



FUNCTIONAL SKILLS OVERVIEW



Functional Skills Overview

Functional Skills are an integral part of delivering apprenticeships in the UK.

Whether you're an employer employing an apprentice or a training provider training an apprentice, you will have seen them listed as requirements on the **apprenticeship standards**.

No matter the apprenticeship, your apprentice will need to provide evidence that they have achieved Functional Skills qualifications or some equivalent. (More on the equivalents later.)

What are Functional Skills?

Functional Skills are the basic skills that all people need to be able to operate confidently and successfully in work and life.

Functional Skills provide learning tools that enable apprentices to:

- Apply their knowledge and understanding to everyday life;
- Engage competently and confidently with others;
- Solve problems in both familiar and unfamiliar problems; and
- Develop personally and professionally.

Are Exams Involved?

Yes. If the learner requires both English and maths, they will need to complete the following exams:

English

- English reading
- English writing
- English speaking and listening

Maths

- Calculator
- Non-calculator

How Long Will It Take To Complete Functional Skills?

Each learner will require support in different areas so some learners will complete in no time at all whereas others will require more support. At QA, we expect learners to complete their Functional Skills within the first 6 months of programme.

QA have specialist Functional Skills tutors available to support learners who require support for Functional Skills.

The learner's level will dictate the support they receive. For example, if a learner has significant gaps in their knowledge, they will receive one-to-one support. If a learner is strong in most areas with one or two areas to improve, they will be invited into small group sessions. Lastly, where learners are exam ready, they will be encouraged to work independently before completing group exam preparation sessions.

Why are Functional Skills Important to Apprenticeships?

Functional Skills are a key component in all the apprenticeship standards.

Achieving a Functional Skills qualification demonstrates that an apprentice has all the skills they need in English and maths to be able to engage with their programme. They help apprentices to develop and secure the broader range of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours.

For all apprenticeships that QA offers End-Point Assessment, Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications are required.

Key Point

All Functional Skills qualifications must be completed before the Gateway stage of the apprenticeship.

QA provides holistic support for our apprentices through our dedicated Learner Services Team. Learner Services provide support in 4 key areas: learning support (SEND/disability), safeguarding, Functional Skills and academic study skills (degree apprenticeships only). The wider benefit of having these functions in one larger team is pro-active communication and the ability to collaborate to ensure the learner receives the best possible service.



QA