

# **Functional Skills Supplementary Booking Document (English and Mathematics)**

**Key changes for 2023/2024**

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## 1. Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the main text of the [JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments \(English and Mathematics\)](#). This document contains the criteria included in the main sections of the JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document with additional supplementary information. It includes policies and procedures unique to NCFE which have not been covered in either the JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments or ICE document.

To be used by centres undertaking paper based and/or onscreen assessments of NCFE's Functional Skills qualifications at Levels 1 and 2 (except for the Speaking, Listening and Communicating component of the Functional Skills English qualification). This pertains to all centres including schools, colleges, and private training providers.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the NCFE specific requirements which are not covered within the JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics).

To provide NCFE centres additional, NCFE specific guidance, and should be read alongside the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document.

### 2.1 Scope

This document applies to the following NCFE specific booking policies and procedures not covered by the JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document:

- Assessment bookings and date
- Transportation of assessment papers to other approved sites
- Transportation of assessment papers from delivery address to assessment site
- During the Assessment
- Return of papers
- Results Release

### 2.2 Responsibilities/Duties

It is the duty of NCFE to ensure that all NCFE specific guidance not covered by the JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document is covered in this document.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that all staff comply with the policies and procedures in this document.

### 3.0 Assessment bookings and date

***NCFE specific information supplementary to the*** Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) **document**

- NCFE offer a choice of 3 delivery modes – paper-based, on-screen and remote invigilation where centres can book within a 42-day window.
- Paper based bookings must be made at least 6 working days before the planned assessment date and cannot be amended once booked.
- Where candidates within a centre are part of the same teaching group:
  - Candidates must undertake assessments on the same date and time
  - Where this is not possible, NCFE permit a maximum of 4 bookings within a 24-hour period.
- Where candidates within a centre are not part of the same teaching group:
  - There are no restrictions on bookings.
- Paper-based assessment materials are despatched to arrive in centres approximately 3 days ahead of the assessment date.
- All assessment materials must be stored securely at all times which can be found in section 10 of the Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document.

### 4.0 Transportation of assessment papers to approved sites

***To be read in conjunction with section 10 and 11 of the*** Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and ***Mathematics***) **document**

- For paper-based Functional Skills external assessments:
  - Papers must be sent to a centre's registered address.
  - To apply for an additional address approval, please contact our Customer Support Team.
  - If the assessment is taking place at a location other than a registered address, such as a place of employment, then this should be indicated in the NCFE Portal when making the booking, and the Invigilators Register, but no further notification is required.
  - Should there be a one-off change to the date or location of any existing paper-based booking (outside current sitting limitations, such as to the paper despatch requirements), NCFE must be notified through centre submission of an Assessment Variation Request form, available on our [website](#).
  - NCFE will permit the despatch of Functional Skills assessment papers to third-party locations (e.g., alternative educational providers, secure workplaces etc), but only by exception and following confirmation that the centre can ensure the security of all assessment papers at that location. If this is required, as above, centres should register these premises (via NCFE's customer service team – if required, in advance, on multiple occasions, or, if after booking, by completing an Assessment Variation Request Form, available on our [website](#)). The centre will be

required to explicitly outline how papers will be confidentially and securely received, transported, and stored, until ready for collection by centre staff and/or the invigilator.

- Residential addresses are not permitted as locations at which papers will be sent.
  - It is the Head of Centre's responsibility to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place so that confidential assessment materials are only handed over to authorised responsible persons and it is for the Head of Centre to set out the appropriate terms of authorisation for any recipient.
- For on-screen Functional Skills external assessments
  - There is no requirement, whether invigilated in person or remotely invigilated, to be conducted at a registered address.
  - Where assessments are sat on-screen, or remotely invigilated, centres must adhere to the assessment room requirements outlined in the Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document.

## 5.0 Transportation from centre to assessment site

***To be read in conjunction with section 10 of the*** JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) ***document***

- Centres can transport assessment material to the assessment site by post, or in-person.
- Transportation from centre to assessment site by post:
  - Once received at the registered address, a centre can then despatch materials to the alternative assessment location using a secure, trackable service such as Royal Mail Special Delivery (we do not consider Royal Mail Recorded Delivery to be an acceptable method of delivery, as this does not guarantee a tracking facility throughout the entire delivery process).
- Transportation from centre to assessment site in person:
  - Once papers are received at the registered address, a centre can transport assessment material to the assessment site in person, following the below conditions:
    - Assessment materials must be transported in a non-transparent lockable case and must not be left unattended.
    - Transportation by hand must take place on the scheduled assessment date.
    - Assessment packs must be signed for at this site and stored according to the secure storage requirements in Section 10 of the Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) document.
    - Assessment materials must only be accessed from secure storage a maximum of 60 minutes before the assessment to disseminate to candidates in the assessment room.

## 6.0 During the Assessment

**To be read in conjunction with section 14 of the** Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics)**document**

- NCFE provide an Invigilator's Register for each assessment assigned on a given date.
- If a candidate is unable to attend an assessment:
  - Mark the candidate as 'Did Not Attend' on the Invigilator's Register
  - Return the paper using a secure, trackable service such as Royal Mail Special Delivery (we do not consider Royal Mail Recorded Delivery to be an acceptable method of delivery, as this does not guarantee a tracking facility throughout the entire delivery process) , or by using the Secure Despatch of Scripts (Yellow Label) service, if appropriate.
  - Once NCFE receive the assessment paper back, you will be able to make a new booking for the candidate.
  - A 'Did Not Attend' does not count as an attempt at the assessment but assessment fees are still applicable.
- All candidates booked onto an assessment on the same date/time, may be permitted flexibility from when papers arrive at the centre until 3 working days after the scheduled assessment day. In cases where the flexibility is applied, centres must:
  - Record and document all changes within the centre for audit purposes.
  - NCFE may ask to view this evidence as part of any centre audit visit. If required, scripts must be stored in the centre's secure room until the assessment date.
- Where it is not possible to take an assessment on the agreed date, and flexibility is not appropriate, centres must:
  - Mark the candidate as 'Did Not Attend' on the Invigilator's Register
  - Return the assessment materials securely through a trackable service such as Royal Mail Special Delivery (we do not consider Royal Mail Recorded Delivery to be an acceptable method of delivery, as this does not guarantee a tracking facility throughout the entire delivery process), or by using the Secure Despatch of Scripts (Yellow Label) service, if appropriate.
- Centres must not add candidate details to the bottom of the attendance register. Candidates who do not have a booking must not be allowed to take an assessment.
- It is the responsibility of the centre to inform candidates of the date and time of their assessment.

- It is permissible for candidates sitting Level 1 and Level 2 assessments to do so in the same room at the same time.

## 7.0 Return of papers

**To be read in conjunction with section 16 of the** Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) **document**

- Assessment papers should be returned to NCFE, within 2 working days, either:
  - by using the Secure Despatch of Scripts (Yellow Label) service, if appropriate,
  - or by Royal Mail Special Delivery or comparable, trackable service from other providers (we do not consider Royal Mail Recorded Delivery to be an acceptable method of delivery, as this does not guarantee a tracking facility throughout the entire delivery process).
  - The above includes any unused papers, because of candidate absence or for any other administrative reason.
- In order to be eligible for use of [The Secure Despatch of Scripts \(Yellow Label\) service](#), centres will need a National Centre Number. The service can only collect papers from registered site addresses associated with the NCN number.
- Centres should attempt, where possible, to return papers directly from the assessment site to NCFE, using a secure delivery method as above.

## 8.0 Results release

**NCFE specific information supplementary to the** Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics) **document**

- NCFE have a 6 working day result turnaround with the exception of when we are releasing new assessment papers to the bank which require awarding.
- The 6 working day turnaround will start once:
  - An on-screen assessment has been uploaded in the assessment platform.
  - A paper-based assessment is received at NCFE.
- To ensure we meet our regulatory requirements we are required to introduce new assessment papers periodically throughout the year. This means that we are unable to offer our 6 working day turnaround for results during this period as assessments will be subject to an awarding process. This allows us to:
  - Maintain the validity and reliability of our assessments.
  - Allow awarding activities to take place so that pass marks can be awarded for our papers.
  - Repurpose assessments into past papers on our website/Surpass
  - Offer additional opportunities for your candidates to sit their assessments where they have exhausted the bank of papers



