City&Guilds | MATHS & ENGLISH

# CHANGES TO FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

## REFRESHING AND IMPROVING OUR ASSESSMENTS

**SUMMER 2015**

# AGENDA

**SETTING THE SCENE**

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**PAUL SCEENY**

**PORTFOLIO MANAGER – MATHS AND ENGLISH**

**@PAULSCEENY_CG**

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## OVER TEN YEARS SINCE FUNCTIONAL SKILLS FIRST PROPOSED

- A lot has changed since then…
- A lot has changed since the current qualifications were introduced in 2010.
- Our offer has also changed significantly over the last five years.

## MIXED MESSAGES FROM GOVERNMENT (AND OTHERS…)

- Key Skills (and Skills for Life) qualifications allowed to continue until 2012.
- Wolf Report led to GCSE being talked up as preferred destination.
- 'Distance travelled' agenda – pressure to challenge learners and show progress.
- QCF qualifications developed to support progression
  (and deeper, more personalised, learning).
- Condition of funding requiring study of maths and English within 16-18 study programmes.

# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IN CONTEXT
## TWO SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

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## OFQUAL THEMATIC REVIEW

- Announced in spring 2014
  *(when Government's attitudes towards Functional Skills were distinctly less positive)*
- Focused specifically on Level 2.
- Acknowledged these are important 'gateway' qualifications for learners in a wide range of settings, and that they seem to be well regarded by those familiar with them.
- Nevertheless challenged awarding organisations to ensure:
  - assessments better reflect the full range of skills specified in the qualification/subject criteria
  - more 'stretch' and explicit focus on problem solving within assessments
  - greater consistency of standards between awarding organisations.

## MAKING MATHS AND ENGLISH WORK FOR ALL

- Commissioned by Nick Boles after he became Skills Minister last summer.
- Conducted by Education and Training Foundation.
- Reaffirmed need for high quality alternatives to GCSE – especially with focus on applied skills and flexible approaches to assessment.
- Concluded Functional Skills *ain't broke* but lack of employer awareness clearly an issue.
- Emphasised need to keep strengthening Functional Skills – rather than ripping up and starting again.

# RESPONDING TO THE THEMATIC REVIEW

## OVERVIEW OF CHANGES

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| ISSUE | HOW HAVE WE ADDRESSED? |
|-------|------------------------|
| Scenarios should be more realistic and engaging. | More carefully chosen topics and more authentic source documents. |
| Tasks should be more open, less heavily guided and better able to elicit problem-solving skills. | Tasks presented with less 'scaffolding', with greater expectation that candidates work out for themselves what needs to be done. |
| Assessments should be less 'formulaic'. | More variety in the structure and format of tasks – less easy to predict what's likely to come up. |
| Assessments should provide more opportunity to demonstrate higher order skills. | Design of assessments reviewed to ensure all areas of the skill standard are at least partially addressed. |

**REMEMBER: THE SKILL STANDARDS, COVERAGE AND RANGE REQUIREMENTS HAVEN'T CHANGED!**

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**OFQUAL'S REVIEW FOCUSED ON LEVEL 2, ALTHOUGH SOME RECOMMENDATIONS ARE ALSO RELEVANT TO LEVEL 1 – SO WE'VE APPLIED THEM TO BOTH.**

- Recently redesigned our Functional Skills handbook documents:
  - admininistration and conduct document *(incorporates FAQs and external assessment guide that were previously separate)*
  - discrete subject specification and tutor/assessor guide for each functional skill.

- No change to delivery models – all external assessments remain available on-demand, with choice of delivery methods:
  - onscreen, using the e-volve system
  - Named on Demand (paper delivery).

- No changes at Entry level – for now.

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"**Within reason, candidates may use any equipment routinely available to them – as long as this does not compromise independent achievement of the standard nor enable them to collude with a third party (eg no mobile phones or other transmitting/ receiving devices, pre-prepared notes, crib-sheets, tutor-developed or other materials designed specifically to assist with this assessment).**"

**FS QUALIFICATION HANDBOOK, PAGE 7**

- We've clarified there's no constraint on the use of spell/grammar checkers, dictionaries, calculators…
  - candidates expected to use their normal ways of working, so there's no finite list of permitted/prohibited items as long as these do not compromise security of the assessment.

- Assessments must be **continually** supervised, although this doesn't have to involve all of the rigidity of traditional 'ICE' conditions
  - qualification handbook clarifies further
  - invigilator *role* distinct from that of a teacher/tutor or assessor/IQA, although we don't specify *who* can/can't perform each of these roles.

- Candidates sitting paper-delivered assessments don't necessarily have to hand-write their responses.

# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ASSESSMENTS
## PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

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## AVAILABLE FOR BOTH NAMED ON DEMAND AND ONSCREEN

- Access performance feedback for individual candidates.
- Provide an indication of candidates' relative strength and weakness.

## FEEDBACK AVAILABLE AND HOW TO ACCESS

| DELIVERY METHOD | FEEDBACK FORMAT | HOW ACCESSED? |
|---|---|---|
| **Named on Demand (paper)** | Performance codes printed on each individual candidate's **Notification of Candidate Results** | Hard copy sent with confirmation of results if the candidate has been unsuccessful.<br><br>Glossary of codes in relevant subject specification document. |
| **e-volve (onscreen)** | **Score Report** | From SecureAssess via Results Window (after no more than 20 working days).<br><br>Based on **provisional** mark data prior to final quality checks (final confirmed mark/grade issued separately via the Walled Garden). |

# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENTS
## SUMMARY AND TIMELINES

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**1** Changes to design of externally-marked assessments at levels 1 and 2 – to improve quality and respond to recent Ofqual thematic review.

**2** New 'in-app' onscreen delivery model for Functional Skills ICT at levels 1 and 2 – replacing the current 'simulations'

**3** Redesigned forms and guidance for Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening and Communication (SLC) – easier to complete and capture qualitative information.

## CHANGES BEING PHASED IN OVER NEXT FEW MONTHS:

Timing change for FS English Writing at Level 2          - from January 2015

Launch of 'in-app'          - from April 2015

Main changes to design of external assessments          - from September 2015

New SLC forms and guidance          - from September 2015

**DELVING INTO THE DETAIL…**

# CHANGES TO
# FS MATHEMATICS

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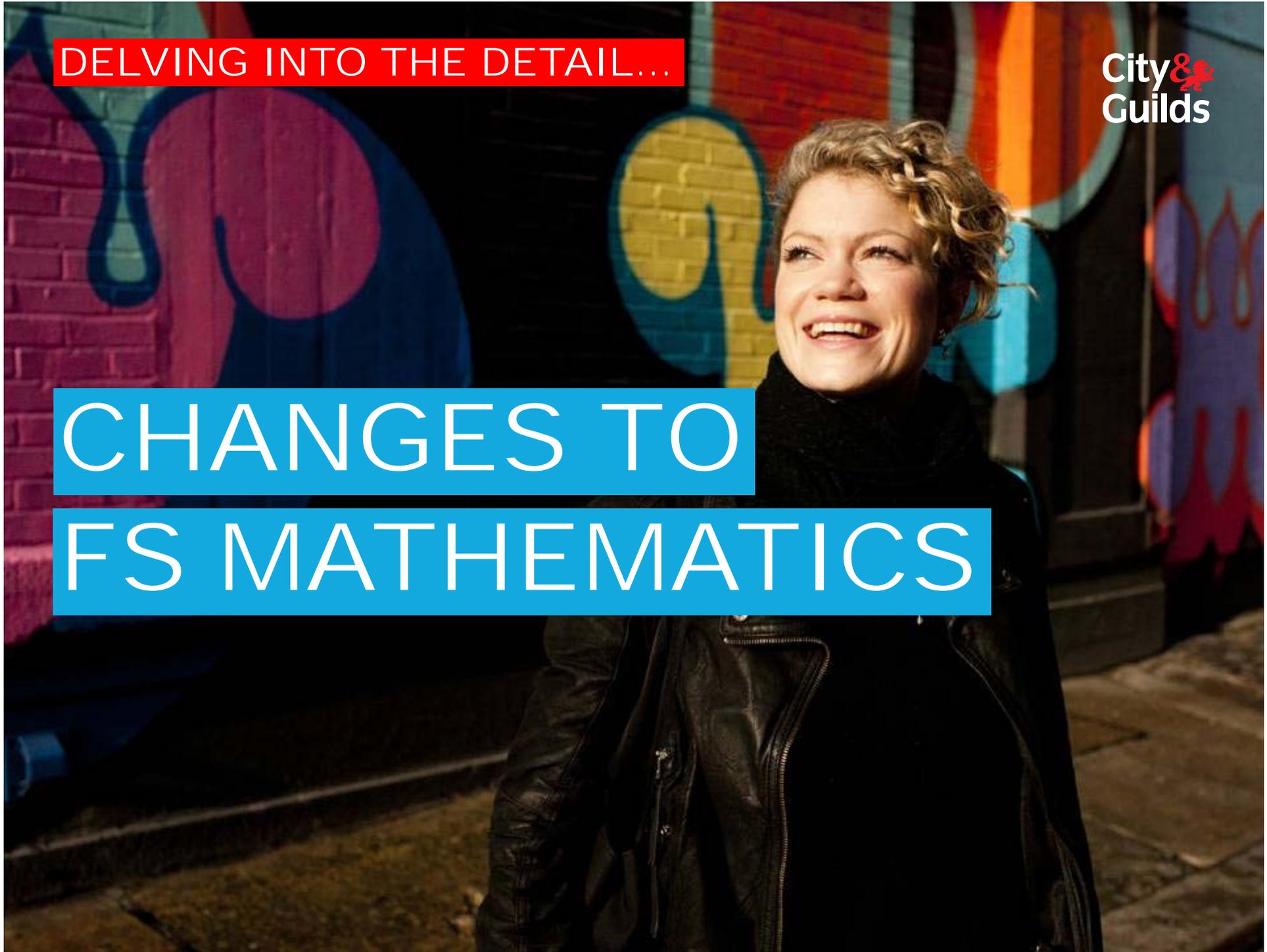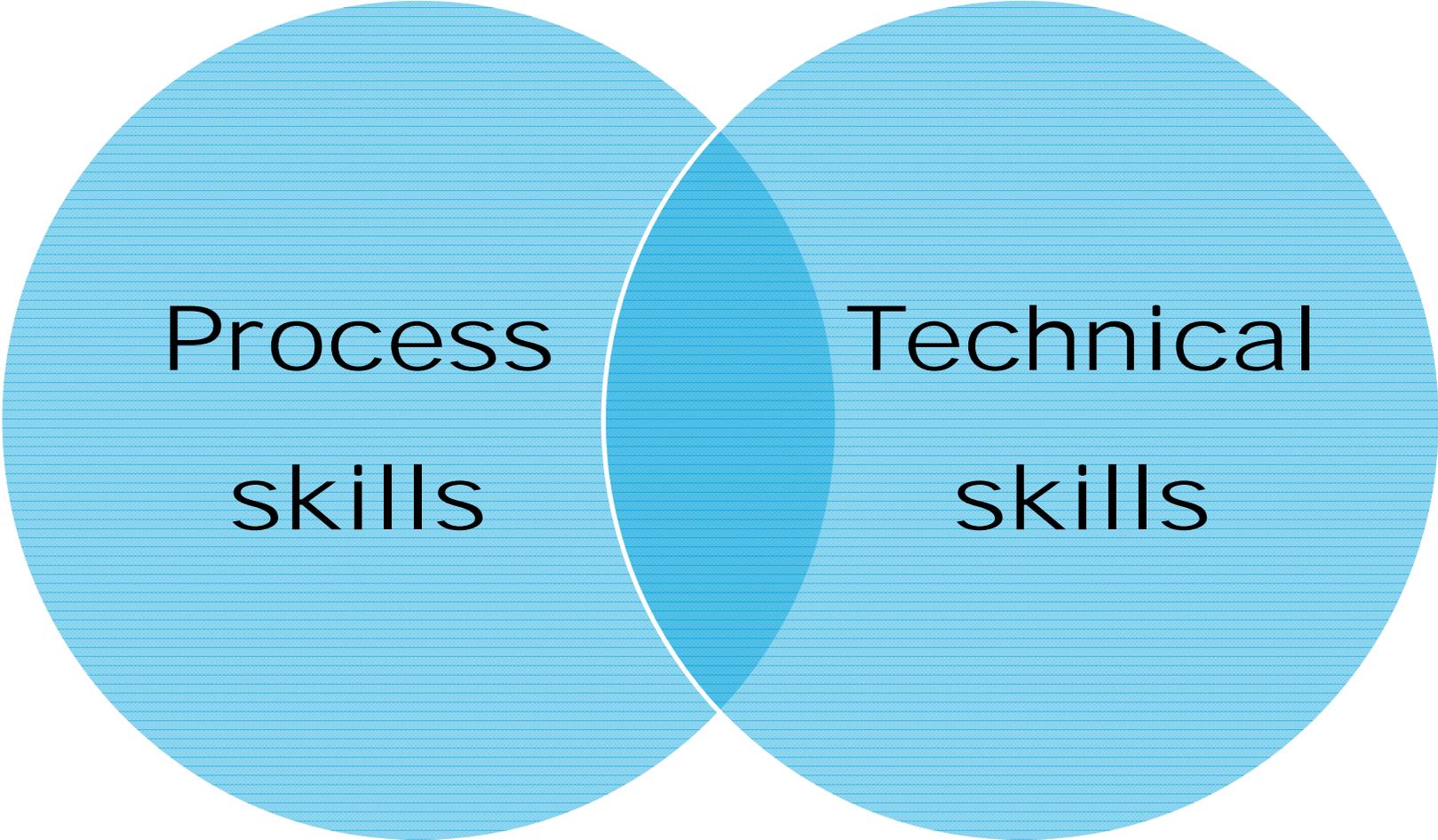


**Process skills**

**Technical skills**

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## Represent
Finding information or data
needed to solve problem

**30-40%**

## Analyse
Calculations and checking

**30-40%**

## Interpret
Presenting and explaining
results.

**30-40%**

# TECHNICAL SKILLS

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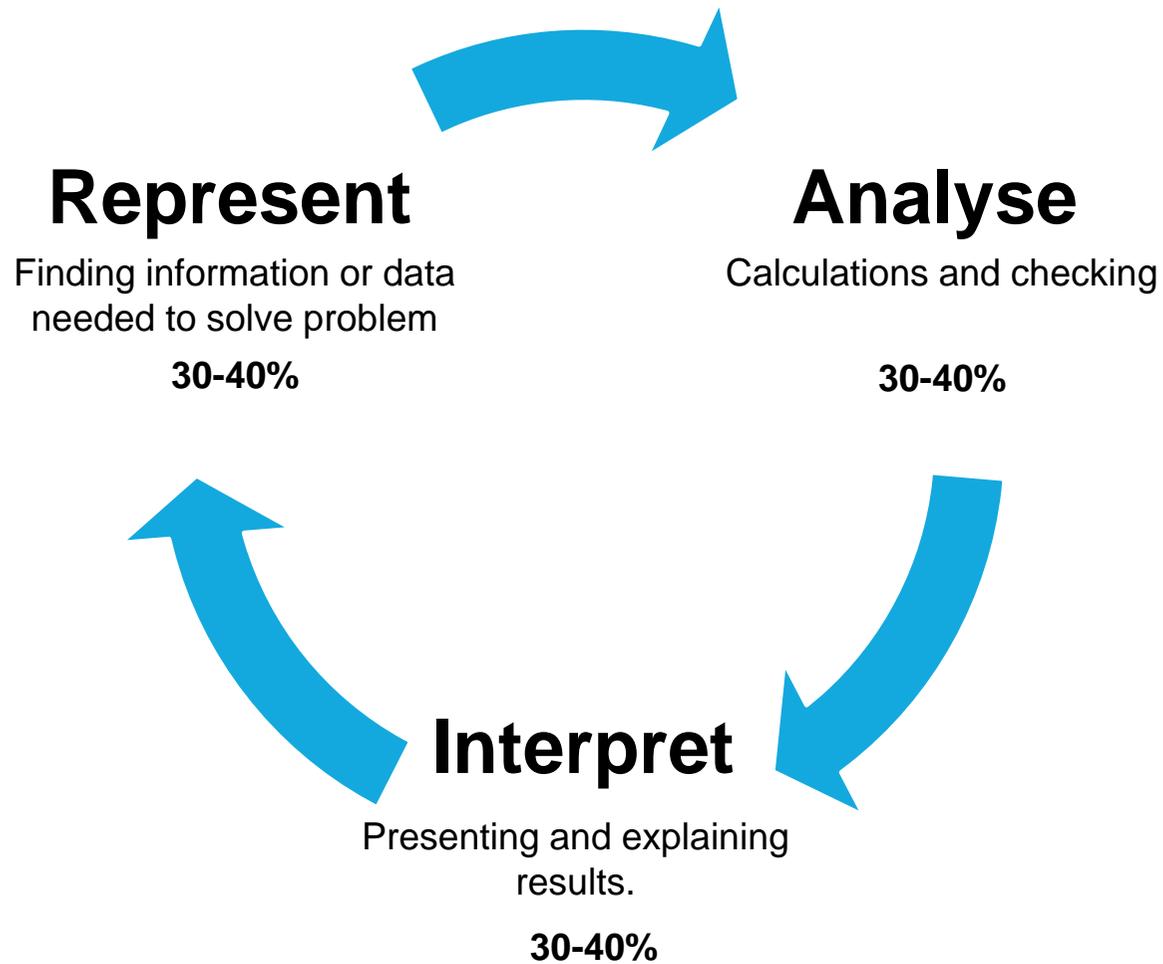
## SAME FORMAT – ASSESSMENTS STILL CONSIST OF THREE TASKS

- **TASK 1**
  covers number
  question contexts typically involving money and/or time.

- **TASK 2**
  covers shape, space and measures
  contexts typically involving diagrams and scaling.

- **TASK 3**
  covers data handling and statistics
  contexts involving calculations of averages and range, probability.

# WHAT NEEDED TO CHANGE?

| CRITICISM | HOW HAVE WE RESPONDED? |
|---|---|
| • Lack of opportunity for candidates to demonstrate evaluation of the effectiveness of their working. | Addition of specific planning and reviewing steps. |
| • Questions 'too closed', not enough functionality.<br>• Too many prompts. | Reduced guidance within tasks (less 'scaffolding' of questions). |

# SO, WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

| TASK 1 – SIGNIFICANT CHANGES | TASKS 2 AND 3 – SOME AMENDMENT |
|---|---|
| • Planning step at start<br>• Considerable reduction in guidance throughout<br>• Review at end of task | • Similar structure to existing<br>• Reduced guidance |

## HOW A TASK TYPICALLY APPEARS AT PRESENT

**1A** You want to buy a railcard.

It is cheaper to buy a 3-year railcard instead of buying a 1-year railcard every year for three years.

How much money would you save? **(1 mark)**

**1B** What is the saving as a percentage of the total cost you would pay to buy a 1-year railcard each year for three years? **(3 marks)**

**1C** The price of a ticket for a return journey from Stockton to Newcastle and back is £11.10.

You have bought a railcard.

How much will the ticket cost using your railcard? **(3 marks)**.

**1D** The interview is at 3:45pm. It will last for half an hour. The interview is at a place 25 minutes from Newcastle Station.

Decide which train you will catch from Stockton to Newcastle and back from Newcastle to Stockton. **(6 marks)**

**1E** Explain your choice of train to Newcastle **(1 mark)**

**1F** Your friend's house is 15 minutes from Stockton Station.

Draw a table to show the time
- you will leave your friend's house the trains leave and arrive
- you will arrive at the place where your interview is
- you will get back to your friend's house.

Include the total amount of time that you will be away from your friend's house. **(6 marks)**

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## HOW THE SAME TASK MIGHT BE PRESENTED FROM SEPTEMBER

**1A** Work out how much you can save on a return ticket from Stockton to Newcastle by buying a railcard. **(7 marks)**

*(candidate provided with source material about railcards and ticket prices)*

**1B** You have an interview at 3:45pm in Newcastle. It will last for half an hour. Work out suitable train times to get you to and from the interview. **(7 marks)**

*(candidate provided with source material about times taken from home and from station)*

**1C** Make a summary table to show your results. **(6 marks)**

**Think about…**

how your plan and methods worked

how sensible your answers were

anything you found difficult

any other information that you would have liked

things you might do differently if you had to tackle a similar problem
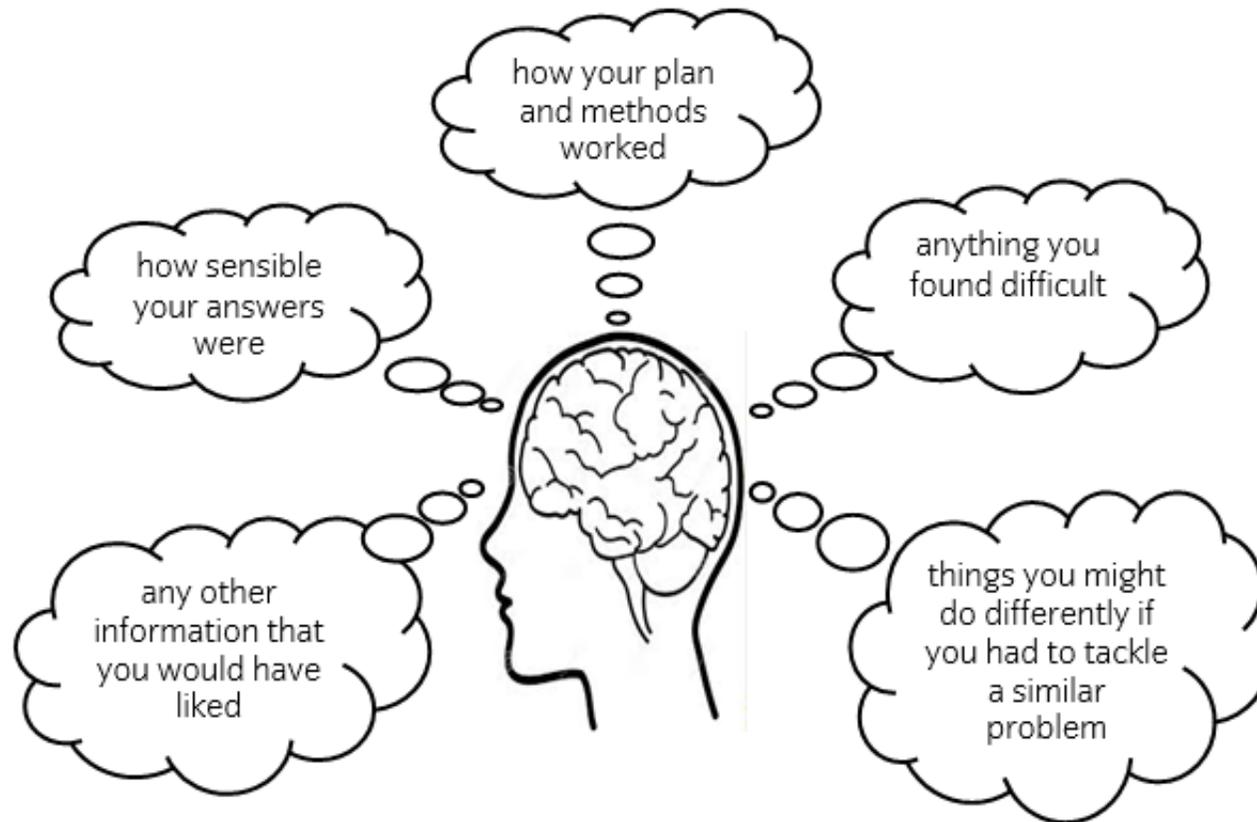
**DELVING INTO THE DETAIL…**

**CHANGES TO FS ENGLISH**

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# WHAT NEEDED TO CHANGE?
## OVERVIEW

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| CRITICISM | HOW HAVE WE RESPONDED? |
|---|---|
| • Scenarios not realistic or engaging enough | Reviewed range of topics to make them more likely to engage candidates. Also improved quality of source material so they look more credible and true-to-life. |
| • Questions/tasks 'too closed'. • Too much guidance, and not enough 'challenge'. | Less guidance and 'structure' – tasks need to be approached more holistically. Greater focus on SPaG accuracy. |
| • Assessments too 'formulaic' and predictable. | More variety in the type of tasks candidates are likely to face. |
| • Lack of clarity about whether spell/grammar checkers and electronic dictionaries may be used. | Now stated explicitly on front of papers. Guidance in handbook also made more prominent. |

- **REALISTIC SCENARIOS**
  better topic choices
  higher production quality for source documents.

- **INCREASED OPENNESS OF QUESTIONS/TASKS**
  less guidance and structure given – encouraging more holistic approach
  fewer 'lists', more extended responses and explanations expected.

- **GREATER FLEXIBILITY WITHIN QUESTIONS/TASKS**
  less formulaic presentation – greater variety in terms of coverage and layout
  will be less easy to predict what's likely to come up, so more important to teach the
  skills rather than 'teach to the test'.

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- **NUMBER OF SOURCE DOCUMENTS**
  more variety in number of reading texts – will typically be at least three.

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- **USE OF GRAMMAR/SPELL-CHECKERS CLARIFIED**
  now made clear on front of each paper (as well as in handbook)
  emphasis on candidates using normal ways of working.

- **REALISTIC SCENARIOS**
  better topic choices
  stimulus material included to provide more context.

- **INCREASED OPENNESS OF QUESTIONS/TASKS**
  less guidance and structure given – encouraging more holistic approach
  more open activities, enabling candidates to provide more extended and developed responses.

- **TIME ALLOWANCE CHANGE**
  'reading time' anomaly removed – assessments now **65** minutes
  (legacy from the pre-2010 assessments where Reading and Writing were combined).

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  responses.

- **HIGHER ORDER SKILLS**
  candidates expected to demonstrate minimum level of attainment across all areas of
  Skill Standard – eg less easy to get away with weak SPaG.

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Just a few more points,
before we close.

# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ICT
## 'IN-APP' NOW AVAILABLE

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### IN-APPLICATION (IN-APP) ONSCREEN ASSESSMENT NOW AVAILABLE FOR FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ICT

**In-app is a new onscreen delivery method for Functional Skills ICT at levels 1 and 2.**

**It has been developed after extensive customer research.**

**"IT'S SO MUCH MORE BENEFICIAL THAT THE LEARNER CAN USE ICT SKILLS THAT THEY WOULD USE IN AN EVERYDAY ACTIVITY RATHER THAN A SIMULATION."**

**LIFETIME TRAINING**

- A self-contained assessment, with no need to retrieve or prepare data files in advance, print or retain learner evidence, or manage local email accounts.

- Allows candidates to complete their assessments using familiar MS Office applications, and then upload the completed files back into e-volve.

- Retains the flexibilities of the e-volve system, eg scheduling with as little as 30 minutes' notice, can operate either online or offline..

- The current 'simulation' onscreen assessments remain available until **31 July 2015**. From **1 August** in-app will be the only onscreen delivery method available.

# KEEPING UP TO DATE

# ALL ABOUT…
## ARE YOU GETTING IT?

**City & Guilds | MATHS & ENGLISH**

- Comes out monthly (or thereabouts…)

- Sign up via **Preferences Centre**

- Join the conversation **#CGMathsEnglish**

# DIGITAL SUPPORT OFFER

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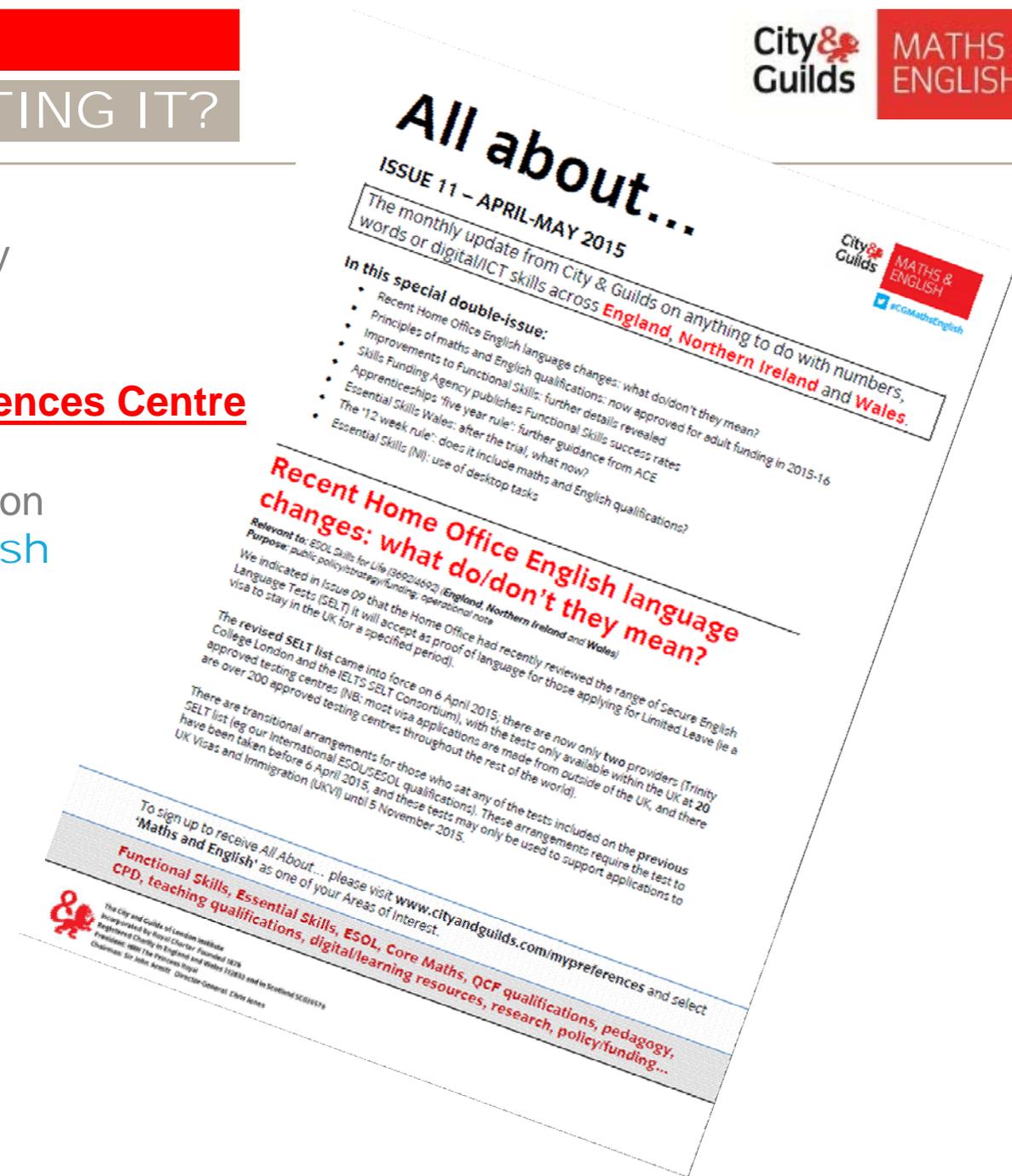
## Maths and English e-Toolkit
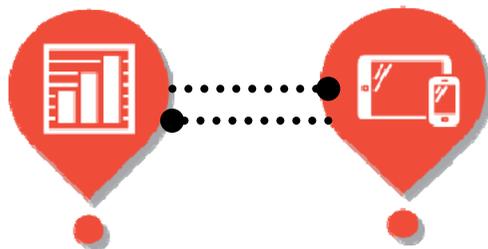
**It is…** Maths and English e-Toolkit

**It provides…** maths and English teaching and learning support, with NEW on-line Initial Assessment and Diagnostic Tool and a supporting toolkit of teaching and learning support resources

**It supports…** all nations, all centres, all qualifications, all learners (content aligned to Core Curriculum)

**It will….** Equip centres with all they need to support and enhance maths and English teaching and learning across their organisation

## e-Functional Skills

e-FUNCTIONAL SKILLS
The complete online Functional Skills teaching and learning experience
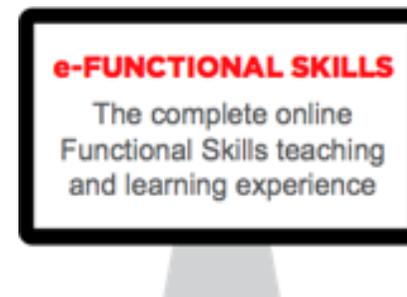
**It is…** e-Functional Skills

**It provides…** complete online Functional Skills teaching and learning experience

**It supports…** Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT at Entry 3 to Level 2.

**It will….** ensure consistent Functional Skills delivery, speed up completions and improve learners' chance of a first time pass.

## HOW CAN WE FIND OUT MORE?

- Learn more about our Maths and English e-Toolkit and see our short intro. video here
- Learn more about our e-Functional Skills offer and see our short intro. video here
- Email: digitalsales@cityandguilds for a free trial or demo of our Maths and English digital resources