



# Reformed Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Senior Examiner's Report July 2021

## Overall learner performance

It has been a difficult year for learners and centres. Centres have not only had to introduce a relatively new qualification, the Reformed Functional Skills English Qualification (RFSQ) with new subject content, but both learners and centres have also suffered disruption to their teaching and learning programmes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It has therefore not been a typical year.

Learner performance has been mixed. Some learners were well prepared and gained very high marks. The majority of learners performed reasonably well. However, some learners were clearly not ready for assessment and gained very few marks, indicating that they had not been taught to the subject content.

## Areas requiring improvement for weaker learners

At both levels, in all components, areas requiring improvement tend to be those Scopes of Study (SoS) which have been added to the RFSQ when compared to the legacy Functional Skills English qualifications.

### **L1 Reading**

- Identifying fact and opinion (SoS 11).
- Identifying how the author uses language (SoS 12). Some learners confuse this with identifying features that make the text easier to read – the second part of SoS 12.
- Comparison (SoS 10).
- Answering all parts of a question. (For example, if a question requires a learner to identify the features used and give examples, many learners EITHER identify the features OR give examples but do not do both, therefore lose valuable marks.)

### **L2 Reading**

- Identifying style and purpose (SoS 19). Some learners confuse this with identifying the type of document.
- Identifying bias (SoS 17). If asked which document is most or least biased, the learner will need to consider all texts, not just the one selected.

- Answering all parts of a question. (For example if a question requires learners to identify the writer's views and explain how they are conveyed, many learners EITHER identify the writer's views OR explain how they are conveyed. Very few learners do both as required by the question, again losing valuable marks.)

### **L1 Writing**

- Using the correct format required by the task (SoS 24).
- Including an appropriate level of detail (SoS 23).
- Writing in complex sentences (SoS25).
- Accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar (SoS 19, 20 & 21).

### **L2 Writing**

- Using the correct format required by the task (SoS 25).
- Including an appropriate level of detail (SoS 24).
- Constructing complex sentences (SoS 28).
- Accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar (SoS 20, 21 & 22).

### **Advice for centres**

- Teach the relevant Subject Content\* including all SoS\*\*.
- Ensure learners are aware of the requirements of the Subject Content, particularly where new requirements have been introduced by Ofqual. For example
  - L1 Reading learners now need to be able to compare, to distinguish between fact and opinion (SoS 11) and to recognise vocabulary associated with specific types and purposes of texts (SoS 16).
  - L2 Reading learners now need to be able to compare how ideas and opinions are conveyed in different texts (SoS12), understand the relationship between textual features and devices and how they can be used to shape meaning (SoS 14), identify levels of formality and bias SoS 17), and identify different styles of writing and writer's voice (SoS 19).
  - L1 Writing learners now need to be able to use commas and possessive apostrophes (SoS 19), use definite and indefinite articles (SoS 20), write text of an appropriate length (SoS 23), use format appropriate for audience and purpose (SoS 24), write accurately in complex sentences and use paragraphs where appropriate (SoS 25).
  - L2 Writing learners now need to be able to use colons, commas, inverted commas apostrophes and quotation marks (SoS 20), be able to use a range of tenses and modality devices (SoS 21), write text of appropriate length (SoS 24), organise information using appropriate format and structure for the purpose (SoS25), use organisational markers effectively (SoS 26), construct complex sentences consistently and accurately, and use paragraphs (SoS 28).
- Teach exam technique (e.g. reading and answering all parts of a question) and time management (e.g. using mark allocations to gauge how much time should be spent on each question).
- Encourage learners to take a practice test on the XAMS system before they take a live test, this can be located by following this [link](#).

\* Department for Education. Subject Content functional skills.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-subject-content-english>)

\*\* Scope of Study (pages 13 – 16 of the Subject Content)

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