

Underpinning skills (UPS) and problem-solving (PS) question bank resource

To support the transition to the new style assessments for FS maths, NCFE have created a question bank of UPS and PS questions.

It isn't the same as a full assessment but a bank of questions that can be used in teaching and learning sessions to help support learners.

The materials are broken up into UPS and PS and by section, so the appropriate questions can be selected, depending on the needs of the learner.

The mark schemes are also provided and are broken down in the same way as the questions.

Mark scheme guidance

The Mark Scheme provides the following information:

- section information
- question number
- total marks available per question (top row, shaded) followed by:
 - attribution of individual marks per question
 - problem solving (PS) and underpinning skill (UPS) attribution
 - process / method or answers
 - additional or alternative evidence
 - indicative of the SC attribution
 - any additional guidance, as required.

To support the valid, reliable and consistent marking of learner evidence, the following abbreviations are applied throughout the Mark Scheme:

Annotation	Explanation and use
FT	'Follow through' marks are applied when the method uses the learner's answer from a previous step either from a correct method or an attempt at a method.
OE	'Or equivalent' marks are available for the justification of the answer being presented in a different form to the Mark Scheme (for example, 0.5 or $\frac{1}{2}$).
CAO	'Correct answer only'
Their	'Their' refers to the learner's own derived values.
Seen	'Seen' refers to the requirement to see the stated value in the learner's response or working out.
Imp	'Implied' refers to the learner's response implying correct working out used but not seen.
Brackets	Indicates units are not required in final answers or for answers seen within working.

BOD	'Benefit of doubt' is where learner handwriting may be difficult to interpret but previous working may indicate correct final answer.
Shaded	Indicates requirements for full marks to be awarded.

Functional Skills Maths – Mark Scheme Guidance

Mark Scheme wording	Examiner guidance
Accept any correctly rounded value	If a learner's given value is correctly rounded from an accurate value that is not seen, then the mark can be awarded as accurate value is implied. If original value is seen but not accurate, then the mark is not awarded.
Attempt	This will be specified in the Mark Scheme as to what is accepted for attempt.
Commas and decimal points	The incorrect use of commas and decimal points is condoned in a learner's working, but where it is a final answer then it must be correct. If the final answer is a decision comment, then incorrect use of commas and decimal points will be condoned.
Correct working	Correct methods and use of correct values and correct final answers are required.
Crossed-out working	Working that has been crossed out and not replaced by any other working can be marked.
Decimal values	Decimal values that are rounded or truncated may be awarded, unless the Mark Scheme specifically states a required value, then it will be indicated on the Mark Scheme. Original value not required to be seen unless Mark Scheme states this as CAO.
Frequency tables that start groupings at zero, which are then unequal when task asks for equal groupings	Marks to be awarded will be indicated on the Mark Scheme. Learners should only be penalised one mark.
Fully correct / correct method	Fully correct method must be both correct method and correct values Correct method – FT marks may be awarded if correct method and correct values in question with their FT value.
Graphs drawn with scale not starting at zero and no broken line to indicate so	If scale does not start at zero then it must show bottom value and, if consistent, maximum of one mark lost.
Graphs with axis the other way round	Graphs may be drawn either way.
Graph's tolerance in plotting	Decimal range at ± 0.5 gridline will be included on the Mark Scheme.
Guidance for marking papers where learners use : for division and . for multiplication	Marks to be awarded.

Mark Scheme wording	Examiner guidance
Incorrect calculation shown, for example, a division shown but learner's answer would indicate that they have multiplied	Correct answer seen implies correct method used, so marks can be awarded.
Incorrect value shown in a calculation, but final answer indicates that correct value was used	Correct answer seen implies correct method used, so marks can be awarded.
Misreads and transcriptions	Marks not awarded.
More than one answer in final answer box	If two answers are given that are equivalent, then mark can be awarded. One of the values must be as requested in the question.
Presentation of working involving brackets	Correct substitution of given numbers means mark can be awarded even if brackets are missing.
Rounding and / or truncating of values, final and mid task	Functional rounding or truncating mid-task and for values where final answer is a decision shall be awarded the marks.
See below	May be used in two situations on the Mark Scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where there are multiple options for the solution and / or final answer and guidance will be indicated on the Mark Scheme • where the task indicates, 'You must show all your working'.
Show all your working	Tasks will be, 'See Below' with guidance on the Mark Scheme.
Units, in brackets	Units, if given by the learner, can be ignored if units are indicated on the Mark Scheme.
Units, if given	Units to be ignored.
Values in brackets	Figures in brackets must be correct if seen. If accurately rounded or truncated values are seen, then they may be awarded marks, but additional guidance will need to be checked.
'Yes' and 'no' responses	If learner's comment clearly implies the correct answer of 'yes' or 'no', without specifically stating it, then marks can be awarded.