All about…

City & Guilds MATHS & ENGLISH

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#CGMathsEnglish

The monthly update from City & Guilds on **anything** to do with mathematics, numeracy, application of number, English, literacy, communication, ESOL, ICT/digital skills…

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Adult funding changes for all Framework maths and English qualifications: how will this affect 3844 and 3847?

Relevant to: *Principles of Using English/Mathematics and English/Mathematics Skills (3844 and 3847)* (***England*** *only)* ***Purpose:*** *public policy/strategy/funding*

As we indicated in Issue 03, the Skills Funding Agency has been reviewing all of the Framework English and mathematics qualifications developed since 2012. They **announced the outcome of this review** on 4 June 2014, with the changes due to take effect from **August 2014**.

What's changing?

Until now, all Framework maths and English qualifications were approved automatically for adult funding in England. That will **no longer** be the case, and in future each individual qualification will be reviewed and approved in line with the following new business rules:

1. **Minimum size**
   - Entry level and Level 1 qualifications must be **at least 3 credits**
   - Level 2 – must be **at least 13 credits** (ie Certificate-sized).

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2. **Evidence of demand**
   Each qualification requires at least five letters of support from centres with a current Skills Funding Agency provider contract. These letters will need to confirm the centre has demand for this qualification from at least 50 publicly-funded adult learners during 2014-15.

3. **Assessment (Level 2 only)**
   Qualifications at Level 2 must be subject to awarding organisation set assessment and **not** internally assessed portfolios of evidence.

This will undoubtedly have a huge impact on both the English/Mathematics Skills suite (3847) and 'Principles of' qualifications (3844). We've **outlined on our website** how we think each will be affected, although to summarise the following would appear to meet the new business rules:

English/Mathematics Skills (3847)

- the 'themed' Awards (3847-03 and -3847-23) at Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3 and Level 1
- the Certificates (3847-02, 3847-22, 3847-92 and 3847-93) at Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3 and Level 1.

Principles of Using English/Mathematics (3844)

- Principles of Using Mathematical Techniques (3844-12, 3844-20 and 3844-22) at **all** levels
- Principles of Using Written and Spoken English (3844-10 and 3844-11) at Entry 3 and Level 1.

Because funding is no longer automatic, we will have to apply to the Skills Funding Agency to have each of these individual qualifications approved (at present, **none** of these qualifications are currently shown on the Agency's Hub/Catalogue as fundable in 2014-15). We're currently clarifying arrangements for this with the Agency, and will work with them to ensure this process is completed as quickly as possible.

We've also expressed our disappointment at these changes – especially the timing of this announcement. We might have to accept that not all of these qualifications will be eligible for adult funding in future, although we remain committed to offering the full suite and recognise the important role they plan in helping to build learners' confidence and enabling them to progress towards 'destination' qualifications such as Functional Skills or GCSE.

It's also important to acknowledge that these changes affect only 19+ provision, and they have no bearing on the use of these qualifications within pre-19 provision funded via the Education Funding Agency.

ESOL Skills for Life: latest on the re-development

Relevant to: *ESOL Skills for Life (4692) (England, Northern Ireland and Wales)*
Purpose: *qualification developments/updates*

We've now received initial feedback from Ofqual on the new ESOL Skills for Life qualifications that we submitted a couple of months ago. A few changes (all minor, thankfully!) are still required before these qualifications can be accredited, and we are confident that these qualification will be up-and-running in September.

Following the **Skills Funding Agency announcement** last month that it would continue to fund the current (NQF) ESOL Skills for Life qualifications for adult learners in England until December, we have decided to extend the 3692 suite so that it remains open for registrations until 31 December 2014. In doing so, we'd nevertheless encourage centres to move to the new qualifications as soon as they become available – and please note all current/active 3692 centres will receive automatic approval for 4692.

Look out for us you're attending this year's **NATECLA National Conference** at the end of this month. We'll be there throughout the weekend if you'd like to discuss the new qualifications any further, and we'll be hosting the pre-dinner drinks reception on the Saturday evening of Conference.

We'll also be holding a further series of launch events of our own once the new qualifications have received accreditation and we're able to share more detail about them.

Why not watch the webinar…
In the meantime, a recording of the **ESOL webinar we hosted earlier this month is available here**
(NB: you'll be asked to enter your name and email address before viewing).

Welsh Government confirms 2015-16 priorities for FE Sector

Relevant to: *all post-16 numeracy and literacy learning (**Wales** only)*
Purpose: *public policy/strategy/funding*

The Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has set out its **policy and funding priorities for the Further Education Sector in 2015-16**. As expected, this includes a significant focus on literacy and numeracy, building on recent announcements about the impending changes to GCSE in Wales and to the assessment of Essential Skills.

The ministerial statement contains a marked shift in emphasis towards expecting full-time 16-19 year-old learners to work towards A*-C GCSEs in English/Welsh First Language and Mathematics, especially if they have already attained GCSE 'D' or 'E' grade. Other qualifications such as Essential Skills will remain available for to help support other learners, and to assist wider progression in literacy and numeracy.

Now that the Education (Wales) Bill has received Royal Assent, there is also further information about the new Education Workforce Council that will manage the mandatory registration of al teachers, lecturers and support staff in Wales. It is expected that the new arrangements will be phased in for FE teachers/lecturers from April 2016.

The full statement is **available to view here**.

Core Maths: DfE confirm early adopters

Relevant to: *Using and Applying Mathematics (Core Maths)(3849) (**England** only)*
Purpose: *qualification developments/updates; public policy/strategy/funding*

The Department for Education (DfE) has now invited a number of schools and colleges in England to trial the range of Level 3 Mathematics qualifications being developed by a number of awarding organisations in response to the 'Core Maths' initiative.

City & Guilds strongly supports this initiative – not least because we have argued for some time that there is a need for a Level 3 qualification to help learners progress beyond GCSE or Level 2 Functional Skills by developing greater fluency and confidence in their use of maths.

We're developing a Core Maths product (its official working title is the 'Using and Applying Mathematics', and the qualification number will be **3849**). Initial feedback from schools, colleges and Higher Education Institutions has so far been very positive, and we are intending to submit it for Ofqual accreditation over the summer.

We will also be working closely with the DfE's Core Maths Support Programme (CMSP) over the next few months, to ensure that the early adopter centres have early access to information about this qualification and appropriate support. The 3849 qualification webpage will be live from early July, and will contain more information about this qualification.

Functional Skills maths sample assessments added

Relevant to: *Functional Skills Mathematics (3748-02) (**England** only)*
Purpose: *qualification developments/updates*

We've recently added a fourth sample assessment for Functional Skills Mathematics at Level 2 (Sample D). It's available from the **Documents tab** on the Functional Skills qualification webpage.

The tasks within the latest sample include trend lines and probability which, although included in the FS Mathematics subject criteria, were not previously covered in any of our sample assessments.

Ofqual Functional Skills review: have your say

Relevant to: *Functional Skills (3748) (**England** only)*
Purpose: *public policy/strategy/funding*

As we advised in Issue 03, Ofqual is currently carrying out a thematic review of Functional Skills English and Mathematics at Level 2. As part of the evidence-gathering process, they have launched an online survey aimed at **anyone** with an interest in these qualifications – eg learners, tutors, curriculum managers, employers…

This review is a **vital** opportunity to persuade the Government and others that the Functional Skills qualifications should be retained, and that simply requiring learners to keep re-taking GCSE is not a satisfactory or workable answer.

The survey closes on **Friday 27 June** and **can be accessed here**.

Accessing Functional Skills performance feedback

Relevant to: *Functional Skills (3748) (**England** only)*
Purpose: *operational note*

Whilst we're on the subject of Functional Skills, don't forget that we provide performance feedback for all externally marked Functional Skills assessments at levels 1 and 2. Arrangements for accessing this information varies, depending whether the assessment was paper-based (Named on Demand) or delivered onscreen using the e-volve system.

Product code	Assessment component	Feedback format	How accessed?
3748-310 3748-313	FS English Reading (Named on Demand)	Performance codes displayed on **Notification of Candidate Results (NCR)** statement	Sent with **hard copy** confirmation of results. Note this information is **not** provided electronically. NCR statements are only issued if candidates have been unsuccessful. A glossary of the codes can be found in the **Functional Skills FAQs** document.
3748-311 3748-314	FS English Writing (Named on Demand)		
3748-319 3748-320	FS Mathematics (Named on Demand)		
3748-324 3748-325	FS ICT (Named on Demand)		
3748-110 3748-113	FS English Reading (e-volve)	SecureAssess® Score Report	From SecureAssess® via Results Window (**after** the candidate's confirmed result has been issued via the Walled Garden). Note these reports are generated from **provisional** mark data (prior to final quality checks and formal results issue). In some cases the indicative mark/grade shown on the score report will therefore differ from the actual confirmed result.
3748-111 3748-113	FS English Writing (e-volve)		
3748-119 3748-120	FS Mathematics (e-volve)		
3748-224 3748-225	FS ICT (e-volve)		

Functional Skills results: how quickly are they turned around?

Relevant to: *Functional Skills (3748) (**England** only)*
Purpose: *operational note*

Finally, still on the subject of Functional Skills, we've done some analysis of our results turnaround performance for the externally marked Functional Skills assessments over the last few months.

As the largest Functional Skills awarding organisation, we process well **over half a million** externally-marked Functional Skills assessments each year. Roughly two-thirds of these are delivered onscreen via the e-volve system, although our paper-based assessments are also available on-demand with a lead-in time of just two weeks. In both cases we're committed to issuing results within 20 working days of when scripts are received (for paper) or uploaded (for e-volve). These arrangements are described more fully in the **Functional Skills External Assessment Guide**.

Even during our very busiest periods, the **vast majority** of results are turned around well within 20 working days. On the rare occasion where results are issued late, the most common reasons for this are either because:

- scripts have not been returned as instructed, or
- candidates' work has been submitted in an 'atypical' format that cannot be scanned.

To further illustrate the average pattern of results issue since September 2013:

- **72%** of all results have been issued within **five** working days (including **86%** of e-volve results)
- **82%** of all results have been issued within **10** working days (including **93%** of e-volve results)
- **88%** of all results have been issued within **15** working days (including **97%** of e-volve results).

Tell us what you think

All About Maths & English is a monthly newsletter that brings together all of the key developments from City & Guilds relevant to maths, English or ICT/digital skills learning. It includes information about each of the maths and English qualifications offered by City & Guilds across England, Northern Ireland and Wales, updates on the range of teaching and learning resources we offer, plus relevant public policy or other information we think you might be interested in.

Each edition is numbered, so we can refer back to previous issues or tell you when information has been superseded. We've also tried to categorise each article by indicating which City & Guilds qualification(s) it relates to, and/or if it applies only to England, Northern Ireland or Wales.

If there's anything else you'd particularly like us to cover or explain more fully in future issues of *All About*, please feel free to drop us a line to **mathsandenglish@cityandguilds.com** or tweet using the hashtag **#CGMathsEnglish**.

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