



Webinar Q&A

Updated – 26 April 2021

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## Centre Assessed Grading Summer 2020

### **1. When will the estimated results on appeal will be issued?**

We have not set a results release date. Each appeal is being reviewed on a case by case basis and once a resolution has been reached the centre will be contacted and the results released to Walled Garden.

### **2. Is there any likelihood of another round of calculated results?**

The Government's guidance to awarding organisations is that there is no intention to offer centre assessed grades again.

## Delivering assessments during the Covid-19 pandemic

During this period, awarding organisations are operating within an Extended Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (EERF) published by the Government. A copy of this can be found here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/925864/Wider stakeholder 2020 and 2021 Advice Note.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925864/Wider_stakeholder_2020_and_2021_Advice_Note.pdf)

### **1. Are you still exploring the idea of testing centres?**

Following the ESFA announcement about extending the Exam Support Service to providers delivering FS to apprentices (More information here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-11-november-2020/esfa-update-further-education-11-november-2020>).

We have launched three external exam venues in London, Birmingham and Bristol. Please see the [FS Covid-19](#) page on the website for more detail.

### **2. If a learner completes and partially achieves FS English legacy components. Can they carry this across to the Reform FS element at the same level to complete and achieve a reformed Functional Skills qualification?**

It is not possible to use components of the legacy Functional Skills English qualification to meet the requirements of the reformed qualification. Because the two qualifications are built on different standards it is not possible to mix and match elements of the two qualifications.

The last certification date for the Legacy Functional Skills qualifications has been further extended until 31 July 2021.

### **3. If we need to sit a candidate separately to the rest of the cohort, due to Covid-19, how do we complete the invigilation certificate? There is only one certificate, but the exams would be done at separate times.**

The invigilation certificate and all the assessments need to be held securely until all the assessments take place then every this returned to City & Guilds together. It is then possible to record on the invigilation certificate the time and date that the individual assessment took place.

- 4. In our prison we do not have access to our learners and may not have access until next year so learners are being disadvantaged that they cannot access exams.**

Where a learner cannot take an assessment, it is not possible to award the qualification. It is worth exploring alternative qualifications which do not depend on an exam such as the English Skills/Maths Skills (3847) qualifications which are assessed by portfolio. A number of MoJ providers are using these.

- 5. What is the guidance for candidates who need to complete now and at the same time need to self-isolate?**

We introduced a remote invigilation solution in mid-December which, where it is suitable for the candidate, may offer a resolution to this situation. Self-Isolation generally lasts for two weeks and we have updated our ICE document to include extra flexibility around exam dates for situations that arise suddenly.

- 6. Do you have any idea how many learners are studying online courses and will exam papers reflect this eg some maths topics are difficult to teach online?**

It is difficult to say how many learners are accessing their learning through online or virtual teaching, it is not information that City & Guilds has access to. The expectation is that teaching & learning continues to reflect the whole specification for Functional Skills and regulatory advice is that adaptation should relate to how assessment is delivered and there should be no reduction in the content of assessments.

## Apprentices

- 1. Can you just run through the ruling for attempting Level 2 tests?**

This is set out in the Government's Apprenticeship Funding Rules. Normally, Level 2 apprentices are required to 'study towards and attempt the assessment' of maths and English qualifications at Level 2 (in addition to achieving qualifications at Level 1), although the Level 2 part of the rule is currently suspended until at least March 2021.

- 2. What are the funding implications of the Working Towards (Level 2 upskills) relaxation rule for apprentices?**

The ESFA has produced an updated version of the Apprenticeship funding rules – available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-funding-rules>

**3. Is there any relaxation for starting EPA without meeting the Maths & English requirement?**

As the Apprenticeship Funding rules make clear, apprentices must meet the minimum qualification levels in maths and English for their apprenticeship standard **before** passing through the Gateway.

There was a temporary dispensation during the summer of 2020, that allowed apprentices to proceed with end-point assessment where they were awaiting the outcome of the centre assessed grading for Functional Skills, but this is no longer in operation.

## Quality Assurance

**1. Please can we have more guidance on remote EQA visits and how will these look/agenda etc?**

Our EQAs have been fully briefed around carrying out monitoring visits remotely. You will be contacted by your EQA ahead of your planned visit and they will talk you through the process and explain how the activity will go. We can confirm that the EQA activity will only cover assessment delivered in the normal way or where they have been adapted due to Covid-19, they will not be reviewing evidence for Centre Assessed Grades that were issued in the Summer.

**2. We are a new centre; do I have to wait for an EQA visit before I can upload results for English SLC?**

If your centre is new to City & Guilds' Functional Skills and does not yet have Direct Claims Status, you will need to wait for EQA sampling before the SLC component can be claimed. You need to contact the City & Guilds Quality Delivery Team to request a remote EQA activity and they may need to sit in on a remote SLC activity as part of this process.

**3. With the current situation with Covid-19, what is the position with regards to exam audits?**

We are continuing to audit exams to ensure we meet our regulatory requirements. However due to the current situation we would only attend the site to conduct a direct audit of both the Centre and Exam Auditor have completed a Covid-19 declaration as found on our website. Our priority is safety of all parties. We continue to manage the frequency of exam audits based on risk and it may be that we utilise other remote quality assurance activities. With exams that are being invigilated remotely we are also making arrangements for these to be audited.

## Invigilation

**1. If Employers invigilate Functional Skills exams, how do they get the Secure Client software on their laptops?**

The Secure Client software has to be downloaded onto any machine being used to take Functional Skills exams. All the information needed can be found on the dedicated e-evolve page on the Website: <https://www.cityandguilds.com/covid-19/evolve>

**2. Do you have an updated invigilation process for reformed maths exams?**

We have recently updated the Instructions for Conducting Exams (ICE) document and this is available from the [4748 Qualification Page](#).

## Remote Invigilation

**1. When realistically will the remote testing for FS be available?**

We rolled out an interim Test at Home solution to centres mid-December. If you are interested please visit our remote testing for FS page: <https://www.cityandguilds.com/covid-19/remote-testing> . A long-term solution is being prepared for release in the Spring of 2021.

It is worth noting that remote invigilation may not be a solution for all learners.

**2. I have had invigilation training in the MCQ remote exams, will we need to do similar training for remote invigilation with the FS exams, when they become available?**

There are some slight differences in invigilating remotely which will be covered in the guidance and training we will provide for any centres invigilating assessments this way. However, the invigilator continues to be responsible for ensuring the test is conducted in line with our regulations and that no malpractice occurs.

## Administration

**1. Why is there such a disparity in the gap between provisional test results appearing on Secure Assess and confirmed results on Walled Garden? Sometimes they're confirmed within a couple of days, sometimes it takes weeks.**

All results should be released to Walled Garden within our published results turnaround timeframe. The reason we publish a timeframe is to ensure we have time to complete rigorous quality checks, often on high volumes of exams, throughout our marking and results release process. As we explain in our qualification handbook, the results which appear on SecureAssess are provisional as they move through this process, so should not be shared with learners until published on the Walled Garden. Delays can occasionally occur for other centre-related reasons and any queries should be reported to [centresupport@cityandguilds.com](mailto:centresupport@cityandguilds.com)

**2. Do you know when Centre Analytics will be back up and running again as it does not accept my password?**

We are still working on access to Centre Analytics and will provide an update as soon as we can.

## OpenAssess

- 1. Open assess is supposed to be used for practicing for the FS tests, will that be on the same platform as e-VOLVE or different one?**

OpenAssess is a web-based platform and it is separate from the e-volve SecureAssess platform.

- 2. Should learners continue to use Open Assess? Will the online exams be similar to the upgrade to the e-volve platform?**

OpenAssess is temporarily unavailable and we are working on a resolution to allow centres and candidates to continue to use the platform.

We are planning to move to a new version of OpenAssess in the coming weeks. This will allow a better learner and tutor experience with access to new features and allowing more detailed performance feedback.

There is some critical testing which needs to take place ahead of launching this version and, as a result, we will not be able to offer practice tests through OpenAssess in the short term. It is likely the new OpenAssess version will be available by mid-March

The content of our live tests and those in OpenAssess will not have changed due to the upgrade.

- 3. When will we see a demo of the new practice test system? I'd like to be able to test it out before launching to learners.**

We are currently developing a road map for the transition between the current version of OpenAssess and the new version. When we have a clear timeframe for the launch of the new offer, we will be offering webinars and guidance documents for centres so they can familiarise themselves with any changes to support their learners.

## Functional Skills English

- 1. Are paper based tests available for FS English (new curriculum)?**

Functional Skills English and Maths assessments for 4748 are available both as paper-delivered exams and on-screen e-volve exams.

- 2. We are struggling to find a purpose for the second discussion in 4748 SLC and 5 mins is too short for a discussion. Is there a possibility in the future that this may change to an explanation or giving instructions instead of a discussion?**

The third activity is around responding to information and asking questions in a brief discussion. There are so many opportunities for learners to listen to instructions or receive information which can relate to any subject or can follow on from a presentation by someone else. The second discussion follows Activity 2 and the candidates should be listening to a talk or presentation then discussing this. Activity 2 could be an explanation or instructions.

The 5 minutes guidance can be extended so you can take as long as you like but the intention was to facilitate a shorter time for assessment. The guidance is that all three activities do not exceed 30 minutes.

- 3. How will remote speaking and listening in prison be handled/ done?**

Delivering Functional Skills in a prison setting has its own challenges and we are not expecting assessors to deliver remote assessments.

We are not requiring centres to carry out all SLC assessments remotely. Remote assessment can be carried out if it suits centres and their learners to do so.

- 4. Where learners have completed FS via distance learning and undertake the SLC assessment remotely, is it acceptable practice to email the completed feedback/recording documents to the learner? If so, is a pdf required or can the word document be emailed? Will an email from the learner, confirming receipt, be accepted as their signature?**

It is acceptable to share the assessor feedback via email, we suggest that this is a word document so that the candidate can type their e-signature on the Assessment Record. If you enable tracked changes in the document the assessor can be reassured that the document has not been changed in any way other than a signature/typed name being added.

- 5. Do you need to record speaking and listening assessments if delivering online Functional Skills?**

If you are carrying out remote assessment of Speaking, Listening and Communicating this must be either audio or video recorded. Full guidance about conducting remote assessment can be found in the Speaking, Listening & Communicating Guidance document for each level. These documents are stored on the Qualification page under the heading for the relevant level, inside the SLC folder.

## Functional Skills Mathematics

- 1. What is happening with the secure assess papers available for maths level 1 when will more papers be available?**

Should a booking for a Functional Skills exam be rejected due to insufficient versions being available for that particular candidate due to earlier, unsuccessful attempts, it is

possible to change mode of delivery for further opportunities, for instance if the candidate has been doing onscreen tests they have more attempt opportunities with paper-delivered tests and vice versa. If you continue to experience a problem with booking, please contact [centresupport@cityandguilds.com](mailto:centresupport@cityandguilds.com) who will be able to assist you.

There was a system fault that occurred in December which meant not all versions of our e-volve Level 1 maths papers were available and therefore some learners could not be entered for assessment. This was only in place for a few days and has now been resolved. If centres continue to have challenges making booking for this assessment, please contact our customer service team.

## Functional Skills Entry Level

### **1. I am new to city and guilds functional skills. I have found the delivery guidance for L1 and L2 English. Is there one for Entry L3?**

We provide Guidance for Delivery documents for Level 1 and Level 2 as these are externally set and marked exams. Assessments for Entry Level FS qualifications are externally set but marked internally so a centre, through their standardisation and IQA processes are able to see which elements of the assessments learners struggle with which in turn supports teaching & learning. It is useful if your teachers familiarise themselves with the content of the qualification handbooks, Assessor guidance and sample assessments as these contain a lot of useful guidance.

## Functional Skills ICT

### **1. As the legacy ICT exams will still run for a while, where can we find the exam guidance for those? We know that ICT doesn't fall under the new ICE guidance, but I can't find a guidance for ICT assessments on the website.**

The guidance about delivering Functional Skills ICT assessments can be found in the Qualification Handbook on the [3748 Qualification page](#). The Functional Skills ICE document and regulations only apply to the post-reform English and Mathematics qualifications.

### **2. Are there any updates on the new Digital Functional Skills Qualifications?**

At this point in time the Department for Education has postponed the planned reform of Functional Skills ICT. The up to date information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-qualifications-evaluation-progress>

### **3. Can FS ICT be done remotely?**



It is not possible to offer remote invigilation for FS ICT at the moment due to the way that the assessment is structured.

We are offering FS ICT assessments at our test centres and continue to explore solutions to allow learners to sit their assessments.