



Top Tips for FS Maths Assessments

1. It is not unusual to read the task instructions (and scenario) more than once. At the second reading, a common feature of an organised approach that is often beneficial, is to list and label information as it is identified. Another approach which can be helpful is to rephrase when reading, using more informal language ('your own words').
2. We may approach problems from different perspectives, so it is important for learners to know that there may not just be one correct approach that is expected. There may be more than one approach that is valid.
3. Similarly, there are sometimes different methods that are equally valid and will result in the same correct answer. For example, if a learner is asked to calculate 15% of 50 grams, there are a variety of methods that are all correct. Different methods are expected but do need to be displayed.
4. A full, clear display of the method used is important so that examiner can award marks for what has been done correctly. For example, a wrong conversion at the initial task stages will affect a response. However, there may be marks available for subsequent valid calculations or comparisons.
5. Likewise, learners should be encouraged to always attempt a task. For example, in a MSS task the conversion of sides of 250cm and 175cm to metres accurately may be worth a mark.
6. Correct notation should be given by learners. For example, money should always be shown to 2 decimal places if it involves pounds and pence; coordinates should be given with either a space or a comma between the values; commas should not be used in place of a decimal point for separating whole numbers and decimal values; if a question involves time, then a colon should be used if using 24 hour time, and am or pm if using 12 hour time.
7. If rounding an amount, I would advise writing/typing the unrounded value as evidence of rounding (this is important if there has been an error and the final value is not correct, as there may be one mark available for accurate rounding). A task may require a learner to work to a specified number of decimal places (for example, 1 or 2 decimal places); if not, then sensible rounding may be awarded marks providing the unrounded value is also seen. In addition, learners should show the results of calculations as well as the calculation, as marks may be awarded even if the final value is incorrect.
8. For charts and graphs, learners need to ensure that scales are linear and start at zero, as well as remembering to label axis, title and any key/legend if not already given (key areas where marks are often not awarded).

9. Learners should be encouraged to check the reasonableness of their calculated answers (does their answer look sensible and realistic? For example, it is not possible to have 2.5 people or animals so these values may need rounding up or down).

10. Online exams: it is often beneficial for learners to practise their completion of an online assessment prior to their final, for familiarity and confidence with the format. Learners should be familiar with the accepted ICT symbols for division, multiplication, addition and subtraction. If learners are presenting area, then 'm²' or 'm sq' are both acceptable. Learners should be reminded that the examiner will only see what they type in with online assessments (and will not receive the paper that they use for working).