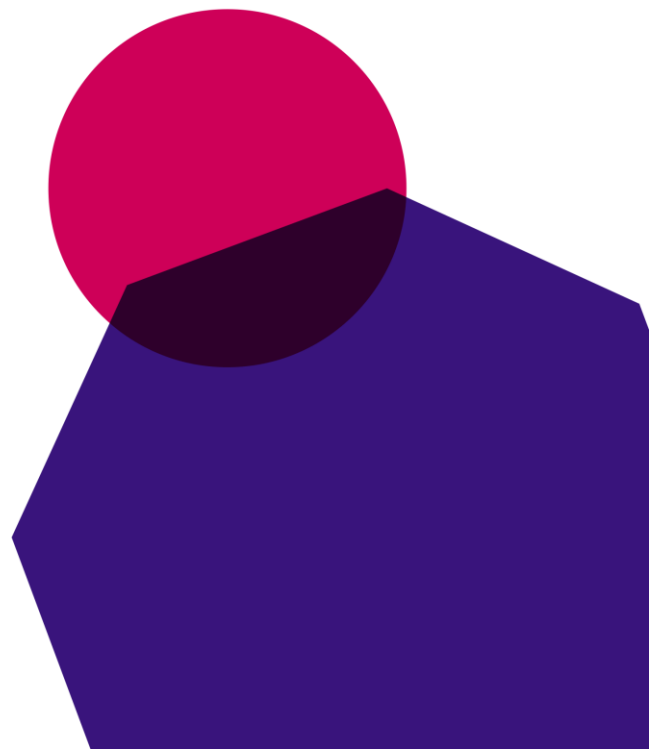


Chief Examiner's Report

Functional Skills English Reading Level 2 (4748)

4748-113 (e-volve)

4748-213 (paper-based)



Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Overall Performance	4
3.	Areas for development	5
4.	Advice for centres	7

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide centres with feedback on the performance of candidates for 4748-113 and 4748-213 Functional Skills English Reading Level 2. The examinations have been available since September 2019, and this report covers the period from September 2019 to February 2020.

2. Overall Performance

This report covers the period from September 2019 to February 2020.

The majority of candidates were successful in passing the examination. For candidates who passed, the route to accumulating sufficient marks varied, but the common factor was an ability to demonstrate a good level of competence across all the Subject Content Statements.

Several of the Subject Content Statements assess areas not previously assessed in the legacy qualification (3748 Functional Skills English Reading). However, for many candidates, adequate preparation and knowledge meant that the challenges these new assessment areas posed were successfully met.

In addition, some new formats for multiple-choice questions have also been used, and these were well negotiated by the vast majority of candidates.

All papers required candidates to read two source documents. The topics presented in the source documents were accessible and seemed to be sufficiently engaging, allowing candidates to locate relevant information for responses and to successfully comment on content, style and layout when required.

Most candidates were able to complete the assessments in the time available. Good exam technique was also evident, allowing candidates to be succinct in their responses, to present the required number of responses, and to be able to understand and address the salient parts of the questions.

3. Areas for development

For those candidates who did not accumulate sufficient marks to pass, a common trait was the tendency to drop marks across many of the subject Content Statements, suggesting inadequate preparation prior to being entered for the exam.

1. A significant number of candidates fail to read the questions carefully enough.

Some questions require candidates to read specific parts of the source document in order to answer the questions correctly. For example, a question may start with the words *Look at the first paragraph*, or something similar. Responses that ignore this initial direction and use information from other parts of the source documents do not receive any marks.

Questions also generally indicate how many responses are required, either in the wording of the question or in the number of marks available. Providing insufficient responses led to the loss of marks for many candidates.

It is also important that candidates follow the directions regarding which of the two source documents should be used to facilitate answering the questions. Once again, responses provided from the wrong source document are not awarded any marks.

2. Multiple-choice question formats

Some new formats of multiple-choice questions have been used, and a small number of candidates appear to have been confused by what was being asked. Some candidates mis-read or ignored the direction to select two answers from a list of five or six options, providing only one answer, so it is important that questions are read carefully. On other occasions candidates are required to identify whether a given statement is covered in source document 1 only, source document 2 only, or both source documents, ticking the appropriate box to indicate their choice. This also proved problematic for some candidates.

3. Subject Content Statement 12: *Compare information, ideas and opinions in different texts, including how they are conveyed.*

The final two questions in all papers will address Subject Content Statement 12: *Compare information, ideas and opinions in different texts, including how they are conveyed.* Once again, it is imperative that candidates read the questions carefully to determine exactly which aspect(s) of the source document requires a comparison.

The format of questions addressing Subject Content Statement 12 will vary from paper to paper. At times, the question will be a multiple choice format and at other times will require a more open response. When a more open response is needed, in order to receive full marks, it is imperative that explicit comparisons are drawn.

Typically, this will be most simply evidenced through the use of discourse markers such as *in contrast, however, on the one hand, both* and so on. Without these explicit comparisons, it will not be possible to gain full marks.

4. Subject Content Statement 15: *Use a range of reference materials and appropriate resources (e.g. glossaries, legends/keys) for different purposes, including to find the meaning of words in straightforward and complex sources.*

Subject Content Statement 15 was not previously assessed in the legacy qualification (3748) and has posed a few problems for some candidates. The nature and format of the questions assessing this aspect of the standards will vary from paper to paper, but, in general, the source document will contain some additional information in the form of a table, a chart, a footnote, or another similar device that provides information not specifically mentioned in the body of the text. Questions are designed to require candidates to answer using this additional information.

5. Subject Content Statement 18: *Follow and argument, identifying different points of view and distinguishing fact from opinion.*

An area that is problematic for many candidates is distinguishing fact from opinion. A typical question will be in a multiple choice format, and candidates will be asked to tick the appropriate option(s) of fact or opinion as required by the question.

4. Advice for centres

1. Centres should make use of the Guidance for Delivery document, available on the [City & Guilds website](#). The document provides further detail about types of questions, what examiners are looking for in responses, typical Level 2 skills and knowledge a candidate should have, and sample teaching activities.
2. Candidates should not be entered into the examination before adequate learning and practice have taken place.
3. Familiarity with the question types is essential. Centres should make use of the sample assessments available on the City & Guilds website and Open Assess. These will allow centres to be better able to judge a candidate's readiness to sit the exam and will give candidates the opportunity to become familiar with the types and styles of questions they are likely to be asked.
4. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are not tested in the examination, and there is no requirement for candidates to write in complete sentences, nor to repeat the stem of the question in the response.
5. Exam techniques is a useful learning session for candidates prior to the examination and should include elements such as how to decipher what is being asked, how to recognise the number of responses required, how to manage time effectively and how to check answers for accuracy and sense.

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