NCFE Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics

(603/5055/6)

Getting ready to take Level 1

Learner Workbook

Name	
Tutor	

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L1.N10 Order and compare decimals

Learning objective

- Read, write, order and compare decimals up to three decimal places

Key words for this element

- Decimal point
- Place value

Decimal numbers are covered in previous chapters but now we will look at them in more detail.

So, three decimal places is exactly what it sounds like – there are three digits to the right of the decimal point.

Here's how the number 2.543 breaks down.

2	.	5	4	3
unit	decimal point	tenths	hundredths	thousandths

If you were reading this number out loud, you would start at the very left with the number before the decimal, then read the decimal as 'point' and then read the following numbers individually. It would sound like this:

'Two point five four three'

What about the number 246.738?

'Two hundred and forty-six point seven three eight'

Useful tip:

Whenever we write money amounts and we use a decimal to separate the pounds from the pence, you wouldn't read the decimal out loud. So, £12.45 would read as

'Twelve pounds forty-five'

Comparing decimals

When comparing decimal numbers, you always start with the first number on the left.

You would then move through the numbers, reading from left to right, comparing each number as you go. Any number that is bigger means that decimal number is greater.

If any number is the same, then continue to compare the numbers in the next place value. If these values are the same again, then continue to move down the place values to the right until we find the first number that is different. If no difference between the two numbers is found, then the numbers are equal.

units	decimal point	tenths	hundredths	thousandths
1	.	3	4	6
1	.	3	6	6
same		same	6 is bigger	

Quick check

Which of the two numbers is greater, 1.346 or 1.366?

We start with the unit value. The number is the same, 1

We continue to compare the numbers in the tenths place value. The number is the same, 3

We continue to compare the numbers in the hundredths place value. Since 4 is smaller than 6, then 1.366 is the bigger number.

It is critical that we compare the same place values of the two numbers, even if the number of digits is different.

We can use the symbols < (is less than) and > (is greater than) to compare decimal numbers. The number on the wider, open side of the symbol will be the bigger number.

The numbers above can be written as 1.366 > 1.346.

Useful tip:

If the numbers are different lengths, you can fill in the gaps with zeros if it helps. For example, compare the numbers 12.21, 12.221, 12.2.

1	**2**	**.**	**2**	**1**	**0**
1	**2**	**.**	**2**	**2**	**1**
1	**2**	**.**	**2**	**0**	**0**
same	**same**		**same**	**2 is the biggest**	

Practice skills

Answer the following questions

1. Identify the biggest decimal number in each set by circling it
   a. 10.525 10.522 10.055 10.015 10.552
   b. 2.7 2.2 2.9 2.5 2.8
   c. 8.72 8.7 8.75 8.88 8.79

2. Identify the smallest decimal number in each set by circling it
   a. 3.96 3.06 3.66 3.99 3.69
   b. 4.443 4.343 4.333 4.434 4.324
   c. 7.001 7.101 7.110 7.100 7.111

3. Put the following decimal number sets in order from smallest to biggest
   a. 14.78 46.1 25.5 14.8 32.32
   b. 37.44 9.32 16.49 9.67 37.91

4. At a national swimming competition, competitors were racing to get the best time for the 100m backstroke race. Nathan got 51.84 seconds, Simon got 51.88 seconds, Harvel got 51.96 seconds, Kieran got 51.85 seconds and Joshua got 51.95 seconds.
   Put the swimmers in order starting with the fastest.