



Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English

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Section One

Welcome to FutureQuals

1.1 Introduction

Introduction to FutureQuals

FutureQuals is forward thinking, learner and customer-focused, and committed to delivering inspiring learning and skills.

Our Values

“We are a Visionary, Supportive, Innovative and Professional Awarding Organisation that is committed to excellence.”

Our Vision

“We envisage a place in which every learner realises their full potential.”

Our Mission

“To provide respected and valued qualifications and assessment to enable quality assured learning.”

FutureQuals is recognised to offer regulated qualifications by Ofqual in England, CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA Accreditation) and Qualifications Wales to offer a comprehensive and diverse range of qualifications across a wide range of vocational areas, many of which are transferable across industries and sectors.

A full list of FutureQuals current qualifications can be accessed at <https://www.futurequals.com/>.

We have developed a genuine understanding and insight into all types of educational organisations, which ensures that we are highly responsive to their needs. We offer a wide range of benefits and support for our learners, our approved centres, and their assessment and quality assurance teams.

FutureQuals offers a wide range of benefits and support for all of our educational products and services including:

- Vocational qualifications accredited by the UK regulators and recognised by employers, universities and professional bodies.
- 24/7 online management systems for the registration of learners, ensuring highly efficient services and access to assessment and results
- A diverse range of qualifications.
- A flexible approach to assessment.
- A network of professionals who examine and quality assure our regulated qualifications and assessments.
- Regular updates on new developments in education and training.
- Unrivalled customer service support and extensive guidance materials.

1.2 Introduction to the Qualification Specification

FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualifications in English and Mathematics will allow learners to operate effectively and confidently in education, employment and everyday life. These qualifications have been developed at Level 1 and Level 2.

Functional Skills Qualifications in English at these levels enable students to speak, listen, communicate, read and write clearly, accurately, and confidently with effectiveness and increased levels of confidence.

1.3 What you can expect from FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualifications

- High quality, valid and reliable assessment materials including sample assessment and resources and guidance materials
- Dedicated Functional Skills web pages
- Accessible and engaging on-screen assessment
- On-demand assessment
- Fast results
- Up-to-date information and advice and support from a well informed and experienced customer support team.

Section Two

Qualification information

2.1 Qualification outline

The FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualification in English Level 1 is designed to be relevant to the current learning environments and workplaces. The qualification and its' assessments explore interesting topics, immerse learners in authentic scenarios, and deliver transferable knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to everyday life. The assessments are carefully constructed to be appropriate to assessing learning and skills acquisition at level 1.

2.2 Learning aims and outcomes

Functional Skills English qualifications at levels 1 indicate that students should be able to speak, listen, communicate, read and write clearly, accurately, confidently with effectiveness and with increased levels of confidence.

They should be able to:

- Listen, understand and make relevant contributions to discussions with others in a range of contexts
- Apply their understanding of language to adapt delivery and content to suit audience and purpose
- Read a range of different text types confidently and fluently, applying their knowledge and understanding of texts to their own writing
- Write texts of varying complexity, with accuracy, effectiveness, and correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Understand the situations when, and audiences for which, planning, drafting and using formal language are important, and when they are less important.

2.3 TQT and Guided Learning Hours

The Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification is: 60

Guided Learning (GL) for this qualification is: 55

2.4 Age ranges

Suitable for age ranges: Pre 16, 16-18, 18+ 19+

2.5 Method of assessment

The method of assessment requires completion of three mandatory externally set summative assessments.

Skill Standard	Method	Duration	Marks
<p>Speaking, listening and communicating (M/617/2358)</p> <p>1. This component is designed to assess knowledge, skills and understanding with respect to speaking, listening and communicating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal assessment • External quality assurance • Oral assessment • Learners are assessed on their individual contributions to two tasks. • Tasks may include group discussions, explanations, instructions and presentations. 	30 minutes	Pass/Fail
<p>Reading (H/617/2356)</p> <p>2. This component is designed to assess knowledge, skills and understanding with respect to reading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External assessment • Online test through XAMS platform • Learners are permitted to use a dictionary during an assessment. 	1 hour	30
<p>Writing (K/617/2357)</p> <p>3. This component is designed to assess knowledge, skills and understanding with respect to writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External assessment • Online test through XAMS platform • There are two tasks • Learners are NOT permitted to use a dictionary or grammar/spellcheck software during an assessment. 	1 hour	60 (30 marks per task. 12 marks per task allocated to the assessment of spelling, punctuation and grammar).

Entry guidance: There are no formal entry requirements for these qualifications. However, it is recommended that learners undertake initial diagnostic assessment to ensure that they are following an appropriate learning programme leading to a summative assessment.

Award results: If a learner obtains a pass result a certificate will be issued accordingly. If a fail grade is given, a learner may take a resit examination. Please see section 4.3.

2.6 Progression

The Functional Skills Qualification in English at Level 1 can support progression to:

- GCSE (9-1) in English
- Vocational-related or general qualifications at Level 1
- Further study at Level 2 - Level 2 Functional Skills English, NVQs

2.7 Centre staff requirements

To deliver our Functional Skills qualifications, FutureQuals expects that centre staff meet the following minimum requirements:

- Tutors to have relevant teaching experience and/or a qualification in the relevant subject area.
- Not a mandatory requirement, but best practice: Assessors to hold the relevant D32/D33/A1/TAQA unit(s) and Level 3 Award in Education and Training.
- Not a mandatory requirement, but best practice: Internal Quality Assurers to hold the relevant D34/V1/IQA unit(s).

Centres are responsible for ensuring that their staff have access to appropriate training and support. They are also responsible for notifying FutureQuals of any staff changes.

2.8 Additional information

This qualification is regulated by The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). This qualification will appear on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) for England. It may be eligible for public funding as determined by the Department for Education (DfE) under Sections 96 and 97 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

The qualification title listed above may feature in the funding lists published by the DfE and regularly updated on its website. It may also appear on the Hub, the online service for use by organisations working with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

You should use the Qualification Number (QN), when you wish to seek public funding for your learners. Each component within a qualification will also have a unique reference number (Unit Reference Number), which is listed in this specification. The qualification title and unit reference numbers will appear on the learner's final certification document.

Learners need to be made aware of this detail when they are recruited by the centre and registered with FutureQuals.

Section Three

Qualification structure

3.1 Qualification components

This Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English consists of three mandatory components, learners are required to achieve a pass all three components:

1. Speaking Listening and Communicating
2. Reading
3. Writing

3.2 The Scope of study

The FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualifications in English at Level 1 assesses all areas of the Scope of Study listed below.

Speaking, Listening and Communicating:

This should include narratives, explanations, discussions, instructions, information, descriptions and presentations* all of varying lengths.

*At this level, learners can present specific pieces of information as required during a discussion within the group without carrying out a formal presentation. Assessment of learners' skills in Speaking, Listening and Communicating will be conducted using two discussions in a group of between three and five learners.

1	Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations
2	Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts
3	Respond effectively to detailed questions
4	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics
5	Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence
6	Follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject
7	Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium
8	Respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions, using appropriate language for interjection

Reading

This should include a range of straightforward texts on a range of topics and of varying lengths that instruct, describe, explain and persuade.

9	Identify and understand the main points, ideas and details in texts
10	Compare information, ideas and opinions in different texts
11	Identify meanings in texts and distinguish between fact and opinion
12	Recognise that language and other textual features can be varied to suit different audiences and purposes
13	Use reference materials and appropriate strategies (e.g. using knowledge of different word types) for a range of purposes, including to find the meaning of words
14	Understand organisational and structural features and use them to locate relevant information (e.g. index, menus, subheadings, paragraphs) in a range of straightforward texts
15	Infer from images meanings not explicit in the accompanying text
16	Recognise vocabulary typically associated with specific types and purposes of texts (e.g. formal, informal, instructional, descriptive, explanatory and persuasive)
17	Read and understand a range of specialist words in context
18	Use knowledge of punctuation to aid understanding of straightforward texts

Writing

This should include straightforward texts such as narratives, instructions, explanations and reports of varying lengths.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar

19	Use a range of punctuation correctly (e.g. full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, possessive apostrophes)
20	Use correct grammar (e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent use of different tenses, definite and indefinite articles)
21	Spell words used most often in work, study and daily life, including specialist words

Writing composition

22	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly, coherently and accurately
23	Write text of an appropriate level of detail and of appropriate length (including where this is specified) to meet the needs of purpose and audience
24	Use format, structure and language appropriate for audience and purpose
25	Write consistently and accurately in complex sentences, using paragraphs where appropriate

As part of the writing assessment, learners are required to undertake two tasks. There are six different formats that assessments will be based on: a letter, a formal report, a newspaper article, an email, a leaflet or an advertisement. These test Scope of Study 24 of the writing criteria. Learners will be expected to demonstrate the following format and structure conventions when responding to the writing assessment task. The table below outlines the criteria and requirements for each writing format.

Writing formats

Format Required	Letter	Formal Report	Newspaper Article	Email	Leaflet	Advertisement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sender's address (with or without name above) • Recipient address • Date • Salutation and acceptable close followed by name of sender. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate title • Appropriate sub-heading <p>and any two of the following formatting features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional sub-headings • Numbered sections • Bullet points • Progressive indentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate title • Strapline or sub-heading • Attribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To (name or email address) • Subject • Salutation and close • Name of sender at end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate title • Sub-heading <p>and any two of the following formatting features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional sub-headings • Sections / paragraphs • Contact details • Bullet points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate title • Sub-heading <p>and any two of the following formatting features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional sub-headings • Sections / paragraphs • Bullet points • Contact details

3.3 Using the Scope of Study content

Where the Scope of Study uses the term 'e.g.' or 'for example' at the end of the content statement, this content is illustrative-only examples and does not represent an exhaustive list.

Where the Scope of Study uses the term 'including' at the end of the content statement, the expectation is that this content must be taught and may be assessed.

3.4 Glossary for use with this Subject Content

Context	The purpose and audience for which spoken or written language is used.
Format	The way in which a text is arranged or presented, e.g. as a book, leaflet, essay, film/animation, audiotape, or the way in which it is structured, e.g. the use made of headings, subheadings, diagrams/photographs with captions.
Organisational features	Refers to those visual aspects of text that give a clue to its status and to its relation to other pieces of text. Such features include: contents pages, chapter headings and other sub-headings, bullet-point lists, captions to photographs and illustrations, text presented in special display boxes, tables, footnotes, indexes, etc.
Registers	A variety of language selected for use in a specific social situation. In particular, the register differentiates formal from informal use of language.
Sentence	In writing, sentences are marked by using a capital letter at the beginning, and a full stop (or question mark or exclamation mark) at the end. A simple sentence consists of a single clause with a single subject. A compound sentence consists of more than one subject or more than one independent clause. A complex sentence consists of a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses (e.g. Although it was late, I wasn't tired).

Specialist words	Specialist words are those that have a specific meaning within a certain context, such as words related to a specific job or work environment, a pastime or hobby, or a certain area of study.
Style	Style can be defined as the selection of certain linguistic features in relation to context (audience and purpose), e.g. formal or informal, non-specialist or technical. All language users have the opportunity to make linguistic choices that will determine the style of a piece of writing or an utterance.

3.5 Speaking, Listening and Communicating pass descriptor

The criteria for a 'Pass' for Speaking, Listening and Communicating at Level 1 is:

	Performance descriptor
Pass	<p>Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently, • effectively, and • to an appropriate degree for that level. <p>Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.</p>

The assessment criteria that learners are required to meet, in order to demonstrate this performance (described by the pass descriptor) are shown in Appendix 3.

Section Four

Administration

4.1 Registration

Learners must firstly be registered for all components in QMIS. This will feed through to the XMAS system. For more information on registering and certificating learners, you can download the instructions by selecting the 'Learner Registration File and Instructions' link [here](#).

4.2 Functional skills delivery model – XAMS®

The FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualifications are available on-screen and on-demand, and delivered through the XAMS electronic delivery system. A User Guide for XAMS is available for download [here](#).

Functional Skills assessments are also available in a paper-based format. Paper-based assessments are available every 6 weeks on the following set dates only. Assessments must not be sat on any other date than those specified. You can find the Paper-based assessment calendar on the FutureQuals website. Paper-based assessments are scheduled through the XAMS system which will automatically generate an assessment paper specific to that learner. For further details about the administration of paper-based assessments, see the *Reformed Functional Skills Operational Handbook* on the FutureQuals website.

4.3 Submission of SLC record of learner achievement

All completed Record of Learner Achievement forms, recordings and any IQA reports or evidence should be uploaded into the centre's secure sub-folder in the SLC Results area of FutureQuals' SharePoint site. This evidence will then be subject to moderation and sampling.

4.4 Certification

Learners who achieve all three components for the qualification will be awarded the formal certificate of achievement. This will include the full qualification title and the title of the components achieved, for example: FAQ Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English.

Learners will be certificated in line with the timescales published in our Centre Operations Manual.

FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualification certificates will be printed in traditional paper format. FutureQuals delivers all certificates to the Approved Centre's registered address using the Royal Mail Recorded Delivery service, where a signature is required upon receipt. In the unlikely event that certificates have been lost during delivery, the centre must inform FutureQuals as soon as they are aware.

4.5 Resits

Learners are permitted to resit an external assessment where they are not successful.

Centres are responsible for preparing their learners for the assessment and should ensure that the approach to resits is appropriate. Learners should be discouraged from repeated resits and be provided with further teaching and learning to support successful achievement of the qualifications, where learners have not achieved.

A learner can resit an assessment (paper-based or onscreen) in the XAMS system after a period of two weeks from the time that a result is returned in the system. Once the time has elapsed, the resit can be scheduled in the system in the usual way. Paper-based assessments will be sat in the next assessment session (see the Paper-based assessment calendar on the FutureQuals website). Resit charges will apply, please contact functionalskills@futurequals.com for more information.

Please see our XAMS User Guide for further information.

4.6 Recognition of prior achievement

Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPA) is a method of assessing and validating achievement that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they have met the assessment requirements for a component through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so do not need to develop further through a new course of learning.

RPA enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided the assessment requirements of a given component or qualification have been met, the use of RPA is acceptable for accrediting a component/s. Evidence of learning must be:

- Valid
- Reliable
- Safe
- Fair

FutureQuals will recognise and allow learners to carry forward component results for reformed Functional Skills Qualifications awarded by other Awarding Organisations. A Learner Past Achievement Form (Appendix 1) will need to be completed by the learner and centre and relevant evidence of achievement included with the form. The completed forms and component certificate evidence awarded by another Awarding Organisations, must be sent to functionalskills@futurequals.com for consideration and approval.

Further information can be located on our website and within our centre operations manual which you can access [here](#).

4.7 Identification Requirements and Learner Authenticity Identification Requirements

It is a centre's responsibility to confirm the identity of a learner as part of its registration process. A centre may do this by requesting sufficient personal data and a unique learner number (ULN) to ensure the learner can be clearly and uniquely identified.

The use of a ULN is now a mandatory requirement for publicly funded education and when submitting Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns.

Centres must have systems in place to ensure that an individual completing an assessment is the person he/she is claiming to be.

Therefore, centres are required to ensure that each learner's identification is checked and that the type of identification provided by each learner is recorded before assessments are undertaken. FutureQuals External Quality Assurers will check this record during quality assurance monitoring activities.

The following would be permitted proof of a learner's Identity:

- a valid passport (any nationality)
- a signed UK photo card driving licence
- valid warrant card issued by HM Forces or the Police
- other photographic ID card, e.g. employee ID card (must be current employer), student ID card, travel card
- UK biometric residence permit If an assessment is taking place in a learner's place of work and a learner is unable to supply any of the above, authentication of a learner's identity by a third-party representative, for example his/her line manager or a member of his/her workplace Human Resources Team can be accepted.

4.8 Initial Assessment and Centre Learner Support

It is important that centres carry out an initial assessment to identify what knowledge and degree of skills the learner already has, and to identify if any support or reasonable adjustments will be required to enable them to be assessed fairly.

Centres should identify any associated needs learners may have and record them. This will help in planning the learning programme. It is important at the initial assessment stage to ensure that learners commence a programme at the appropriate level.

This assessment will need to take account of:

- the support available to the learner within the centre during his/her programme of study
- any specific support that might be necessary to allow the learner to access the assessment
- for the qualification
- diagnoses of the requirements of the learner, making use of specialist advice from external sources, as appropriate.

It is our intention that there should be no discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic. FutureQuals and approved centres have a responsibility to ensure that the process of assessment is robust and fair and allows a learner to show what they know and can do without compromising the assessment criteria.

4.9 Learner Authenticity

It is a regulatory requirement that the assessment is authenticated as the work of the named learner whether submitted to a centre or to FutureQuals. Therefore, the record of learner achievement form requires that a declaration of authenticity is signed by a learner for speaking, listening and communicating.

By signing the declaration a learner is acknowledging that if the statement is untrue, an assessment breach has been committed.

FutureQuals also require candidates taking online assessments to authenticate their work. This is completed through the XAMS online platform.

Any submission that does not carry a formal declaration of authenticity will not be externally quality assured. If an alternate formal declaration of authenticity is completed by a learner it must, as a minimum, include the statement:

Statement of confirmation of authenticity

I declare that the record presented for this assessment is entirely my own work.

The learner must sign and date the declaration.

4.10 Malpractice and maladministration

FutureQuals takes all allegations of malpractice or maladministration by centres and learners seriously.

Centres are required to have arrangements in place to prevent, investigate and deal with malpractice, plagiarism and maladministration, which the EQA will ask to see on approval and as part of business as usual quality assurance activities.

Centres are required to inform FutureQuals of any incidents and respond to any requests made by FutureQuals to investigate.

Further information can be found on the FutureQuals website.

Section Five

Assessment and Verification

5.1 Assessment Delivery

For external assessment, FutureQuals require that Learners are directly supervised throughout an online or paper-based assessment session to reduce the risk of plagiarism and malpractice.

The administration of paper-based Functional Skills assessments, to ensure the security of assessments requires that no tutor of a Functional Skills qualification can be involved in the administration of the assessment materials for level 1 and 2 exams in that subject, regardless of the level they teach. The term 'Administration' of paper-based assessments includes initial receipt of confidential materials, secure storage, movement and preparation of materials for scheduled assessments, and registration, secure storage and return of materials to the awarding organisation after scheduled exams are completed.

The contents of all materials must be treated as strictly confidential by centres and should not be shared with anyone other than those taking or administering the assessment.

Invigilators **must** be used during online/onscreen and paper-based external assessments.

The invigilator(s) **must not** be the same Functional Skills tutor (or any other member of staff with a conflict of interest in the outcome of the assessment) used for the delivery of the relevant Functional Skills course (regardless of the level) the learner, or group of learners, is undertaking the assessment for. For example, a Functional Skills English tutor must not invigilate any Functional Skills English exam and a Functional Skills Maths tutor must not invigilate any Functional Skills Maths exam, regardless of the level they teach.

A centre must contact FutureQuals immediately in the event that a suitable invigilator is not available, and prior to any learner undertaking an onscreen or paper-based assessment.

Learners can take the English Reading and English Writing assessments consecutively or on separate occasions; the on-screen assessment system will store their completed assessment test and results ready for formal certification. Paper-based assessments are returned to FutureQuals for marking.

For internal assessment (for Speaking, Listening and Communicating) the assessment conditions are described in three stages: Task setting, Task taking; and Task marking. The SLC assessment measures the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding against the speaking, listening and communicating criteria. The Ofqual assessment criteria sets out the criteria that each learner must meet, centres must ensure that learners are familiar with the criteria before assessment. Centres **must** provide this assessment criterion in advance of the SLC assessment. The criteria can be distributed as a handout to learner (shown as an

appendix in the SLC assessment materials for the assessor) or centres can choose to display the criteria on a notice board.

Centres can schedule a learner for a Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment when they are ready, but centres will need to make appropriate arrangements for the administration of the assessment.

Both external and internal assessment are subject to controlled condition requirements.

5.2 Assessment conditions

For internal assessment, the assessment conditions are described in three stages: Task setting, Task taking; and Task marking.

Task setting

SLC set tasks

Centres should use one of the SLC tasks set by FutureQuals. These are available to download from the Centre Hub SharePoint site, 'Learner Results and Resources' folder. Approved centres must contact FutureQuals to gain access to these set tasks. All SLC set tasks must be stored securely within the centre at all times. Centres are able to contextualise the set assessment so that discussions are relevant to the industry, learning programme or educational context. The extent of any contextualisation is outlined in the SLC brief and must be adhered to. Any other contextualisation of a task would require a centre to get this pre-approved by FutureQuals, following the process outlined below.

Centre-devised SLC tasks

If a centre chooses to devise their own SLC tasks, then they are required to follow the guidance, complete and submit the 'Centre-devised Speaking, Listening and Communicating Form' and submit this to FutureQuals for approval by a subject specialist, at least six weeks prior to the assessment. Please see **Appendix 2** for the guidance and form. These are also available on the FutureQuals website. All SLC tasks must be stored securely within the centre at all times. See the *RFSQ Setting Centre-Devised SLC Assessment Tasks* guidance available on the FutureQuals website for more information.

Task taking

Supervision and authenticity:

The discussions must be facilitated by the assessor.

- The assessor may introduce the assessment expectations at the beginning of the assessment and only necessary information about the subject matter.

- It is acceptable for the assessor to provide brief points of clarification, if necessary, to maintain the effectiveness of the assessment taking place.
- It must be made clear that learners are being formally assessed, under controlled conditions, on their individual performance.
- Discussions must take place in group contexts. Groups must be a minimum of three people and it is recommended that they do not exceed five participants (3–5 participants).
- Additional centre assessors, other than the main assessor conducting the assessment session, may be required as a 'participant' due to the limited availability of participants. The main assessor of the session must record the attendance of additional assessor personnel on the Record of Learner Achievement Form.
- Where discussions require preparation, learners can complete these activities under limited supervision. Learners must not have access to their notes during the discussion/s being assessed. However, they may have access to prompts from their preparation for speaking, listening and communication.
- Learners are permitted to collaborate during preparations, but they must be aware that they are required to provide individual and distinct contributions to the discussions for assessment.
- Level 1 and level 2 learners should not be mixed within an assessment groups.
- Centres should, where possible, record (video or audio) assessment sessions and retain these in the centre for use in the quality assurance process in line with JCQ requirements.

Assessment conditions:

- Learners must be provided with a quiet, undisturbed space for the duration of the assessment.
- The SLC assessment must be completed under controlled conditions.
- Learners must not have access to any prepared notes during the assessment. However, learners may have access to prompts from their preparation for speaking, listening and communicating.
- Learners must not have access to mobile phones or any other resources not provided by the assessor.

- Assessors can introduce resources or artefacts into assessed discussions, if necessary, such as a fact sheet as a stimulus for an issues-based discussion. Where this occurs, all learners must have equal access to the resources or artefacts.
- It is not necessary to remove any materials from the assessment environment, such as posters or notices, but assessors must ensure that these do not include inappropriate materials, such as deliberate prompts or prepared notes.

Task marking

- Learner performance is assessed against each of the SLC criteria, with assessors confirming whether the individual's performance passes or fails the descriptor.
- Learners must be able to demonstrate the skills consistently within a given assessment (within the constraints of a single time-limited discussion) and across the different assessments (i.e. two separate discussions at both levels.).
- Performance evidence must be recorded for individual learners. This must be sufficiently detailed to confirm how the learner met the SLC criteria, and provide examples to support these decisions.
- Assessors must complete the marking at the time of the assessment. Assessors are permitted to write up notes immediately following the assessed discussion but the marking must be completed and signed as complete and authentic at this point. It is not acceptable to amend assessment records at a later stage.
- Evidence of completed marking and assessment outcomes are sent to FutureQuals for verification by a Quality Assurer.

5.3 Internal assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and standardisation

The Speaking, Listening and Communicating component is the only element of the FutureQuals Functional Skills Qualifications in English that is subject to internal assessment.

Centres delivering Speaking, Listening and Communicating internal tests have a responsibility to conduct internal quality assurance activities led by a qualified internal quality assurer (IQA).

Centre approval, compliance monitoring and external quality assurance is carried out by FutureQuals' External Quality Assurers (EQAs) who will confirm that centres are assessing to the required standard and ensure that there are robust quality assurance systems within the centre.

Centres are required by FutureQuals to carry out appropriate internal standardisation for speaking, listening and communicating assessments.

Centres are required to complete and retain a record of learner achievement form which clearly specifies how the learner has met the assessment criteria, any audio or visual recordings, and any additional evidence requirements for every learner. Centres are required to keep all evidence related to SLC for a minimum of 3 years.

FutureQuals will conduct centre visits (scheduled and unannounced) to undertake quality assurance activities at all Functional Skills centres. This will include thorough external verification of all systems, processes, records and performance evidence, including observation of assessment delivery.

5.4 Moderation

Moderation of Functional Skills is carried out to ensure that assessment decisions are fair, recorded accurately and confirmed by qualified External Verifiers and Quality Assurers.

Completed speaking, listening and communicating records of learner achievement forms must be forwarded to FutureQuals for verification within three days of the assessment having taken place. **See section 4.3** for further information.

It is the centre's responsibility to conduct internal quality assurance activities, led by an appropriate internal quality assurer. FutureQuals have produced training and standardisation videos that centres should use prior to undertaking their first SLC assessment. These videos are available on a secure area of the FutureQuals [website](#). To gain access, please apply for a password to customersupport@futurequals.com.

Centres must submit the *RFQS English SLC declaration* form and submit this to FutureQuals to confirm appropriate standardisation and internal quality assurance activities have taken place.

FutureQuals will carry out external quality assurance activities, to ensure that the assessment meets the agreed standard and the internal quality systems meet the approval criteria set by FutureQuals.

5.5 Reasonable adjustments and special consideration

Sign Language (i.e. BLS, SSE) is permissible in the Speaking, Listening, and Communicating component, provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion.

It is recognised that BSL is a language in its own right and not a form of English. BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of Speaking, Listening and Communicating where BSL is the learner's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.

Details on how to make adjustments for learners to ensure fair access to assessment is set out in the FutureQuals Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy on the FutureQuals web site.

Section Six

Support and centre information

6.1 Centre support and guidance

FutureQuals has a diverse team of highly experienced staff who are available to provide all necessary training, guidance and support for the delivery of their full range of qualifications, including Functional Skills.

Centres can access our dedicated Functional Skills web pages with free support materials that includes sample assessments from the FutureQuals website

<https://www.futurequals.com/>

Other resources to support the delivery of functional skills, including SLC videos for standardisation and training, can be found on our website.

6.2 Learner support

Centres should ensure that learners are informed of the title and level of the qualification they have been entered for and that FutureQuals is the awarding body for their chosen qualification.

Centres should ensure that learners are fully prepared for Functional Skills assessments through appropriate teaching and learning strategies. Centres are encouraged to ensure that learners have the opportunity to practise their skills in real-life contexts, which are likely to be stimulating, vocationally-relevant tasks prior to taking the assessment.

6.3 Data protection

FutureQuals is registered with the Data Protection Act and handles all data in accordance with the required procedures of the Act.

6.4 Equality

FutureQuals ensure that qualifications are non-discriminatory on the grounds of disability, gender, race, age, sexual orientation and religion / belief.

Centres must ensure when amending or developing tasks for SLC, no unnecessary barriers are placed in the way of learner achievement.

6.5 Legal considerations

Learners and centres should be aware of regulations affecting those who deal with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Prevent Duty Guidance available from the Home Office makes clear the important role of Further Education leaders in stopping extremists seeking to radicalise learners on campuses and in supporting learners at risk of extremist influences.

Ofsted has responsibility for monitoring the Prevent Duty in publicly funded further education and skills providers.

6.6 Enquires

For enquiries relating to specific or live learners please refer to the Functional Skills team:

Functional Skills Team
Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd
EMP House
Telford Way
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 3HE

Tel: 01530 512426
E-mail: functionalskills@futurequals.com
Website: <https://www.futurequals.com/>

Any enquires relating to the development or content of this qualification specification should be addressed to:

Product Development Team
Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd
EMP House
Telford Way
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 3HE

Tel: 01530 836662
E-mail: qualifications@futurequals.com
Website: <https://www.futurequals.com/>

6.7 Complaints

FutureQuals aims to constantly monitor the levels of service provided and report on performance indicators on a regular basis. We will endeavour to be open about the levels of service we aim to offer all our customers.

There may be times, however, when our centres do not feel we have met these needs. In these cases, centres may follow the complaints process as detailed in our Complaints Policy, which can be found in the FutureQuals Centre Operations Manual. FutureQuals will attempt to resolve all complaints within the published timescales, and will record and review all complaints as part of our customer service commitment.

Section Seven

Appendices

Appendix 1: Recognition of prior achievement form

Speaking, listening and communicating Functional Skills Past Achievement Form

If a learner has completed one or two English SLC components with another awarding organisation then this achievement may be acknowledged by FutureQuals. Please complete this form and send it to functionalskills@futurequals.com. If the Learner Records Service has been updated to reflect the achievement obtained by the learner from the issuing awarding organisation, this will need to be clearly available and show the component, date and result/s obtained. In instances where the past achievement/s cannot be verified on the LRS, we will require confirmation or evidence of the achievement/s confirming the learner obtained the component/s attaching with this form, for example, the certificate/s showing the learner's achievement/s.

Centre Name	
Learner Name	
Unique Learner Number (ULN)	
Date of Birth	

Exemption(s) required:

Component	Issuing awarding organisation	Ofqual Qualification code	Date achieved
Reading			
Speaking, Listening and Communication			
Writing			

Learner Declaration

I give authorisation for FutureQuals to contact the issuing awarding organisation on my behalf to confirm my achievement on the above Functional Skills English components.

Name (printed):			
Signed:		Date:	

Appendix 2

Guidance and form for centres on setting SLC assessment tasks

To ensure that learners who achieve a pass mark have the required level of competence in the Speaking, Listening and Communicating skills, set out in the Subject Content, including meeting the full scope of study and range of contexts.

Centres developing their own assessment tasks must follow the guidance provided.

Each assessment task must:

- Provide realistic contexts and scenarios
- Specify sub-tasks that are relevant to the context and meaningful
- Require application of knowledge, skills and understanding for a purpose
- Assess process skills and the outcome of their application in different contexts.

Assessment tasks

- The assessment includes two sub-tasks
- At Level 1, both tasks are a discussion, but must have a different purpose
- Sub-tasks will cover the same theme, but can address different topics or perspectives within that theme
- The assessment will last for a maximum of 30 minutes
- Sub-tasks include realistic contexts and scenarios
- Sub-tasks are meaningful and relevant to the context / theme

Every assessment task must be designed to assess a single level, i.e. Level 1 or Level 2. The assessment must provide a reliable measure of proficiency at this level by providing significant evidence of success against the requirements for the Subject Content, as defined in the setting specification for Level 1 (see Table 1) and for Level 2 (see Table 2).

Each assessment task consists of related sub-tasks with guidance on the preparation required, instructions to the Assessor on how to manage the sub-task and a set of ideas to help maintain discussion.

Learners complete the assessment task and any related sub-tasks under controlled conditions in groups of not less than three and not more than five.

Learners are permitted to use aids, but care must be taken to ensure that the use of any aid does not detract from the need to demonstrate the skill through the scope of study.

New tasks, along with a completed setting matrix and specification should be sent to FutureQuals **at least six weeks** before assessment is due to take place for approval by the Functional Skills subject specialist. The form titled '*Centre-devised Speaking, Listening and Communicating Template*' must be used. Centres are not required to produce mark schemes.

Only if your task(s) meet the requirements, will approval be confirmed. If approval is not received by the time the assessment takes place, centres should use one of the FutureQuals approved assessment tasks.

Centres are able to contextualise a FutureQuals set assessment task to fit a particular industry/workplace environment appropriate to their learners without having to have prior approval. However, centres should upload the task(s), with details of their contextual changes into their secure centre folder on Huddle/SharePoint.

Assessor guidance

Record of learner achievement

The pass/fail result must be entered onto the assessment sheet after the assessment has been completed for each group of 3–5 learners. Learners must not be shown their results which are provisional. Results are subject to external verification by FutureQuals and are only confirmed on receipt of a FutureQuals certificate.

The standards to be achieved and the place for recording achievement are contained with the SLC Record of Learner Achievement Form. Learners should be observed in each speaking and listening sub-task. A Y/N should be placed in each box to represent the pass/fail standard achieved by the learner in each sub-task.

The learner should be provisionally awarded a 'pass' and the record of learner achievement (along with any other evidence to support it, e.g. learner notes, video or audio recording etc.) should be retained by the centre for external verification.

Centres are reminded that work should also be part of a sample which has been internally verified or standardised before being submitted for external verification.

Centre-devised Speaking, Listening and Communicating Template

Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English

Please complete this checklist and submit to FutureQuals together with your centre devised Speaking, Listening and Communicating (SLC) assessment task(s) for approval by the FutureQuals subject specialist, please email to functionalskills@futurequals.com

1	Title of assessment task:	
2	Have you completed all sections of the assessment activity template?	Yes / No
3	<i>The assessment activity must ensure that learners have the opportunity to make a range of contributions in a range of contexts</i>	
	Please confirm that within the assessment activity there is opportunity for learners to include the following:	Specify which sub-task this is in (1/2)
	Narrative	Yes / No
	Explanations	Yes / No
	Instructions	Yes / No
	Information	Yes / No
	Descriptions	Yes / No
4	Have you included opportunities for learners to be involved in <i>two discussions</i>	Yes / No
5	Is the assessment task clear and unambiguous throughout?	Yes / No
6	Could learners carry out both sub-tasks without needing further information or explanation?	Yes / No
7	Have you proofread the assessment task?	Yes / No
8	Are any stimulus materials required of sufficient quality and clarity for learners?	Yes / No
9	Can you confirm there are no errors in the assessment task in terms of:	
	Grammar	Yes / No
	Spelling	Yes / No
	Punctuation	Yes / No

Signed: _____ Date: _____

LEVEL 1 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH: SPEAKING, LISTNING AND COMMUNICATING

Scope of Study ref	The learner must have the opportunity to	ST1	ST2
SoS1	Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations.		
SoS2	Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts.		
SoS3	Respond effectively to detailed questions.		
SoS4	Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics.		
SoS5	Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence.		
SoS6	Follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject.		
SoS7	Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium.		
Sos8	Respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions, using appropriate language for interjection.		

LEVEL 1 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH: SPEAKING, LISTENING AND COMMUNICATING

Centre-devised Speaking, Listening and Communicating Template

Assessment task title: *[insert title of the task]*

Learners need:

- Paper and pen/pencil to makes notes
 - *[insert any other item needed]*
 - *[insert any other item needed]*
-

This assessment task must be kept secure until the assessment is due to take place.

TIME ALLOWED: 30 minutes

Instructions

- *[Insert information about any additional stimulus material required for the assessment task.]*
 - This assessment must be carried out under controlled conditions.
-

Preparation

Learners should be aware that there are two ten-minute speaking and listening sub-tasks to be completed within a half hour window of time. It is recommended that a break of 10 minutes is taken between the sub-tasks to allow learners a rest, allow them some time to think about and briefly prepare ideas for the second discussion and time for marking of the first sub-task to be completed. Learners may make notes of their ideas during this break.

The group must be *at least three but no more than five learners*, to allow all the opportunity to speak and to provide an audience for each other. Arrange the learners around a boardroom style table so they may maintain eye contact with each other.

Instructions for assessors

Remind learners that within the sub-tasks they should include narratives, explanations, an exchange of ideas / talk with other people, instructions, information, descriptions and presentations.

Also remind learners that within the sub-tasks they will be assessed on

- identifying relevant information and lines of argument
- making requests and asking relevant questions
- responding effectively to detailed questions
- communicating information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately
- using appropriate phrases, registers and adapting their contributions to take account of the audience, purpose and medium of the discussion
- respecting the turn taking rights of others during the discussion, using appropriate language for interjection.

The above information must be provided to learners prior to the assessment beginning.

This can be in the form of a handout (see Appendix A) or alternatively centres can choose to display this information to all learners on a notice board.

Introduction

Insert suitable introduction to task.

Insert title of assessment task – Sub-task 1
(10 minutes)

Insert details of sub-task 1

You should explain that you will be taking no further part in the discussion.

After 10 minutes, close the session. Indicate there will be a break (of 10 minutes) after which learners should return for the next part of the assessment

Over the break they should consider (*insert details of sub-task 2*).

Insert title of assessment task – Sub-task 2

(10 minutes)

Introduction

Remind learners of the task.

Insert details of sub-task 2

You should also explain that you will be taking no further part in the discussion as the management want to capture their opinions, not yours.

Give a time warning at 9 minutes if the group is not nearing agreement.

After 10 minutes, close the discussion. If appropriate, you could summarise their conclusions as a way of ending this session.

END OF TEST

LEVEL 1 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH: SPEAKING, LISTENING AND COMMUNICATING

Speaking, Listening and Communicating: Instructions to learners

During this assessment you should include narratives, explanations, an exchange of ideas / talk with other people, instructions, information, descriptions and presentations.

You will also be assessed on:

- identifying relevant information and lines of argument
- making requests and asking relevant questions
- responding effectively to detailed questions
- communicating information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately
- using appropriate phrases, registers and adapting their contributions to take account of the audience, purpose and medium of the discussion
- respecting the turn taking rights of others during the discussion, using appropriate language for interjection.

Appendix 3

RECORD OF LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

Learner name:	
Date of birth:	Learner number:
Work location:	

Assessor name:
Assessment task:
Additional assessment requirements:
Additional comments / incidents:

Result (please indicate a pass if the learner has demonstrated a secure overall performance for each S i.e. there is a tick on each row of the assessment sheet overleaf. Please indicate a fail if there is a cross on any of the assessment sheet overleaf)	Pass	Fail

I declare that the record presented for this assessment is entirely my own work.

Learner signature:	Date:
Assessor signature:	Date:
Internal Quality Assurer signature: <i>(if sampled)</i>	Date:

This form must be completed and retained by the centre in a secure place for a minimum of 3 years. It must be made available to FutureQuals or your external quality assurer/moderator upon request.

ASSESSMENT SHEET

Level 1 overall performance across the range of requirements for the level must be secure; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement must be balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.

SOS ref	You must observe the learner doing each of the following consistently across the sub-tasks.	Insert a tick (✓) if yes Insert a cross (X) if not.
1	identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations?	
2	make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts?	
3	respond effectively to detailed questions?	
4	communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics?	
5	express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence?	
6	follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject?	
7	use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium?	
8	respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions, using appropriate language for interjection?	

Sub-Task 1 – Assessor evidence/comments:

Sub-Task 2 – Assessor evidence/ comments:

This form must be completed and retained by the centre in a secure place for a minimum of 3 years. It must be made available to FutureQuals or your external quality assurer/moderator upon request.

FutureQuals[™]

INSPIRING LEARNING AND SKILLS

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