

OCR Functional Skills Testing Windows

Levels 1 and 2 English, ICT and Maths

09876, 09877, 09865, 09866, 09498, 09499

THIS IS A LIVE DOCUMENT AND IS
CONTINUALLY UPDATED

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1 OCR Functional Skills External Tests

When offering Functional Skills external tests, centres must undertake certain responsibilities to ensure the proper conduct of examinations and so should follow the JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations*. OCR Functional Skills tests are subject to the JCQ inspection process.

OCR's Functional Skills external tests are available within a five-day, Monday to Friday testing window (except where the window coincides with a bank holiday, for example in the January 2011 testing window). As the JCQ *Instructions* are written mainly with timetabled examinations in mind, we have produced this additional guidance to help you apply the JCQ *Instructions* in the context of a testing window. This guidance also complements the information within the *OCR Admin Guide: Functional Skills* (Section 7: Examination Arrangements). For example, dates of testing windows, entry deadlines and results issue dates are all provided within the *OCR Admin Guide: Functional Skills*.

These instructions apply to the following OCR Functional Skills qualifications (qualification code shown in brackets):

- ICT Level 1 (09876)
- ICT Level 2 (09877)
- Mathematics Level 1 (09865)
- Mathematics Level 2 (09866)
- English Reading and English Writing Level 1 (09498)
- English Reading and English Writing Level 2 (09499).

For ICT and Maths, there will be one test for each qualification for each testing window. For English, there will be one test for Reading and one test for Writing at each level for each testing window.

Teaching during testing window

It is very important for the integrity of these qualifications that learners do not gain an unfair advantage, or are not disadvantaged, because of when they take their test within the window. Teaching of the Functional Skills programme of learning for learners taking the test during the testing window must, therefore, be suspended during the testing window (any learner not taking the test in the window can still be taught). It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that teaching staff know that teaching must be suspended.

Security of the test material

Once you have made your entries, you will be sent test papers and materials approximately **one week** before the testing window. Please note that hard copy attendance lists will not be sent to you; these can be printed from our secure extranet, Interchange, for use in the exam room.

Assessment material is highly confidential and should be secured as per the JCQ *Instructions*. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the security of the examination(s) is maintained at all times. Please see section 1 of the JCQ *Instructions* for more information.

All question papers must be accounted for and held securely by the centre until the end of the five-day window. Copies may not be issued to anyone, including teaching staff, during the window.

Timetabling of tests

Centres are responsible for timetabling Functional Skills tests. It is also the centre's responsibility to inform candidates of the date and time of their test(s). Tests can be conducted at any time within the testing window (ie, tests can only begin after midnight of the first day of the testing window (normally 00.00hrs Monday morning) and must be completed by midnight of the last day of the testing window (normally 00.00hrs Friday night)).

If you have a large number of candidates, the testing window gives you the flexibility to spread the tests over five days. It also allows you to accommodate your centre's and individual candidates' needs. For example:

- You can timetable tests back-to-back and hold tests for more than one qualification on the same day.
- Candidates can take tests for more than one qualification and at more than one level within the same testing window.

Please note: Candidates cannot re-sit a test within the same testing window, ie, they cannot take the same test twice.

Supervising the candidates

Candidates who are taking tests must be supervised in the exam room. However, candidates who will be taking or who have already taken a test within a testing window do not have to be supervised before and after their test(s). This is a difference from the *JCQ Instructions*; except for this and other differences specified in *Summary of General Differences* (section 3 of this document), tests must be conducted and supervised as per the *JCQ Instructions*.

Although candidates who will be taking or who have already taken a test within a testing window do not have to be supervised before and after their test(s), centres must take every reasonable action to ensure that staff and candidates do not engage in any unfair or dishonest practice before, during or after the test that would result in any candidate having an unfair advantage over another candidate or being at a disadvantage. This would include, but not be limited to:

- Candidates communicating or attempting to communicate the contents of their tests with anyone before the end of the testing window
- Candidates who are due to sit the same tests after their peers trying to elicit information on the content of the tests
- Publishing the content of the tests, or inferences as to the content of the test, unless authorised by OCR.

Candidates should be informed of these instructions before the testing window begins and invigilators should remind candidates of this at the beginning of each test.

Candidates who arrive late

All tests must be conducted within the testing window. (Tests can only begin after midnight of the first day of the testing window (normally 00.00hrs Monday morning) and must be completed by midnight of the last day of the testing window (normally 00.00hrs Friday night)).

Candidates who have a scheduled test and arrive late may (according to the centre's organisational arrangements):

- Be given the full time for the test, **or**
- Be rescheduled for another time and date within the testing window, **or**
- Be entered in another testing window.

Candidates who have a scheduled test and arrive too late to complete the test by 00:00hrs on the last day of the testing window must be entered in another testing window.

Centres are responsible for communicating their approach for Functional Skills tests to staff, invigilators and candidates.

After the test

Attendance lists for OCR's Functional Skills assessments must be submitted online via Interchange. Attendance lists should be submitted once the final test **for that subject and level**, in that window, has been completed. For example:

- Teaching group one sit Maths Level 1 on Monday morning.
- Teaching group two sit Maths Level 1 on Wednesday afternoon.

If no other candidates are due to sit Maths Level 1 in that window, the attendance register **for Maths Level 1** should be submitted on Wednesday afternoon, after that test has finished.

Details of how to submit attendance registers online are provided in the *OCR Admin Guide: Functional Skills*.

The completed scripts must be securely sealed and returned to OCR using the examiner labels provided. (If you require script return envelopes or replacement examiner labels, please request them via the OCR Key Skills team at keyskillsopsteam@ocr.org.uk.)

Please do not wait until the end of the testing window to return scripts. You can return them daily if you have timetabled your candidates across the five-day window. If a test is taken on the last day of the testing window, candidate scripts must be returned to OCR on the next working day, and all candidate scripts must have been returned to OCR by the next working day after the last day of the window.

All question papers used by candidates during the test must be returned to us with the completed scripts.

All question papers not used by candidates must be returned to us with the completed scripts or destroyed.

The content of question papers must not be used as past papers, published, copied or communicated in any way even after the testing window has ended.

The integrity of these qualifications and the security of the tests must be maintained at all times. OCR will monitor candidate performance to determine if there is any evidence of candidates gaining an unfair advantage over others. If evidence suggests that this is the case it will be treated as suspected malpractice.

2 Specific Test Instructions

ICT tests

Test duration

The test is 2 hours at both Levels 1 and 2. Each test is divided into two parts (which must be taken in one sitting as one test):

- Part A – 15 minutes
- Part B – 1 hour 45 minutes.

Resources permitted for candidates in the examination room:

Candidates will need access to a computer, a printer and the Internet. Candidates will need a pen with black ink.

Use of data files

Candidates will have to copy and paste or import the data provided into appropriate software applications that they have selected during the test, to carry out the tasks set. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that candidates are prepared to do this.

OCR will provide the data required for tests in the following formats:

- Microsoft 97–2003 document (.doc)
- Text files (.txt)
- Image files are supplied as .jpg
- Video clips are supplied as .mpg, .mp4 and .wmv
- Sound clips are supplied as .mp3

Centres must ensure that the data files are in a format that suits how their candidates have been prepared. For example, candidates can copy and paste the data provided in Microsoft Word into a spreadsheet application so that they can process numerical data, display numerical data in a graphical format and/or enter, search, sort and edit records. However, some database applications do not allow this facility and candidates will need to import the data from a text file.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the data files are saved in a place that is accessible to each candidate to work with during the test. The files **may** be provided **by OCR** in a folder structure (e.g. two folders both containing files). **If provided in a folder structure**, the files must be presented to the candidate in this format.

During the test

The test is divided into two parts – Part A and Part B. Both parts must be taken in one sitting as one test, but candidates must start with Part A.

Where a question requires a written response, space is provided. Candidates may word process their answer and provide a printout. Word processed answers must be numbered correctly, eg '2c'.

For Part A:

- Candidates must be given the Part A Task and the answer booklet only.
- Space has been provided in the Part A booklet for candidates to write their answers but answers may be word processed if preferred. Candidates must ensure that each answer is numbered correctly eg '1b'.
- The candidate will require access to the Internet. Candidates may be required to save or print out information they have found on the Internet that they will then use as part of the Part B task(s).
- At the end of the 15 minutes allowed for Part A, the centre should disable the Internet before the Part B task and answer booklet are given out. The candidate should keep their work from Part A.
- When the Internet has been disabled, the candidate can be given Part B of the test.

For Part B:

- Candidates must not have access to the Internet during the time allowed (1 hour 45 minutes) for Part B. Candidates should not be able to send or receive emails but **must have access to email software (such as Outlook or Outlook Express) so that they can demonstrate their ability, for example, to organise attachments when sending an email.**
- **For Level 2 only:** Candidates should be given the Part B resource booklet at the same time as the Part B task and answer booklet.
- For Part B of the test, candidates must use data provided by OCR. Candidates should not have access to the data files after printing has been carried out.

At the end of the test

Part A and Part B task and answer booklets should be collected. The Part A and Part B task and answer booklets for each candidate must be kept together when sent to the examiner.

Printing may be carried out after the time allocated for the assessment.

Candidates must check that their name appears on **every** printout. Printouts must be inserted into the answer booklet in the correct order and handed it to the supervisor when both Part A and Part B of the test have been completed. **Printouts without a name will be awarded no marks.** Candidates can handwrite their name on each document.

Maths tests

Test duration

The test is 1 hour and 30 minutes at both Levels 1 and 2.

Resources permitted for candidates in the examination room

- Pen with black or blue ink
- Calculator (details of the type of calculator allowed can be found in the JCQ *Instructions*)
- HB pencil
- Eraser
- Ruler graduated in centimetres and millimetres.

During the test

There is no choice of questions in either paper at Level 1 or 2.

Learners should write in blue or black ink; pencil will not be accepted (except for diagrams).

The answers must be written in the spaces provided on the test paper.

English tests (Reading and Writing)

Test duration

- At Level 1, 50 minutes for Reading and 50 minutes for Writing.
- At Level 2, 55 minutes for Reading and 55 minutes for Writing.

Resources permitted for candidates in the examination room

- A pen with black ink **or** access to a computer and printer to print out their responses, which should be firmly attached to the answer booklet.
- For the Reading test, candidates may use a dictionary and spell/grammar check facilities.
- For the Writing test, candidates may use a dictionary and spell/ grammar check facilities.

Instructions specific to managing a five-day window

Where a candidate is entered for both the Reading and Writing tests, they can:

- Sit the papers one after the other within the same testing window, in any order, **or**
- Sit the papers at different times/dates in the same testing window*, **or**
- Sit the papers in different testing windows*.

*Relevant JCQ guidelines must be adhered to for both test sittings.

Points to note:

- The invigilator should ensure that the candidate has each paper available to them for only the time allowed for that paper.
- If candidates are sitting both papers together, one paper must be collected at the end of that paper's allowed time before the next is given out.
- It is the responsibility of the invigilator to ensure that the candidate is not allowed more time per test than the time identified on the front of the question paper.
- Where candidates are permitted to use a dictionary, spell check or grammar check facility, the invigilator should ensure that no assistance is given in using these resources.
- An appropriate warning should be given to candidates when the time available for a test has expired.

The question papers for each test are packaged to include all of the necessary materials required to take each test exclusively within the testing window.

At the end of the test

For candidates who have typed their responses using a computer, printing may be carried out after the time allocated for the test.

Candidates **must** check that their name appears on **every** printout. Printouts must be inserted into the answer booklet in the correct order and handed it to the supervisor. Candidates can handwrite their name on each printout.

Speaking, Listening and Communication unit

This is assessed by the centre and externally moderated by OCR. Details on how to conduct this assessment can be found in the English Speaking, Listening and Communication assessment guidance, available on the OCR website.

3 Summary of General Differences

This section provides a summary of the differences between the JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations* and how the OCR Functional Skills tests must be conducted. The instructions described in this document will either be additional to the JCQ *Instructions* or replace them.

JCQ <i>Instructions</i> section title	Section no	Additions or exceptions to JCQ <i>Instructions</i> for Functional Skills five-day testing window
1 Keeping question papers and other examination materials secure	1.9	Within the testing window, centres will set times for tests. Packets of question papers must be opened no earlier than one hour before the first test in the testing window.
2 Timetabling of examinations	2.1	Tests can only take place from midnight of the first day of the testing window (generally 00.00hrs Monday morning) and must be completed by midnight of the last day of the testing window (generally 00.00hrs Friday night).
	2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 2.8	Candidates who are taking tests must be supervised in the exam room; however, candidates who will be taking or who have already taken a test within a testing window do not have to be supervised before and after their test(s).
	2.4	Candidates can only sit a test once within the testing window.
	2.6, 2.7, 2.8 & 2.9	Functional Skills tests must be taken only within the published dates for the testing window.
3 Using calculators		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
4 Resources for examinations		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
5 Accommodation		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
6 Invigilation arrangements	6.1	Invigilators must be familiar with JCQ <i>Instructions</i> and OCR instructions for conducting Functional Skills tests.
7 Identifying candidates		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
8 The people present		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
9 Question papers, stationery, materials and other equipment		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
10. Starting the examination	10.1, 10.2, 10.3	Invigilators must remind candidates that they should not discuss the contents of their test(s) with anyone before the end of the testing window.
11 Supervising the candidates		Candidates who are taking tests must be supervised in the exam room; however, candidates who will be taking or who have already taken a test within a testing window do not have to be supervised before and after their test(s).
12 Candidates who arrive late		Candidates who are not able to start a test at the time scheduled by the centre can take the test at another time and date within the testing window, provided that they will finish their test before 00:00hrs

		<p>on the last day of the window (normally Friday night). Alternatively their test can be rescheduled for another testing window.</p> <p>Candidates who have been offered another date/time for the test within the original testing window must be reminded that they must not engage with any unfair or dishonest practice that would result in them having an unfair advantage over another candidate.</p> <p>Centres are responsible for communicating their approach to dealing with late arrivals for Functional Skills tests to staff, invigilators and candidates.</p>
13 Completing the attendance register		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
14 Leaving the examination room	14.9	<p>All used Functional Skills question papers must be returned to OCR with the completed answer booklets.</p> <p>All unused Functional Skills question papers must be returned to OCR or destroyed. If returning to OCR, please include the unused papers with your completed answer booklets.</p>
15 Malpractice		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
16 Emergencies		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
17 Finishing the examination		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
18 Collecting scripts		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
19 Packing scripts		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
20 Sending scripts		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
21 Unused stationery		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
22 Applications for special consideration		As per JCQ <i>Instructions</i>
23 Supplements		<p>Checklist for invigilators (for written examinations)</p> <p><u>Before the examination</u></p> <p>Invigilators should remind candidates that they must not talk about the content of the test(s) until the testing window has closed.</p> <p><u>After the examination</u></p> <p>Invigilators should remind candidates that they may not take used or unused question papers from the exam room. Used and unused question papers should be collected by the invigilator before candidates leave the examination room.</p>

In addition, teaching of the Functional Skills programme of learning for learners taking the test during the testing window must be suspended during the testing window (any learner not taking the test in the window can still be taught). It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that teaching staff know that teaching must be suspended.