

## Mathematics

Level 1 09865

Level 2 09866

## OCR Report to Centres

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**October 2011**

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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# Functional Skills Mathematics Level 1 (09865)

## Report on the work of the candidates

Many, but not all, candidates had access to a calculator and some showed clear working to support their answers. A few candidates wrote, “used calculator” beside their answers but showed no evidence of the numbers or calculations used.

No credit was given where an answer was clearly incorrect and no method could be seen or where evidence was needed to support an answer.

Most candidates appeared to have adequate time to answer all sections of the paper.

Many candidates did not have appropriate problem solving skills. Weaker candidates did not appear to have experienced solving extended problems using data to support their answers. Significant numbers of responses consisted of opinion around the problem with no calculations to support their stated opinion.

Many candidates could solve simple ratio problems but often showed no working. More able candidates used standard methods.

Most candidates retrieved appropriate information from the Resource Booklet. However, they were not so secure when it came to converting length measurements to a common unit.

Candidates need to remember that, when an outward journey is made, a return trip is often required.

Very few candidates showed a check of their work using a repeat or reverse calculation to score 2 marks in some tasks. A reasonable number of candidates scored 1 mark in each task for completing three or more correct calculations throughout the Task. Some candidates wrote, “checked” or “checked with calculator” after their solutions. This failed to score the checking marks as no evidence for the check was presented.

## Guidance for Centres

- Candidates have up to 2 marks available in each task for checking their work. These marks may be earned for employing any checking procedure at an appropriate point in the task. Such procedures could be: working out the calculation by an alternative means, approximating the figures or using a reverse calculation. It would be in the interest of all candidates to practise such procedures.
- Candidates should use a calculator in the assessment but should also practise recording, ordering and annotating their working. No additional credit is given for working using manual methods rather than a calculator.
- Candidates need to be secure with converting between common units, especially length, such as centimetres and metres.
- Candidates should know that correct money conventions do not include for example £12.3.
- Candidates should practise responding to questions that require them to make and explain decisions and support their answers with evidence. They should realise that, where a significant number of marks are available, calculations and data should be used to support their reasoning.
- Candidates should practise reading and interpreting questions and selecting necessary information from another source.
- Candidates should not record working in Resource Booklets. Examiners cannot give credit to such working.
- Resource Booklets should not be returned with scripts.
- Candidates' scripts should be sent to the examiner in the order that their names appear on Interchange together with an attendance register and the number of scripts written on the front of the package. This should be done on the day that all the assessments have been taken.
- It is a good idea to use the plastic envelopes or bags provided to return the scripts. Paper envelopes often burst with large numbers of scripts in wet weather.
- Scripts should all be sent to the examiner at, or before, the end of the Assessment window.

## Functional Skills Mathematics Level 2 (09866)

### Report on the work of the candidates

Many, but not all, candidates seemed to have access to a calculator and many showed clear working to support their answers.

All candidates appeared to have adequate time to answer the paper.

Most candidates used clear and correct money notations. However, a few still write figures without £ or pence being indicated and some present answers such as £4.5 rather than £4.50. There were very few instances of questions or parts of them not being attempted. Most candidates seemed to have done what they were capable of in all three tasks. The literacy demands of each task did not appear to have an adverse effect on accessibility.

The general standard of basic arithmetic was broadly satisfactory. There were instances of basic errors being made, for example in the order of which to perform divisions. In common with previous sessions, a number of candidates tended to be careless with money notation and units generally, for example a number of candidates were under the false impression that a kilogram was equivalent to 100 grams.

There was minimal evidence, despite the rubric at the beginning of each task, of candidates checking their work or reflecting on their calculations in the course of the task. There were very few instances of any calculation checking – very few candidates showed any evidence of genuine checking or reflection on results achieved.

A number of candidates failed to read questions carefully and so answer them completely - marks were lost, probably needlessly in some cases, because of this. This was particularly noticeable in cases requiring a yes or no decision supported by working. Some candidates still fail to recognise the trigger expressions such as “give your reasons”, “explain all your working” or “write down any assumptions”.

## Guidance for Centres

- Candidates have up to 2 marks available in each task for checking their work. These marks may be earned for employing any checking procedure at an appropriate point in the task. Such procedures could be: working out the calculation by an alternative means, approximating the figures or using a reverse calculation. It would be in the interest of candidates to practise such procedures.
- Candidates should use a calculator in the assessment but should also practise recording, ordering and annotating their working.
- Candidates need to be secure with converting between common units, especially time but also units of length, such as centimetres and metres.
- Candidates should know correct money conventions.
- Candidates should practise responding to questions that require them to make and explain decisions and support their answers with evidence. They should realise that, where a significant number of marks are available, calculations and data should be used to support their reasoning.
- Candidates should practise reading and interpreting questions and selecting necessary information from another source.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**Coventry Office**  
**Westwood Way**  
**Coventry**  
**CV4 8JQ**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**(Skills and Employment)**

Telephone: 024 76 851509

Fax: 024 76 851633

Email: [vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

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**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
Head office  
Telephone: 01223 552552  
Facsimile: 01223 552553