

Assessor Instructions for Functional Skills Controlled Assessments

To be used for:

- **NCFE Entry Levels 1-3 Functional Skills Qualifications in English:**
 - **Speaking, Listening and Communicating**
- **NCFE Levels 1 and 2 Functional Skills Qualifications in English:**
 - **Speaking, Listening and Communicating**

Version 1.5 (April 2021)

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Introduction

Assessors **must** familiarise themselves with this document prior to delivery and assessment of the Speaking, Listening and Communicating controlled assessment of the reformed NCFE Functional Skills English qualifications. This document must also be read in conjunction with the **NCFE Regulations for the Conduct of Controlled Assessments – Functional Skills**.

Assessors must be familiar with the subject content, performance descriptors and the assessment specifications for these qualifications prior to teaching to their learners.

Assessment Overview

Each learner will complete the controlled assessments set by NCFE to create evidence which demonstrates achievement of the required skills standard, coverage and range statements.

Controlled assessments are internally marked and internally quality assured by the centre, and externally quality assured by NCFE.

Centres will need to book all instances of controlled assessments via their Designated Person on the Portal. Upon booking an assessment it must be sat within 6 weeks of the booking date. Please refer to the Steps to booking controlled assessments – Guidance for Centres. Centres can choose the appropriate time, location and date for assessment.

It is allowed that Level 1 and Level 2 Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment activities can be administered at the same time to accommodate mixed level ability learners, where this is required by the centre.

Centres are only able to split SLC assessments where a learner has a reasonable adjustment requirement, and this must be managed in line with NCFE’s Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration policy. If the assessments are split over two sittings, learners must not have access to the work in between specified assessment opportunities, and they are not permitted to work on assessment evidence.

Level	Maximum sittings
Entry 1	1
Entry 2 and 3	2
Level 1 and 2	2: Tasks 1 and 2 must be completed together

All Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments can be completed face-to-face or via video conferencing. Centres must ensure that they are administered in line with the **NCFE Regulations for the Conduct of Controlled Assessments – Functional Skills**.

Information for Assessors

Prior to assessment

NCFE provide controlled assessment packs for centres. All assessment documentation must be stored securely until the date of the assessment and must not be shared with learners.

Assessors must have access to the assessment documents prior to the assessment, and the scenario, topic and aim at Entry Level 3, Level 1 and Level 2 should be shared with learners in advance.

Centres are responsible for scheduling an appropriate date, time and location for a controlled assessment to take place and can book the assessments up to 6 weeks ahead of the assessment date.

Assessment conditions

All controlled assessments must be completed in controlled conditions. Learners should be provided with a quiet, undisturbed assessment location, such as their normal learning area.

For full information on assessment conditions please refer to the following documents available at www.qualhub.co.uk

- **NCFE Regulations for the Conduct of the Controlled Assessments - Functional Skills**
- **NCFE Functional Skills Qualification Specifications**

Resources

Simulated resources can be provided, where appropriate. For example, at Entry Level 1 NCFE may provide an example of a business card for an assessment. However, using a real-life business card may make the assessment more realistic for the learner. Learners should be provided with any other necessary resources, including paper and pens.

Group numbers

On occasions where it's not possible to reach the required minimum of 3 learners, other appropriate persons may take part in the discussions, for example a teaching/support staff or learners' peers as long as they are not due to sit the same assessment at a different time. **Assessors are not permitted to take an active role in the assessment, other than to facilitate.**

Use of ICT

Learners are permitted to use ICT equipment, where appropriate, for research purposes for their controlled assessment. Centres are responsible for ensuring that there are no pre-prepared materials on the hard drive or otherwise that could be accessed by the learner.

As all Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments are required to be recorded, either by audio or visual means, it is important to follow the below technical preparations:

- Preparation may need to be completed before the start of the assessment to ensure the recording equipment is working to an acceptable level.
- Cameras/microphones are set up in a suitable place to ensure quality of recording. Assessors must be able to hear and see both the learner(s) and audience.
- Ensure that all parties have working knowledge of video technology being used and that a reliable Wi-Fi connection is being used.

Note: If a centre becomes aware of an exceptional circumstance where an assessment cannot be recorded, they must contact their EQA to discuss this in advance of the assessment and record details on the Assessment Tracking Document. Exceptional circumstances include:

- Learners with safeguarding concerns
- Learners with vulnerabilities

Contextualisation

Centres may contextualise (amend/change) scenarios in order to make the assessment context more relevant and engaging for their learners. These changes need to be approved in advance by NCFE. For full information on how to do this please refer to "*Functional Skills Writing Guide – Adapting NCFE Devised Internal Assessment Activities*" which is available at www.qualhub.co.uk.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

For information on the access arrangements available for the NCFE Functional Skills qualifications, please see the '*NCFE Guidance on Accessing Reasonable Adjustment*'.

Centres should also refer to the '*NCFE Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy*', both available at www.qualhub.co.uk.

Levels of Support

All learners should have the best possible opportunity to attempt their assessment. This includes support in understanding the requirements of the tasks.

The Assessor should present and explain the scenario and tasks to the learner(s), as required. Assessors may change the wording/phrasing to assist learner understanding, but **must not** change the meaning or give instructions which would unfairly assist learner(s) in completing their assessment. Assessors should also ensure that any key words are clearly understood by the learner(s) before attempting the assessment.

Speaking, Listening and Communicating	
Acceptable support:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminding the learner of the instructions • Repeating the instructions to focus the learner
Unacceptable support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling the learner what to say • Repeatedly asking the learner to try again until they meet the requirement •

Assessing learners

Each learner will be given a single Pass or Fail result for their assessment. The learner must meet the requirements set out in the Pass level descriptor and overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is **secure**; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.

The following points must be applied across all levels.

- All learners should be fairly marked. Assessors must mark the first learner to the same standard and criteria as they mark the last.

- All learners should have the best possible opportunity to attempt all the tasks. This includes support in understanding the requirements of the tasks.
- Observations should be applied positively. Learners should be rewarded when they have consistently demonstrated the competencies from the subject content statements.
- If Assessors are in doubt regarding the application of the pass descriptor, they should contact their Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) in the first instance.
- The grade for each individual learner should be clearly and legibly recorded on the Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR).

Each learner will need an individually completed Learner Observation and Achievement Record. Assessors must provide evidence to show how the learner has achieved the Subject Content Statements. This should be reflective to show what was discussed and will be used to validate the decision, by the IQA and External Quality Assurer (EQA).

After the assessment, feedback to the learner should be provided regarding their performance. This can include examples of how the learner performed well and any areas for development.

The Learner Observation and Achievement Record can be completed by one of the following means:

- Typed into the word document and saved securely on an e-platform
- Printed and handwritten as part of a learner file
- Recorded using an audio device and audio file uploaded to an e-platform.

Giving feedback to learners

Feedback is an important part of learning and we encourage feedback during teaching and learning that will identify areas for learner progression, including stretch and challenge.

- Positive feedback always relates to the assessment scopes of study/subject content statements/criteria/points and pass descriptors found within the qualification specification.
- Offering feedback on ways in which a learner could improve their work to achieve a Pass by referring to the assessment scopes of study/subject content statements/criteria/points and pass descriptors, encourages learners to continuously do this themselves and prepares them for the external assessment.
- Feedback on how to improve knowledge, skills, understanding, behaviour and how to approach a task are all positive feedback.

Feedback and guidance that gives them a specific list of actions they need to take in order to complete a task is not positive and learners should be encouraged to identify how they can improve themselves. Use open questions in your feedback.

Evidence requirements

All assessments outcomes must be recorded using the relevant assessment documents.

The following evidence must be available for internal and external quality assurance purposes:

- Completed Learner Observation and Achievement Record
- Recording of assessment
- Completed Assessment Tracking document
- Internal Quality Assurance reports and sampling plans

Any supplementary evidence generated should also be provided for quality assurance purposes. This may include:

- Learner research
- Notes; annotations / highlighting / underlining.

Audio recording of Learner Observation and Achievement Record

NCFE allow the Learner Observation and Achievement Record evidence to be recorded via audio, however the following instructions must be adhered to:

- During the introduction learners must state their name and learner number and confirm their participation
- During the introduction the Assessor must state their name, centre name, date and assessment topic
- Assessors must state their observations against each Subject Content Statement and record how the learner has met the Pass Descriptor as required of the Learner Observation and Achievement Record
- Assessors must state whether learner has achieved a pass or fail
- Assessors must detail the feedback given to learner
- Audio files must be securely stored on the centre's system and access must be given to the EQA during a visit.

Centres are responsible for ensuring audio recordings of evidence are clear and accessible. Should you provide audio observation and feedback there is no requirement to provide this in written form.

Authentication

The authenticity of learner work is the responsibility of the centre. Learner's work must be authenticated by the centre on the appropriate assessment documents.

Assessment structure

Entry Level 1 – Speaking, Listening and Communicating

<p>Assessment Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-1 discussion with Assessor. <p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow a single step instruction • discussion on an agreed topic • say the names of the letters of the alphabet. 		
Preparation:	Up to: 30 minutes (optional)	<p>The scenario and topic must be given to the learner directly prior to the assessment taking place.</p> <p>Optional preparation time of up to 30 minutes for the learner to prepare for their discussion is allowed, directly before the discussion taking place.</p>
Activity:	5 minutes	The full SLC assessment activity must be completed in one session.
Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	<p>Copy of all SLC assessment activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A written copy or audio recording of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner. A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented to include the SLC assessment activity number used and must be included in each Individual Learning Plan.</p>
Level of attainment	Pass/Fail	<p>Learners must meet the minimum Pass Descriptor at each Subject Content Statement:</p> <p>Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently • effectively • to an appropriate degree for that level

		Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure ; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.
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Entry Level 2 - Speaking, Listening and Communicating

Assessment Activity		
Task 1: 1-1 discussion – 5 minutes		
Preparation Task 1 (Optional):	Up to: 30 minutes (optional)	The scenario and topic must be given to the learner directly prior to the assessment taking place – on the same day. Optional preparation time of up to 30 minutes for the learner to prepare for their discussion is allowed, directly before the discussion taking place.
Task 1	5 minutes	The centre can write their own or use NCFE devised activities.
Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	Copy of all SLC assessment activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes. A copy of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner either in writing or via audio. A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan.
Task 2: Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 2-3 minutes per learner		
Preparation Task 2 (Optional):	Up to: 30 minutes (optional)	The scenario and selection of topic must be given to the learner directly prior to the assessment taking place – on the same day. Optional preparation time of up to 30 minutes for the learner to prepare for their discussion is allowed, directly before the group discussion taking place.
Task 2	2–3 minutes per learner	Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 2–3 minutes per learner . The centre can write their own or use NCFE devised activities.

<p>Documents required:</p>	<p>Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)</p>	<p>Copy of all SLC Assessment Activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A copy of the LOaAR must be completed either in writing or via audio for each learner.</p> <p>A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan</p>
<p>Level of attainment:</p>	<p>Pass or Fail</p>	<p>Learners must meet the minimum Pass Descriptor at each Subject Content Statement:</p> <p>Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently • effectively • to an appropriate degree for that level. <p>Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.</p>

Entry Level 3 - Speaking, Listening and Communicating

Entry Level 3		
Assessment Activity		
<p>Task 1: Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 4-6 minutes per learner.</p> <p>Task 2: Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 4-6 minutes per learner.</p>		
<p>Preparation Task 1 and 2:</p>	<p>Up to: 1 hours and 20 minutes per discussion (optional)</p>	<p>The scenario, topic and aim of the two discussions must be given to the learner 2 teaching weeks prior to the assessment taking place. These are not part of the assessment component and can therefore be read, and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation.</p> <p>Learners are allowed up to 2 hours optional preparation time to prepare for their 2 discussions. This preparation should take place within the centre.</p> <p>Learners are permitted to use ICT equipment to prepare for their assessment, for example, accessing the internet to research the topic. However, centres are responsible for ensuring that there are no pre-prepared materials on the hard drive/intranet or otherwise that can be accessed by learners.</p> <p>A further 20 minutes of optional preparation time is allowed for the learner to prepare, directly before each group discussion takes place.</p>
<p>Task 1 and 2:</p>	<p>4-6 minutes per learner, per discussion</p>	<p>Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 4–6 minutes per learner.</p> <p>The centre can write their own or use NCFE devised activities.</p>

<p>Documents required:</p>	<p>Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)</p>	<p>Copy of all SLC Assessment Activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A written copy or audio recording of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner.</p> <p>A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented to include the SLC assessment activity number used and must be included in each Individual Learning Plan.</p>
<p>Level of attainment:</p>	<p>Pass or Fail</p>	<p>Learners must meet the minimum Pass Descriptor at each Subject Content Status:</p> <p>Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently • effectively • to an appropriate degree for that level. <p>Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same</p>

Level 1 - Speaking, Listening and Communicating

<p>Task 1: A presentation on a given topic lasting 5 minutes to an audience of a minimum of 3 learners.</p>		
<p>Preparation Task 1:</p>	<p>Up to: 3 hours and 20 minutes (optional)</p>	<p>The scenario, topic and aim must be given to the learner 2 teaching weeks prior to the assessment taking place. These are not an assessment component and can therefore be read and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation. Learners are allowed up to 3 hours optional preparation time to prepare for their 2 discussions. This preparation should take place within the centre. Learners are permitted to use ICT equipment to prepare for their assessment, for example accessing the Internet to research the topic. However, centres are responsible for ensuring that there are no pre-prepared materials on the hard drive/Intranet or otherwise that can be accessed by learners. A further 20 minutes of optional preparation time is allowed for the learner to prepare, directly before each group discussion takes place.</p>
<p>Task 1: Presentation</p>	<p>A presentation lasting 5 minutes</p>	<p>The learner must complete a presentation on a given topic lasting 5 minutes to an audience of a minimum of 3 learners. The centre can write their own or use NCFE Devised Activities.</p>
<p>Audience:</p>	<p>A minimum of 1 question to be asked per learner. A minimum of 3 learners</p>	<p>No questions should be asked during the presentation. At the end of the presentation, it is expected that each member of the audience should ask at least one pertinent question.</p>

Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	<p>Copy of all SLC Assessment Activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A copy of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner either in writing or via audio. A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual learning Plan (ILP).</p>
<p>Task 2: A question and answer session, taking place directly after the presentation. 3-5 minutes</p>		
Preparation Task 2:	No preparation	
Task 2: Q&A Session	A question and answer session lasting 3-5 minutes.	<p>The Q&A session must take place directly after each presentation. 3-5 minutes.</p> <p>NB: During the question and answer Task, learners will take the role of either the Presenter (P) or the Audience (A).</p>
Presenter:	Respond to a minimum of 3 questions.	<p>Once the presentation has finished, the learner must invite questions about their topic from the audience, responding to each question in turn.</p> <p>Learners must respond to a minimum of 3 questions.</p>
Audience:	<p>A minimum of 1 question to be asked per learner.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 learners</p>	<p>No questions should be asked during the presentation.</p> <p>At the end of each presentation, it is expected that each member of the audience should ask at least one pertinent question.</p>
Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	Copy of all SLC Assessment Activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE Devised Activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.

		<p>A copy of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner either in writing or via audio.</p> <p>A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan (ILP).</p>
<p>Task 3: Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 4-6 minutes per learner</p>		
<p>Preparation Task 3:</p>	<p>Up to: 1 hours and 20 minutes (optional)</p>	<p>The scenario, topic and aim of the discussion must be given to the learner 2 teaching weeks prior to the assessment taking place. These are not an assessment component and can therefore be read, and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation.</p> <p>Learners are allowed up to one hour optional preparation time to prepare for their discussion. This preparation and research must take place within the centre.</p> <p>Learners are permitted to use ICT equipment to prepare for their assessment, for example, accessing the internet to research the topic.</p> <p>However, centres are responsible for ensuring that there are no pre-prepared materials on the hard drive/intranet or otherwise that can be accessed by learners.</p> <p>A further 20 minutes of optional preparation time is allowed for the learner to prepare, directly before the group discussion takes place.</p>

Task 3	4-6 minutes per learner, per discussion.	Group discussion – with a minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 4-6 minutes per learner . The centre can write their own or use NCFE Devised Activities.
Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	Copy of all SLC activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes. A copy of the LOaAR must be completed either in writing or via audio for each learner. A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
Level of attainment:	Pass or Fail	Learners must meet the minimum Pass Descriptor at each Subject Content Status: Learners generally demonstrate the requirements for the level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently • effectively • to an appropriate degree for that level. Overall performance across the range of requirements for the level is secure ; any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement is balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.

Level 2 - Speaking, Listening and Communicating

Task 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A presentation on a given topic lasting 8 minutes to an audience of minimum of 3 learners 		
Preparation Task 1:	Up to: 3 hours and 20 minutes (optional)	<p>The scenario, topic and aim must be given to the learner 2 teaching weeks prior to the assessment taking place. These are not an assessment component and can therefore be read and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation.</p> <p>Optional preparation time up to of up to 3 hours for the learner to prepare for their presentation is allowed. This preparation may include research. This preparation should take place within the centre.</p> <p>Learners are permitted to use ICT equipment to prepare for their assessment, for example accessing the Internet to research the topic. However, centres are responsible for ensuring that there are no pre-prepared materials on the hard drive/Intranet or otherwise that can be accessed by learners.</p> <p>A further 20 minutes of optional preparation time is allowed for the learner to prepare, directly before the presentation takes place.</p>
Task 1: Presentation	A presentation lasting 8 minutes	<p>The learner must complete a presentation on a given topic lasting 8 minutes to an audience of a minimum of 3 learners.</p> <p>There will be a question and answer session, taking place directly after the presentation lasting 3–5 minutes. See task 2 below.</p> <p>The centre can write their own or use NCFE devised activities.</p>

Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	<p>Copy of all SLC Assessment Activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A copy of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner either in writing or via audio.</p> <p>A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan (ILP).</p>
<p>Task 2: A question and answer session that can be completed directly after the presentation lasting 3–5 minutes per learner</p>		
Preparation Task 2:	No preparation time	Not applicable
Task 2:	A question and answer session lasting 3–5 minutes	<p>The Q&A session must take place directly after each presentation lasting 3–5 minutes.</p> <p>NB: During the question and answer task, learners will take the role of either the Presenter (P) or the Audience (A).</p>
Presenter:	Respond to a minimum of 3 questions	Once the presentation has finished, the learner must invite questions about their topic from the audience, responding to each question in turn. Learners must respond to a minimum of 3 questions.
Audience:	A minimum of 1 question to be asked per learner. A minimum of 3 learners	<p>No questions should be asked during the presentation.</p> <p>At the end of the presentation, it is expected that each member of the audience should ask at least one pertinent question.</p>

<p>Documents required:</p>	<p>Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)</p>	<p>Copy of all SLC Assessment Activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A copy of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner either in writing or via audio.</p> <p>A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan.</p>
<p>Task 3: Group discussion – with minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 5–6 minutes per learner.</p>		
<p>Preparation Task 3:</p>	<p>Up to: 1 hour and 20 minutes (optional)</p>	<p>The scenario, topic and aim of the discussion must be given to the learner 2 teaching weeks prior to the assessment taking place. These are not an assessment component and can therefore be read and/or discussed with learners as many times as necessary prior to assessment to support with preparation.</p> <p>Learners are allowed up to one hour optional preparation time prepare for their discussion. This preparation should take place within the centre.</p> <p>Learners are permitted to use ICT equipment to prepare for their assessment, for example accessing the Internet to research the topic.</p> <p>However, centres are responsible for ensuring that there are no pre-prepared materials on the hard drive/Intranet or otherwise that can be accessed by learners.</p>

		A further 20 minutes of optional preparation time is allowed for the learner to prepare, directly before the group discussion takes place.
Task 3:	5-6 minutes per learner	<p>Group discussion – with minimum of 3 learners on a given topic lasting between 5–6 minutes per learner.</p> <p>The centre can write their own or use NCFE devised activities.</p>
Documents required:	Learner Observation and Achievement Record (LOaAR)	<p>Copy of all SLC activities if centre devised or reference to the NCFE devised assessment activity number on the LOaAR must be included for external quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>A copy of the LOaAR must be completed for each learner either in writing or via audio.</p> <p>A timetable of SLC assessment sessions must be documented and included in each Individual Learning Plan (ILP).</p>