

Functional Skills (4748)

Level 1 and Level 2

Mathematics and English

Pass rates 2021-22

Version 1.0

Last modified 2-December-2022

For external use

Document revision history

Version	Changed by	Summary of change	Approval date
1.0	Industry & Product and Assessment	Document created	2 December 2022

Contents

1. Background.....	3
2. Information about pass rates.....	4
3. Total pass rates	5
4. First time pass rates	6
5. Results release times	7
6. Support with Functional Skills	8
7. Ongoing evaluation	10

Background

During 2020-21, the Department for Education's directive was that Functional Skills qualifications should be assessed as normal wherever possible using adaptations. In 2021-22 we have seen a return to more regular patterns of delivery and expected volumes for level 1 and level 2 Functional Skills English and Mathematics exams delivered both on paper and on screen.

After a difficult introduction for reformed Functional Skills due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and two years of teacher and centre assessed grades, many of you have reported a need to re-visit the reformed exams and subject content, and re-set teaching, learning and candidate preparation activities. City & Guilds has endeavoured to support you through this period with a range of face-to-face and remote activities and additional support materials which we hope have been helpful to you and your learners.

During the past year, we have also supported an increase in the adoption of remote invigilation (RI) to deliver on screen tests, and we continue to work with those of you using this option to ensure exam delivery remains robust and as smooth as possible.

Information about pass rates

The total pass rates presented in this document are given as a percentage which is based on the number of pass grades awarded out of the number of times an exam has been attempted. It should be noted that re-sits are included within this calculation. Our Functional Skills exams are available on demand, and we have multiple exam question papers available at any one time. The data we publish here are at subject level, not question paper level.

Our Functional Skills exams are taken by a wide range of learners across different settings and using different programme lengths and delivery arrangements. Some of you are also adopting technology and more remote teaching and learning approaches to prepare learners for their exams.

Unlike many general qualifications such as GCSEs, our Functional Skills exams are not norm-referenced. The pass rates reflect the proportion of exam attempts which meet the required performance standard. It is not unusual for the number of learners taking the test and pass rates to fluctuate over the year as a result. Our pass rates are kept under continuous review, and we will update the information published here annually.

Total pass rates

The total pass rates for each Functional Skills subject and level are published for information and to help you gauge your centre's performance.

The data presented below reflect the total number of exams taken by candidates within all provider types and across all age groups, and the percentage of passes awarded.

The exams include all live versions of level 1 and level 2 Functional Skills Reading, Writing and Mathematics (4748) exams taken across all provider types, both on screen and on paper, between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022.

Subject	Level	All provider % Total	FE % Total	ITP % Total	ACL %Total
Reading	L1	80%	72%	81%	86%
Writing	L1	69%	60%	73%	76%
Reading	L2	75%	73%	73%	78%
Writing	L2	84%	79%	85%	83%
Maths	L1	40%	25%	54%	55%
Maths	L2	43%	38%	43%	48%

While it is useful to see pass rates across provider types, we would suggest you interpret the data with caution. It is important to remember that any one provider type may be offering a range of different programmes in which Functional Skills is a component, eg study programmes, Apprenticeships, AEB funded adult skills provision, prison education etc. As an example, Apprenticeships are being delivered by FE, HE, adult and community and independent training providers. Therefore, there isn't necessarily a direct correlation between a provider type and a particular programme type.

Given a return to more normal delivery and increased volume of assessments compared with previous years, total pass rates are steady with improvements in 3 of the 6 subjects compared with 2021 – Maths L1, Maths, L2 and Reading L1.

First time pass rates

Subject	Level	All provider % First time	FE % First time	ITP % First time	ACL % First time
Reading	L1	84%	78%	84%	88%
Writing	L1	75%	67%	77%	79%
Reading	L2	77%	77%	75%	82%
Writing	L2	87%	82%	86%	87%
Maths	L1	48%	31%	58%	62%
Maths	L2	45%	42%	43%	55%

First time pass rates for each subject and level have also remained steady, with improvements in 5 of the 6 subjects compared with 2021 – Maths L1 and L2, Reading L1, Writing L1 and L2. There has been a significant increase of 10% in Maths L1.

However, there are some factors which may be useful for you to consider, and others which may support further improvement:

- volumes for Functional Skills exams during 2021-22 have increased significantly
- impact from lost or disrupted learning due to the pandemic
- candidates may be entered for exams without sufficient preparation
- candidates may lack experience with external assessment, and possibly onscreen testing, particularly after a period of teacher and centre assessed grades
- teachers/candidates may not be fully familiar with the subject content of reformed Functional Skills
- variations in time and funding for delivery and preparation of learners for exams
- challenge presented by problem-solving questions in maths exams, particularly the higher order skills which candidates need to develop
- uncertainty about the pass standards for each subject when preparing candidates and marking practice tests.

Our Chief Examiners' reports provide more detailed information by subject and level.

Results processing times

City & Guilds commits to returning results as swiftly as possible and will follow up any result not returned within 20 working days of receipt/upload of exam.

Delivery mode	01/09/2021 – 31/08/2022 results returned within	01/09/2022 – 30/11/2022 (Q1) results returned within
On screen exams	7.03 days on average	4.96 days on average
Paper exams	5.62 days on average	4.04 days on average

Support with Functional Skills

Technical Advisors: We have Technical Advisors who provide face-to-face and digital support and guidance free of charge to centres using City & Guilds' Functional Skills. They regularly host events which support best practice in maths and English delivery and help centres understand our assessment approach and the range of materials available to support exam preparation. You can contact our Technical Advisors by emailing pre-employment@cityandguilds.com.

We have also developed a comprehensive suite of tools and materials to help you set up, deliver and prepare candidates for success. You can access these through our qualification web page.

Guidance for delivery documents: Guidance for Delivery of Functional Skills Maths / English documents have been developed to enable candidates and centres to better understand the structure of the assessments and the types of items and breadth of range which could occur in live exams.

Examiner reports: These reflect any trends or patterns our examiners have observed in performance across all exams during that period and are intended to support centres in preparing learners to take the exams. We recommend these are read alongside the Guidance for Delivery documents.

Sample Assessments and mark schemes: We make available a number of sample assessments with mark schemes, which clearly reference subject content statements, for each Functional Skills subject area for centres to help prepare candidates for the exam. These are written and standardised using the same process and level of scrutiny as live papers. Our sample assessments draw content from across the whole syllabus and are therefore not exhaustive; we try to ensure that these cover as much breadth as possible and aim to familiarise learners with a variety of question types and assessment scenarios. We recommend that these are used in conjunction with the Guidance for Delivery documents.

We would also encourage centres to make use of other resources which we make available to support delivery and exam preparation.

Performance feedback: We provide candidate and cohort feedback through our Centre Analytics platform. Centres can access feedback on performance and identify areas for remedial work if unsuccessful, or areas for development if progressing to the next level. This is available for both on screen and paper exams. Find out more [here](#).

Digital resources:

SmartScreen: We have a wealth of maths and English digital learning resources on our SmartScreen platform to support face to face and remote learning at all levels.

e-Functional Skills: This tool supports learners specifically preparing for City & Guilds Functional Skills from Entry level 3 to Level 2. It takes learners through initial and diagnostic testing to a programme of personalised learning, and on to a range of City & Guilds practice test questions building confidence and familiarity with our assessment approach. Learners may also wish to build their confidence further using our Open Assess platform.

Open Assess: This platform provides an opportunity for learners to fully prepare for the onscreen experience and for tutors to mark onscreen tests and review their marking and feedback with learners.

It can be used as both a teaching and formative assessment tool.

Find out more: You can find out more about all the support available [here](#).

Ongoing evaluation

Our Functional Skills exams are kept under close and ongoing evaluation, and we strive to make continual improvements to them. We are always exploring ways to improve fairness, accessibility and candidate experience. To this end, findings from the awarding process and continuous monitoring are fed back into the development process and we proactively seek feedback from tutors and learners.

You are welcome to share any feedback you may have or speak to our Centre Support team by emailing centresupport@cityandguilds.com.

Contact us

Giltspur House 5-6 Giltspur Street London EC1A 9DE

general.enquiries@cityandguilds.com

01924 930 801

www.cityandguilds.com

About City & Guilds

Since 1878 we have worked with people, organisations and economies to help them identify and develop the skills they need to thrive. We understand the life changing link between skills development, social mobility, prosperity and success. Everything we do is focused on developing and delivering high-quality training, qualifications, assessments and credentials that lead to jobs and meet the changing needs of industry.

We work with governments, organisations and industry stakeholders to help shape future skills needs across industries. We are known for setting industry-wide standards for technical, behavioural and commercial skills to improve performance and productivity. We train teams, assure learning, assess cohorts and certify with digital credentials. Our solutions help to build skilled and compliant workforces.

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