

3748-110 and 3748-310

**Functional Skills English Level 1
Reading**

Chief Examiner's report – January 2018

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide centres with feedback on the performance of candidates for 3748-110 and 3748-310 Functional Skills English Reading Level 1.

2 Overall Performance

This report covers the period from February 2017 to January 2018. However, centres are strongly urged to review all previous Chief Examiner reports as the comments and advice still apply.

The majority of candidates achieve sufficient marks to pass; however, a significant number do not. As outlined in previous reports, the reasons for failing to achieve sufficient marks remain broadly the same:

1. inadequate preparation of candidates
2. careless reading of the questions
3. entering too few responses.

Areas of good performance

Successful candidates were able to answer questions across all four assessment criteria, and take note of the number of responses required as specified in the questions, taking their time to find the correct responses through careful reading of the source documents.

Time management was not an issue for the majority of candidates.

Areas for development

1. It was evident that a significant number of candidates who failed were entered into the exam before having the requisite reading skills. It is essential that candidates are adequately prepared for the exam prior to being entered. This can be relatively easily judged by making use of the sample papers and worked examples on the City & Guilds website. Not only will their use aid teachers and tutors to gauge a candidate's learning progress, they will ensure candidates are familiar with the demands of the tests and the types of questions being asked.
2. Many responses from candidates indicated the failure to read the questions properly. It is essential that candidates read and then re-read the questions, and take their time doing so, to ensure a complete and accurate understanding of the questions. Responses should then be checked for sense and accuracy.
3. Assessment criterion **1.2.1 - Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts** - posed some issues for weaker candidates. At level 1 the main points and ideas in a source document are generally very apparent, and are often signposted through organisational features such as titles, subheadings or bullet points, or through the use of highlighting tools such as bold font.
4. Time management may have been an issue for some candidates, so centres are urged to remind candidates that there is no need to write in complete sentences, and there is no need to repeat the stem of the question in the response. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are not assessed in the exam, although it is important that responses are legible.
5. It was occasionally apparent that candidates were drawing on their own experiences to answer the questions. All responses are contained within the source documents and should not be drawn from own experience.

3 Recommendations/Advice for centres

1. Read all the previous Chief Examiner reports, available on the City & Guilds website.
2. Centres should make use of the Guidance for Delivery document, available on the City & Guilds website. The document provides invaluable information for both centres and learners, and includes useful learning activities that can maximise a candidate's preparation for the exam.
3. Functional Skills English Reading is a summative exam, and it is imperative that candidates are not entered for the exam before adequate learning and practice have taken place.
4. Exam techniques is a useful learning session for candidates prior to the exam, and should include elements such as how to decipher what is being asked, how to recognise the number of responses required, how to manage time effectively and how to check answers for accuracy and sense.
5. Candidates should be reminded that all the responses are contained in the source documents and should not be drawn from their own experiences.
6. As part of the learning process, centres should expose candidates to all types of source documents, including web-sites, articles, formal letters, emails, leaflets, promotional material and advertising. These should be studied in combination with the Functional Skills English Reading Level 1 criteria.

4 Additional Information

Revised standards are currently being developed, and the expectation is that assessment against the new standards will commence in September 2019. There will be a period of time where assessment against the current standards will run concurrently with assessment against the new standards.

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