



Guidance for Assessors: Speaking, Listening and Communicating

**NCFE Level 1 Functional Skills
Qualification in English
603/5058/1**

**NCFE Level 2 Functional Skills
Qualification in English
603/5054/4**

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Summary of changes

This summarises the changes to this guidance document.

Version	Publication date	Summary of amendments
v1.0	August 2023	First publication
v2.0	July 2024	Addition of appendix Amendments to General Information and Delivery Information relating to appendix
v3.0	August 2024	Removal of section in Delivery Information: Recording of assessment Inclusion of section in General Information: Retaining Assessments

Overview

All Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments can be completed face to face or via video conferencing. These assessments are internally assessed and are subject to quality control measures. Assessors must familiarise themselves with the information in this guidance document and ensure full familiarity with the relevant subject content statements (SCS) and qualification specifications.

This guidance document refers to Speaking, Listening and Communicating components for the following qualifications:

NCFE Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English **NCFE Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification in English**

Level 1 Speaking, Listening and Communicating
L1.1.1 Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations.
L1.1.2 Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts.
L1.1.3 Respond effectively to detailed questions.
L1.1.4 Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics.
L1.1.5 Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence.
L1.1.6 Follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject.
L1.1.7 Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium.
L1.1.8 Respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions, using appropriate language for interjection.
Level 2 Speaking, Listening and Communicating
L2.1.1 Identify relevant information from extended explanations or presentations.
L2.1.2 Follow narratives and lines of argument.
L2.1.3 Respond effectively to detailed or extended questions and feedback.
L2.1.4 Make requests and ask detailed and pertinent questions to obtain specific information in a range of contexts.
L2.1.5 Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and effectively, providing further detail and development if required.
L2.1.6 Express opinions and arguments and support them with relevant and persuasive evidence.
L2.1.7 Use language that is effective, accurate and appropriate to context and situation.
L2.1.8 Make relevant and constructive contributions to move discussion forward.
L2.1.9 Adapt contributions to discussions to suit audience, purpose and medium.
L2.1.10 Interject and redirect discussion using appropriate language and register.

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Overview of assessment tasks

Task	Level 1	Level 2
1. Short talk or presentation with question-and-answer session	10 to 15 minutes	10 to 20 minutes
2. Group discussion	10 to 15 minutes	10 to 15 minutes

General information

- Centres can devise their own tasks, but they must comply with the information and guidance provided in this document.
- Topics used for practice assessments must not be used for live assessments.
- Learners must be given an opportunity to plan and prepare for assessments.
- Centres may use NCFE exemplar tasks but must not alter the overall level of demand.
- Learners must demonstrate achievement against all SCS.

Evidence and feedback

Learner observation and assessment record (LOAR)

Assessors must complete a learning observation and assessment record form to document each learner's performance (available on the NCFE website). All sections of the LOAR must be completed.

Assessors should tick each box once to show that a learner has generally demonstrated competence against SCS. They must use the comments box to summarise the learner's overall performance, using short statements and quotations or paraphrase to show how the learner has met the criteria. The learner must achieve against each subject content statement to pass. Assessors should refer to the exemplar LOARs on the NCFE website, which provide guidance on the level of commentary required.

Evidence for all activities, including any preparation notes, must be retained for external quality assurance purposes. Please see the appendix for acceptable evidence. Evidence should be attached to the LOAR form, which must be completed by the assessor within two weeks of the assessment taking place. Forms must be stored securely for sampling by the external quality assurer (EQA).

Any weakness in a given subject content statement in one part of the assessment should be balanced by a demonstration of the same subject content statement, as a strength, elsewhere.

To achieve a pass, learners must generally meet the requirements of the grading descriptors for the level:

- consistently
- effectively and
- to an appropriate degree for that level.

Learners who have not achieved a pass can resit. Feedback should be provided with clear actions outlined on how to improve. Before learners resit this component, further teaching and learning opportunities should be provided.

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Each assessment task is a stand-alone activity and is assessed separately. If the learner fails one of the tasks, they can retake that task. For example, a learner may need to repeat the short talk at Level 1 but not the discussion; the task that is retaken **must** be different from the original task. The assessor will need to use a separate LOAR for the resit.

All records of assessment, pass or fail, should be retained and made available as part of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and EQA sampling.

Retaining assessments

Centres will need to securely retain completed and marked assessment materials, pass or fail, until an EQA has sampled learners and certificates are received, checked and issued to learners.

Note: at least one Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment must be recorded or observed by the EQA for each level assessed, per assessor, per academic session (1 August to 31 July).

The documents listed below must be securely retained for a minimum of 3 years for all learners who have completed their assessment:

- IQA feedback to assessors
- tracking documents for all assessments that have been sat
- documents created relating to the achievement of learners' assessments.

Preparation

Learners must be taught Speaking, Listening and Communicating using a variety of texts with different purposes, including explanations, information texts, narratives and discussions. Assessment topics must be fit for purpose, functional and of interest to learners.

Assessments must be carried out by an appropriate assessor who has been standardised in line with Speaking, Listening and Communicating requirements. Assessors should be inclusive and clear in the delivery of the assessments and ensure they pitch all communication at the level of the learner.

Each assessment task must clearly enable learner performance against all relevant SCS. Learners must be prepared and have a full understanding of the requirements of each assessment task. There is no recommended time frame for preparation, so long as the learner is given sufficient time to research and plan as required.

A learner can take more than one attempt to achieve each of the tasks, but preparation and practice activities should ensure that re-assessment is avoided and that learners are not subjected to repeated assessment unnecessarily.

Groups

The minimum number for a group discussion is three. Groups should not exceed five participants. This number includes the learner being assessed; it does **not** include the assessor. A group of three for a Level 2 Presentation would include a presenter and two audience members. Participants do not need to be learners and may be classed as 'other participant' on the LOAR, but they must be an active participant in the discussion.

Groups may be made up of mixed levels, but assessors must ensure that assessed learners can achieve against all relevant SCS. Where possible, learners should be assessed in groups of the same level.

Level of formality

In all assessment tasks, learners must use semi-formal language appropriate for the teaching and learning situation.

Delivery information

All Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments can be completed face to face or via video conferencing.

Assessment in the classroom

- Ensure assessment activities take place in a suitable environment. If the usual classroom is used, assessors should ensure it is free from distractions and disturbance.
- Assessment must not take place within a lesson and only those taking part in the assessment should be present.
- The learner should demonstrate appropriate behaviours for the teaching and learning situation.

Remote assessment

- Assessors must check that software and hardware are functioning prior to the assessment.
- The web conferencing software must be free from distractions, and only those taking part in the assessment should be present (no pets, family members, friends, partners or dependents).
- In terms of formality, the learner should refrain from smoking, vaping or eating, ensure they are clothed appropriately and that anything visible on camera would not be likely to cause offense to others.

Level 1 assessment guidance

Structure of assessment

The learner will complete two tasks. Each task may be assessed on a separate occasion. The learner must:

- deliver a short talk with question-and-answer session
- take part in a group discussion.

Preparation for the assessment

Assessors may use the example tasks or devise tasks appropriate for learners. For task 2, learners should be informed of the discussion topic or agree on a topic in advance (for example, one week prior to assessment). Learners need to adapt spoken register to meet the needs of different purposes and audiences and must be given opportunities to practise the skills by taking part in presentations and discussions. Learners should be made aware of the assessment structure and its requirements SCS. Learners may refer to written notes in both tasks, but they must not read from a script.

- **Short talk**

In task 1, the presenter must be made aware of the need to invite questions from the audience. Similarly, the audience must be informed of the need to ask the presenter detailed questions and may take notes during the talk to ensure questions are relevant. The presenter should be given time to prepare and make notes or slides if required. Visual aids such as slides, prompts or images may be used, but this is not a requirement. The short talk at Level 1 is a step towards the more formal presentation assessed at Level 2. Learners should therefore be taught how to structure a talk with a clear aim (for example, to persuade, inform, or explain), a brief introduction, a main part and a summary or conclusion.

- **Discussion**

Discussion titles should **not** be generalised questions or statements, such as 'The environment', or 'Is the environment in danger?' The aim of the discussion title is to help learners narrow down their focus and establish a specific point of view. If the title is too generalised, the discussion will have too wide a reach, making it unlikely for opinions to overlap or meaningful consensus to be achieved. Try to frame the discussion topic as a question or a thought-provoking statement; this presents a starting point from which learners might organise their research, thoughts and opinions. It also helps establish where there is consensus within the group and encourages learners to come to a conclusion.

Topics should be functional (relate to work, study, or current / local issues) and must provide learners with the opportunity to achieve against all relevant subject content. Topics that invite multiple points of view are the most appropriate for

discussion. Current news items may provide a stimulus; a themed talk or short video might provide a useful talking point.

Duration of assessment

Suggested timings: **10 to 15 minutes** per task. Both tasks combined should not exceed **30 minutes**. This does not include preparation time. For task 1, each subtask (short talk, question-and-answer session) **must** last a minimum of 4 minutes to enable the learner to cover relevant subject content. The group discussion for task 2 should take between 10 to 15 minutes. For example, a short talk may take 5 minutes and the question-and-answer session may take 8 minutes; both tasks combined do not exceed the recommended maximum of 15 minutes.

Group details

A group must consist of at least three and no more than five learners. Other participants may be called upon to make up the number to three or more. The assessor must not take part in the discussion. However, where group size is limited, or where the learner would otherwise be disadvantaged, the assessor may ask further questions to allow the learner to meet all relevant SCS.

Breakdown of level 1 tasks

Task 1: short talk with question-and-answer session (10 to 15 mins)

The learner must prepare and deliver a short talk, then invite questions about their talk immediately afterwards. Assessors may choose one of the example topics on page 13, set an overarching topic which learners can personalise, or learners can choose their own topic. If the learner chooses the topic, the assessor must ensure this is fit for purpose, suitable for the question-and-answer session, and enables the learner to meet all relevant criteria. The short talk should demonstrate the learner's ability to adapt spoken language for audience and purpose.

The question-and-answer session will provide the learner with a further opportunity to adapt spoken language for different purposes. If required, the assessor may ask further questions to allow the learner to meet all relevant SCS.

In a face-to-face assessment, learners are **not** required to stand or be positioned at the front of the room to deliver their short talk, but they should be able to make eye contact with their audience.

Note on task 1:

Learners should ask relevant questions while participating in question-and-answer sessions as an audience member. This additional activity, mapped against SCS **L1.1.2**: make requests and ask relevant questions, does **not** need to be recorded on the LOAR for task 1. Evidence for this SCS will be recorded in task 2, 'Assessor comments' box.

Task 2: group discussion (10 to 15 mins)

Participants must be made aware of the topic in advance so they can carry out research, if required. Where possible, learners should choose topics which interest them.

All participants must be able to make eye contact throughout the discussion task. Use one of the example topics (page 16) or devise a discussion task appropriate for learners.

Level 1 example tasks

Task 1: short talk with question-and-answer session

Subject content statements tested
Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations.
Respond effectively to detailed questions.
Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics.
Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence.
Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium.

Provide learner with a scenario and topic questions. The learner should choose **one** question (bullet point) from any of the scenarios numbered 1 to 6:

1. People do many different types of jobs. Some people are employed by a company, but others are self-employed. Employees need certain skills and qualities for different kinds of work. Being at work can be a good way to meet new people.
 - What would be the benefits of being your own boss?
 - What skills would be needed in your dream job?
 - What are the challenges of working in a team?
2. Staying fit and healthy is important for our physical and mental wellbeing and people like to keep fit in different ways. Modern technology can help to encourage us to stay fit and include healthy activities in our daily lives.
 - What are the benefits of sharing your fitness goals with others?
 - How does outdoor exercise help our physical and mental health?
 - Are online fitness classes as good as attending a class in real life?
3. There is a saying that 'the best things in life are free', but we all need money to get by. It's important to think about how you can use your money wisely. There are many inventive ways to save money and increase your income.
 - Describe one or two activities people can do from home and explain how they could make money from them.
 - Explain what people could do to save money on everyday costs, such as travel, socialising, and shopping.
 - Explain some advantages of buying and selling second-hand clothes or other items.
 - Describe alternative ways of socialising that could help save people money.
 - Explain the advantages of budgeting and planning how you spend or save your money.

4. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) is used in many workplaces and public spaces to help keep people and property safe and secure. CCTV is even used in the home to see who is at the front door. However, some people do not like to be filmed, as they are concerned that CCTV is an invasion of their privacy.

- Describe some of the positive reasons we use CCTV in workplaces.
- Describe the public places you would expect to have CCTV cameras and give reasons why they are needed.
- Explain some of the advantages of having CCTV in our flats / apartments and shared buildings.
- Describe some of the disadvantages and dangers of CCTV.
- Explain how CCTV could be used to prevent or solve crimes.

5. Technology is a big part of everyday life. It is used for education, as entertainment, to socialise and for work. We can even use technology to run our homes for us. Some people think that we rely too much on technology. Others are excited about how technology can improve lives.

- Describe how new developments, such as driverless cars, may improve how we travel.
- Explain the benefits of using technology in your home, for example, SMART meters, robot vacuums and voice-controlled digital assistants.
- Describe the benefits and challenges of socialising in virtual reality.
- Explain how AI (artificial intelligence) technology, such as chatbots and digital training sessions, may help businesses communicate with their customers and staff.

6. Some people say that being able to drive a car makes life much simpler. However, other people decide to use different forms of transport instead. There are also some others who believe that, in the future, cars will be driverless.

- Describe some of the skills and qualities that make a good driver and explain why they are important.
- Describe some of the costs involved when learning to drive and explain any other issues learners need to think about.
- Describe some advantages and disadvantages of choosing not to learn to drive.
- Explain what effects driving has on people's health, fitness, and sociability.
- Describe your dream car and explain why you would like to own it.

These scenarios correspond with the level 1 discussion exemplars.

Further example tasks for level 1 task 1: short talk with question-and-answer session

Task outline	Details
Informative presentation on recent changes in the relevant sector, for example, 'The impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality sector'.	Use of slides. Presenter gives clear introduction to summarise the purpose of the talk before going into detail (for example, focused on local industry / specific place of work); presenter gives clear information , including some facts and statistics . Presenter gives own opinions about impact, for example, job losses, and says how they feel it will impact on their chances of progressing in this industry. The presenter gives some suggestions and concludes with a summary, main point or question for the audience to consider. The presenter asks for questions.
Describe a special day or a holiday and explain what made it so special.	Use of handwritten notes. Presenter outlines what the topic is about before narrating events in order; the presenter describes one or two specific events in detail, explaining what makes the events so memorable and the day so special. The presenter sums up the 'best bit' then asks for questions.
Explain an interest, talent, or special skill.	Presenter says what the talk is about (for example, to explain a particular skill) before outlining the skill itself and explaining own interest in it in more detail. Presenter shows images to help explain the time and personal investment involved and the equipment needed. Presenter identifies some advantages and disadvantages of keeping up the skill over time. The presenter asks for questions.
Talk on a topic connected with vocational area, for example, dog grooming.	Presenter introduces self and topic before explaining how they became interested. Presenter uses slides to show equipment needed and to demonstrate 'before and after' to show impact of grooming. Presenter describes some of the most difficult tasks before summing up what essential skills a dog groomer must have. The presenter asks for questions.
<p>Other topics for a short talk with question-and-answer session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the positive and negative impact of social media on young people. • Persuasive talk on real-life heroes: explain who the real heroes are in society. Group may select one 'hero' overall after question-and-answer sessions. 	

- Explain why a current news item has a personal impact.
- Persuasive talk about which songs are important and why.
- Describe the most thrilling theme park rides and explain why people like them so much.
- Explain how you should deal with a colleague who is underperforming due to a poor attitude.

Task 2: discussion

Subject content statements tested
Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations.
Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts.
Respond effectively to detailed questions.
Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics.
Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence.
Follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject.
Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium.
Respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions using appropriate language for interjection.

Provide learners with a title and specify the aim, for example:

1. How can employers improve working life?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **three** actions that employers could take to improve working life for their employees. The group should make a recommendation as to the best action that employers could take to make working life better.

2. Can we use technology to improve our health?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **two** advantages and **two** disadvantages of using technology to improve our health. The group should make a recommendation about whether people should or should not use technology to improve their fitness and wellbeing.

3. Cash or cards?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **two** positive and **two** negative effects of using cards instead of cash. The group should make a recommendation about whether people should be able to use cash in the future.

4. Bring CCTV into the classroom.

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify two positive and two negative effects of having CCTV in school and college classrooms. The group should make a recommendation about whether they think schools and colleges would benefit from CCTV in the classroom.

5. Is technology making life easier?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify two positive and two negative effects of using more technology in our work and home lives. The group should make a recommendation about whether or not we should use technology in all aspects of our daily lives.

6. Driverless cars

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify two advantages and two disadvantages of driverless cars. The group should make a recommendation about whether driverless cars are a good idea or not.

These discussion tasks correspond with the level 1 task 1 exemplars.

Further examples for level 1 task 2: discussion

Title	Details
Learning to drive a manual car is pointless.	<p>All new petrol and diesel cars will be banned from sale in the UK in 2030. You only need to learn to drive an automatic because all electric vehicles are automatic.</p> <p>Aim: discuss advantages and disadvantages of learning to drive in an electric car. Reach an agreement as to whether it is better to learn to drive in an electric car.</p>
What can be done about X ? For example: what can be done about water pollution?	<p>Watch a short information film on a topic of special interest before setting the discussion topic, for example:</p> <p>Governments should act to improve water quality and reduce the impact of pollution on health. Discuss the impact of water pollution on health and say what should be done.</p> <p>Aim: describe some effects of water pollution and give suggestions for what should be done to improve things.</p>
What are the advantages and disadvantages of national identity (ID) cards?	<p>Aim: as a group, identify three advantages and three disadvantages of introducing ID cards in the UK.</p>
Britain has too many surveillance cameras.	<p>Is Big Brother always watching you? What are the advantages and disadvantages of CCTV?</p> <p>Aim: reach an agreement to identify three advantages and three disadvantages of CCTV.</p>
Celebrities should be held responsible for the things they promote and the influence they have on what young people buy.	<p>Aim: reach a consensus about the products celebrities should be allowed to promote, and identify some controls needed to monitor advertising to young people.</p>
Community service should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.	<p>Some people think that every young person should do at least 50 hours voluntary work by the age of 19. They want to make it part of the national curriculum.</p> <p>Aim: reach a consensus about whether community service should be compulsory. Identify three advantages and three disadvantages of making community service compulsory.</p>
<p>See level 2 topics for further ideas.</p>	

Level 2 assessment guidance

Structure of assessment

The learner will complete **two** tasks. Each task may be assessed on a separate occasion. The learner must:

- deliver a presentation with question-and-answer session
- take part in a group discussion.

Preparation for the assessment

Assessors may use the example tasks or devise a task appropriate for learners. Learners must be informed of the discussion topic or agree on a topic in advance (for example, one week prior to assessment). Learners must be given sufficient time to research relevant information and to make notes about the points they wish to communicate, such as any facts, dates or references to support their views and to allow them to participate effectively.

Learners need to be able to use language that is effective, accurate and appropriate to context and situation, and must be given opportunities to take part in presentations and discussions to practise the skills. Learners should be made aware that their performance in the assessment tasks is to be assessed against the level 2 SCS 1 to 10. Learners may refer to written notes in both tasks, but they must not read from a script.

- **Presentation**

In task 1, the presenter must be made aware of the need to invite questions from the audience. Similarly, the audience must be informed of the need to ask the presenter detailed and pertinent questions and may take notes during the presentation to ensure questions are pertinent. The learner should be given time to prepare and make notes or slides if required. Visual aids (presentation slides, prompts, handouts) may be used for task 1, but this is not a requirement.

- **Discussion**

Discussion titles should **not** be generalised questions or statements such as 'The environment', or 'Is the environment in danger?' The aim of the discussion title is to help learners narrow down their focus for research and organise their thoughts and opinions. If the title is too generalised, the discussion will have too wide a reach, making it unlikely for opinions to overlap or meaningful consensus to be achieved. Try to frame the discussion topic as a question or a contentious statement; this presents a starting point from which learners might organise their research, thoughts and opinions. It also helps establish where there is consensus within the group and encourages learners to come to a conclusion.

Topics should be functional (relate to work, study or current / local issues) and must provide learners with the opportunity to achieve against all relevant subject

content. Topics that invite research and multiple points of view are the most appropriate for discussion. Current news items or a short talk or video might provide a useful talking point.

Duration of assessment

Suggested timings: **10 to 20 minutes** for task 1 and **10 to 15 minutes** for task 2. Both tasks combined should not exceed **35 minutes**. This does not include preparation time.

For task 1, each subtask (presentation and question-and-answer session) **must** last a minimum of five minutes to enable the learner to cover relevant subject content.

Group details

A group must consist of at least three and no more than five learners. Other participants may be called upon to make up the number to three or more. The assessor must not take part in the discussion. However, where group size is limited, or where the learner would otherwise be disadvantaged, the assessor may ask further questions to allow the learner to meet all relevant SCS.

Breakdown of level 2 tasks

Task 1: presentation with question-and-answer session (10 to 20 mins)

The learner must prepare and deliver a presentation or extended explanation and invite questions about their presentation immediately afterwards. Assessors may choose one of the example topics on page 22, set an overarching topic which learners can personalise, or learners can choose their own topic. If learners choose their own topic, the assessor must ensure it is fit for purpose; the presentation should demonstrate the learner's ability to adapt verbal contributions to suit audience, purpose and medium.

The question-and-answer session will provide the learner with a further opportunity to adapt contributions and use language effectively, accurately, and appropriately. Questions at Level 2 should be challenging, requiring the learner to reflect on what they have said and provide further information or an explanation. If required, the assessor may ask further questions to allow the learner to meet all relevant SCS.

In a face-to-face assessment, learners are **not** required to stand or be positioned at the front of the room to deliver their short talk, but they should be able to make eye contact with their audience.

Note on task 1: learners should ask detailed and pertinent questions while participating in question-and-answer sessions as an **audience** member. This additional activity, mapped against SCS **L2.1.4**: make requests and ask detailed

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and pertinent questions to obtain specific information in a range of contexts, does **not** need to be recorded on the LOAR for task 1. Evidence for this SCS will be recorded in task 2, 'Assessor comments' box.

Task 2: group discussion (10 to 15 mins)

Participants must be made aware of the topic in advance so they can carry out research. Topics should be functional and formal (relate to work, study, or current / local issues) and must provide learners with the opportunity to achieve against all relevant subject content.

All participants must be able to make eye contact throughout the discussion task. Use one of the example topics (page 25) or devise an appropriate discussion task for learners.

Level 2 example tasks

Task 1: presentation with question-and-answer session

Subject content statements tested
Identify relevant information from extended explanations or presentations
Follow narratives and lines of argument
Respond effectively to detailed or extended questions and feedback
Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and effectively, providing further detail and development if required
Express opinions and arguments and support them with relevant and persuasive evidence
Use language that is effective, accurate and appropriate to context and situation
Adapt contributions to discussions to suit audience, purpose and medium
Interject and redirect discussion using appropriate language and register

Provide learner with a scenario and topic questions. The learner should choose **one** question (bullet point) from any of the scenarios numbered 1 to 5:

1. Transport is something we all need and use, whether it is public transport, car or a bicycle. We use transport for work, for shopping for school or college, and for visiting places and people. It is an integral part of our daily lives.
 - What are the main advantages and disadvantages of public transport in your area?
 - Should people use public transport more?
 - How can a good transport system improve businesses?
2. People do many different types of jobs. Some people are employed by a company, but others are self-employed. Employees need certain skills and qualities for different kinds of work. Being at work can be a good way to meet new people.
 - Do you have to live in a big city to access the highest paid jobs?
 - What skills and qualities do you need to be an entrepreneur?
 - Do you think robots can replace people in the workplace?
 - What are the benefits of employers providing training for staff?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of working from home?
3. Staying fit and healthy is important for our physical and mental wellbeing and people like to keep fit in different ways. Modern technology can help to encourage us to stay fit and to include healthy activities in our daily lives.
 - Should indoor gyms be free for people to use?
 - Has technology changed competitive sport?
 - What improvements would you make to your local park to help you exercise there?
 - Do famous people influence how we exercise and keep fit?

4. There is a saying that 'the best things in life are free', but we all need money to get by. It's important to think about how you can use your money wisely. There are many inventive ways to save money and increase your income.
- Is it important to save money as well as spend it?
 - What advice would you give to someone looking for a budget-friendly holiday?
 - Are some professions paid too much money?
 - Is learning about money management as important as learning maths?
 - Does shopping online help us to save money?
5. Many people enjoy taking a day out or going on a holiday. This allows people to see new things or to spend time with friends and family. Some people like to take this time to relax, while others prefer trips to be more exciting.
- What are the benefits of visiting different countries?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking day trips to historic places?
 - How can people enjoy a holiday on a limited budget?
 - What different types of activities can people do on a day trip?
 - How does going on holiday abroad impact the environment?

These scenarios correspond with the level 2 discussion exemplars.

Further examples for level 2 task 1: presentation with question-and-answer session

Task outline or topic	Presentation details
<p>Explanatory presentation on changes in the relevant sector, for example, 'The long-term impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality sector'.</p>	<p>Use of slides with bullet points and images to prompt the learner and / or illustrate points. Presenter gives clear introduction with clear aim before describing specific details (for example, a focus on effect on a local business and a well-known business, which may be familiar to the audience); presenter explains impact using research: facts and statistics. Presenter draws this information together and presents own opinions, aiming to persuade audience of the severity and the long-term impact on this industry before concluding and identifying the three or four key points for the audience to consider. The presenter asks for questions.</p>
<p>Informative and descriptive presentation on a topic of special interest to the presenter and / or a personal skill connected with vocational area (for example, dog grooming).</p>	<p>Use of 'before and after' images and images of equipment on slides. Handwritten brief notes on A4. Presenter gives clear introduction with clear aim before explaining own interest in the topic in more detail (how learner became interested / got involved). Presenter uses images as a springboard to describe skills and qualities needed, tools required, and some common problems (uses anecdote and own opinion to engage the audience with own experiences). Presenter emphasises key points such as the level of skill and amount of work involved to convince the audience of the motivation, hard work and patience needed to work in this role. The presenter asks for questions.</p>
<p>Persuasive presentation about a local business, project, group, or person, emphasising why they deserve an award / honour / public praise. Presenters may judge which is the most convincing presentation.</p>	<p>Use of slides with images and basic facts / statistics to prompt the learner. Presenter gives clear introduction, for example, reasons for choosing this business and name of business or person. Presenter gives key facts / information and explains certain points in detail, for example how / why / when / where, aiming to convince the audience that their choice is deserving of an award / merit. Presenter explains own point of view and concludes with key achievements / merits, before asking for questions.</p>

Other presentation topics:

Explanatory / informative:

- The importance of maintaining open and honest communication at work
- Why new year's resolutions don't work / How new year's resolutions can work
- What are the challenges faced by young carers in the UK?
- The effect of working long hours / shifts on productivity and decision making
- How to be safe when... / Dos and Don'ts when... (working out at the gym, riding a dirt bike, being interviewed, working 'front of house', and so on)
- Persuasive:
What are your strengths and areas for improvement as part of your application for X role?
- Why the UK should abolish the monarchy
- Why military service should be compulsory for all 18-year-olds

Task 2: group discussion

Subject content statements tested
Identify relevant information from extended explanations or presentations
Follow narratives and lines of argument
Respond effectively to detailed or extended questions and feedback
Make requests and ask detailed and pertinent questions to obtain specific information in a range of contexts
Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and effectively, providing further detail and development if required
Express opinions and arguments and support them with relevant and persuasive evidence
Use language that is effective, accurate and appropriate to context and situation
Make relevant and constructive contributions to move discussion forward
Adapt contributions to discussions to suit audience, purpose and medium
Interject and redirect discussion using appropriate language and register

Provide learners with a title and specify the aim, for example:

1. How important is it to have a good transport network?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify the three main reasons it is important to have a good transport network. The group should make a recommendation as to how transport systems could be improved.

2. How can employers improve working life?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **three** actions that employers could take to improve working life for their employees. The group should make a recommendation as to the best action that employers could take to make working life better.

3. Can technology improve our health?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **two** advantages and **two** disadvantages of using technology to improve our health. The group should make a recommendation about whether people should or should not use technology to improve their fitness and wellbeing.

4. Cash or cards?

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **two** positive and **two** negative effects of using cards instead of cash. The group should make a recommendation about whether people should be able to use cash in the future.

5. Taking time off makes you more efficient in the long run.

Aim: the group should aim to reach an agreement to identify **three** benefits of taking time off from work or study to do other things, such as days out with friends or a holiday. The group should give examples and make a recommendation as to the most important benefit of taking time away from study and work.

These discussion tasks correspond with the level 2 task 1 presentation exemplars.

Further examples for level 2 task 2: discussion

Title	Details
The official retirement age should be set at 65 for men and women.	<p>State pension ages are rising around the world. In the UK the State Pension age is currently 66 years old for both men and women but this will go up again from 6 May 2026.</p> <p>Aim: reach a consensus as to the official retirement age.</p>
Reach a consensus on the top five essential tips for interview preparation.	<p>Interviews can be nerve-racking for some. Good preparation is very useful. Discuss what things to prioritise when preparing for an interview and explain why.</p> <p>Aim: reach a consensus on the top five tips.</p>
Celebrities should be held to account for the things they promote and the influence they have on what young people buy.	<p>Aim: reach a consensus about the products celebrities should be allowed to promote, and identify some controls needed to monitor advertising to young people.</p>
Is Google a 21 st century spy? Invasive technology has killed privacy.	<p>When the supermarket knows what you're having for tea before you do, a line needs to be drawn so our private lives stay private.</p> <p>Aim: describe some invasive technologies and provide suggestions for ways people can protect themselves.</p>

Other discussion topics:

- In what ways has social media had an impact on crime and policing?
- Do celebrities have too much influence on young people?
- What use are 'good manners' in the 21st century?
- Do we rely on charities to take responsibility for citizens in need? Discuss the role of charities in dealing with social issues in the UK.
- What might our role be in changing current attitudes towards older people?
- Should all workers join a union? Discuss advantages and disadvantages.
- How important are numeracy and literacy in the workplace?
- What are the main barriers to communication in the workplace and how can we address them?

See also level 1 discussion topics for further ideas.

Appendix

For external quality assurance purposes, centres **must** provide evidence of each activity assessed. If the learner chooses their own topic for task 1, the assessor must ensure it is fit for purpose prior to assessment:

Each assessment task must clearly enable learner performance against all relevant SCS. Each task must enable the learner to meet the needs of the purpose / audience / medium.

The question brief for the short talk or presentation and the topic of discussion must be shared with the learner **at least one week** before the assessment. Following the assessment, it should be retained and attached to the LOAR.

Level 1

Task 1: short talk

- Scenario / context / topic
- Purpose (for example, persuade, inform, explain)

Task 2: discussion

- Question / thought-provoking statement that encourages multiple points of view
- Aim / purpose

Level 2

Task 1: presentation / extended explanation

- Scenario / context / topic
- Purpose (for example, persuade, inform, argue, explain)

Task 2: discussion

- Title / topic (for example, question or contentious statement that is functional and formal)
- Aim / purpose

NCFE Level 1 Functional Skills Qualification in English (603/5058/1)
NCFE Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification in English (603/5054/4)

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