



Functional Skills Strategy 2018/2019

1. Introduction

Functional skills were originally identified within the Tomlinson report as an essential aspect of core learning for young people. Tomlinson proposed that getting the basics right was one of the main reasons for the intended 14-19 reform and that the achievement of functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT would provide young people with a foundation for the rest of their lives.

The Leitch Review of Skills: 'Prosperity for all in the economy – world class skills' published in December 2006 found that almost one half of adults (17 million) have difficulty with numbers and one seventh (5 million) are not functionally literate. The Review concluded that to achieve world class skills will require 95% of adults to have functional literacy and numeracy (basic skills) up from 85% literacy and 79% numeracy in 2005; more than trebling projected rates of improvement to achieve a total of 7.4 million adult attainments over the period.

In March 2008, the Department of Children School and Families (DCSF) published a consultation paper, 'Promoting achievement, valuing success: A strategy for 14-19 qualifications', setting out the Government's intention to move towards a more streamlined qualification offer for young people aged 14-19 in England from 2013. The most significant educational development of the qualification reform was the introduction of Functional

Skills.

The Sainsbury Review (2016) used to develop the Post 16 skills plan and independent report on technical education. This reiterated the need for maths and English to remain 'vital skills' and key requirements to completion of apprenticeships. It highlights studies that show literacy and numeracy as being one of the top 3 most important factors for employers when recruiting. It also suggested the addition of 'relevant maths and English standards where these directly relate to occupational requirements.'

Functional Skills are described by the DCSF as: "...core elements of English, Maths and ICT that provide an individual with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and at work".

Statement of Priorities

Post-16 Skills Plan

The Government White Paper: 'Post-16 Skills Plan', published in July 2016, highlighted that raising literacy and numeracy 'remains an absolute priority.' The

vision for the future economy remains having a highly skilled workforce with technical qualifications 'as well as

the transferable skills that are needed in any job such as good literacy and numeracy, and digital skills.'

Skills for Growth - the National Skills Strategy

The Government White Paper: 'Skills for Growth - the National Skills Strategy', published on the 11th November 2009, marked a radical shift in some of the priorities of the current skills system.

National targets and aspirations

- * By 2020, 95% of adults possess at least functional levels of literacy and numeracy, defined as Entry Level 3 numeracy and Level 1 literacy

- * 597,000 people of working age will have achieved a first Level 1 or above literacy qualification; and

- * 390,000 will have achieved a first Entry Level 3 or above numeracy Qualification.

- * From September 2012 Key Skills qualifications in Communication, Application of Number and ICT are being replaced by Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT. Skills for Life qualifications have been funded as the main literacy and numeracy qualification for adults aged 19 or over. However, the intention is for Adult Basic Skills Qualifications to come in line with the new Functional Skill Standards.

2. What are Functional Skills?

Functional Skills are practical skills in English, mathematics and ICT that enable learners to deal with practical problems and challenges. All three Functional Skills are:

- * a component in apprenticeship frameworks from September 2012 • available as stand-alone qualifications for young people and adults.

- * constituent qualifications of the new vocational Diplomas (those that remain following Wolfe Report) at Levels 1, 2 and 3

- * part of new GCSEs in English, mathematics and ICT and are included in key stage 3 and key stage 4 programmes of study.

Being “functional” means that an apprentice will:

- * be able to apply skills to all sorts of real-life contexts
- * have the mental ability to take on challenges in a range of new settings
- * be able to work independently
- * realise that tasks often need persistence, thought and reflection

3. Sportscape Education Functional Skills Strategy

Apprenticeship

* Learners on Apprenticeship Programmes are all on functional skills programmes (unless there are exceptions for individual cases). The level of functional skill is determined by their initial assessment results and prior achievement. If a learner's initial assessment indicates that they can do a higher level than is expected from the framework, then learners are enrolled on the higher level.

* We chose the product that fits the learner and location that this process is being completed.

Other models of delivery

Other Key actions

To support the successful implementation of the strategy, the following activities have taken place;

* Recruitment of a Functional Skills Specialist (consultant) to support staff deliver and assess learners.

* The MD has responsibility for Functional Skills Specialist IQA (this process can be passed to other staff under supervision.)

* Functional Skills teaching staff undertake full responsibility for preparing learners for the national FS tests.

* The MD will lead the "The Functional Skills" support, standardisation, raise quality of teaching and learning and improve learner performance.

* Identification and development of relevant and suitable resources required to support learners and assessors.

* Identification of awarding body procedures in relation to functional skills test, and a decision with regards to online or paper-based testing processes. Work with employers to identify venue/room/facilities for learners to sit on-line and paper-based assessments, within the work place. Check and note quality of Internet access if this will impact on assessment for learner.

4. Functional Skills delivery model

Sportscape Education will deliver functional skills in the workplace, either one to one or in groups dependent upon ILP and initial assessment needs. A full initial assessment will be undertaken prior to commencing the programme. Differentiation activities and resources will be developed to challenge and support learners.

Resources will be sourced and made available from the relevant awarding body and other sources, including e-learning websites. In house resources will be developed and continually reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and maximise the potential for embedding learning.

Learners will be provided with practice tests in preparation for tests.

Learners are planned to sit the tests at the earliest opportunity into the apprenticeship once confident and competent in understanding, interpreting and meeting assessment criteria.

Learners who are working towards the Functional Skills qualifications in addition to a vocational qualification will experience teaching through a variety of delivery methods. Primarily,

embedded teaching will be delivered by the vocational tutors. In addition, it is expected that every available opportunity to embed and enforce English, Maths and ICT will be maximised by the wider course team in the following ways:

- * When marking learners' assignments check for content and for spelling, punctuation and grammar
- * Extending opportunities for the use of data in all coursework
- * Incorporating skimming and scanning techniques when reading
- * Using presentation techniques such as graphs, charts etc wherever possible

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