



# Functional Skills Directory

## What is Functional Skills?

- Functional Skills are ideal for learners who either do not have a current English or Maths qualification, or do not have one at an appropriate grade and would like to progress in work or access further education.
- Functional Skills courses were created to offer you the most convenient solution to learn and develop practical skills in the essential subjects of Maths and English.
- Functional Skills at Level 2 is equivalent to a GCSE at Grade 4-9 (old grades A-C) and can often be used to enable learners to access higher education courses.

Functional Skills	GCSEs
Level 2	Grade 4 - 9 / (old grades A-C)

- Gaining these qualifications will also boost your confidence, enhance your CV and give you those transferable skills which you will actually use in the workplace to help you do your job better.

- They will help with your communication skills and personal budgets and may even help you get a better deal when you're shopping!

Studies show that higher levels of literacy and numeracy are linked to better health and a longer lifespan. These skills also have a positive impact on your mental health.



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*Successfully completing functional skills courses will allow you to progress on to a Level 3+ apprenticeship.*

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## FAQs

### **Do Functional Skills expire?**

No! Once you have achieved your qualification in Functional Skills English or Functional Skills Maths, you will have this Level 2 qualification forever.

### **Are Key Skills the same as Functional Skills?**

In 2012, the UK government removed the Key Skills criteria and replaced most of them with Functional Skills. While the premise is the same, the criteria has changed slightly, with learners focusing on English and Maths.

*Please note that **Key Skills** qualifications may no longer be accepted by universities as evidence of English and maths competence.*

### **Are Functional Skills easier than GCSE?**

This is a difficult question to answer because ease of learning is dependent on the individual, as some people can pick things up quickly while others take time to grasp fresh knowledge. To work out whether studying Functional Skills is easier than GCSEs, you need to consider the differences between them.

The main difference is that Functional Skills courses focus on the core subjects of English and Maths, with a specific highlight on the skills that we use in daily life, both in our professional and everyday function.

On the other hand, GCSEs are more academically driven and cover in-depth theory that prepares learners for further education. Essentially, an individual studying Functional Skills will do so to brush up their general skills, so these Functional Skills Level 2 courses are geared more towards adults.

In addition, you can complete a Functional Skills Level 2 course sooner than a GCSE, making them more beneficial for learners who are unable to commit a year (or more) of their lives to studying.

### **What are the fees for Functional Skills?**

In general, for adults 19+, functional skills are government funded and therefore free to the learner. There are however several private providers included on our map, who may charge for their services.

Please seek further information from the course provider where you've chosen to complete functional skills.

### **How long is a Functional Skills course?**

Some training providers have set timelines for their courses, which are delivered over 1 or more terms in the year.

It may depend on your approach to learning, as you may not have to adhere to classroom restrictions. You can therefore study Functional Skills Maths or English Level 2 at a pace that suits you and your lifestyle.

On average, learners take 8 to 12 weeks to complete Functional Skills online, but it is entirely up to you and the speed in which you choose to learn.

### **Can I use a calculator in my Functional Skills maths test?**

Yes, but only for certain sections of the exam.

This is one of the most common Functional Skills Maths Level 2 questions and answers. Your exam will outline the sections in which you can use a calculator.

### **Is a dictionary allowed in my Functional Skills English test?**

Dictionaries can be used in English reading assessments. They cannot be used in English writing assessments.

Dictionaries must be standard English language and must not contain a Thesaurus. They also cannot contain annotations or notes.

Wherever possible, dictionaries should be provided by the training provider to ensure these requirements are met. If a learner is using their own dictionary, this should be checked at the start of the assessment by the invigilator.

### **Do assessments have to be taken under controlled exam conditions?**

Yes all assessments, for each subject, must be taken under controlled assessment conditions.

### **What are the pass marks for Functional Skills assessments?**

They will not be the same for every paper. Pass Marks for Level 1 and 2 English Reading/Writing and Maths assessments vary per assessment version and are set following standardisation and awarding activities.

Each Maths assessment is designed to enable a minimally competent learner to achieve a pass mark of around **36 out of 60**.

Each English Reading assessment is designed to enable a pass mark of around **18 out of 30** and each English Writing assessment is designed to enable a pass mark of around **36 out of 60**.

However, the awarding process will determine specifically where the pass mark sits for each assessment version. Therefore, the pass mark may vary between assessments.

### **How long do I have to wait for results?**

Results for external Functional Skills assessments generally take a maximum of 20 working days.

### **How many times can I resit an assessment?**

You can resit the tests as many times as required. You'll have to make a new entry each time for Level 2.

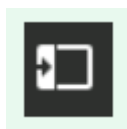
## Where can I study Functional Skills?

### Local Learning Options

The below map shows the learning venue locations for various Functional Skills providers in the South West. If you click on a location dot, it will then show you the contact information for that course provider.

### Maths/English Filter

Please use the filter icon (as shown below) on the map to select/tick the appropriate subject if necessary - although most providers do offer both subjects



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src="https://www.google.com/maps/d/embed?mid=1euyLmheGwSG8XZG1RTdShWTINZ1T1  
ql&ehbc=2E312F" width="640" height="480"></iframe>

### Online Learning Options

Below are a few online functional skills courses available in the South West, split by county.

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*Please bear in mind that for most of these options, while you can study the course material online, you will still need to attend a physical training location to sit the final exam.*

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#### Cornwall

Cornwall Adult Education Service - Functional Skills in English L2 **or** Maths L2

**Phone:** 03001231117

**Email:** [adulthoodeducation.feedback@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:adulthoodeducation.feedback@cornwall.gov.uk)

**Web:** <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk>

#### Devon

Learn Devon - Functional Skills in English L2 **or** Maths L2

**Phone:**

- Bideford - 01237 472462
- Exmouth - 01395 223851
- Newton Abbot - 01392 384094
- Tavistock - 01822 613701

**Email:**

- Bideford - bideford@learndevon.co.uk
- Exmouth - exmouth@learndevon.co.uk
- Newton Abbot - newtonabbot@learndevon.co.uk
- Tavistock - tavistock@learndevon.co.uk

**Web:** <https://www.learndevon.co.uk/subjects/english-and-maths-qualifications/>

**Dorset**

Skills & Learning ACE - Functional Skills in English L2 or Maths L2

**Phone:** 01202 123444

**Email:** enquiries@salbcp.com

**Web:** <https://www.skillsandlearningace.com/subjects/functional-skills/>