4800-111 Essential Skills Application of Number Level 1

Chief Examiner's report – June 2026

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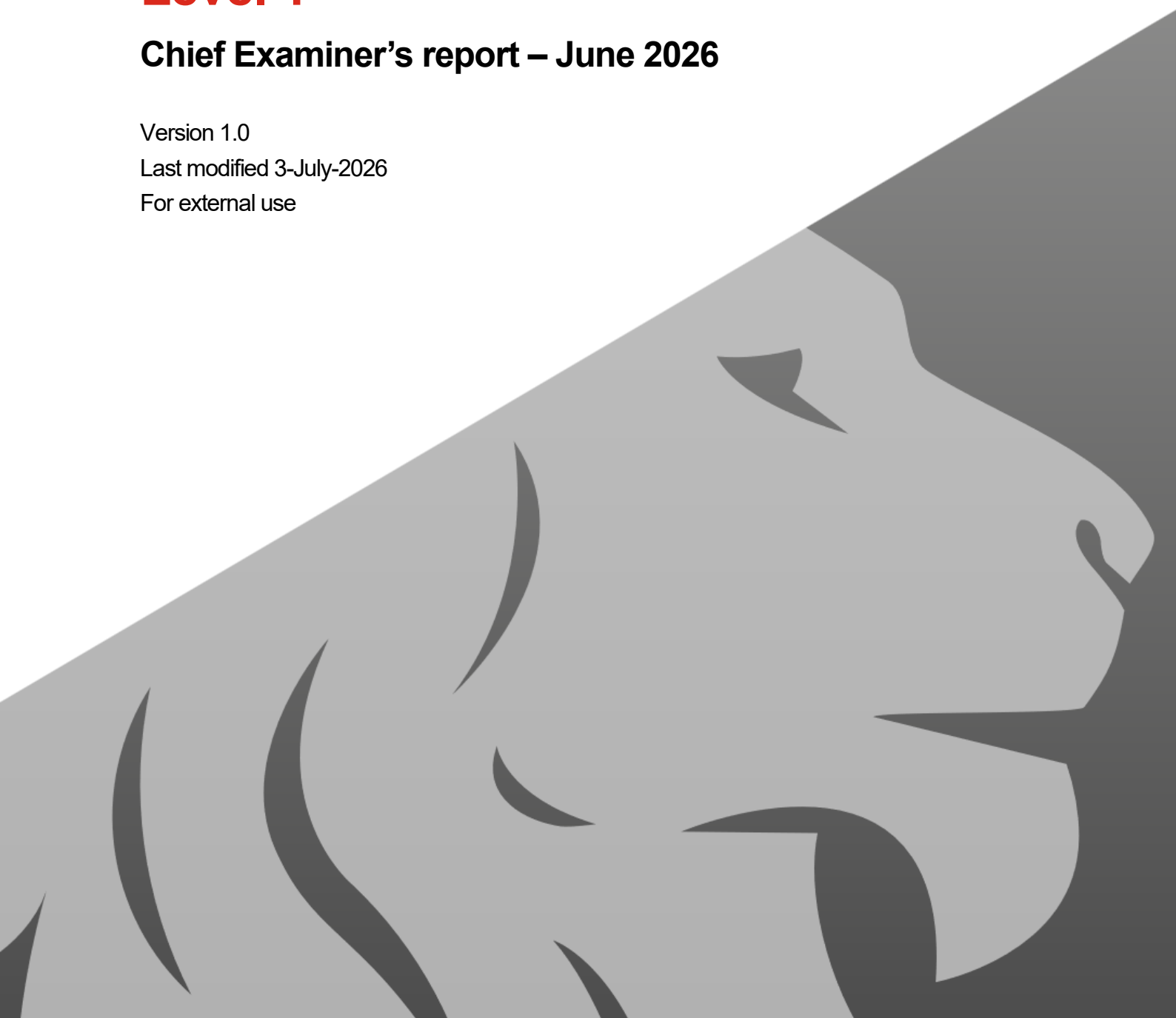

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide centres with feedback on the performance of candidates for 4800-111 Essential Skills Application of Number Level 1.

This report covers the period from November 2025 to April 2026.

2. Overall Performance

2.1. Areas of good performance

The overall performance of candidates was mixed, with questions on most topics answered adequately.

Most candidates successfully **solved problems** involving **money** with related **fraction** or **percentage** discounts. They were able to identify and obtain the necessary information to tackle the problem using appropriate **calculations**.

Most candidates performed well when **using equivalences between common fractions, decimals and percentages**. Candidates showed competence when calculating with **decimals** to a given number of decimal places.

Drawing Tables. Most candidates achieved the majority of marks available for the presentation of results in tables. Marks are available for correct structure, delineation, headings and corresponding data.

Extracting information from tables, diagrams, charts and graphs was carried out well and the correct **data** was identified, enabling the correct calculations to be made.

There was good performance on questions requiring the calculation of an **average (mean)** and the calculation for finding the **range.**

Interpreting range. Most candidates identified the minimum and maximum values required for the range and carried out the correct calculation.

Probability. Performance was good, with candidates selecting the correct likelihood of an outcome on a probability scale.

2.2. Areas for development

These are some areas identified for development:

Checking calculations. The standard of checking calculations was very poor, with a significant number of candidates not attempting this question. Some candidates wrote that they did not understand the question and some over-complicated the check. In this type of question, candidates are directed to check calculation from a previous question or choice of questions. They need to use a different method to the original so they can use a reverse check or an approximation, but a repeat check is not acceptable.

Positive and negative numbers. Overall, there was poor performance when working with positive and negative numbers involving questions with ranges of temperatures. Many candidates did not demonstrate understanding of how to calculate the number of degrees between a negative temperature and a positive temperature. Candidates need to practise calculating positive and negative numbers particularly with ranges in temperature.

There was also a mixed response when **finding percentages of numbers.** Candidates did not always use the most straightforward method of multiplying by a decimal but were breaking it down into a number of division calculations thus losing accuracy. Finding a **percentage of a quantity** can be calculated in different ways, for example, to find 15%:

- use x 0.15
- or use ÷ 100 x 15
- or use ÷ 10 to find 10% then divide this answer by 2 to get 5% and then add both answers together.

Simplifying **Fractions.** There was a mixed response when **finding fractions of numbers.** Candidates often missed the requirement to simplify thus losing a mark. Where candidates are required to write the answer in its simplest form they must reduce both the numerator and denominator to its lowest terms.

Ratio. There was overall a poor performance when working with ratio. A significant number of candidates were not familiar with the method for calculating a simple ratio, which prevented them from completing the question. Candidates need to practise calculating simple ratio in everyday contexts, for example diluting fruit squash and water in the ratio of 1 : 4

Formula. The ability of candidates to find answers using formulas was mixed. A significant number of candidates did not substitute the given values into the formula and then carry out the calculation required. Candidates need practice in using simple formulae expressed in words **and** substituting the data, eg speed = distance ÷ time when distance is 100 miles and time 2 hours.

Time. There was a mixed performance involving the use of time. Many candidates were unable to convert minutes to hours and subtract from a given time. Candidates need practice with converting minutes to hours, and addition and subtraction of time.

Converting units of measure. There was a mixed performance with calculations involving **length** and converting within the same system. Many candidates did not know how many mm and cm were in a metre. Candidates need practice with converting units within the same system to do with length, weight and capacity.

Explanations. Some questions require candidates to make a choice based on their calculations. Many candidates did not **explain their choices** in the one-mark questions that followed. Only a simple explanation is required, usually just referring to a quantity being less or more than needed.

Probability. There was poor performance when candidates were asked to explain what the probability showed in the context of the task. Candidates need to be familiar with all the words used on a probability scale and how they apply to numerical values. They need practice in explaining why they have chosen a suitable likelihood, for example, ‘Unlikely because only 3 out of 10 people eat vegetables’.

There was a lack of evidence of understanding what the **average(mean)** or **range** shows in relation to the context of the question. Candidates need to compare their **average (mean)** with given data and state, for example, ‘more than/less than…’.

Interpreting the range. Attempts to interpret the range were generally poor. Candidates need to make accurate statements relating to the consistency of data. Many candidates simply referred to the value being high/low without reference to variation or consistency.

The standard of **scale diagrams** drawn was poor. A significant number of candidates were unable to interpret the given **scale** and use this to construct a diagram. Candidates did not **label** their diagrams. Most candidates thereby lost one mark.

There was a mixed performance from candidates when using their scale diagram to find an **area**. Many candidates added the side lengths to calculate the area. They did not include the unit of measure which they could have got irrespective of their area being incorrect.

Bar Charts. Candidates need practice with:

- labelling the axes, particularly the vertical axis
- constructing a continuous linear scale on the vertical axis
- starting the vertical scale at zero
- drawing bar heights accurately, with the use of a ruler.

3. Recommendations and Advice for Centres

Centres should carefully consider whether a candidate is operating at an appropriate level for entry at Level 1. Unfortunately, there were a significantly high number of candidates who were clearly well below the standard required.

There was a lack of working out shown on a significant number of papers. Candidates who failed to provide a correct answer missed out on compensation marks. It is recommended that candidates show as much working out as possible.

Some candidates used the extra space for workings and answers at the back of the exam papers. It is advisable that the candidates indicate when they have done this on the relevant answer section of the paper.

Centres should advise candidates about appropriate ‘exam technique’, particularly with regard to attempting tasks in order. Candidates may attempt tasks in any order, and it may be to a candidate’s advantage to start with Task 2 or 3 rather than Task 1.

4. Additional Information

Centres should be aware that pass marks may vary from paper to paper as a result of an awarding process undertaken by City & Guilds. Any difference in pass marks reflects the perceived and actual difference in demand of the exam papers, including the source materials and the questions themselves. Therefore, it is possible that two candidates with the same score may have different overall results (pass or fail) if they have taken different versions of papers.