trusted evidence**)

- where this provides evidence that the learner had already met one or more of the component's assessed requirements, at the point at which the initial / diagnostic assessment was taken (**low trusted evidence**).

Other forms of evidence may be acceptable, but it is recommended that the centre discusses these with Skillsfirst before judging CAGs.

It is acknowledged that these forms of evidence would not normally be considered in assessing these qualifications. It is also acknowledged that available evidence may only show partial achievement. Teachers will need to exercise judgement and discretion in reaching decisions about which learners would have passed or failed. This includes a judgement where learning has been disrupted, about whether the learner would have passed had they completed the full programme of learning.

Centres should bear in mind the learner's progression aim when providing a 'pass' CAG for a learner and that this means they believe that the learner would be able to progress to the next Functional Skills level, or operate in an employment setting in respect of the skills that will be certificated.

## 5.2 Centre assessment grades required by component

For each component, centres should submit the following:

For components **assessed by exam** (ie Mathematics level 1 and 2; English Reading level 1 and 2; English Writing level 1 and 2; ICT level 1 and 2) the centre will submit for each learner, an evidence-based judgement of whether the learner would pass or fail the component.

For components **assessed internally** (ie Speaking Listening and Communication at level 1 and 2, the centre will submit the judgement of the teacher, using evidence, about which learners would have passed the assessment only (ie not those learners who they would not judge to have passed).

You **should not** provide a CAG where you have no evidence upon which to base one.

All evidence used to support judgement of CAGs may be subject to inspection by Skillsfirst and must be retained by the centre for six months, unless otherwise notified by Skillsfirst.

## 5.3 Guidance for teachers judging learners' CAGs

A learner's CAGs should only be judged by teachers with direct experience of teaching that learner the subject and component for which the CAG is being judged.

Where more than one teacher is responsible for teaching a learner a component, these teachers should work together to reach a judgement about the learner's CAG.

Where more than one teacher is responsible for teaching a subject / component at a particular level, they should work together to standardise their judgement in the way described below.

- Judgements must be made in an impartial, balanced and unbiased way; such that the assessment grades are based on evidence of attainment and avoid bias as far as is possible, so that learners are not systematically advantaged or disadvantaged by having, or not having, a protected characteristic or any other factor (for example character, appearance, social background or special educational needs) that does not relate to their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject. Protected characteristics are defined by the 2010 Equality Act as, age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. In addition to protected characteristics judged

## 5.4 Before judging CAGs

Teachers should be familiar with:

- The guidance on the process issued by Skillsfirst
- The standards for the Functional Skills subject and level being assessed, these can be accessed from Ofqual's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/functional-skills-qualifications-requirements> For legacy Functional Skills qualifications (ie Mathematics and English pre September 2019 and ICT) the relevant legacy criteria should be used. For Mathematics and English learners from September 2019, the standards are published within the Conditions and Requirements documents as appendices.
- For legacy and reformed Mathematics and English at levels 1 and 2, the awarding organisation common pass descriptors (see Appendix B).

## 5.5 Judging CAGs

Only learners affected by the Covid-19 disruption should have CAGs submitted. This is defined as:

**All learners who they would expect to have taken the exam / assessment between 20 March and 31 July 2020. This includes:**

- learners attempting the assessment / exam for the first time
- learners resitting the assessment / exam. It is acknowledged that learners may have both attempted for the first time and resat an exam /assessment during this period.

Centres must **NOT** submit CAGs for any learner they would not expect to have taken the exam / assessment during this period.

Teachers should identify eligible learners before starting the process of judging learner CAGs.

The teacher should consider each eligible learner in turn. For each learner whose CAG is being judged, the teacher should consider:

- at least one piece of valid evidence that demonstrates the learner's progress towards the assessment requirements of the component (see Appendix A)
- the assessment requirements of the component
- (where available) the pass descriptor for the component being considered (see Appendix B)
- their knowledge of the learner's ability
- any reasonable adjustment that would have been made to the assessment for that learner in respect of a disability.

Teachers should also use their professional expertise to reach a considered judgement about whether that learner would have passed, or whether the learner would have failed the component. had they taken the assessment in the usual way.

The evidence used may only show partial achievement of the component's requirements. In reaching a decision about each learner's component CAG, teachers must make a judgement that includes a reasonable consideration of whether the learner would have passed, had the scheduled programme of learning taken place and been completed by the learner.

Centres should bear in mind the learner's progression aim when providing a 'pass' CAG for a learner and that this means they believe that the learner would be able to progress to the next Functional Skills qualification level, or operate in an employment setting in respect of the skills that will be certificated.

In some cases, it may be considered that a learner would have been on the borderline between passing and failing the assessment, but the teacher may feel unable to reach a definitive judgement. In such cases it is recommended that:

- where possible, such cases are discussed as part of standardisation
- particular attention is paid to the pass descriptor provided by Skillsfirst (where this is available for the component being considered)
- comparison is made between the evidence for that learner and evidence considered for other learners felt to be around the borderline, but where it has been possible to reach a pass or fail decision.

All borderline decisions must be recorded on the CAG submission and should be reconsidered as part of the centre's quality assurance check in relation to the overall profile of the CAGs for the component, relative to expectations based on an equivalent historic period.

The teacher's judgement for each learner should be recorded and the evidence retained in line with Skillsfirst's instructions.

## **5.6 Standardisation**

Where there is more than one teacher responsible for delivering a component within the centre and involved in judging CAGs for that component, these teachers must work together to standardise their judgements.

At the start of the process, teachers should individually consider an initial sample of learners and make provisional judgements about whether each would pass or fail. Any learners who are felt to be on the borderline of pass and fail should be noted. Before judging any further CAGs, the teachers should collaborate to discuss and compare their CAGs, the evidence used, and the judgement applied and reach agreement about the characteristics of pass and fail learners.

As a result of this process, judgements reached about the initial sample of learners may be revisited.

The teachers should then complete judgement for all learners, but may wish to discuss any borderline decisions with colleagues as required.

## 5.7 Completing the CAGs judgement process

When CAGs have been judged for all learners / components, the following should be recorded on the spreadsheet provided by Skillsfirst for **all** learners:

- learner name (as registered with Skillsfirst)
- date of birth
- Skillsfirst learner number
- qualification title / level
- Skillsfirst qualification number
- component
- centre assessment grade (CAG) – pass or fail
- borderline (if applicable)
- type(s) of evidence used
- trusted evidence rating (see Appendix A)

The CAGs for each learner should be passed to the Head of Centre for checking and submission to Skillsfirst, along with the completed Head of Centre declaration which confirms:

- for all learners, confirmation that
  - for all components where a CAG is submitted, only staff with experience of teaching that component to the learner(s), provided their CAG
  - at least one piece of valid evidence (see Appendix A) per learner was used to reach the CAG judgement
- an indication of the types of evidence used for the component
- confirmation that the Head of Centre has overseen a sense check comparing the numbers and proportions of pass and fail CAGs for each component, with expectations about how each cohort of learners would perform under normal circumstances
- a description of any factors which account for divergence between historic achievement rates and the achievement profile of the CAGs
- total number of learners for whom a CAG has been judged
- total number for whom a 'pass' is recommended
- total number for whom a fail is recommended (SLC not applicable)
- the types of evidence used to support the process
- CAGs for all learners have been based on a minimum of one piece of high trusted evidence per learner, or in the case of medium or low trusted evidence, more than one piece of trusted evidence has been used (see Appendix A).

## 5.8 Submitting CAGs to Skillsfirst

Skillsfirst will provide centres with a spreadsheet to confirm CAG results for all learners. The following is required for each learners CAG, per component.

When submitting the spreadsheet, the Head of Centre declaration must also be provided.

Centres are permitted to make **one submission**; this must cover **all learners expected to take Functional Skills assessments between 20 March and 31 July 2020**.

The window for the submission of CAGs is 1 June – 29 June 2020, we are unable to accept late submissions.

All submissions should be sent to Skillsfirst by the Head of Centre to [exams@skillsfirst.co.uk](mailto:exams@skillsfirst.co.uk)

### **5.9 Sharing CAGs with learners**

To protect the integrity and validity of the CAG process, you **must not** share your CAG with learners until the calculated result is confirmed by Skillsfirst.

## 6. Guidance on the pass descriptors

### 6.1 Mathematics and English Reading and Writing Level 1 and 2

Pass descriptors have been provided for Mathematics, English Reading and English Writing at level 1 and 2 (Appendix B). These should be used by teachers judging assessment CAGs for these components for both legacy and reformed Functional Skills qualifications. These are used to help ensure a common understanding of the minimum requirement for a pass for each component.

As part of the process leading to the implementation of reformed Functional Skills qualifications from September 2019, Functional Skills awarding organisations worked together to develop an approach to standardise awarding of the Functional Skills qualification components assessed through an exam.

Awarding organisations separately considered exam scripts for these components and noted the characteristics demonstrated by learners who had achieved the same total number of marks as the exam pass mark (eg learners who achieved 28 marks where the pass mark was 28 out of 40). This is defined as a, 'minimally-competent' learner.

Awarding organisations then came together to agree common descriptors of the skills and capabilities typically demonstrated by a 'minimally-competent' learner.

It was noted, and this is acknowledged by the descriptors, that not all minimally competent learners are the same and that in some cases, weak performance against some of the assessed requirements is compensated for by strong performance against other requirements. Teachers should apply this consideration in reaching judgement.

These common descriptors are used by Functional Skills AOs as part of their process for setting exam pass marks in order to support:

- a common interpretation of the standard required in order to pass the exam
- consistency between the pass standard required for legacy and reformed qualifications.

The evidence used to develop the descriptors was taken from assessments for legacy qualifications and they are used to support awarding for reformed qualifications. Therefore, these are appropriate and should be used to support judgements for both legacy and reformed assessments.

### 6.2 Reformed assessments

For reformed assessments, the descriptors are being kept under review and it is planned that further work will take place to consider requirements that have been added or revised as part of the Functional Skills reform. At the present time, this work has been suspended on account of the Covid-19 disruption. At the point in time at which the disruption took place, the reformed qualifications had only been established for about 6 months. This means that evidence is incomplete and still emerging about the reformed pass standard and where awarding for reformed assessments has taken place, this will have taken into account unfamiliar aspects of the new specifications.

The following guidance is given in respect of this:

- Throughout the Functional Skills qualification reform programme, Ofqual have given AOs guidance that while aspects of the requirements for each component have changed, there was no steer from Government that the *overall standard* required to pass any Functional Skills qualification assessment should change.
- For awards made so far for reformed Functional Skills qualifications, Ofqual has asked AOs to take into consideration any impacts on achievement caused by the relative unfamiliarity of the requirements of reformed Functional Skills qualifications and to take these into consideration in setting pass marks. In practice, where there is evidence of such impacts, this means that pass marks may be set a few marks below where these would be set for a more established qualification. It was expected that this process of the new requirements becoming established would have continued throughout the first year of the reformed qualifications and this includes the period for which CAGs are judged. Teachers judging CAGs should therefore apply a similar judgement in judging learners CAGs for reformed Functional Skills assessments.

## Appendix A - Levels of trusted evidence

CAGs for all learners must be based on a minimum of one piece of high trusted evidence per learner, or in the case of medium or low trusted evidence, more than one piece of trusted evidence has been used.

Examples of types of evidence	Level of trusted evidence
Head of Centre declaration is mandatory for all submissions and cannot be used in isolation for a learners CAG evidence	
Results of centre-marked attempts at Functional Skills practice tests which has been internally moderated	High
Results of mock Speaking, Listening and Communication assessments which have been internally moderated	High
Previous attempts at a live exam (based on feedback previously supplied by Skillsfirst after failed exams), together with additional learning evidence	High
Results of centre-marked attempts at Functional Skills practice tests which have not been internally moderated	Medium
Results of mock Speaking, Listening and Communication assessments which have not been internally moderated	Medium
On-programme learning evidence	Medium
Formative assessment results. Formative assessment is defined as assessment undertaken to check learning has taken place and assess progress towards the Functional Skills level. This can be centre-devised or a commercially-available product.  This does <b>not</b> include initial and diagnostic assessment (see below)	Medium
Learner work demonstrating the skills assessed by Functional Skills qualifications that has been completed in support of another qualification learning aim	Medium
Assessor records	Medium
Any other learner work towards the qualification (ie work they have independently undertaken in class or at home)	Low
Evidence of GLH	Low

Results of initial and diagnostic assessment can be used, but only in the following ways:

Type of evidence	Level of trusted evidence
As a benchmark to gauge progress made towards the component requirements by the learner	Low
Where this provides evidence that the learner had already met one or more of the component's assessed requirements, at the point at which the initial / diagnostic assessment was taken	Low

**Other forms of evidence may be acceptable, the centre must discuss these with Skillsfirst before judging CAGs.**

## **Appendix B - Pass descriptors**

### **Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics**

#### **Problem Solving**

The learner has demonstrated that they can:

- understand practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations, some of which are non-routine
- identify and obtain necessary information to tackle the problem.
- select mathematics in an organised way to find solutions.
- apply mathematics in an organised way to find solutions to straightforward practical problems for different purposes.
- use appropriate checking procedures and at each stage, interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems, drawing simple conclusions and giving explanations.
- use appropriate checking procedures at each stage.
- interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems, drawing simple conclusions and giving explanations.

Learners will be able to engage with straightforward problems, but may not always choose the most logical approach to resolving these. They should be able to use the required level of accuracy and may be able to use strategies to check their answers.

More limited performance on some problems is compensated by strong performance on other problems.

#### **Underpinning skills**

The learner has demonstrated that they have a secure understanding and accurate application of the level 1 skills specified in each of the three content areas of number and the number system, measure shape and space and statistics and data. Performance may be limited in a few of more peripheral and less familiar aspects of one or more content area.

## **Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics**

### **Problem Solving**

The learner has demonstrated that they can:

- understand routine and non-routine problems in familiar and non-familiar situation situations and identify and select the maths needed to solve the problems
- apply a range of mathematics to find solutions.
- use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage
- interpret and communicate solutions
- draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications.

Learners will be able to use maths within problems, but their approach may not always be the most logical or economic. They will know most of the formulae they need to recall. They will be able to find the required accuracy in most cases and should be able to show checking strategies when required.

For at least some multi-stage practical problems with more limited performance in some problems compensated for by stronger performance in other problems.

### **Underpinning Skills**

The learner has demonstrated secure understanding and accurate application of the level 2 skills specified in each of the three content areas of number and the number system, measure shape and space and statistics and data.

Performance may be limited in a few of more peripheral and less familiar aspects of one or more content area.

## Functional Skills Qualification in English Writing

### Writing Level 1

The learner has demonstrated that they can write texts:

- for a range of given purposes and audiences
- of sufficient length
- containing some relevant appropriate information, ideas and opinions
- containing an appropriate level of detail
- that convey these with some degree of clarity and coherence
- that present information with some logical sequence
- that evidence some attempt to write in paragraphs
- that use elements of a recognisably appropriate format
- that use language mostly suitable for purpose and audience
- that use a range of sentence structures with some accuracy.

The learner can produce written work that includes acceptably accurate punctuation, spelling and grammar including generally consistent use of tense with overall clear meaning.

Acceptable accuracy means at least some degree of accuracy in each of spelling, punctuation or grammar and where more limited accuracy in one of these areas is compensated for by stronger performance in one or more of the others.

### Writing Level 2

The learner has demonstrated that they can write texts:

- for a range of given purposes and audiences
- of sufficient length
- containing some relevant appropriate information, ideas and opinions
- containing an appropriate level of detail
- that convey these with some degree of clarity and conciseness/persuasiveness
- that are consciously/recognisably structured/logically sequenced
- that evidence some attempt to write in paragraphs
- that use a recognisably appropriate format
- that use language mostly suitable for purpose and audience
- that use a range of sentence structures with some accuracy.

The learner can punctuate written text with an acceptable degree of accuracy and produce written work that is fit for purpose with acceptable accuracy in spelling and grammar.

Acceptable accuracy means at least some degree of accuracy in each of spelling, punctuation or grammar and where more limited accuracy in one of these areas is compensated for by stronger performance in one or more of the others.

## Functional Skills Qualification in English Reading

### Reading Level 1

The learner has demonstrated that they can:

- identify the purposes of texts
- identify main points and some details of texts
- extract information to give some straightforward responses to texts
- identify some organisational features used by writers

The learner has demonstrated at least some ability to understand texts in detail and to identify suitable responses to these.

### Reading Level 2

The learner has demonstrated that they can:

- identify the purposes of texts
- identify main points and specific details of texts
- extract, compare and exemplify information, ideas and opinions in different texts
- identify, compare and exemplify points of view in different texts
- identify and exemplify language techniques and organisational features used by writers
- identify and explain implicit and inferred meaning
- recognise and exemplify bias, and compare degrees of bias
- analyse and compare texts in relation to purpose and audience need.

The learner has demonstrated at least some awareness of how meaning is conveyed in written documents and at least some ability to analyse texts in relation to audience needs.

## Appendix C – Head of Centre declaration

The centre assessment grade (CAG) process for Functional Skills qualifications must be overseen and signed off by the Head of Centre.

By completing and submitting this declaration to Skillsfirst, as Head of Centre I confirm the following:

- CAG judgements have been submitted for learners who would have taken an assessment between 20 March and 31 July 2020 only
- The CAG process has been followed in full as required by Skillsfirst
- For all learners, confirmation that:
  - for all components where a CAG is submitted, only staff with experience of teaching that component to the learner(s) have provided the CAGs
  - only centre staff who taught a learner were involved in judging that learner's CAGs
  - a minimum of a least one piece of high trusted evidence per learner, or in the case of medium or low trusted evidence, more than one piece of trusted evidence has been used, to reach the CAG judgement(s)
  - teacher judgements have taken into account any reasonable adjustment that would be made to the assessment in respect of a learner with a disability
  - judgements were evidence-based and as far as possible, free of any bias in respect of any learner with a protected characteristic, or any other factor (for example character, appearance, social background or special educational needs) that does not relate to their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject
  - where more than one member of staff was involved in teaching an individual learner for any component, that these members of staff worked together to agree the CAG
  - where more than one member of staff were responsible for teaching any Functional Skills component, that these staff worked together to standardise their judgements
- I have provided a description of any factors which account for divergence between historic achievement rates and the achievement profile of the CAGs (if applicable)
- CAGs have not been submitted for any learner where there is no valid evidence on which to base the judgement
- I have overseen a sense check comparing:
  - the number of CAGs submitted for each component and
  - the number of results submitted for each component for an equivalent historic period (eg 20 March – 31 July 2019)

*NB: for examined components, the sense check should compare the numbers and proportions of pass and fail CAGs for each component, with expectations about how each cohort of learners would perform under normal circumstances. A comparison with centre records for an equivalent period of time (eg 20 March – 31 July 2019) should be used for this.*

Please provide the following information for each component / qualification:

Total number of learners for whom a CAG has been judged	
Total number of learners for whom a 'pass' is recommended	
Total number of learners for whom a fail is recommended (SLC not applicable)	

Please indicate the types of valid evidence used to make the CAG judgements (*please tick (or highlight) as appropriate*):

- Results of practice papers
- On-programme learning evidence
- Assessor records
- Evidence of additional teaching that has taken place after failed exams
- Mock SLC assessments and records
- Main aim evidence which could relate to Functional Skills
- Formative assessment, such as marked exercises and assignments which are carried out after a teaching session
- Evidence of GLH being met
- Other

If you selected 'other' please specify what evidence has been use to make the CAG judgements for each component.

If applicable, provide a description of any factors which account for any disparities, in relation to historic achievement rates and the achievement profile of the CAGs for each component / qualification.

Name of Head of Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Centre assessment grade (CAG)</b>	The professional judgement made by teachers on the most likely grade a learner would have achieved, if learning had continued as normal. These grades are submitted to Skillsfirst.
<b>Teacher</b>	This refers to any Teacher, Tutor or Assessor who has taught the learner.
<b>Assessment</b>	Any Functional Skills exam or Speaking, Listening and Communication (SLC) assessment.
<b>Component</b>	This refers to the assessments which make up an overall Functional Skills qualification.  English is made up of three components; Reading, Writing and SLC  Mathematics and ICT contain a single component.
<b>Formative assessment</b>	Assessment undertaken to check learning has taken place and assess progress towards the Functional Skills level.  This can be centre-devised or a commercially-available product. This does <b>not</b> include initial and diagnostic assessment.
<b>Calculated grade</b>	The final result Skillsfirst will issue for the learner.