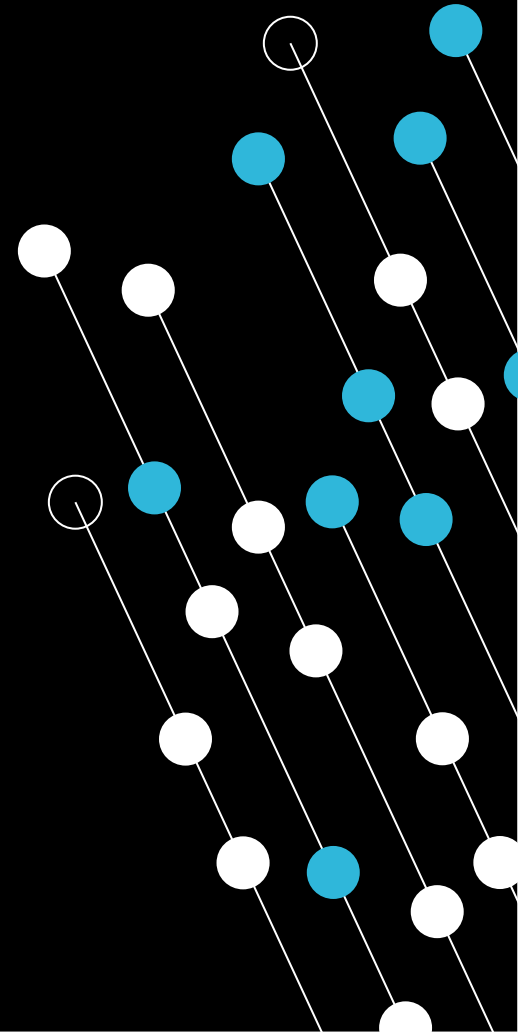




Functional Skills Overview for Employers

What are Functional Skills?



What are Functional Skills?

Functional Skills are an integral part of apprenticeships in England.

No matter the apprenticeship, every apprentice will need to provide evidence that they have achieved Functional Skills qualifications (or equivalent qualifications achieved previously). The full list of qualifications can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-and-maths-requirements-in-apprenticeship-standards-at-level-2-and-above>

Functional Skills are the essential skills that all people need to be able to operate confidently and successfully in work and life. Functional Skills provide learning tools that enable apprentices to::

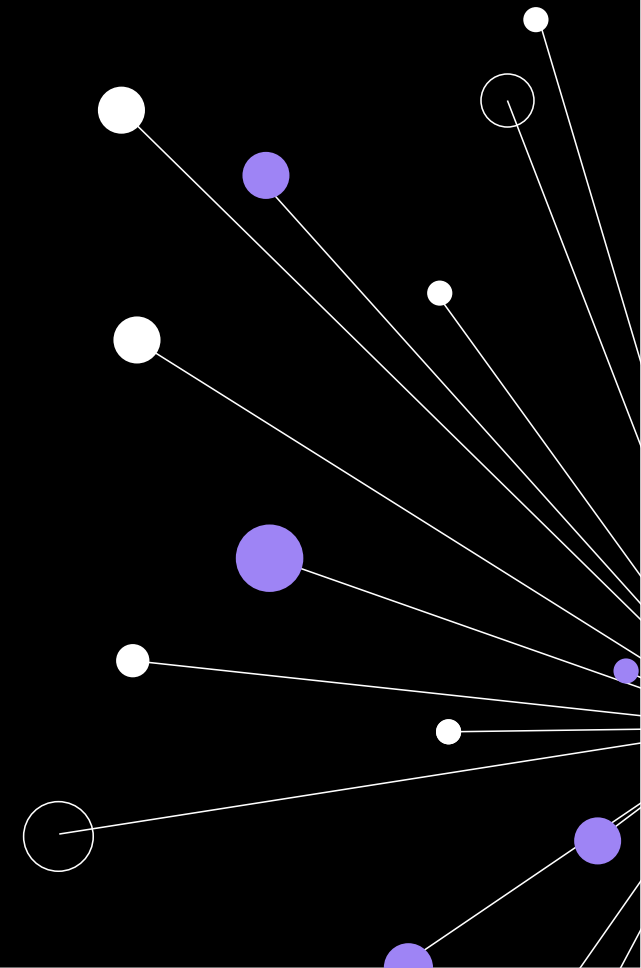
- Apply their knowledge and understanding to everyday life;
- Engage competently and confidently with others;
- Solve problems in both familiar and unfamiliar problems; and
- Develop personally and professionally

Why are Functional Skills Important to Apprenticeships?

Functional Skills are a key component in all the apprenticeship standards. 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. They help apprentices to develop and secure the broader range of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours. For all apprenticeships that QA offers, to be able to reach End-Point Assessment, Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications are required.

Key Point: All Functional Skills qualifications must be completed before the Gateway stage of the apprenticeship.

**What does the Functional Skills
learning journey with QA look like?**



What does a Functional Skills learning journey with QA look like?

QA have specialist Functional Skills tutors available to support apprentices who require support for Functional Skills. The apprentice's starting level will dictate the level of support they receive. For example, if an apprentice has significant gaps in their knowledge, they will receive one-to-one support. If an apprentice is strong in most areas with one or two areas to improve, they will be invited to attend live group sessions. Lastly, where apprentices are exam ready, they will be encouraged to work independently before completing group exam preparation sessions

All QA apprentices have an account set up on our partner platform called bksb.

Apprentices have ongoing access to resources to work through self-paced and should complete the progress checks on a monthly basis. Progress is tracked on this platform as every apprentice has a target level of 2.7 to reach.

Once a learner reaches their target level on bksb and has completed a mock exam successfully, they will then be booked on to complete their exams.

QA Functional Skills journey map

Initial
Assessment
& Diagnostics

bksb platform to identify starting point levels and areas of development

Individual
Learning
Plans

Individual Learning Plans tailored to the needs of each individual and identifying specific activities to bridge learning gaps to meet target of L2.7

Live Tutor-
led group
sessions

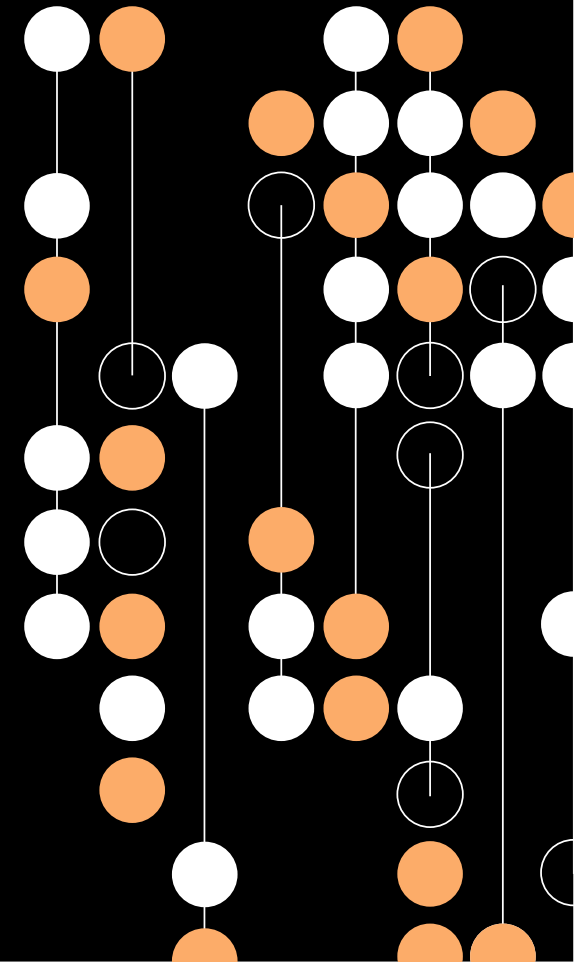
Directly bookable to offer flexibility and suit individual needs.
Two-hour sessions

Exam
Readiness

- Sit a mock exam (booked by the FS tutor)
- If mock result is successful, sit actual exam (either remote or at a QA centre)

121 personalised
remote support
meetings with
Functional Skills
Tutor ongoing

How long does it take to complete Functional Skills?



How long does it take to complete Functional Skills?

One glove doesn't fit all.

Each apprentice will require support in different areas, so some will complete in no time at all whereas others will require more support. At QA, we expect apprentices to complete their Functional Skills within the first 6 months of programme

The qualification is designed to be flexible and fit around work commitments. However, the amount of time required for the learning modules really depends on them as an individual. To be able to answer this question we would need to consider their starting point and time commitments

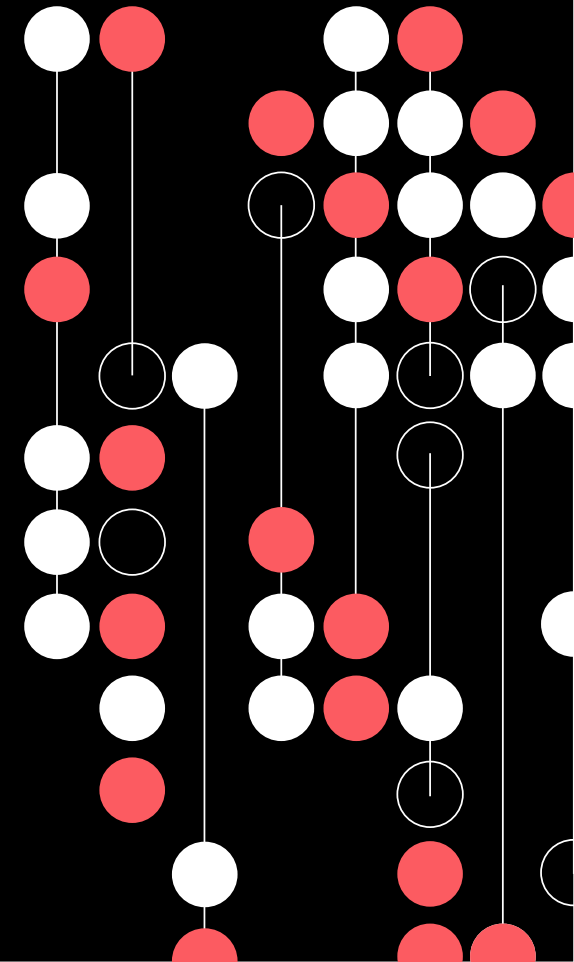
As a minimum requirement, apprentices will need to engage with the course/s once every 4 weeks although it is advisable for them to set time aside to work on these skills weekly.

Your engagement is monitored throughout the course by your Functional Skills Tutor and your Apprenticeship Coach/DLC.

It is worth noting that some apprentices may only need to complete one Functional Skill if they are able to provide valid evidence that shows prior achievement of a Level 2 Functional Skill qualification or equivalent.

Therefore, if only one Functional Skill is required, we would anticipate this could be completed within the first three months of the Apprenticeship

**How is progress towards
Functional Skills tracked?**



How is Functional Skills progress tracked?

As mentioned previously, every apprentice has a personal account set up on our partner platform called bksb. Each apprentice will have their targets set following on from the completion of their Diagnostic Assessment on the platform. This will determine what areas they will need to work from and what activities will need to be completed to reach their individual targets. The system provides visuals and data to show learners how they are progressing.

All apprentices will also have an account on their relevant digital learning platform which will show all their main apprenticeship learning objectives, as well as Functional Skills objectives so that progress towards the aims can be tracked. Each apprentice will be required to upload **monthly evidence of progress** towards Functional Skills.

To be able to successfully close any open Functional Skills objectives, each apprentice must pass their required exams.

Functional Skills Exams

If your apprentice requires English and/or maths Functional Skills, they will need to complete the following exams:

For apprentices required to demonstrate proficiency in **English**, Functional Skills exams include:

- **Reading (1 hour)**
- **Writing (1 hour)**
- **Speaking & Listening (1.5-2 hours)**

For **Maths**, the exam is split into:

- **Calculator allowed section (1.5 hours)**
- **Non-calculator section (30 minutes)**



Learn. To Change.