

**3748-110 and 3748-310**

**Functional Skills English Level 1  
Reading**

**Chief Examiner's report – May 2016**

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# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide centres with feedback on the performance of candidates for 3748-110 and 3748-310 Functional Skills English Reading Level 1.

The Chief Examiner's Report has been reintroduced as a result of feedback from centres, to give them guidance in preparing candidates for examination.

## 2 Overall Performance

This report covers the period from February 2016 to May 2016. However, centres are strongly urged to review the previous Chief Examiner's report, dated January 2016, as the comments and advice still apply.

As would be expected, increased familiarity with the new model of assessment papers has led to a rise in the pass rates. However, significant numbers of candidates are not passing the exam, and the principal reasons remain the same:

1. entering candidates prior to completion of adequate learning
2. unfamiliarity with key level 1 standards
3. failing to enter the required number of responses
4. misreading questions and/or not understanding what is being asked.

### Areas of good performance

Candidates who passed the exam tended to score marks consistently across all four assessment criteria. Similarly, candidates who failed lost marks against all four assessment criteria.

### Areas for development

Marks are often lost by weaker candidates through a failure to properly read and understand a particular question. For candidates entered into the paper-based exam, it may be useful to underline the salient points of the question as an aid to understanding. Due to inherent restrictions of a screen-based examination, candidates would benefit from having a blank sheet of paper and a pen or pencil to be able to make notes for the same purpose.

Centres should ensure candidates understand that the number of marks available for a question is indicative of the number of responses required. On occasion, questions will specify how many responses are required, but this is not always the case.

Centres should also make candidates aware that responses will generally be spread throughout the document. If a question requires four responses, as indicated either by the question or the number of marks available, the candidate will typically have to look at different areas of the source document to find the four responses.

### 3 Recommendations/Advice for centres

1. Centres are strongly advised to read the previous Chief Examiner's report, available on the City & Guilds website.
2. Make use of the Guidance for Centres document, available on the City and Guilds website. The guidance document includes a section on typical teaching activities that will help prepare candidates for the exam.
3. Candidates should not be entered for the exam until an adequate period of learning has been undertaken and they have successfully passed the practice papers available on the City & Guilds website.
4. Responses are to be found in the source documents and should not be taken from the candidate's own knowledge or experience.
5. Whilst some questions will specify how many responses are required, candidates should be aware that, in the absence of this information, the number of responses required is generally indicated by the number of marks available for that particular question.
6. As part of the learning process, centres should expose candidates to all types of source documents, including web-sites, articles, formal letters, emails, leaflets, promotional material and advertising. These should be studied in combination with the Functional Skills English Reading Level 1 criteria, with a view to candidates being able to:
  - understand layout features and their effects
  - identify the main points and ideas in a text by looking at headings, subheadings, final summaries or bold lettering, for example
  - read texts in detail
  - utilise information contained in texts
  - identify suitable responses to texts.

## 4 Additional Information

Pass marks for individual papers are arrived at through an awarding process undertaken at City & Guilds. During this process, the relative demands of each paper are considered and, as a result, pass marks for papers will differ. Therefore, it is quite possible that two candidates will achieve the same overall mark, but one will pass whilst the other will fail.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are not tested in the exam. In addition, there is no need for candidates to write in complete sentences. Copying out the stem of a question in a response is to be discouraged as it merely wastes a candidate's time.

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