

How we set the pass mark for each assessment

Our Functional Skills assessments are designed to measure whether or not a candidate has met the requirements of a particular Functional Skills qualification. They are awarded on a pass/fail basis and are criterion-referenced. This means all who take an assessment and demonstrate that they consistently meet the required standard are awarded a pass.

The pass mark for each individual assessment version is a reflection of the minimum number of marks that a candidate must achieve in order to meet the qualification standard. Each Functional Skills assessment has its own pass mark. These are set through a formal process known as awarding. Awarding is undertaken to ensure fairness to all candidates and is a robust, evidence-based process involving detailed statistical analysis of the assessment, each question and candidate performance.

A provisional pass mark is set through expert examiner judgement. This is confirmed or adjusted as necessary through the following methods:

1. Review of statistics showing how each question and each assessment have performed;
2. Review of candidate scripts, including those that score within a range of marks above and below the proposed pass mark.

This process ensures that the final pass mark is an accurate reflection of the standard of assessment and that all candidates are treated fairly.

During the awarding, the impacts of any unforeseen item performance issues or slight differences between assessment versions are considered so that these can be taken into account in setting the pass mark to ensure that no disadvantage is caused to any candidate.

For these reasons, the pass mark may vary from one paper for a particular subject and level to another. Usually the pass marks will fall within a range of a few marks but in occasional circumstances, it may be necessary to set a pass mark outside the range.

The following figures represent the upper end of the range of pass marks for each subject and level:

Subject / level	Pass Mark	Out of (total marks):
English Reading Level 1	29	40
English Writing Level 1	30	50
English Reading Level 2	28	40
English Writing Level 2	31	50
Mathematics Level 1	28	45
Mathematics Level 2	48	75

Pass rates

The pass rate for each assessment version is the number of times a particular assessment has been passed, as a percentage of the total number of times that assessment has been attempted. The figures are affected by candidates resitting assessments and centres should bear this in mind when interpreting them. Our Functional Skills assessments are available on demand from a bank of assessments. Pass rates tend to fluctuate when an assessment is first introduced and stabilise as more candidates take the assessment. For this reason, any pass rate published will be a 'snapshot' of performance based on the data available at the time of calculation.

The following average pass rates for each Functional Skills subject and level are published for information and to help centres gauge their own performance. These are based on performance of candidates in Functional Skills tests from September 2018 to August 2019.

Our pass rates are kept under continuous review and we will update the information published here when necessary, to ensure these remain accurate:

Subject / level	Pass rate
English Reading Level 1	77%
English Writing Level 1	77%
English Reading Level 2	61%
English Writing Level 2	75%
Mathematics Level 1	49%
Mathematics Level 2	50%

The following information is available to support centres preparing candidates to take Functional Skills assessments:

Guidance for delivery

Guidance for Delivery of Functional Skills Maths / English documents have been developed to enable candidates and centres to better understand the structure of the assessments and the types of item and breadth of range which could occur in live assessments.

Chief Examiner's Reports

We publish a Chief Examiner's Report for each Functional Skills subject area each quarter. These reflect any trends or patterns our examiners have observed in performance across all assessments during that period and are intended to support centres in preparing learners to take the assessments. We recommend these are read alongside the *Guidance for Delivery* documents.

Sample Assessments

We make available a number of sample assessments for each Functional Skills subject area for centres to help prepare candidates for the assessment. These are written and standardised using the same process and level of scrutiny as live papers. Our sample assessments draw content from across the whole syllabus and are therefore not exhaustive; we try to ensure that these cover as much breadth as possible and aim to familiarise learners

with a variety of question types and assessment scenarios. We recommend that these are used in conjunction with the *Guidance for Delivery* documents.

Evaluation

Our Functional Skills assessments are kept under close and ongoing evaluation and we strive to make continual improvements to them. We are always exploring ways to improve fairness, accessibility and candidate experience. To this end, findings from the awarding process and continuous monitoring are fed back into the development process and we proactively seek feedback from tutors and learners.

Feedback

We welcome centres' feedback on our Functional Skills assessments. Please email: centresupport@cityandguilds.com