Change lives through learning

Open Awards Entry Level Functional Skills Qualification in

Mathematics (Entry 1 – Entry 3)

Entry Level 1: 603/4956/6
Entry Level 2: 603/4961/X
Entry Level 3: 603/4959/1

Qualification Guide

Contents

Version Control	
v 1.0	New document September 2019
v 1.1	Reviewed March 2023 to update wording. No substantive changes.
v 2.0	May 2025 full review and rebrand. Amended subject content to meet DfE updates (no material changes). Scheduling and results timeframes updated. Entry Level 3 on-screen arrangements added.

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Entry Level Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics (Entry 1 – Entry 3)
Qualification Accreditation Number	Entry Level 1: 603/4956/6 Entry Level 2: 603/4961/X Entry Level 3: 603/4959/1
Sector	14.1 Foundations for Learning and Life
Level	Entry Level One (1) Entry Level Two (2) Entry Level Three (3)
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2031

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

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

Age Range and Restrictions	
Pre-16	✓
16 – 18	✓
18+	✓
Any other restrictions specific to the qualification(s)	None

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 of the Qualification

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

- 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.

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 Summary

Achievement of the Functional Skills Mathematics qualifications is through successful completion of a task-based assessment, including a calculator and non-calculator section, at the relevant Entry Level (1-3):

- Externally set by Open Awards
- Internally marked by the provider
- Externally quality assured by Open Awards

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. Sample assessments cover both paper-based (Entry 1-3) and on-screen modes of delivery (Entry 3 only).

In addition, there are practice mathematics questions for the functionality utilised for on-screen assessments and demonstration videos of how to use this functionality. Providers must ensure that learners have utilised these question types in advance of sitting an on-screen assessment to ensure they are familiar with the assessment platform and potential question types.

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 outlined below:

	Total Time	Breakdown
Entry Level 1	**1 hour and 20 minutes**	**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**
Entry Level 2	**1 hour and 25 minutes**	**Section A Non-Calculator:** 25 minutes (7 marks available - worth 25% of total marks) **Section B Calculator:** 60 minutes (21 marks available - worth 75% of total marks) **Total marks available: 28**
Entry Level 3	**1 hour and 45 minutes**	**Section A Non-Calculator:** 30 minutes *(9 marks available - worth 25% of total marks)* **Section B Calculator:** 1 hour 15 minutes *(27 marks available - worth 75% of total marks)* **Total marks available: 36**

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 traditional individual calculator.

The use of other electronic devices, including phones, smart glasses and smart-watches are not allowed at any time during the assessment.

Both Sections A and B will include questions assessing underpinning skills and problem solving skills, as follows:

- Underpinning skills – 25% of total marks available
- Problem solving skills – 75% of total marks available

All assessments must be taken under controlled assessment conditions. Further guidance can be found in Open Awards' Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments or Open Awards' Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments Remotely available via the Portal.

The assessment is available as a paper-based mode of delivery only for Entry Levels One (1) and Two (2).

The assessment is available as a paper-based or on-screen mode of delivery for Entry Level Three (3).

All assessments must be scheduled using Open Awards' XAMS Assessment Platform with at least two hours' notice.

Once scheduled, paper- based assessments will be made available (2 weeks in advance) for providers to download and print.

Assessments must be sat on the day they are scheduled for.

On-screen assessments will be available for the learner to access 12 hours either side of the scheduled date/ time.

Providers must mark the assessments in the XAMS Assessment Platform. Centre marking is subject to internal quality assurance and completed paper-based assessment scripts must be uploaded to the provider's SharePoint folder for external quality assurance activities. 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.

Learning Aims and Outcomes

Functional Skills qualifications at Entry Levels 1-3 should:

- enable students to become confident in their use of fundamental mathematical knowledge and skills, as described through the content
- indicate that they can demonstrate their understanding by applying their knowledge and skills to solve simple mathematical problems or carry out simple tasks

Subject Content – Entry Level 1

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

Underpinning Skills and Problem Solving Skills

Students at Entry Level 1 are expected to be able to use the knowledge and skills set out in the subject content section to:

- recognise a simple mathematical problem
- obtain a solution

A simple mathematical problem is one that 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 on knowledge and skills from one mathematical content area:

- 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:
	• use given mathematical information
	• recognise and use simple mathematical terms appropriate to Entry Level 1
	• use the methods listed in the subject content section to produce, check and present results that make sense
	• present appropriate explanations using:
	  ○ numbers
	  ○ measures
	  ○ simple diagrams
	  ○ simple charts
	  ○ symbols
	• 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

Subject Content – Entry Level 2

Using numbers and the number system – whole numbers	
1	Count reliably up to 100 items
2	Read, write, order and compare numbers up to 200
3	Recognise and sequence odd and even numbers up to 100
4	Recognise and interpret the symbols +, – , x, ÷ and = appropriately
5	Add and subtract two-digit numbers
6	Multiply whole numbers in the range 0x0 to 12x12 using times tables
7	Know the number and sequence of hours in a day and weeks in a year.
8	Divide two-digit whole numbers by single-digit whole numbers and express remainders
9	Approximate by rounding to the nearest 10, and use this rounded answer to check results
10	Recognise simple fractions (halves, quarters and tenths) of whole numbers and shapes
11	Read, write and use decimals to one decimal place
Using common measures, shapes and space	
12	Calculate money with pence up to one pound and in whole pounds of multiple items and write with the correct symbols (£ or p)
13	Read the time displayed on analogue clocks in hours, half hours and quarter hours
14	Read and record time in common date formats
15	Understand hours from a 24-hour digital clock
16	Use metric measures of length including millimetres, centimetres, metres and kilometres
17	Use measures of weight including grams and kilograms
18	Use measures of capacity including millilitres and litres
19	Read and compare positive temperatures

20	Read and use simple scales to the nearest labelled division
21	Recognise and name 2-D and 3-D shapes including pentagons, hexagons, cylinders, cuboids, pyramids and spheres
22	Describe the properties of common 2-D and 3-D shapes including numbers of sides, corners, edges, faces, angles and base
23	Use appropriate positional vocabulary to describe position and direction, including between, inside, outside, middle, below, on top, forwards and backwards
Handling information and data	
24	Extract information from lists, tables, diagrams and bar charts
25	Make numerical comparisons from bar charts
26	Sort and classify objects using two criteria
27	Take information from one format and represent the information in another format including use of bar charts

Underpinning Skills and Problem Solving Skills

Students at Entry Level 2 are expected to be able to use the knowledge and/or skills set out in the subject content section to:

- recognise a simple mathematical problem
- obtain a solution

A simple mathematical problem is one that requires working through one step or process.

At Entry Level 2, it is expected that students will be able to address individual problems, each of which draw on knowledge and skills from one mathematical content area:

- number and the number system
- common measures, shape and space
- information and data

Solving mathematical problems and decision making	Entry Level 2 students are expected to be able to: • Use given mathematical information including numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and charts; • Recognise, understand and use simple mathematical terms appropriate to Entry Level 2; • Use the methods given above to produce, check and present results that make sense; and • Present appropriate explanations using numbers, measures, simple diagrams, simple charts and symbols appropriate to Entry Level 2. 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

Subject Content – Entry Level 3

Using numbers and the number system – whole numbers	
1	Count, read, write, order and compare numbers up to 1000
2	Add and subtract using three-digit whole numbers
3	Divide three-digit whole numbers by single and double digit whole numbers and express remainders
4	Multiply two-digit whole numbers by single and double digit whole numbers
5	Approximate by rounding numbers less than 1000 to the nearest 10 or 100 and use this rounded answer to check results
6	Recognise and continue linear sequences of numbers up to 100
7	Read, write and understand thirds, quarters, fifths and tenths including equivalent forms
8	Read, write and use decimals up to two decimal places
9	Recognise and continue sequences that involve decimals
Using common measures, shapes and space	
10	Calculate with money using decimal notation and express money correctly in writing in pounds and pence
11	Round amounts of money to the nearest £1 or 10p
12	Read, measure and record time using am and pm
13	Read time from analogue and 24 hour digital clocks in hours and minutes
14	use metric or imperial units to compare, to the nearest labelled or unlabelled division, measures of: length, capacity, weight and temperature
15	Compare metric measures of length including: millimetres, centimetres, metres and kilometres
16	Compare measures of weight including grams and kilograms
17	Compare measures of capacity including millilitres and litres
18	Use a suitable instrument to measure mass and length
19	Sort 2-D and 3-D shapes using properties including lines of symmetry, length, right angles, angles, including in rectangles and triangles
20	Use appropriate positional vocabulary to describe position and direction including: eight compass points, full-turns, half-turns, quarter-turns
Handling information and data	
21	Extract information and create frequency tables from: lists, tables, diagrams and charts
22	Interpret information, to make comparisons and record changes from different formats, including: bar charts and simple line graphs
23	Organise and represent information in appropriate ways, including: tables, diagrams, simple line graphs and simple bar charts

Underpinning Skills and Problem Solving Skills

Learners at Entry Level 3 are expected to be able to use the knowledge and skills set out in the subject content section to:

- recognise a simple mathematical problem
- obtain a solution

A simple mathematical problem is one that requires working through one step or process.

At Entry Level 3, it is expected that learners will be able to address individual problems, each of which draw on knowledge and/or skills from one mathematical content area:

- number and the number system
- common measures, shape and space
- information and data

Solving mathematical problems and decision making	Entry Level 3 students are expected to be able to: • Use given mathematical information including numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and simple charts; • Recognise, understand and use simple mathematical terms appropriate to Entry Level 3; • use the methods set out in the subject content section to produce, check and present accurate results that make sense to an appropriate level of accuracy • Present results with appropriate and reasoned explanation using numbers, measures, simple diagrams, simple charts and symbols appropriate to Entry Level 3. The context for simple problems at this level should be familiar to all students.	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 – Problem Solving

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.

Delivering this Qualification

Becoming a Provider

To deliver this qualification you must be a recognised Open Awards Provider. For more information, head to our website or contact the team on 0151 494 2072.

How to Deliver

To request to deliver this qualification, please login to the Portal and then click on 'Tracking' and 'Initiate a Workflow'. You will then need to select 'Apply to Deliver Functional Skills'.

For support with this process, please see the following document in the Portal 'Provider Portal Guidance – Qualification Approval' or contact the team on customerservices@openawards.org.uk or 0151 494 2072.

Registering Learners

Once you are ready 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.
Long courses (over 15 weeks) within 60 working days of the course start date.

You will need to register your learners via the Portal.

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 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);
- 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.

Assessments can be sat on any day and providers can set their own dates/ times for assessments.

Providers can schedule up to two (2) hours before the set assessment date/time.

On-screen assessments will be available for the learner to sit at any time on the scheduled date via the XAMS assessment platform (i.e., 12 hours before or after the scheduled time).

Paper-based assessments will be made available for the provider to download from the XAMS system from 2 weeks before the assessment is due to take place.

Once a paper-based assessment has been sat, providers are required to scan and upload them to their Open Awards SharePoint folder to support external quality assurance. Original copies must be kept secure at all times and retained for six (6) months. This includes any papers that have not been sat by a learner for any reason.

Please see our XAMS User Guidance on the Portal for further information.

Once scheduled, you cannot change the date or time of the assessment. Assessments must be sat on the day that has been scheduled. Providers can, however, withdraw the learner from the scheduled assessment and re-schedule within the timescales outlined above.

Adapting Assessments

Contexts in the Maths 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.**

Marking Assessments

All external 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.

Centre markers should use the provided mark schemes and accompanying guidance to mark the completed assessments. Any queries that arise should be directed to the provider's Quality and Standards Adviser (QASA) in the first instance.

Assessments are marked on-screen in the XAMS Assessment Platform and subject to internal quality assurance.

Once assessments have been marked and results entered in the XAMS assessment platform, paper-based assessments must be uploaded to the provider's Open Awards SharePoint folder 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. Learners should not be given a result until it has been confirmed by Open Awards.

Centre markers, and Internal Quality Assurers (IQA) are required to complete training with Open Awards before their first marking activity takes place, and to attend annual training and standardisation.

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Delivery of this qualification must be done so in accordance with Ofqual regulatory guidelines and in line with Open Awards' quality assurance processes. Please see our website for more information.

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 promptly notifying Open Awards of staff changes.

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

- Tutor/ teacher
- Marker
- Internal Quality Assurer
- Invigilator
- Assessment administrator

These roles must be covered by a minimum of 2 separate individuals to avoid potential or actual conflicts of interest.

No tutor or assessor of a Functional Skills qualification can be involved in the administration of the assessment materials for that subject, regardless of the level they teach.

A Functional Skills subject tutor must not be involved in the invigilation of that subject, even if they have not taught those candidates (i.e., a Functional Skills English tutor must not invigilate any Functional Skills English assessment, regardless of the level they teach).

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

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.

For the roles of Marker and Assessor, staff will be required to complete Open Awards' internal training and ongoing standardisation.

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

Please visit our website for more information on upcoming training and events.

External Assessment

Assessment of Entry Level Functional Skills in Mathematics is through an externally set and internally marked assessment, comprising of a calculator and non-calculator section.

Practice assessments are provided in both modes of delivery where applicable (on-screen or paper-based), and providers should ensure learners have access to these in advance of sitting their assessment to familiarise themselves with the format. For on-screen assessments, there are additional demonstration questions available via the Portal to enable learners to get used to the different question types and functionality that may appear in their assessments e.g., drawing shapes, graphs and on-screen protractors.

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 Assessments or Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments Remotely, available on the Portal.

Open Awards permits remote invigilation of on-screen Functional Skills assessments (Entry 3 – Level 2). Providers must apply in advance of the first assessment via the Portal if they intend to administer assessments remotely. Open Awards also provides a remote invigilation service. Open Awards invigilated assessments can be scheduled via the XAMS assessment platform by choosing this option from the drop-down. Prices associated with utilising Open Awards' invigilators are published in our Pricing Information on the Open Awards website.

Invigilator reports must be completed for every assessment and retained in line with Open Awards' Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments (Remotely) and made available to Open Awards external quality assurance team on request. Invigilators are responsible for ensuring that learners do not have access to calculators for Part A of the scheduled assessment, and that, for paper-based assessments, 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.

Storing Confidential Materials

Question papers and any other confidential material 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 by calling 0151 494 2072 or emailing quality@openawards.org.uk.

Should the provider be found responsible for compromising the security of the assessment then we will invoke our Sanctions Policy and the provider may be charged for redevelopment costs.

External Quality Assurance

Providers are allocated a Quality and Standards Advisor (QASA) who will lead the external quality assurance activities.

External quality assurance includes, but is not limited to, the following activity:

- Observations of live assessments
- Sampling of marking decisions
- Annual Functional Skills Risk Rating Review
- Quality compliance visits/ activity
- Unannounced visits and spot checks
- Checks of policies and procedures
- Feedback from staff and learners

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
- ensure the provider is taking all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of malpractice or maladministration
- confirm that invigilation is conducted by appropriately experienced individuals and subject to internal monitoring

Open Awards adopts a risk-based approach for monitoring all approved Providers, which identifies and justifies the number and frequency of external quality assurance monitoring visits required based on the Provider's performance. The risk-based sampling approach adopted uses a RAG rating matrix and is utilised across the delivery of Functional Skills.

Provider Monitoring

Providers delivering Functional Skills Maths at Levels One (1) and Two (2) will receive, as a minimum, an annual review of their Functional Skills Risk Rating. 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.

Unannounced and Short-notice Visits

Open Awards operates a system of unannounced and short-notice visits 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.

Training and support

Guidance and support to providers is available as part of the regular external quality assurance monitoring visit, as well as provided throughout the year via training sessions, workshops and networking events.

Open Awards offers a variety of training and support to Providers. Our online training and support is free of charge and can be accessed on the following link https://oalearn.org.uk/shop. An everlasting coupon (PLUC code) will be issued to each Provider to gain free access to these resources.

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.

Learners can be scheduled for a resit in the XAMS platform within the standard timeframes, provided the necessary further learning has taken place. 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.

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.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Open Awards is committed to ensuring the rights of individual learners to access qualifications, units and assessments in a way most appropriate for their individual needs and to enable them to demonstrate their achievements. At the same time, we are committed to ensuring that the integrity of our qualifications, units and assessment is maintained at all times.

Open Awards encourages Providers to adopt, at all times, inclusive assessment processes that adhere to disability and equal opportunity legislation and other regulatory criteria without compromising standards of assessment or giving any unfair advantage over other learners. We ensure that our Providers consider a variety of suitable assessment methods as good practice, taking into consideration its learners. In cases where a qualification is inaccessible because of a learner's inability to demonstrate competence in all units of the qualification, credit will be awarded for all units for which competence has been demonstrated.

Open Awards treats all records of reasonable adjustments and special consideration requests and agreements in confidence. Different types of assessment make different demands on learners and will influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed with the kind of suitable reasonable adjustments which may be put in place.

The adjustments that are appropriate for a particular assessment will depend upon:

- the specific assessment demands for the qualification/unit
- the type of assessment
- the particular needs and circumstances of the individual learner.

In situations where the learner is given set assessment materials and must complete the task in a fixed amount of time, there may be a greater need for adjustments to standard assessment arrangements in order to give access. In such instances, Providers must obtain approval from Open Awards before the assessment is planned to take place.

Open Awards' policy for reasonable adjustments and special considerations can be found on our website here.

Malpractice, Maladministration and Incident Management

Open Awards is committed to ensuring access to fair assessment for all learners and to protecting the integrity of the award of credit and qualifications. Our policy and procedures define malpractice and maladministration, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of Providers, learners and Open Awards, and outlines the procedures that will be followed when there are issues of suspected malpractice or maladministration within a Provider.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that:

- potential malpractice and maladministration is identified, prevented, corrected and/or mitigated
- any event that could lead to an Adverse Effect is identified, prevented, corrected and/or mitigated.

The full Policy and Procedure can be found on our website here.

Appendices and Links

The following documents can be viewed on the Open Awards website:

1. Complaints Policy
2. Enquiries and Appeals Policy http://openawards.org.uk/centres/policies-and-procedures/
3. Academic Misconduct Policy
4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy http://openawards.org.uk/centres/policies-and-procedures/
5. Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy
6. Invoicing Policy
7. Privacy Policy
8. Provider Handbook (Regulated Qualifications and Unit Courses)

Further supporting information, including additional practice papers, can be found on the Portal.

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