

All things...

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 #CGMathsEnglish

The monthly update from City & Guilds on **anything** to do with mathematics, numeracy, application of number English, literacy, communication, ESOL, ICT/digital skills...

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Changes to ESOL qualifications: what's happening and when?

Relevant to: *ESOL Skills for Life (3692) (England, Northern Ireland and Wales)*

Purpose: *changes/improvements to qualifications; coming soon*

As we've indicated in previous ESOL updates, the current ESOL Skills for Life qualifications (3692) will be replaced by a new suite of ESOL qualifications from September 2014. The new qualifications will continue to be titled 'ESOL Skills for Life', though with a new product code – **4692**.

Why the change?

Like the 3692 suite, the new ESOL qualifications will be based on the National Standards for Adult Literacy and referenced to the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum. The main difference is the new qualifications will have credit values (notionally 10 hours' learning time) and will be located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework – crucial for attracting Adult Skills funding in England after September 2014.

Over the last few months we've spoken to a large number of ESOL practitioners and centres about their ideas for the new qualifications, as well as attending various events organised by NATECLA and others. We recognise that the ESOL learner population has changed considerably in the ten years since the current ESOL Skills for Life qualifications were launched, and we appreciate the need for a greater range of qualifications that can support more flexible and varied patterns of language



learning. For example, we're planning to include 'single mode' qualifications in Reading and Writing within the new suite of qualifications, as well as in Speaking & Listening.

How does ESOL fit into City & Guilds' wider maths and English offer?

The redevelopment of ESOL Skills for Life has enabled us to review how we relate our UK ESOL qualifications to our broader range of maths and English qualifications and teaching/learning support. We've traditionally tended to position our ESOL offer as quite separate from our other 'English' qualifications, although more recently the distinction between 'literacy' and 'language' qualifications has been blurred – partly as a result of the Government's wish (at least within England) to see ESOL learners progressing to Functional Skills or GCSE English.

We are also aware that our Framework-based maths and English qualifications are already proving popular with a significant number of ESOL centres and learners in England. The **English Skills (3847)** suite in particular allows learners to focus on specific areas of the standards and have small steps of progress recognised. We envisage these continuing to be used alongside the new ESOL qualifications.

I've heard City & Guilds is writing its own units for the new ESOL qualifications, rather than sharing with other awarding organisations. Why is this?

Whilst all new ESOL Skills for Life qualifications need to be based on the National Standards for Adult Literacy and demonstrate a clear relationship with the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum, each awarding organisation is able to develop its own units, qualifications and assessments. In our case we were keen to build on what had made the 3692 suite popular (including the revised Entry level assignments that we introduced last summer), as well as positioning the new ESOL qualifications alongside English Skills (3847) and as part of a broader City & Guilds maths and English offer.

We are aware that some of the other awarding organisations have opted to work as part of a consortium to produce a shared set of units to underpin their qualifications. City & Guilds decided not to take part in this consortium, largely because we already offer a substantial range of Framework-based qualifications – including the 3847 suite. Regardless of whether new ESOL qualifications are based on AO-specific or shared units, they must cover the same standards and align to the Core Curriculum. In practice, all AOs' new ESOL qualifications are likely to be of a similar size and cover the same range of skills. However each AO is responsible for its own assessment arrangements, and these are likely to vary – eg some are likely to offer 100% external assessment.

How is City & Guilds planning to assess the new qualifications?

Whilst we cannot confirm the assessment requirements for 4692 until the new qualifications have received Ofqual accreditation, we **anticipate** the following:

- **Entry level**
will continue to be assessed by assignment, similar to the current arrangements for 3692. We only refreshed these assignments last year, and we're intending to amend them so that they align with the new qualifications' assessment criteria.
- **Levels 1 and 2**
 - *Speaking and Listening* will continue to involve three locally-assessed activities (no longer including a phone call). A list of suggested topics will be provided, and with recording sheets similar to those used within 3847.
 - *Writing* will continue to be assessed locally, and is likely to involve two written pieces, as well as a spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) exercise.
 - *Reading* will be externally set and marked by City & Guilds. The test will be available **on demand** and is likely to be offered both onscreen and on paper. The tests will be multiple choice, although unlike the old Basic and Key Skills national test their content will be more specifically designed for ESOL learners.

What are the end-dates for the current qualifications?

Withdrawal dates for 3692 are as follows:

City & Guilds number	QAN	Qualification title	Last registration	Last certification
3692-01 and 3692-07	100/3740/8	Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Entry 1)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-02 and 3692-07	100/3741/X	Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Entry 2)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-03 and 3692-07	100/3742/1	Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Entry 3)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-11	100/3743/3	Level 1 Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life	31 August 2014	31 August 2016*
3692-12	100/3744/5	Level 2 Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life	31 August 2014	31 August 2016*
3692-21	100/4899/6	Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 1)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-22	100/4900/9	Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 2)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-23	100/4901/0	Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 3)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-24	100/4902/2	Level 1 Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016
3692-25	100/4903/4	City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening)	31 August 2014	31 August 2016

Extra funding available for job-seekers in England

Also the Skills Funding Agency has announced an additional **£30 million** for 2014-15 to support the expected increase in demand for spoken English learning once the additional Jobcentre Plus screening and language conditionality arrangements come into force from April 2014. This additional funding is intended specifically to support Speaking and Listening at Entry 1 and Entry 2.

Further information is available from the **Skills Funding Agency** (although the original announcement is not currently visible as their website is in the process of being migrated to GOV.UK).

* although please note there will be no further scheduled assessments available for the Reading unit after **June 2014**. If candidates have not already met the assessment requirements for this unit - either via the current interim assessment (based on City & Guilds' Functional Skills English Reading assessment) or by previously achieving the Basic and Key Skills national test, they will need to switch to the new qualifications.

ESOL Skills for Life during 2013-14: interim Reading assessment at levels 1 and 2

Relevant to: *ESOL Skills for Life (3692-11 and 3692-12) (England, Northern Ireland and Wales)*

Purpose: *operational note*

Whilst current ESOL Skills for Life qualifications (3692) remain available until 31 August 2014, for regulatory reasons we had to introduce a temporary alternative assessment model for the Reading units of the full-mode qualifications at levels 1 and 2. As we indicated in the ESOL Skills for Life update issued in December 2013, the interim Reading assessment is available only on a limited number of fixed-date opportunities to candidates accessing these assessments under a 3692 registration.

Whilst we tried to select the three assessment dates carefully, we were mindful that there would be at least some centres and candidates for whom the dates would not be convenient. We were also conscious of the need to leave enough of a gap between each assessment opportunity to enable results to be processed and issued before the closing date for the following sitting.

However, a number of centres have recently contacted us to advise that the next assessment opportunity, scheduled for Monday 7 April 2014, falls during their Easter break. As soon as we became aware of this we considered how feasible it would be to move the assessment date to later in April (although that would cause problems for other centres with later holiday dates) or bring it forward to late March (which would affect the entry deadline). We therefore decided to leave the published assessment date unchanged, although we will allow centres to hold this assessment up to five working days either side of this date (ie **starting anytime between 00:01 on Monday 31 March 2014 and 23:59 on Monday 14 April 2014**).

Where centres opt to hold these assessments on a date other than Monday 7 April there is no need to inform City & Guilds in advance, although **all** of the centre's ESOL Reading assessments must take place on the same alternative date. Candidates should be accommodated together if at all possible, although if multiple sittings are required care should be taken to ensure there is no collusion between candidates (there is a confidentiality statement on the front page of each assessment paper that candidates are required to sign). To ensure results are turned around promptly, all completed assessments must be returned to City & Guilds together in one envelope.

This additional latitude will only apply to the **April 2014** assessments, the subsequent sitting (Monday 23 June) must take place on the specified date – although can be any time during that day.

Please also note that since the interim ESOL Skills for Life Reading assessment is based on the same specification as our Functional Skills English Reading assessments at levels 1 and 2, achievement of this assessment may be counted towards the Reading component if learners subsequently work towards City & Guilds' Functional Skills English qualifications. This achievement will not be recognised automatically by our systems, although it can be recorded by using the process outlined in Section 4.5 (pages 24-25) of the current (Version 1.4) Functional Skills handbook. Please note we cannot guarantee that other awarding organisations will accept achievement of this assessment towards the Reading component of their Functional Skills English qualifications.

Likewise, where learners have achieved the Reading component of Functional Skills English (at Level 1 or 2) with City & Guilds, this may be counted as achievement of the ESOL Skills for Life Reading unit. Again the process is not automatic, although achievement may be recorded using the relevant prior achievement 'proxy' code (3692-501 or 3692-502) – see guidance on page 15 of the ESOL Skills for Life (3692) handbook. Please note only **City & Guilds'** Functional Skills English assessments may be used for this purpose – this is only possible because we can verify that these assessments cover the assessment criteria for ESOL Skills for Life Reading in full.

English/Mathematics Skills: workpacks now available

Relevant to: *English Skills and Mathematics Skills (3847)*

Purpose: *changes/improvements to qualifications (England only)*

Portfolio development **workpacks**, covering all five levels, are now available for both the English Skills and Mathematics Skills qualifications (3847). They can be downloaded from the **3847 qualification page** on our website (click on the relevant level, and then look for the section marked ‘Assessment Materials’).

The workpacks are designed to support the assessment process and accumulation of portfolio evidence by providing a series of suggested activities and questions. They can be used to generate evidence, although the normal process of candidate assessment and internal/external quality assurance still applies.

The workpacks are **not** an ‘exam’ or ‘test’, and their use is entirely **optional**. Centres are free to adapt or recontextualise them in any way that they see fit – and in some cases they could also prove useful as a learning activity prior to assessment. Whilst the workpacks have been designed to cover the majority of the assessment requirements for each unit, in some cases further evidence will be required from other sources (eg when the assessment criteria specify more than one occasion).

3847 vs 3844: what’s the difference?

Relevant to: *English/Mathematics Skills (3847); Principles of English/Mathematics (3844) (England only)*

Purpose: *operational note*

When we launched our Framework-based maths and English qualifications last year, we deliberately chose to develop two distinct sets of qualifications: Mathematics/English Skills (3847) and the Principles of Using Mathematics/English (3844). Both are based on the National Standards for Adult Numeracy/Literacy and aligned to the Core Curricula, although there are important differences:

	English/Mathematics Skills (3847)	Principles of Using English/Mathematics (3844)
Key purpose	To help learners improve specific areas of their maths/English and have this progress recognised through flexible ‘bite-sized’ units.	To help learners demonstrate a solid grasp of maths/English, as well as the confidence to work under pressure in a digital environment.
Levels covered	Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, Level 1, Level 2	Entry 3, Level 1, Level 2
Structure and characteristics	<p>Consists of 100 small units (55 for Mathematics, 45 for English) – each available as a single-unit qualification, but with larger themed Awards (eg in ‘Handling Data’ or ‘Reading’) also available, along with Certificate-sized qualifications that cover the full range of skills set out in the National Standards for Adult Numeracy/Literacy.</p> <p>The units can be used to support highly personalised learning programmes, especially to address specific gaps in learners’ knowledge, understanding and confidence.</p>	<p>Consists of a single unit, although addresses a substantial proportion of the National Standards for Adult Numeracy/Literacy – especially some of the particular skills highlighted as important by employers.</p> <p>These qualifications can be used to demonstrate depth of understanding, independence and resilience – eg Mathematics entails includes working both with and without a calculator.</p>
Assessment model	By portfolio, with evidence able to be drawn from any purposeful activity relevant to the learner. Workpacks are available to support evidence gathering.	By one-off onscreen test, taken after a period of learning and available on-demand with instant results. (NB: mathematics has two papers).

	English/Mathematics Skills (3847)	Principles of Using English/Mathematics (3844)
Any age restrictions?	No – both suites are eligible for Adult Skills funding in England from the Skills Funding Agency. They are also included on the Department for Education’s ‘Section 96’ list of qualifications approved for pre-16 and 16-18 delivery.	

New teaching and learning materials: are you aware of what’s now available?

Relevant to: any English or mathematics learning
Purpose: changes/improvements to City & Guilds’ offer

You might be aware that City & Guilds now offers an extensive range of digital maths and English teaching and learning support materials. These materials have been created in partnership with Kineo, the leading global e-learning services company. A range of samples are available to view – see

www.cityandguilds.com/mathsandenglish,
 or watch this video:
http://youtu.be/35U9S2N8OAI.

Whilst these materials are aligned to the National Standards for Adult Numeracy/Literacy and referenced the to Functional Skills and GCSE subject criteria, they are deliberately ‘qualification neutral’. They’re intended to support the development of applied maths and English learning in any setting, regardless of whether learners are aiming to achieve any particular qualification.

“I’ve been using the new maths and English resources to inform planning of my lessons. Although I teach Functional Skills, I have found the new maths and English resources to be easier to use than traditional Functional Skills ones because each topic is broken down into ‘bite size chunks’ and has a wealth of resources; both paper-based and interactive which accompany each one. So, for example, if a diagnostic reveals that a learner or group of learners need help with spelling I can pull off a lesson plan, teaching materials and resources on this topic and amend accordingly to suit the needs of the learners.”

Nicola Bell, Skills for Life Assistant Director, South & City College Birmingham

Functional Skills: more sample assessments now available

Relevant to: Functional Skills (3748) (England only)
Purpose: changes/improvements to qualifications; operational note

We’ve recently added to the range of sample Functional Skills assessments available. Please be aware that we provide samples in two formats, both located on the **Functional Skills qualification webpages**:

- **PDF** – designed to help candidates practise and/or familiarise with content of the assessment, as well as to help tutors understand how marks are allocated (NB each assessment is accompanied by a mark scheme and indicative pass mark).
- **Flash** – designed to help candidates practise and/or familiarise with the presentation of assessments within the e-volve onscreen environment.

When preparing candidates for the onscreen assessments, centres should make use of **both** the PDF and Flash samples.

Functional Skills: requesting assessment papers in alternative formats

Relevant to: Functional Skills (3748) (England only)

Purpose: changes/improvements to qualifications; operational note

We've recently introduced a simplified ordering procedure for requesting Functional Skills external assessments in the most common alternative formats such as modified enlarged or Braille. Whilst any more specific requirements might need to be discussed in advance with our Access Arrangements team, the following are now available to order directly via the Walled Garden using the following entry codes:

Format	Product code to use	Notes
Braille	3748-4xx (eg 3748-410 for FS English Reading at Level 1, 3748-420 for FS Mathematics at Level 2...)	These will be in contracted (Grade 2) Standard English Braille (SEB).
Enlarged print	3748-5xx (eg 3748-510 for FS English Reading at Level 1, 3748-520 for FS Mathematics at Level 2...)	Text for these assessments will be 24 point on A4-sized paper.

Whilst assessments ordered via this route are available on-demand, please be aware that onscreen marking is not feasible for these assessments so results are likely to take up to 32 working days.

In the case of FS ICT, please also be aware that two additional sets of data files have been provided (versions M and N). These can be downloaded in the normal way from the **Functional Skills qualification webpages**.

What are candidates entitled to?

It is important to consult the **JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments** document, as well as the **Functional Skills qualification handbook**, well in advance of requesting any Functional Skills assessments in alternative formats.

Where candidates require materials in a size or format *other* than those indicated above, please discuss this with our Access Arrangements team (020 7294 2772 or policy@cityandguilds.com) as soon as possible. In some cases it may take up to three months to provide materials.

Essential Skills Wales: qualification and assessment review

Relevant to: Essential Skills Wales (3768); wider Key Skills (3638-21) (Wales only)

Purpose: public policy/strategy

As part of the Welsh Government's Reform of Qualifications, the Essential Skills qualifications in Wales will be changing from September 2015. Further information about the intended changes is now available on the **Qualification Wales website**. They include:

1. New assessment models for Essential Skills Communication and Application of Number at levels 1-4 – likely to involve a controlled task with a supporting confirmatory assessment (NB: the assessment model at Entry level is unlikely to change).
2. Essential Skills ICT will be replaced by a new suite of qualifications in Digital Literacy.

3. Four new Essential Skills qualifications will replace the wider Key Skills:

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Planning and Organisation
- Creativity and Innovation
- Personal Effectiveness.

City & Guilds is working with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) on all three of these strands, and we anticipate that there will be further detail available about each before the summer. Whilst the revised qualifications will not start officially until September 2015, there will be at least some trialling/piloting activity well before then. Again, we will update you about this as soon as details about this begin to emerge.

However, it is worth also noting that the Essential Skills qualifications will in future be positioned **specifically** for post-16 learners in work-based or adult/community settings. They will no longer be a compulsory part of the Welsh Baccalaureate, since for this it is assumed literacy and numeracy will be assessed through the new Welsh-specification GCSEs, with the other skills will be developed, applied and assessed through the completion of four 'Challenges'.

Essential Skills Northern Ireland: the recent comparability study and future plans for change

Relevant to: *Essential Skills NI (3800) (NI only)*

Purpose: *operational note; public policy/strategy*

Although there are still long-term plans to review the assessment model for Essential Skills in Northern Ireland, it is unlikely that this will be resolved in the near future. We are aware that the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is considering a number of possible alternatives to the current two-part assessment model, although in the meantime CCEA Accreditation has confirmed that the current qualifications will continue until **at least August 2015**.

We will therefore be extending the Essential Skills (3800) suite of qualifications. We will advise once the new end-dates are reflected on the Walled Garden.

Reviewing the tasks

Given that the current bank of assessment tasks has not been reviewed for several years, we are planning to develop an updated set of Desktop tasks and Entry level tasks over the next few months. The bank of tasks is jointly owned by all Essential Skills awarding organisations, so it may take some time to agree the new versions. We will keep you posted about this.

One idea we are keen to explore is whether the task documents could be made available as interactive PDFs that candidates/assessors could complete onscreen without needing to print out.

CCEA Accreditation Comparability Study

You may also be aware that the CCEA Accreditation (the Regulatory team within CCEA) carried out a comparability study of all Essential Skills awarding organisations last year. The full report can be found on the **Accreditation section of CCEA's website**, although there are a number of findings we need to draw centres' attention to:

- Any centre-devised portfolio templates (ie anything other than the Action Based Activity templates available on City & Guilds' website) **must** be agreed in advance with your Qualification Consultant (QC).

- All City & Guilds centres are required, as a condition of centre and qualification approval, to have an internal appeals procedure. Moreover, a record must be kept of any appeals relating to the assessment or IQA process (as described in the document 'Our Quality Assurance Requirements').
- The revised Desktop task cover sheets (introduced last April, when the centralised printing arrangements ended) now incorporate space for candidate/assessor/IQA authentication signatures.

DEL Apprenticeships consultation

Meanwhile, DEL has also published a consultation document outlining proposed changes to Apprenticeships in Northern Ireland. There are some parallels with the 'Richard' reforms in England – although also some important differences, eg it is proposed that all Apprenticeships must be at/above Level 3 and last a minimum of two years. The **consultation document can be found on the DEL website** – note the closing date for responses is 7 April 2014.

Entry level ICT in Northern Ireland: qualifications fundable as a step towards Essential Skills

Relevant to: *Essential Skills ICT (3800-60); Start IT (4249) (NI only)*

Purpose: *public policy/strategy*

The NI Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) has published an updated list of fundable IT user qualifications at Entry level for instances where learners are not ready to tackle Essential Skills ICT at Level 1. The **list is on the DEL website** (see Circular Addendum 5); note it includes City & Guilds' Start IT suite of qualifications (4249).

English and Mathematics 'Funding Condition' for 16-18 Study Programmes in England: what does/doesn't it require?

Relevant to: *English and mathematics learning within 16-18 provision in England (England only)*

Purpose: *public policy/strategy*

We are aware there is some misunderstanding about the implications of the English and Mathematics condition for accessing Study Programme funding from September 2014, and in particular whether it will prohibit use of our Framework-based maths and English qualifications.

The condition will require all 16-19 learners without A*-C GCSEs in English and Mathematics to continue studying these subjects as part of their programme. There is no requirement as such to *achieve* qualifications in these subjects (NB: 16-19 funding is no longer linked directly to qualification aims), although to satisfy the condition learners must be at least "enrolled to take" one or more of the following (in each subject, as necessary):

- GCSE
(or regulated 'i-GCSE' certificates that have been recognised as counting towards the Key Stage 4 Ebacc performance measure)
- Functional Skills
- ESOL Skills for Life.

As far as performance measures are concerned, only GCSE/i-GCSE will count, and anything else is effectively seen as a *step towards* GCSE attainment. This includes Functional Skills and ESOL qualifications, although these have been recognised by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) as a reasonable interim destination if learners are not immediately in a position to achieve GCSE at/above Grade C.

Our Framework-based Mathematics and English qualifications are not seen as ‘destination’ qualifications, so cannot on their own satisfy the programme funding condition. Nevertheless, that **does not mean they cannot be used** as long as the provider can demonstrate that they are adding value and that learners are on a path towards GCSE or one of the other qualifications EFA has specified. All of our Framework-based Mathematics and English qualifications have Section 96 Approval for 16-19 (and pre-16) use, and the Mathematics/English Skills qualifications (3847) in particular may help build learners’ confidence and provide clear evidence of them having followed, and gained from, a personalised programme.

Core Mathematics qualification: what is it, and is City & Guilds planning to offer it?

Relevant to: *mathematics learning in England at/above Level 2 (England only)*

Purpose: *public policy/strategy*

Finally, the Department for Education (DfE) in England is currently consulting on a **proposed new Level 3 qualification in Mathematics**, aimed initially at 16-19 learners who have already achieved A*-C GCSE in Mathematics although do not intend to study A/AS Level.

Although the DfE is not planning to confirm its technical requirements for Core Mathematics until the end of March, we are delighted to confirm that City & Guilds has begun to develop a Core Mathematics qualification. We anticipate some limited trialling/piloting activity during 2014-15, with full implementation for first teaching from September 2015. We anticipate that Core Mathematics will complement our emerging TechBac® (www.cityandguilds.com/courses-and-qualifications/techbac).

We are keen that these qualifications should have real relevance to the world or work and buy-in from employers, and that they should help learners to develop confidence in their ability to apply maths effectively. We will be saying far more about this new qualification as our plans develop, although if you have any suggestions, or would be interested in working with us, please feel free to drop us a line (to mathsandenglish@cityandguilds.com).

Tell us what you think

All Things Maths & English is a monthly newsletter that brings together all of the key developments from City & Guilds relevant to maths, English or ICT/digital skills learning. It includes information about each of the maths and English qualifications offered by City & Guilds across England, Northern Ireland and Wales, updates on the range of teaching and learning resources we offer, plus relevant public policy or other information we think you might be interested in.

Each edition is numbered, so we can refer back to previous issues or tell you when information has been superseded. We’ve also tried to categorise each article by indicating which City & Guilds qualification(s) it relates to, and/or if it applies only to England, Northern Ireland or Wales.

If there’s anything else you’d particularly like us to cover or explain more fully in future issues of *All Things*, please feel free to drop us a line to mathsandenglish@cityandguilds.com or tweet using the hashtag **#CGMathsEnglish**.

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