



Functional Skills

Maths

Entry Level 1 Maths - **09862**

Entry Level 2 Maths - **09863**

Entry Level 3 Maths - **09864**

OCR Report to Centres 2016

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates, which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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Functional Skills Maths Entry Level 1, 2 and 3 09862, 09863 and 09864

1. Overview

At all levels, the quality of work seen by most centres' candidates is improving. Layout, explanations and justifications are clearly being encouraged by an increasing number of assessors which is very pleasing to see. There are still a number of centres that appear not to understand the concept of assessment and moderation, however, the quality of candidates' evidence is improving. Many centres show positive and constructive feedback to the candidates and clear evidence that work has been sampled by an internal moderator with useful feedback. This must only benefit the candidates. Good practice is seen where centres include comments from the candidates showing true ownership of the assessment. There are still some centres who appear not to realise that reports are written on every claim with guidance and support on applying the mark schemes and the quality of assessment and internal moderation.

2. General Comments

In most cases, candidates appear to be well prepared for the assessments and are entered at the correct level. Occasionally, it is clear this is not the case and initial or diagnostic assessment has not been used. On the whole, all administration paperwork is included is completed correctly. There are still cases where assessors sign as the internal moderator suggesting they have second marked their own assessments which is not acceptable.

Excellent practice is seen regularly with comprehensive feedback to candidates on their achievement and constructive guidance on areas needing development. In the best cases this includes annotation of responses with corrections and model answers. Evidence of internal moderation is becoming more common, especially where the moderators amend marks and feedback to the assessor on assessment practice. This is really good to see.

Most centres take advantage of the reports produced for every claim processed and appreciate the value of this communication from their external moderators. A few centres either do not realise these are produced, or the reports are not getting to the right people. Where centres, share these reports at regular standardisation meetings so issues can be addressed and good practice shared, the improvement of candidate achievement can be clearly seen.

3. Comments on Individual Units

Entry Level 1:

Most candidates appear to be well prepared for this assessment with many scoring full marks. In most cases the resource material is used effectively and the responses are clear and legible. It would help, in some cases, if assessors were to scribe answers as some candidate responses have been quite hard to read. Part 2 of the assessment is usually completed better than part A which contains the open questions, but this is understandable, this being the start of the functional skills journey. Generally, calculations are well laid out and units included where necessary. It is always pleasing to see assessor annotations where mistakes have been made which show the correct responses, or where very good answers have been written which receive positive comments.

Entry Level 2:

All tasks appear to be accessible to candidates with very few cases where assessor comments have been included stating the candidates did not understand the question. This again suggests most candidates are well prepared for the assessment and have received the required teaching

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and learning. Feedback from assessors has in many cases been excellent with positive support and very good guidance where mistakes have been made or where unconventional methods have been used. There are still some centres not adhering to the supplied mark schemes: this often disadvantages the candidates. The most common mistakes seen are differentiating between questions that require working to be seen for full marks and those where the working can be assumed if a correct answer is written. The mark schemes are very clear and need to be followed precisely. Again, there are some centres that do not action the instruction and guidance offered in the reports which in some cases causes delays in processing and in extreme circumstances, work to be returned or candidates withdrawn. Happily, this is not common as most submissions are complete and accurate.

Entry Level 3:

Entry 3 submissions are by far the most prolific suggesting they are being used as intended, as a springboard up to Level 1. That said they do produce the most issues. At entry 3 the feedback and support from an assessor is most important as it is the last level where this sort of support is available. Many centres have excellent practice showing supportive and constructive feedback from both the assessors and the internal moderators. The increasingly common good practice of learners commenting on their own work shows how valuable feedback can be in developing learners' skills and confidence. Pleasingly, most assessors' marking accuracy is very good and the practice of an internal moderator second marking a sample is evident and in most cases effective. The most common errors are with the marking of date and time formats and monetary notation. The mark schemes are very clear where these are assessed and what is acceptable. As with the entry 2 assessments, there are still some issues with questions that require working to be seen for full marks and those where the working can be assumed if a correct answer is written.

4. Sector Update

Work continues behind the scenes on the development of new Functional Skills standards and criteria. The ETF have commissioned research projects to determine the shape and content of these new qualifications that should be ready for first teaching in 2018.

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