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Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics

Entry Level 1



QUALIFICATION GUIDE

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About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Entry Level Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics (Entry 1)
QAN	603/4596/6
Sector	14.1 Foundations for Learning and Life
Level	Entry Level 1
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2026

Ofqual Purpose	Prepare for Further Learning or Training and/or Develop Knowledge and/or Skills in a Subject Area
Ofqual Sub-Purpose	Develop Knowledge and/or Skills in a Subject Area

About Functional Skills Qualifications

Functional Skills qualifications provide reliable evidence of a learner's achievements against demanding content that is relevant to the workplace. They provide assessment of learners' underpinning knowledge as well as their ability to apply this in different contexts. They also provide a foundation for progression into employment or further technical education and develop skills for everyday life. In some contexts, Functional Skills qualifications also play a part in the Government's accountability systems.

A key aim for Functional Skills Mathematics specifications is to enable the learner to demonstrate a sound grasp of mathematical skills at the appropriate level and be able to apply mathematical thinking effectively to solve problems successfully in the workplace and in other real life situations.

Purpose of Functional Skills Mathematics for Entry Levels: to demonstrate a sound grasp of the underpinning skills and basics of mathematical skills appropriate to the level, and the ability to apply mathematical thinking to solve simple problems in familiar situations. Achievement of these qualifications can provide the skills for further study at Levels 1 and 2.

Achievement to the Qualification

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully pass at Entry Level 1:

- One externally set and internally marked assessment in Mathematics (including a calculator and non-calculator section).

A learner who passes the externally set assessment will be issued with a 'pass' result.

A learner who does not pass the externally set assessment will be issued with a 'fail' result.

Qualification Time

Total Qualification Time (TQT)	55
Guided Learning (hours)	55

Age Range and Restrictions:

Pre -16	✓
16 – 18	✓
19+	✓
Any other restrictions specific to the qualification(s)	None

Any specified entry requirements

There are no restrictions on learner entry to these qualifications. However, it is recommended that learners undertake a comprehensive initial diagnostic assessment to ensure that they are following an appropriate learning programme leading to a summative assessment.

Assessment Method

Achievement of the Functional Skills Mathematics qualifications is through successful completion of a single task-based assessment at Entry Level 1:

- Externally-set and internally marked assessment paper, including a calculator and non-calculator section.

Both sections will be sat by the learner in one scheduled session unless a reasonable adjustment is required. Please see our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy available on the [portal](#) for details on how to apply for and implement these measures.

Sample assessments are available on [the Portal](#) and can be accessed by the Assessment Administrator contact at your provider.

The assessment tasks are based on real-life contexts. Contexts may be based on:

- Work and education
- Community, citizenship and environment
- Family, home and social issues

The amount of time allocated for the assessment is 1 hour and 20 minutes.

The assessment is split into the following sections:

- Section A Non-Calculator: 20 minutes
(6 marks available - worth 25% of total marks)
- Section B Calculator: 60 minutes
(18 marks available - worth 75% of total marks)

Total marks available: 24

When completing the non-calculator section, learners will **not** be allowed access to external aids in relation to calculations, including traditional calculators and smart-phones, watches and other electronic devices.

When completing the calculator section, learners will be allowed to make use of a non-scientific calculator. The use of other electronic devices, including phones and smart-watches are not allowed at any time during the assessment.

All assessments must be taken under controlled assessment conditions. Further guidance can be found in the Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments available on [the Portal](#).

The assessment is available as a paper-based mode of delivery. Assessments must be scheduled using Open Awards' XAMS Assessment Platform.

Once scheduled, paper-based assessments will be made available (2 weeks in advance) for providers to download and print. Once marked and internally quality assured, results must be entered onto the XAMS assessment platform and completed assessment scripts must be scanned into the providers secure SharePoint folder ready for external quality assurance. Results will not be confirmed until external quality assurance has taken place.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations may be required for individual learners to enable them to undertake assessments fairly. Please see our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy available on [the Portal](#) for details on how to apply for and implement these measures.

Subject Content

Open Awards Entry Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in Maths supports learners to:

- Become confident in their use of fundamental mathematical knowledge and skills, as described through the subject content; and
- Indicate that students can demonstrate their understanding by applying their knowledge and skills to solve simple mathematical problems or carry out simple tasks.

Using numbers and the number system – whole numbers	
1	Read, write, order and compare numbers up to 20
2	Use whole numbers to count up to 20 items including zero
3	Add numbers which total up to 20, and subtract numbers from numbers up to 20
4	Recognise and interpret the symbols +, – and = appropriately
Using common measures, shapes and space	
5	Recognise coins and notes and write them in numbers with the correct symbols (£ & p), where these involve numbers up to 20
6	Read 12 hour digital and analogue clocks in hours
7	Know the number of days in a week, months, and seasons in a year. Be able to name and sequence
8	Describe and make comparisons in words between measures of items including size, length, width, height, weight and capacity
9	Identify and recognise common 2-D and 3-D shapes including circle, cube, rectangle (incl. square) and triangle
10	Use everyday positional vocabulary to describe position and direction including left, right, in front, behind, under and above
Handling information and data	
11	Read numerical information from lists
12	Sort and classify objects using a single criterion
13	Read and draw simple charts and diagrams including a tally chart, block diagram/graph

Underpinning Skills and Problem Solving Skills

Learners at Entry Level 1 are required to demonstrate their understanding of underpinning skills, and their ability to apply mathematical thinking to solve problems in familiar contexts.

Entry Level 1 students are expected to be able to use the knowledge and skills listed above to recognise a simple mathematical problem and obtain a solution. A simple mathematical problem is one which requires working through one step or process.

At Entry Level 1 it is expected that students will be able to address individual problems each of which draw upon knowledge and/or skills from one mathematical content area (i.e. number and the number system; common measures, shape and space; information and data).

Solving mathematical problems and decision making	Entry Level 1 students are expected to be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use given mathematical information and recognise and use simple mathematical terms appropriate to Entry Level 1;• Use the methods given above to produce, check and present results that make sense; and• Provide a simple explanation for those results. The context for simple problems at this level should be familiar to all students and easily described	Worth 75% of the available marks
Underpinning skills	The ability to do mathematics when not part of a problem	Worth 25% of the available marks

Additional Guidance

1. Explanation behind the use of the term mathematical problem solving (for information)

Mathematical problem solving is a core element of Functional Skills mathematics, though underpinning knowledge will also be tested in its own right. Problem solving should not seek to obscure or add additional mathematical complexity beyond the level of the qualification. Defining what problem solving means in the context of examinations is challenging.¹

Attributes, of which one or more may be present in a single task to consider it as problem solving, are listed below:

- A. Tasks that have little or no scaffolding: there is little guidance given to the student beyond a start point and a finish point. Questions do not explicitly state the mathematical process(es) required for the solution.
- B. Tasks that provide for multiple representations, such as the use of a sketch or a diagram as well as calculations.
- C. The information is not given in mathematical form or in mathematical language; or there is a need for the results to be interpreted or methods evaluated, for example, in a real-world context.
- D. Tasks have a variety of techniques that could be used.
- E. The solution requires understanding of the processes involved rather than just application of the techniques.
- F. The task requires two or more mathematical processes or may require different parts of mathematics to be brought together to reach a solution.

For more information, please see the DfE's Subject Content: Functional Skills Maths (February 2018) Document available [here](#).

¹ DfE - Subject content functional skills: mathematics (Feb 2018) p19

Delivering this Qualification

Becoming a Provider

To deliver this qualification you must be a recognised Open Awards provider. For more information, visit our [website](#) or contact the team on 0151 494 2072

How to Deliver

You can deliver this qualification by [completing a New Qualification Request Form](#) via the Portal.

You will be required to provide details of the staffing and resources you have in place for the delivery of Functional Skills qualifications and to confirm you can fulfil the requirements of this Qualification Guide and supporting policies.

For more information, see the Provider Handbook, or contact the team on 0151 494 2072.

Registering Learners

Once you are approved to deliver this qualification, you will need to register your learners in line with the timescales below:

Short courses (15 weeks or less) within 25 working days of the course start date.
Full year long courses (over 15 weeks) within 60 working days of the course start date.

You will need to register your learners via the Open Awards [Portal](#) using the Learner Registration Form (LRF). Please ensure all learner details are provided to avoid delays to your learner registrations being processed. Learner Registrations Forms can be submitted by the Provider Admin Contact.

If an end-date for the course is not provided, the Functional Skills registration will last for a period of two years.

Once your learners are registered, you will be able to schedule assessments via the XAMS assessment platform.

Identification Requirements and Learner Authenticity Identification Requirements

Providers must have systems in place to ensure that an individual completing an assessment is the person they are claiming to be.

It is a provider's responsibility to confirm the identity of a learner as part of its registration process. You may do this by requesting sufficient personal data and a unique learner number (ULN) to ensure the learner can be clearly and uniquely identified.

The use of a ULN is a mandatory requirement for publicly funded education and when submitting Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns.

Providers are required to ensure that each learner's identification is checked and that the type of identification provided by each learner is recorded before assessments are undertaken. Open Awards' Quality Assurance team will check this record during quality assurance monitoring activities.

The following are permitted proof of a learner's Identity:

- a valid passport (any nationality);
- a signed UK photo card driving licence;
- valid warrant card issued by HM Forces or the Police;
- other photographic ID card, e.g. employee ID card (must be current employer), student ID card, travel card; OR
- UK biometric residence permit If an assessment is taking place in a learner's place of work and a learner is unable to supply any of the above, authentication of a learner's identity by a third-party representative, for example his/her line manager or a member of his/her workplace Human Resources Team can be accepted.

Scheduling Assessments

Learners must be registered in accordance with Open Awards policy prior to scheduling learners for a Functional Skills assessment. .

Once the learner has been registered, their assessments can be scheduled via the XAMS assessment platform.

Providers can schedule learners up to 48 hours before the set assessment date/time.

Assessments will be made available for Assessment Administrators at the providers to download from the XAMS assessment platform from 2 weeks before the assessment is due to take place.

Please see our XAMS User Guidance on [the Portal](#) for further information.

Once scheduled, you cannot change the date or time of the assessment. Providers can, however, withdraw the learner from the scheduled assessment and re-schedule within the timescales outlined above.

Adapting Assessments

Contexts in Entry Level Mathematics assessments can be adapted by providers. No amendments to the knowledge, skills, understanding or level of demand are permitted. All adaptations need to be approved in advance by Open Awards Quality Assurance team. Further information is provided in **Guidance for Adapting Functional Skills Assessments** available via [the Portal](#).

Marking Assessments

All Entry Level Functional Skills assessments are marked by the provider and externally quality assured by Open Awards. Standardisation and marker monitoring activities are carried out regularly to ensure quality of marking.

Provider markers must use the provided mark schemes and accompanying guidance to mark the completed assessments. Mark schemes can be accessed via Assessment Administrators via [the Portal](#). Any queries that arise should be directed to the Open Awards Quality Assurance team in the first instance via quality@openawards.org.uk.

Providers must have a policy and process in place to internally quality assure provider-marked assessments before results are submitted to Open Awards.

Once assessments have been marked and internally quality assured, results must be entered into the XAMS assessment platform and the scripts (including any unused scripts and invigilation reports) uploaded to the provider's secure SharePoint folder ready for external quality assurance. In addition, providers are required to enter the individual marks for each question in the provided tracker spreadsheet in SharePoint. This is to support external quality assurance activities.

Please note, results will not be confirmed until the marked scripts have been externally quality assured by Open Awards. Providers should not inform learners of their expected result until it has been confirmed by Open Awards.

Provider markers are required to complete training with Open Awards before their first marking activity takes place, and to attend annual training and standardisation.

Quality Assurance

Delivery of this qualification must be in accordance with Ofqual regulatory guidelines and in line with Open Awards' quality assurance processes.

Provider Staff Requirements

Providers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are occupationally competent and have access to appropriate training and support. They are also responsible for notifying Open Awards of staff changes.

To deliver Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, Open Awards expects that you have appropriate staff in place to fulfil the following essential roles:

- Tutor / Teacher
- Marker
- Internal Quality Assurer
- Invigilator
- Administrator

These roles must be covered by a minimum of 2 separate individuals to avoid potential or actual conflicts of interest. For more information, please see our Conflicts of Interest Policy available on [the Portal](#).

In addition, it is Open Awards expectation that staff at providers meet the following

minimum requirement:

- Tutors have relevant teaching experience and/or a qualification, and experience and/or a qualification in the relevant subject area, as a minimum at a level above that being taught
- Although not mandatory, best practice would be for Assessors to hold the relevant D32/D33/A1/AQA unit(s) and Level 3 Award in Education and Training. Likewise, best practice would be for Internal Verifiers to hold the relevant D34/V1/IQA unit(s)

For the roles of Marker and Assessor, staff will be required to complete Open Awards' internal training and ongoing standardisation. Please visit our [website](#) for more information on upcoming training and events.

For the role of the administrator, providers must ensure that the confidentiality and security of assessments is maintained at all times.

Administration includes initial receipt of confidential materials, secure storage, movement and preparation of materials for scheduled assessments, and registration, secure storage and return of materials to the awarding organisation after scheduled assessments are completed.

No tutor of a Functional Skills qualification can be involved in the invigilation or administration of the assessment materials for Level 1 and 2 assessments in that subject, regardless of the level they teach. Nobody with a vested interest in the outcome of the assessment may be involved in the administration or invigilation.

For the role of Invigilator, staff will be required to complete Open Awards' online training before the first assessment.

External Assessment

Assessment of Entry Level 1 Functional Skills in Mathematics is through an externally set and internally marked assessment, including a calculator and non-calculator section. This can currently be delivered out as paper-based assessments only.

Providers must ensure that assessments are carried out in controlled conditions to minimise the potential for plagiarism and to ensure security of the assessment materials. In order to ensure these conditions are enforced external assessments must be delivered in accordance with our policy, Instructions for Conducting Controlled [available on the Portal](#).

Invigilator reports must be completed for every assessment and retained in line with Open Awards' Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments and uploaded to the Provider's secure Sharepoint folder at the same time as assessment papers.

Invigilators are responsible for ensuring that learners do not have access to calculator for Part A of the scheduled assessment, and that all Part A scripts are returned before issuing Part B.

Providers must ensure that there are no conflicts of interest between the invigilator

and learners by checking in advance of the assessment. The invigilator(s) **must not** be the same Functional Skills tutor used for the delivery of the relevant Functional Skills course the learner, or group of learners, is undertaking the assessment for. The only exception to this is where it is required as a reasonable adjustment for a learner with specific support needs. In this case, a request for a reasonable adjustment should be made to Open Awards in advance of the assessment.

Once completed, marked and internally quality assured, external assessments must be uploaded to the provider's SharePoint folder. This includes any scripts that were not attempted due to learner absence. The original copies must be securely retained by the provider in line with Open Awards' Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments [available on the Portal](#).

Storing Confidential Materials

Question papers and any other confidential material, e.g. answer booklets, must be stored securely at the provider's registered address in a safe and secure lockable cupboard/cabinet with restricted access in a secure locked room. The contents of all materials must be treated as strictly confidential and should not be shared with anyone other than those taking or administering the assessment. Copies may not be issued to anyone, including teaching staff. Open Awards must be notified immediately if any known or suspected infringement of these conditions takes place. Should the provider be found responsible for compromising the security of the assessment then they may be charged for redevelopment costs.

External Quality Assurance

External quality assurance includes the following activity:

- Sampling of marking decisions at the provider;
- Provider performance review of results at task/question/assessment level;
- Annual quality compliance visits/activity;
- Unannounced visits and spot checks; and
- Reviews of administration, reports, and internal quality assurance activities.

External quality assurance will ensure that:

- all learners' assessment responses are rigorously and fairly marked within agreed timescales;
- Open Awards receives accurate information about learner performance;
- marking is consistent and that required sampling takes place across the quality assurance team;
- item level performance can be monitored on an ongoing basis across a range of providers to provide early feedback on the effectiveness of questions and mark schemes;
- any anomalies in marking decisions can be identified and addressed early on and measures put in place to provide further training and support to a provider and improve their marking performance;
- risk ratings can be constantly reviewed and amended (either increased or decreased) at any time to reflect a change in the risks presented by a provider.

Unannounced and Short-notice Visits

Open Awards operates a system of unannounced and short-notice visits in order to ensure that providers are complying with the rules set out within this specification, and associated policies, around the delivery of assessments. These visits ensure ongoing confidence in the qualification as well as maintaining and improving quality and standards. Such checks will create the opportunity to comment on good practice and to identify areas for improvement.

Guidance on unannounced and short-notice visits is available via [the Portal](#).

External Quality Assurance and Results

All provider-marked assessments will be externally quality assured by Open Awards before results are confirmed. This includes second-marking and sampling by a Lead Marker in line with Open Awards sampling policy.

Following completion of the marking process, learners' results will be available to the provider through the XAMS assessment platform. Providers should not inform a learner of the expected result before it has been confirmed by Open Awards.

Verification and Standardisation

Verification is the process by which assessment decisions are confirmed. Providers delivering this qualification have a responsibility to conduct internal verification led by a trained internal verifier.

Provider approval compliance monitoring and external verification is carried out by Open Awards Quality Reviewers/External Verifiers who will confirm that the provider is assessing to the required standard and ensure that there are robust quality assurance systems embedded.

Further guidance on Internal Verification and Training Support for providers can be found on our [website](#).

Providers are required to contribute to national standardisation as requested by Open Awards and to carry out appropriate internal standardisation. Open Awards offers standardisation events that are held throughout the year. Such events will also provide an opportunity to identify and share best practice. Up to date details of training and standardisation events can be found on our [website](#).

Internal standardisation involves ensuring that, where there is more than one tutor/assessor delivering Open Awards provision or at more than one site, internally set tasks and the outcomes of internal assessment are consistent across the range of courses.

Resits

Learners are permitted to resit an external assessment where they are issued a fail result. Resit charges will apply.

Providers are responsible for preparing their learners for the assessment and should ensure that the approach to resits is appropriate. Learners should be discouraged from repeated resits and be provided with further teaching and learning to support successful achievement of the qualifications where learners have not passed the assessment.

A learner can be re-scheduled for a resit in the XAMS assessment platform after a period of two weeks from the time that a 'fail' result is released. This is to ensure that learners receive further teaching and learning and that they are fully prepared for the resit.

Please note, providers should not re-schedule an assessment until results have been received and it is confirmed that a learner has failed an assessment attempt.

If a learner has had three (3) attempts and not yet passed, please contact us on 0151 494 2072 or quality@openawards.org.uk to discuss this with the Quality Assurance team before scheduling a fourth attempt.

Enquiries and Appeals

Providers and learners have the right to appeal against the results issued. Providers must ensure that learners are made aware of this.

There are three stages of appeal depending on the nature of the decision at each stage:

- Enquiry (Stage 1)
- Appeal (Stage 2)
- Independent Appeals Review (Stage 3)

Each stage must be completed before progressing to the next stage.

More information can be found in Open Awards Policy for Enquiries and Appeals found on our [website](#).

Provider Monitoring

Providers delivering Functional Skills Maths at Entry Level will receive an annual quality compliance visit. This will include a check of policies, procedures and controls for ensuring the provider undertakes the delivery, invigilation and administration of assessments in line with guidance and policies provided.

Providers are required to schedule all assessments to enable Open Awards to complete observations of on-screen and online assessments, unannounced visits and spot-checks.

Further guidance on training and support is available, please speak to your Open Awards' Quality and Standards Advisor.

Providers are required to contribute to national training and standardisation events as requested by Open Awards and also to carry out appropriate internal standardisation and/or peer observations for tutors involved in the delivery of Functional Skills.

Open Awards offers training and standardisation events that are held throughout the year. Such events will also provide an opportunity to identify and share best practice. Up to date details of training and standardisation events can be found on [our website](#).

Appendices and Links

Appendix Name
Complaints Policy
Enquiries and Appeals Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Invoicing Policy
Privacy Policy
Provider Handbook
Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
XAMS Guidance

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