

Mathematics Skills (3847) Portfolio development workpacks

Assessment guidance



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Introduction and purpose of this document

This document sets out the scope and purpose of the Mathematics Skills (3847) portfolio development workpacks, and guides centre staff on how they can be used successfully with these qualifications.

It is important to be clear from the outset that use of the workpacks is **not mandatory**. They provide suggested learning and assessment activities, as well as helping to support evidence generation; nevertheless, their use is not a substitute for the normal process of assessment planning. All evidence presented for assessment, regardless of whether it is sourced from a workpack activity or any other activity, must be assessed against the relevant unit assessment criteria, as well as being subjected to a process of Internal Quality Assurance.

The workpacks are designed to reflect the flexible structure of these qualifications, providing activities relevant to all units within the Mathematics Skills suite across all five levels. There are two topics – Homes and Holidays, although these topics can be adapted as necessary to ensure assessment activities are engaging and relevant to learners.

About the workpacks

Each workpack contains a series of tasks based on a given topic area, along with some additional questions. The letter 'Q' denotes questions/instructions that form part of the task; the letter 'A' refers to the additional questions.

There are two workpacks at each level; between them they address all of the Learning Outcomes across all units at that level, potentially generating evidence for each of the Assessment Criteria on at least **one** occasion (NB: where the Criteria requires at least two occasions, learners will need to evidence the other occasion through separate activity – eg from another part of their programme).

The relationship between the workpack tasks/questions and qualification assessment criteria is set out in the workpack log sheets/tracking grids. In each case this indicates whether workpack evidence is sufficient to meet all of the Assessment Criteria in full, or whether additional evidence will also be required (eg a second occasion) for complete coverage. Even where the workpack provides complete coverage, it may still be necessary to provide additional evidence if any of the workpack tasks/questions have not been completed correctly. Conversely, the workpack tasks in some cases include more occasions than are strictly required by the Assessment Criteria – allowing some tolerance if not all of these have been met.

The workpacks are provided in MS Word format so they can easily be adapted or re-contextualised. These qualifications are designed to facilitate flexible learning and personalise learning, and it is important that their assessment should reflect that approach.

Each workpack is available in two formats:

- candidate workpack – containing the assessment tasks and questions
- assessor workpack – containing the assessment task and questions, along with model answers in **red** as applicable (NB: candidates must **not** be given access to these).



Some of the workpack tasks require the use of common measuring and weighing instruments – eg rulers, tapes, scales, thermometers, clocks and calendars. These will need to be made available to candidates as necessary, along with any other relevant items (eg bags/packages for weighing).

In any event learners will almost certainly need adequate opportunity to practise using these prior to undergoing any formal assessment.

Using the candidate workpacks for portfolio development

It is important to note that the workpacks may only be used for assessment purposes if work has been produced **independently** by the candidate. As with any form of portfolio assessment, evidence presented for assessment must be valid, authentic, current and sufficient.

The workpacks are designed to support the assessment process and the accumulation of portfolio evidence. They are **not** an externally-set 'assignment' or 'test', and there is no requirement for them to take place under any formal supervised or examination conditions.

- The workpacks consist of a series of tasks and additional questions around a theme. They are not subject to any formal time constraints.
- Tasks can be adapted as necessary to suit the context of the learning or work environment, and must be engaging and relevant to learners.
- The workpack tasks/questions can be used flexibly, depending on the particular units candidates are working towards. However, because the tasks have been written holistically and are designed to 'flow', it will sometimes be necessary to adapt them so candidates are not relying on information from other parts of the task that they have not covered.
- Additional evidence will be required where candidates have not completed the workpack task/questions adequately, or if the Assessment Criteria require evidence from another occasion. Other evidence may be sourced from any purposeful activity that is relevant and engaging to the learner.
- The **logsheets and tracking grids** indicate how each of the unit Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria are addressed by the workpack tasks/questions. These **must** be read in conjunction with the Qualification Handbook and relevant Assessment Pack(s). Since the Assessment Criteria are based on the National Standards for Adult Numeracy, centre staff **must** also be familiar with the Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum.
- Evidence can be gathered and recorded in any auditable form, as long as it is valid, authentic, current and sufficient – as well as being easily accessible for Internal/External Quality Assurance purposes. This may include oral or observed evidence (as long as this is captured adequately), although there are a few instances (eg reading/writing figures) where written evidence is intrinsic to the Assessment Criteria. Even then, evidence does not necessarily need to be hand-written (eg it could be produced electronically).
- Candidates can generally use any equipment routinely available to them (eg calculators) as long as this does not compromise independent achievement of the Assessment Criteria. In a few cases, use of a calculator or similar device is **necessary** in order to meet the Assessment Criteria (NB these are denoted by a calculator icon: ).
- Some of the tasks/questions specifically require candidates to work **without** a calculator or similar device. These are denoted: .
- Candidates must show their working if the task/questions instruct them to do so, since this will be assessing their process skills and use of method.
- There is space at the end of each activity for assessors to provide feedback to candidates.
- To affirm authenticity, the candidate and assessor must sign and date the completed work at the end of each workpack.

Using the assessor workpacks for assessment

- The assessor workpacks contain the tasks/questions, along with coverage of the Assessment Criteria in **green** (Number), **pink** (Measure, Shape and Space) and **yellow** (Handling Data) as well as expected answers (in **red**).
- Whilst the workpack tasks/questions are designed to generate evidence for the unit/qualification Assessment Criteria, whether candidates' work actually does so may depend on the way that they have approached the tasks/questions (eg if units are required

by have been omitted from the candidate's response). **In all cases, evidence must be assessed against the relevant Assessment Criteria.**

- Within the expected answers, any units/values shown in brackets are not required for achievement, eg for '25(cm)' – '25' would be sufficient.
- When assessing candidates' responses to the tasks, the principle of 'follow-through' should be applied to any incorrect answers – ie they should be penalised only for that error, but not for any subsequent calculations based on the same data set that have otherwise been carried out correctly.

Illustrated example of follow-through

One of the task instructions involves calculating the cost of two tickets priced at £25 each. The candidate answers '£45', so on this occasion does not meet the Assessment Criterion.

The next instruction within the same task is to calculate how much change there would be from £100. Whilst the 'expected' answer is £50, if this candidate answers £55 (by subtracting £45 from £100) this can be considered correct.

Using the log sheets/tracking grid

- The log sheets/tracking grids are designed to record evidence collected through the workpack tasks/questions. If they are not used, an alternative method of recording and tracking evidence (eg the logsheets contained in the Mathematics Skills Assessment Pack) must be used.
- The first two columns of the log sheets/tracking grid show the Assessment Criteria references and descriptors. In some cases these are abbreviated and should be read in conjunction with the full specification in the Mathematics Skills Assessment Pack.
- There are then a further three columns for recording evidence. The third column shows tasks/questions from the first workpack; the fourth column shows tasks/questions from the second workpack; the fifth column (labelled 'portfolio') is to record any additional evidence gathered from other activity.
- For each of the workpacks, any Assessment Criteria **not** covered by the tasks/questions are shaded grey.
- Where the Assessment Criterion can be met in full by completing both workpacks successfully, the portfolio column is shaded grey. It might still be necessary to provide additional evidence for these if the candidate's workpack evidence has not met the required standard; otherwise there should be no need to enter any information in the grey boxes.
- Most Assessment Criteria must be evidenced on at least two occasions; where this is **not** the case the reference is shaded in yellow to indicate that once is sufficient.
- The workpacks sometime provide more opportunities to evidence the Assessment Criteria than the two (or one) occasions required; candidates therefore do not necessarily have to get every task step or question correct as long as they have demonstrated the Criterion on the minimum number of occasions required (eg at least twice, or at least once for any 'yellow' Criteria). Very occasionally, two task steps or questions will be part of the 'same occasion' (eg extracting two pieces of information from the same table); this is indicated by the use of 'or' (eg Q13 or Q14 means that only one of these questions can be used as evidence for that Criterion).
- Occasionally there is a letter in square brackets next to a question number. This indicates which aspects of the Assessment Criterion it covers, eg [W] means written and [C] means calculator, [L] means list and [T] means table. The meaning is always easy to decipher from the Assessment Criterion descriptor in the second column.
- Assessors may use any clear way of indicating which instructions/questions have been successfully answered, for example ticking or circling the reference in columns one and two; however centres are strongly advised to adopt the same system throughout the centre.
- There is a final column after the evidence location columns for assessor comments. Use of this column is optional.
- To help authenticate the evidence, candidates and assessors must both sign and date the completed work in the grid provided at the end of each workpack.