Tutor guidance

NCFE Entry Level 3 Digital Functional Skills
QN: 610/2807/1

NCFE Level 1 Digital Functional Skills
QN: 610/2808/3

Contents

Document security

This document should not be distributed to students – it is for centre and tutor use only. All tutors must be familiar with the information in this document along with the information in the Qualification Specifications.

This document should always be kept secure. This document should be read along with the Regulations for Conduct of External Assessment. Assessment conditions and resources are defined in the Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery (QSID). These documents can be found on the NCFE website here.

1. Qualification and assessment overview

1.1 About Entry Level 3 Digital Functional Skills

The Entry Level 3 Digital Functional Skills qualification aims to provide reliable evidence of a learner's achievements against content that is relevant to the workplace and real life. It will provide assessment of a learner's knowledge and skills, as well as their ability to apply these in different contexts, provide a foundation for progression into employment or further education and develop skills for everyday life.

The Entry Level 3 Digital Functional Skills qualification will enable learners to initiate and participate in digital and online activities safely in the workplace and other real-life contexts. At this level, Digital Functional Skills will:

- enable learners to gain confidence and fluency in their use of digital knowledge and skills, and develop a positive attitude towards the use of digital skills
- enable learners to develop an appreciation of the importance of digital skills in the workplace and in real life
- enable learners to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by applying these to complete tasks and activities
- provide a basis for further study, work and life

1.2 About Level 1 Digital Functional Skills

The purpose of this qualification is to allow learners to demonstrate understanding of, and competency in, the digital skills they need for life. It will enable learners to engage with digital services and products in everyday life as well as preparing them for work or further study.

When assessing the subject content, we have set out the skills areas in a way that would enable learners to learn and demonstrate skills appropriate for self-development, and for authentic everyday scenarios. To achieve this, it was determined that learners need to be able to demonstrate skills linked to everyday online tasks, such as carrying out internet searches and participating in a video call. This qualification in Digital Functional Skills will:

- enable learners to increase their confidence and fluency in their use of digital knowledge and skills, and develop a positive attitude towards the use of digital skills
- enable learners to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by applying these to complete tasks and activities
- introduce learners to areas of life and work which may be new or unfamiliar, and tasks and activities that they may encounter throughout their life

- enable learners to develop an appreciation of the importance of digital skills in the workplace and in life generally
- provide a basis for further study, work and life

1.3 Content coverage

The skills for both entry level 3 and level 1 are organised into the following five areas:

1	Using devices and handling information
2	Creating and editing
3	Communicating
4	Transacting
5	Being safe and responsible online

2. Instructions for tutors

2.1 Onscreen assessments

2.1.1 Before the assessment

Centres must complete an online approval form in order to be set up to use our online assessment platform, Surpass. They must ensure that they meet the arrangements detailed below and have the expertise to access, administer and support the assessment. They should also be able to deal with technical issues that may arise during the assessment.

The following instructions apply to all confidential materials relating to the administration and delivery of onscreen assessments.

Centres must:

- have the relevant software installed to administer the assessments and demonstrate that the appropriate security systems are in place to prevent unauthorised access to the assessment materials
- always store electronic assessment materials securely
- ensure that assessment materials are only accessed in accordance with NCFE's Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments
- store learner keycodes securely and only give this to learners at the time of the assessment
- check the identity of each learner and ensure that the correct keycode is issued – the learner is responsible for inputting their keycode and ensuring that the name of the assessment and their details are correct. Further things to consider include that:
  o if the information presented to the learner is incorrect, they must notify the invigilator and close the assessment before starting
  o the invigilator must give the learner the correct keycode in order to access their assessment
  o if a learner sits an assessment in another learner's name (whether it is intentional or not), this may constitute malpractice
- have appropriate security systems and procedures in place to prevent learners using computers/laptops in assessments having unauthorised external communication with other users of computers/laptops

The onscreen platform, Surpass, has a demonstration tool available to show learners the functionality of the platform, allowing them to practise zipping folders and uploading files. It is highly recommended that learners use this demonstration tool to familiarise themselves with Surpass.

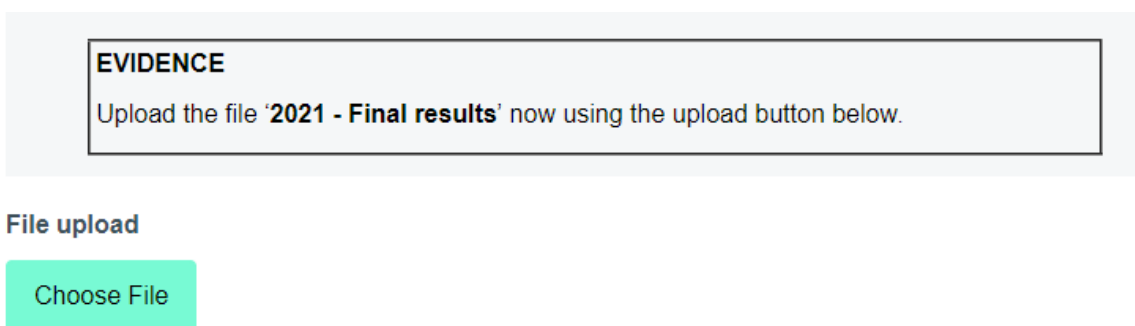## 2.1.2 Taking the assessment

When more than one learner is taking the assessment in the same room, assessments should be scheduled to start at the same time as this will limit disruption.

The invigilator must ensure that the learners are sitting the correct assessment.

Learners must not have access to any materials including books and must not be able to access unauthorised software while undertaking the assessment. The room in which the assessment is being taken should have display materials removed or covered as specified in the NCFE's Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments.

Accessing unauthorised materials during the assessment may constitute malpractice and the learner could be subject to sanctions and penalties in accordance with NCFE's Malpractice and Maladministration guidelines.

Opportunities to upload evidence of completed assessment tasks are indicated to learners during their assessment using green upload buttons and bold text boxes.

EVIDENCE

Upload the file '**2021 - Final results**' now using the upload button below.

File upload

Choose File

A 15-minute optional break has been added for our onscreen and remote invigilation assessments. The break will occur at the end of Section 1. There are no requirements for the learner to take the 15-minute break and they can move straight onto Section 2 at any time.

Onscreen assessments

Breaks must be supervised at all times in accordance with our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments.

Remote invigilation

Learners must remain within the assessment room and in view of their webcam and mobile camera if taking a break. This ensures that when recordings are reviewed, we can be sure that no malpractice has taken place.

2.1.3 At the end of the assessment

All learners' evidence must be uploaded onto Surpass when prompted throughout the assessment. There is no opportunity to upload evidence after the assessment has ended.

Remote invigilation only

Prior to the assessment, you should ensure that learners have been made aware that they must upload any evidence that is asked for as part of the assessment and that any paper used for notes and workings out must be held up to the screen and destroyed (for example, ripped in half at least twice).

Learners must also delete any files they have used during the assessment from their computer, which includes all the pre-release files that were downloaded before starting the assessment.

Failure to complete the above tasks will cause a delay in results being made available; once learners have destroyed their notes and deleted all files they will need to select '**Finish Test'**.

Onscreen assessments only

Following the external assessment, the invigilator is responsible for making sure any materials saved by the learner are deleted completely from the computer used.

3. Entry level 3 assessment and task specific instructions

There are two sections to the external assessment, worth a total of 40 marks. The total assessment time will not exceed 1 hour 30 minutes.

Assessments must not take place until all teaching and learning of the qualification content has been delivered to learners.

Learners sitting the online assessments **must** be able to manage zip files

Learners may be required to access and carry out a search using a search engine.
Learners may be required to follow a link from a search to complete tasks.

3.1 External assessment Section 1: knowledge (12 marks)

This assessment will be available on demand and will be onscreen (through Surpass). It will be externally set and externally marked and is comprised of five multiple-choice questions (MCQs) worth one mark each and five short-answer questions (SAQs), worth between one and three marks each.

Time allowed: 20 minutes.

Subject content area	Section 1
1	1.1, 1.2, 1.8
2	2.4
3	3.4
4	
5	5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5

3.2 External assessment Section 2: skills (28 marks)

This assessment will be available on demand and will be onscreen (through Surpass). It will be externally set and externally marked and comprised of 2 practical tasks. One task will be based on the context of work and the other task based on an everyday life situation.

Time allowed: 1 hour 10 minutes.

Subject content area	Section 2
1	1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.9
2	2.1, 2.2, 2.3
3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3
4	4.1, 4.2
5	5.3

3.3 Marking the external assessment task

All external assessment tasks are set and marked by NCFE. This means that centres must not assess, internally quality assure or provide any feedback to the learner about their performance in the external assessment tasks.

The invigilated external assessment tasks must be treated independently of the teaching of the outline content. No work produced during the teaching should be used as evidence for the assessment.

If learners do not attempt one of the sections, or they fail to reach the minimum standard across all sections, they will receive a fail. The student will then have to resit both sections of the assessment.

4.   Level 1 assessment and task specific instructions

There are two sections to the external assessment, worth a total of 50 marks. The total assessment time will not exceed 1 hour 45 minutes.

Assessments must not take place until all teaching and learning of the qualification content has been delivered to learners.

Learners sitting the online assessments **must** be able to manage zip files.

Learners may be required to access and carry out a search using a search engine.
Learners may be required to follow a link from a search to complete tasks.

4.1 External assessment Section 1: knowledge (15 marks)

This assessment will be available on demand and will be onscreen (through Surpass). It will be externally set and externally marked and comprised of five multiple-choice questions (MCQs) worth one mark each and five short-answer questions (SAQs) worth between one and three marks each.

Time allowed: 20 minutes.

Subject content area	Section 1
1	1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8
2	
3	3.3
4	
5	5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5

4.2 External assessment Section 2: skills (35 marks)

This assessment will be available on demand and will be onscreen (through Surpass). It will be externally set and externally marked and comprised of two tasks. One task will be based on the context of work and the other task based on an everyday life situation.

Time allowed: 1 hour 25 minutes.

Subject content area	Section 2
1	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.9
2	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7
3	3.1, 3.2
4	4.1, 4.2, 4.3
5	

4.3 Marking the external assessment task

All external assessment tasks are set and marked by NCFE. This means that centres must not assess, internally quality assure or provide any feedback to the learner about their performance in the external assessment tasks.

The invigilated external assessment tasks must be treated independently of the teaching of the outline content. No work produced during the teaching should be used as evidence for the assessment.

If learners do not attempt one of the sections, or they fail to reach the minimum standard across all sections, they will receive a fail. The learner will then have to resit both sections of the assessment.

5. Resources

A full list of resources can be found in the qualification specification for each qualification.

Learners are not allowed to bring personal portable storage devices into the assessment (for example, memory sticks, portable hard drives or CDs).

1. Pre-release information

Assessment-specific pre-release documents can be accessed on the NCFE website digitally here then saved on your centre's local network when sitting onscreen and learner local network when sitting through remote Invigilation as early in the academic session as possible.

However, as a minimum they must be downloaded before the learners sit the external assessment.

Whether your learners are sitting their assessment online or through our remote invigilation offer, it is best practice to use the set-up of the pre-release materials as a teaching opportunity for your learners in which you provide support and guidance.

Online assessment

For learners sitting their assessments through our online assessment delivery mode, we would encourage that centres download the pre-release materials independently or as a teaching opportunity with the learner.

Remote invigilation

For learners sitting their assessments through our remote invigilation delivery mode, we would encourage that centres follow the methods below:

- learners can bring their computer equipment into the centre prior to the assessment taking place so that the pre-release materials can be set up on the computer that will be used for the assessment
- where learners are unable to come into the centre, we would encourage that centres use conferencing solutions such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom or any other screen sharing software; this will afford you the opportunity to guide them through the process of setting up the pre-release materials prior to the assessment taking place and as previously stated, provide a beneficial teaching opportunity

Important: throughout the academic session, additional pre-release materials will be added to the bank as we introduce new papers. It is vital that you check here regularly for any new pre-release materials.

We may also remove some pre-release materials from this page if the papers they are associated with are no longer live assessments. You can either remove these from your devices or leave them as they may be brought back at some stage.

6. Time allowance

Learners may not need the full allocation of time; however, it should be noted that each section has a fixed duration. Centres cannot carry forward any time from Section 1 to Section 2. The permitted time must not be increased, unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed for a learner in accordance with the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy, which can be found on the NCFE website.

Learners are not allowed extra time to compensate for machines or networks that run slowly. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that appropriate hardware and software is available to learners. If unforeseen technical difficulties occur, the centre may pause the assessment and contact NCFE for additional technical support.

7. Accessibility and fairness

To promote accessibility and fairness for all learners, and to ensure equality and diversity, we expect centres to be aware of and meet the requirements of relevant NCFE policies and government legislation. You must ensure that:

- all your processes concerned with assessment are carried out in a fair and objective manner
- you continue to adhere to current equal opportunities legislation
- you continue to operate an effective equality and diversity policy with which learners are familiar and that applies to all learners using our products and services

NCFE seeks to provide equal access to assessment for all learners registered for its qualifications. NCFE recognises that reasonable adjustments may be required for assessments, and information is available in our Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Special Considerations Policy on our website.

The responsible person (for example, special educational needs co-ordinator) must ensure that all relevant staff are aware of any reasonable adjustments requirements as per the NCFE policy. In principle, if a learner has an adjustment as part of their normal way of working, a similar arrangement will normally be permitted for external assessment. Please refer to the qualification specific instructions for delivery (QSID) document here for qualification/component restrictions.

9. Qualification level pass grade descriptors

9.1 Entry level 3 qualification level pass grade descriptors

Candidates show some knowledge, understanding and capability regarding digital tasks in the workplace and everyday life and their interconnection.

A threshold candidate (a candidate demonstrating the minimum competence required to pass the qualification) would **generally** be expected to demonstrate the following.

Using devices and handling information	The candidate demonstrates some knowledge of the main features and uses of devices, software and system settings. The candidate can recognise a simple technical problem with a device and apply a solution. The candidate can use devices to navigate online content and search for information, images and videos. The candidate can use files and folders to store and retrieve information.
Creating and editing	The candidate demonstrates the ability to select and work with suitable applications, including word-processed documents or presentations. The candidate can select, edit, amend and format text and numerical data with some success using appropriate software. The candidate can show some evidence of the ability to format and present information in conventional layouts.
Communicating	The candidate can use a device to create and edit contacts and can use these contacts to communicate straightforward messages via text or video. The candidate has some awareness of some of the communication activities that leave a digital footprint.

Transacting	The candidate can complete the most relevant fields in an online form and comply with validation and verification checks with some success.
Being safe online	The candidate demonstrates some knowledge of the need to stay safe and respect others when online. The candidate knows simple methods to protect personal information and privacy and understands the benefits of using security software. The candidate can recognise some physical stresses and some methods to minimise their effect.

9.2 Level 1 qualification level pass grade descriptors

Candidates show some knowledge, understanding and capability regarding digital tasks in the workplace and everyday life and their interconnection.

A threshold candidate (a candidate demonstrating the minimum competence required to pass the qualification) would **generally** be expected to demonstrate the following.

Using devices and handling information	The candidate demonstrates the ability to use devices and handle information by using different methods (for example, internet searches and file searches). The candidate can use files and folders to store and retrieve information. The candidate can perform internet searches, taking into account the appropriateness of their results and resolve common technical problems. The candidate uses a range of appropriate terminology and demonstrates adequate understanding of the limitations relating to file size.
Creating and editing	The candidate demonstrates the ability to select and work with suitable applications, including word-processed documents or presentations. The candidate can select, edit, amend and format text, images and charts and numerical data with some success using appropriate software. The candidate can show some evidence of the ability to format and present information in conventional layouts.
Communicating	The candidate demonstrates the ability to use online communications to engage with emails for a range of contexts and audiences. The candidate can also use instant messages, text messages and social media. The candidate demonstrates the knowledge of the implications caused by digital footprint.
Transacting	The candidate can complete an online form and comply with validation and verification, uploading an attachment. The candidate will know ways to limit the risks involved in online transactions and managing accounts.
Being safe and responsible online	The candidate can identify key rights under data protection laws. The candidate shows some ability to protect personal information and how to avoid exposure to malware. The candidate can recognise some health risks and some ways to minimise their effect.