

Functional Skills – What Are They?

Functional Skills provide learning tools that enable you to:

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

Why are Functional Skills Important for Apprenticeships?

Achieving a Functional Skills qualification demonstrates you have the English & Maths skills required to partake in your chosen programme.

Level 2 Functional Skills Qualifications (*or equivalent acceptable evidence*) are required for all QA programmes before End Point Assessment.

Exams

English: Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening

Maths: Calculator & Non-Calculator



- Specialist Functional Skills Tutors will be available to support you.
- You will be given access to an online portal called BKSB where you have access to self-paced resources.

Key Point

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



Submitting Evidence

Acceptable Evidence

- Full certificates or certified statements of results: (*Clear and detailed showing your qualification information*)
- **(Not Accepted for Degree Programmes)** Provisional results slip: These must include written confirmation that:
 - You did not undertake a resit.
 - You did not request any of the exam papers to be remarked.
 - Neither the school/college nor parent(s) requested a remark.
 - Awarded grade, and the date of achievement.

Not Accepted

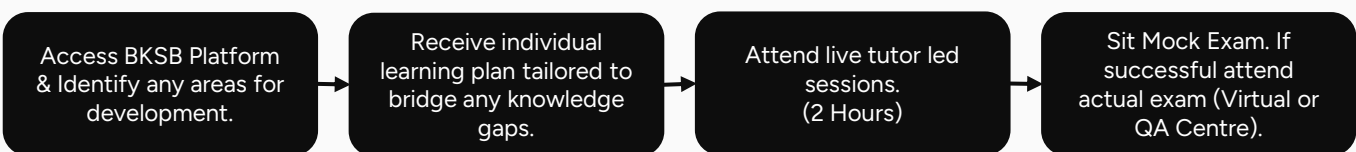
- Certificates or results from exam boards not listed on the government's acceptable evidence list (e.g., IELTS, ESOL, Level 2 Entry qualifications).
- Cropped certificates.
- Certificates that don't display grades.
- Result slips from schools, unless they are stamped and signed SIMS/CMIS reports specifying the exam board and award date.
- Any unclear or illegible certificates

How Long Does It Take To Complete Functional Skills?

We require you to complete functional skills within the first 6 months of programme unless you have submitted acceptable evidence of equivalent qualifications.

*Your engagement is monitored throughout the course by your **Functional Skills Tutor** and your **Apprenticeship Skills Coach (SC)/Digital Learning Consultant (DLC)***

Your Functional Skills Journey



121 personalised remote support meetings with Functional Skills Tutor ongoing

For direct entry candidates: You must provide acceptable evidence of your qualifications to be approved to apply for an apprenticeship position.

For employed candidates: If you do not have the necessary qualifications at the time of application, you will need to pass the maths and English Initial Assessments.

(Should you score above a Level 1 in these assessments, you are then required to complete the Level 2 Functional Skills exams while enrolled in the programme).

All applicants, regardless of their prior qualifications, must sit the Maths and English Initial Assessments. This is a mandatory requirement set forth by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to ensure all apprentices meet the same standard of competency.

Passing the initial assessment does not count as evidence of meeting the functional skills requirements.

Further Questions?

See our FAQ Document on the next page!

Evidence

How Long Do I Have To Show Proof of Previous Qualifications?

Once you have attended your programme launch session and begun your apprenticeship, you have up to 42 days to show proof of previous qualifications.

What Happens If I Miss The Deadline?

If you miss the deadline or can't provide proof, you will be required to take Functional Skills learning.

What If I Have Changed My Name?

If the name on your qualification papers doesn't match your current registered name, you will need to provide extra proof. You can use documents like marriage certificates, deed polls, or legal name change declarations.

UK Qualifications We Accept As Evidence

- GCSE: Any GCSE with 'Maths' or 'English' in the title (excluding English as a second language), minimum grade C or 4.
- International GCSE: Same criteria as above.
- Functional Skills Level 2: Must include both English and Maths, with a passing grade.
- Key Skills Level 2: Titles should include 'Communication' for literacy and 'Application of Number' for numeracy, with a passing grade.
- A Levels and AS Levels: Must strictly have 'English' or 'Maths' in the title, with a minimum grade of E.
- O Level: Needs 'English' or 'Maths' in the title, minimum grade C.
- CSE: Only grade 1 is acceptable for English or Maths titles.
- Degrees: Only those specifically named 'English' or 'Mathematics', not just containing those subjects as units
- International Baccalaureate: Only English A or A1; no other variants like A2 or B forms, with a minimum acceptable grade of 3.
- PLR - Personal Learning Records: Should comprehensively detail the qualification name, awarding organization, grade, and date of achievement.

My Qualifications Are From Outside The UK?

We usually accept international high school Maths qualifications. But for English, you need to have studied it as your first language. We advise you to follow the steps to obtain a comparative statement from the UK ENIC. The steps on how to do this are outlined on the following page: [Statement of Comparability \(enic.org.uk\)](https://www.enic.org.uk)

Why Is University/Degree/Master's Evidence Rejected?

Government guidelines specify that only qualifications with Maths or English explicitly in the title are accepted.

Why Is My International Evidence Not Recognised?

Verifying international qualifications can be tricky and depends on third-party evaluations such as UK ENIC. We're here to help guide you through the verification process or towards completing any necessary exams.

Key Point

Official school reports from SIMS or CMIS: These must be authenticated with a stamp and signed by the school's examination officer. The report must include your full name, full qualification name, the awarding organization name and/or qualification number.

Progress & Exams

How Is Functional Skills Progress Tracked?

You will receive a login to our partner platform BKSB. You will have your targets set following on from the completion of your **Diagnostic Assessment** on the platform. This will determine what areas you need to work from and what activities you will need to complete to reach your target. *(The system provides visuals and data to show learners how they are progressing.)*

You will also have an account on a digital learning platform which will show your top apprenticeship learning objectives, as well as Functional Skills objectives and progress towards the aims can be tracked. You will be required to upload monthly evidence of your 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 you require English and/or maths Functional Skills, you will need to complete the following exams:

English

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

Maths

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