



# UHL Apprenticeship and Development Centre Functional Skills Policy

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	qualifications-in-english-and-maths/					
	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-subject-					
	content-english					
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# **Document Amendment and Review Log**

February 2023	V2.1 Change of name	20/02/2023	JS
April 2024	V2.2 Document branding updated	23/04/2024	JS
March 2025	V3 Updated functional skill requirements for apprentices	14/3/2025	JAM
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#### 1. Rationale

Functional Skills provide essential life and employability skills. Employers, such as UHL, value literacy and numeracy skills for their role in communication, problem-solving, and workplace efficiency. The ability to access and complete functional skills qualifications by colleagues and apprentices should be considered on an individual basis and should consider the best interests of both the employee/apprentice and employer. Developing the Functional Skills of a learner will develop and enhance their personal effectiveness, employability as well as providing a firm foundation to progress further in learning.

#### 2. Scope of Policy

This policy seeks to ensure that functional skills delivered by and on behalf of the Centre are relevant to learner and apprentice/learner, employer and programme needs. They should be effectively delivered to provide a high quality learning experience.

The primary focus of this policy is to support the apprenticeship provision and assurance against national funding rules.

This policy sets out the Centre's objectives and strategies for planning, managing and delivering functional skills, as well as covering quality assurance and staff development relating to the delivery of functional skills.

Any subcontracting will be monitored and picked up through the Sub-Contracting policy.

#### 3. Provision of Functional Skills

- 3.1. Functional skills, maths and English, can be studied in a number of ways.
  - As part of an Apprenticeship Education Programme
  - Alongside an Apprenticeship Education Programme to support individual, employer or career aspiration needs
  - As a standalone package by an employee
  - As a standalone package by an employee to ensure required skills or professional requirements can be met prior to enrolment onto an Apprenticeship Education Programme.
- 3.2. Whilst maths and English are the most commonly known functional skills, the Centre also recognises digital skills as an essential life and work skill.
- 3.3. The functional skills information, advice and guidance (IAG) for Centre apprentices will be conducted by the sub-contractor, Leicester College. The contract was awarded in 2017 and is reviewed annually.





- 3.4. All learners are offered an initial assessment by the Centre. This is typically conducted on the BKSB platform. The completion of initial and diagnostic assessments will ensure that each learner's current levels of skills are identified on their Training Plan.
- 3.5. Leicester College will support learners needing to complete maths and English development and qualifications.
- 3.6. Learners who do not need to complete maths and English qualifications either due to age and agreement with employer or those who have evidence of the required level of maths and English, but at IAG demonstrate a subsequent attrition of skills, will be able to complete self-directed learning through the online assessment tool (BKSB) to refresh and update their knowledge.
- 3.7. The provision of digital skills and knowledge is currently not mandatory for any of the Apprenticeship Education Programmes delivered by the Centre and therefore not covered in the contract with Leicester College. The Trust ICT Training Team would be the provider of this development through either the BKSB system or the Digital Learning Solution System.
- 3.8. Which apprentices need functional skill qualifications?
  - 3.8.1. For apprentices aged 16-18 when they started their apprenticeship, Functional Skills requirements remain unchanged, meaning they must still complete English and maths qualifications at the level required by their apprenticeship standard, or a lower level if they have recognised learning challenges.
  - 3.8.2. From 11th February 2025, apprentices who started their programme on or after their 19th birthday will no longer be required to achieve Functional Skills qualification in English and maths at the level stipulated in the apprenticeship standard in order to complete their apprenticeship or enter end-point assessment (EPA) if the employer, training provider and learner agree. NB: some qualifications e.g. Student Nursing Associate will still require maths and English qualifications so no changes will be made.

The Centre is mindful that for some apprentices the barrier to completion could be the functional skills qualifications for a range of reasons e.g. SEND, maths anxiety and the option to not complete these will now enable professional learning to continue through the apprenticeship standard.

The national change in February 2025 makes the definitions in 3.8 relevant for all current and future learners.

- 3.9 Aside from the qualification, it is very likely that functional skills development during the apprenticeship learning will be completed as part of the programme or to support the individual's ability to do their role; having good maths and English skills is paramount to us being effective and efficient employees and students.
- 3.10 Consideration should be to the apprentices current and future career needs too when making decisions on none completion of formal qualifications are being made. If the learners ambition





is to be a different role in the future e.g. nurse, and that role requires a level of maths and English, they should, wherever possible, still be supported to achieve the relevant qualifications alongside their apprenticeship (noting they won't be needed for EPA).

#### 4. Quality

- 4.11. The college will manage the quality and delivery of the provision of IAG and Functional Skills training in line with the contract and their professional obligation.
- 4.12. The college will share CV's of Functional Skills tutors who are involved directly or indirectly with delivery through the contract with the Centre, updating these immediately (within 7 working days) a tutor changes.
- 4.13. The college will evaluate the learners' experience and progress through a combination of activities e.g. learner voice, evaluations, progress and achievement results. This will take into account the encouragement to learn outside the boundaries of the classroom, the types of learning and the administration of the programme.
- 4.14. The Centre will ensure that a learner voice activity for each Functional Skill takes place at least annually; more frequently if concerns are identified by either a learner or a member of the Centre staff.
- 4.15. The Centre will carry out an annual joint observation as a minimum of each functional skill and level taking into account the college's calendar of observations.
- 4.16. All Centre staff will be supported and challenged to complete CPD. College staff will be expected to participate in regular, relevant CPD as per the college policy with confirmation of this provided to the Centre annually.
- 4.17. The college will successfully plan, establish and manage the curriculum and learning programmes to meet the needs of learners and employers.
- 4.18. The college will update the curriculum accordingly to ensure it takes into account and reflects national reforms and requirements.
- 4.19. The college will actively promote equality, diversity and safeguarding at all times ensuring an inclusive and thriving learning environment for learners to succeed and progress in.
- 4.20. The college will share with the Centre, generic information on the spelling, punctuation, grammar and maths development needs of learners that arise from their teaching and assessment. Centre staff will enable use these and areas for development arising from the BKSB to embed in reviews and learning.





#### 5. Quality Assurance Governance

- 5.11. Quality Assurance of Functional Skills will follow the governance, policies and processes of Leicester College. It will include self-assessment, curriculum review and development, standardisation, and observations of teaching, learning and assessment.
- 5.12. Functional skills contract performance meetings will be held regularly between the College and the Centre to ensure performance, curriculum, and evaluation are reviewed. Leicester College will provide a report, at least termly, to the Centre detailing relevant information on learners, outcomes and progress. These meetings will be fed into Centre governance reporting lines for monitoring.
- 5.13. Updates on progress and homework set for learners will be shared to the Centre by the College to ensure partnership working in progression of skills development between sub-contractor, employer and training provider.
- 5.14. At least annually joint quality reviews will take place between the college and the Centre which will include joint observations of learning in line with the college calendar and procedures. The findings of these will be brought to the Centre Governance meetings and to joint party contract performance review meetings.
- 5.15. Should apprentices/learners have any concerns over their functional skills qualification programme they should in the first instance speak to Leicester College. If they are not able to resolve the issue they should then speak to a member of the Centre who will liaise with the college to resolve the matter.

#### 6. Continuing Professional Development

- 6.11. Staff delivering functional skills at Leicester College on the Centre's behalf will be appropriately qualified and experienced. The College are responsible for ensuring their professional and occupational teaching is in place and remains up to date.
- 6.12. Centre staff will be confident and competent to support the development of Functional Skills during their Apprenticeship Education Programme and ensure they are appropriately embedded into the curriculums, relevant to the employer needs.
- 6.13. Centre staff not holding a relevant qualification will be supported to attain this as required.

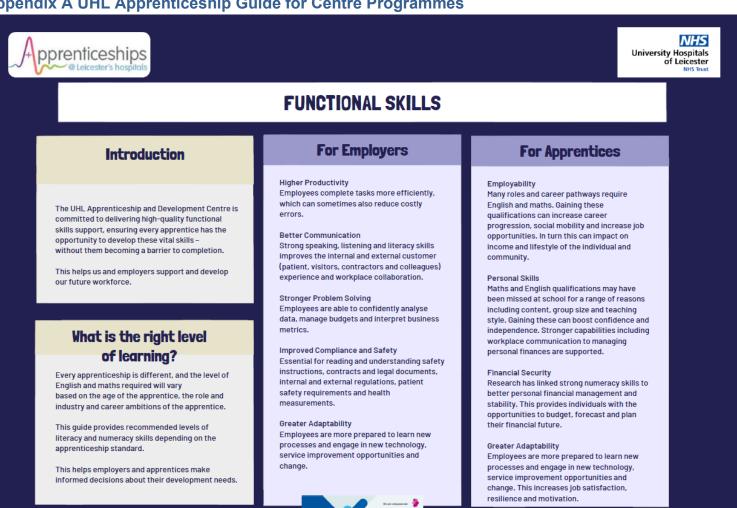
### 7. Implementation of Policy

- 7.11. The policy will be monitored through the Centre Governance meetings.
- 7.12. The provision of Functional Skills is monitored through the contract review process.





## **Appendix A UHL Apprenticeship Guide for Centre Programmes**



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### **FUNCTIONAL SKILLS**

# Who needs Functional Skills?

Most employers prefer their employees to have a good level of knowledge and skills for maths and English. Job descriptions and Person Specifications often request a level of qualification or proven ability to perform certain maths and English skill activities.

For Apprentices there is national guidance.

# What is the right level of learning?

Every apprenticeship is different, and the level of English and maths required will vary based on the age of the apprentice, the role and industry and the career ambitions of the apprentice.

# **16–18** Year Old Apprentices

For apprentices aged 16-18 when they started their apprenticeship, Functional Skills requirements remain unchanged, meaning they must still complete English and maths qualifications at the level required by their apprenticeship standard, or a lower level if they have recognised learning challenges.

NB: The guides on the following pages are superseded by the Government requirement and level set out in the apprenticeship standard they are studying.

# 19 Year+ Apprentices

From 11th February 2025, apprentices who started their programme on or after their 19th birthday will no longer be required to achieve Functional Skills qualification in English and maths at the level stipulated in the apprenticeship standard in order to complete their apprenticeship or enter end-point assessment (EPA) if the employer, training provider and learner agree.

NB: some qualifications e.g. Student Nursing Associate will still require maths and English qualifications so no changes will be made.

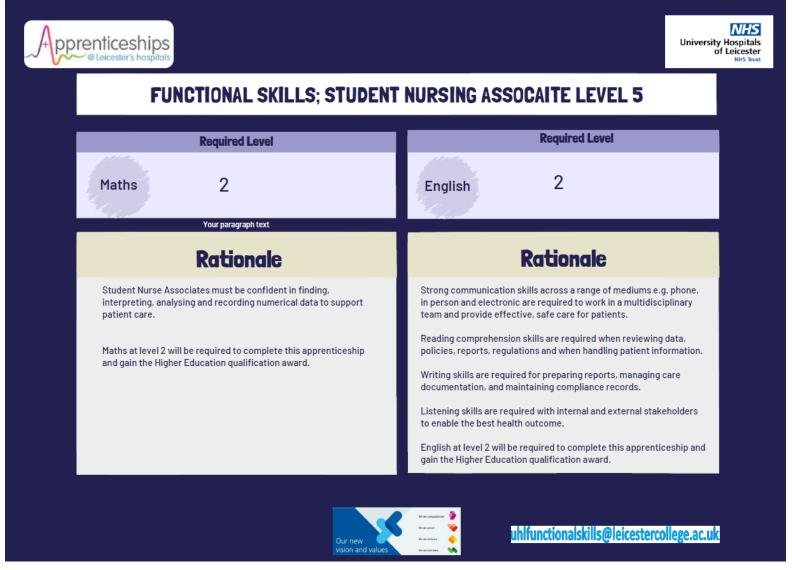
Consideration should be given to the apprentices current and future career aspirations when making decisions on functional skill qualifications. If an apprentices ambition is to be a different role in the future e.g. nurse, and that role requires a level of maths and English, they should, wherever possible, still be supported to achieve the relevant qualifications alongside their apprenticeship (noting they won't be needed for EPA).

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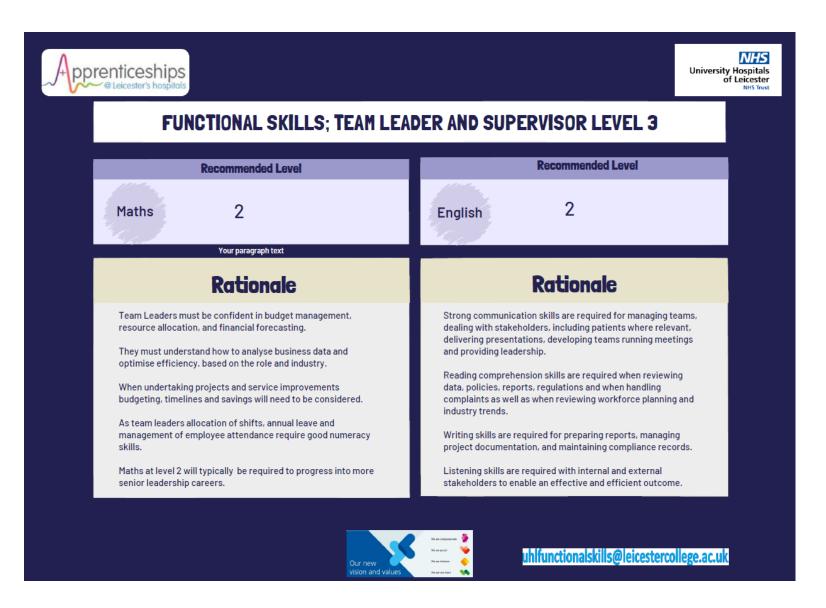












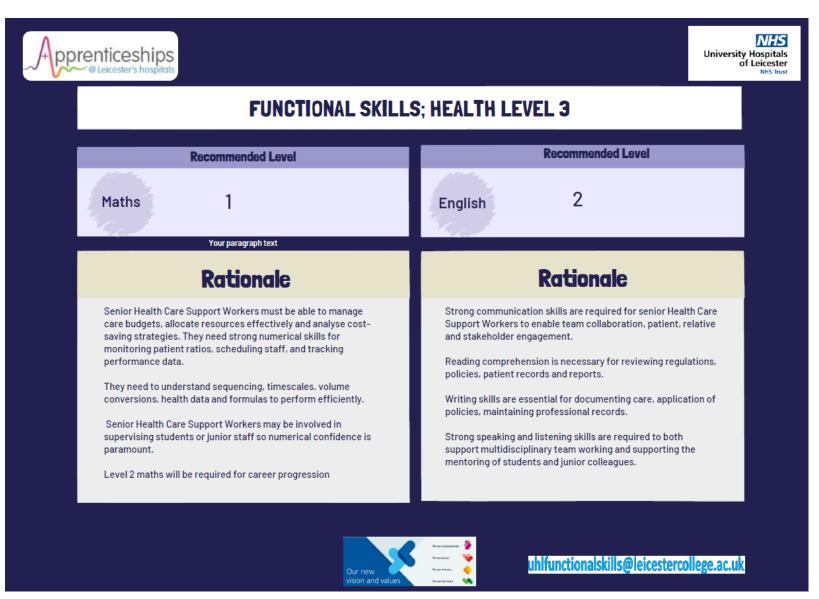






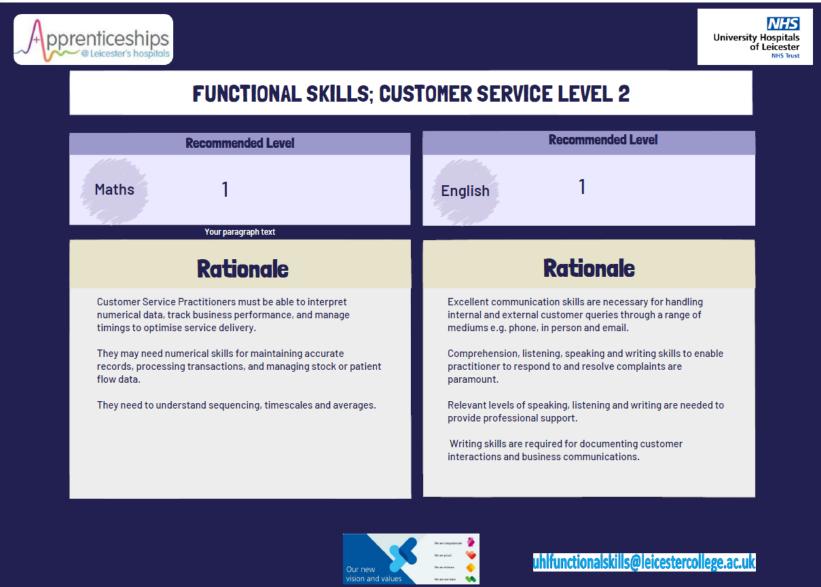


























#### Appendix B Centre Overview for Supporting the Provision of Functional Skills

- ✓ Ensure a co-ordinated approach between the Centre and the college
- ✓ Have in place learner support systems at both the Centre and college.
- ✓ Have effective registration, examination entry arrangements in line with awarding body regulations
- ✓ Perform screening, initial and diagnostic assessment and use this to set challenging tasks for learners to build on, and extend their learning
- ✓ Set and achieve high but realistic expectations and targets for achievement to motivate learners
- ✓ Plan, establish and manage a Functional Skills curriculum effectively, through Leicester College, to meet the needs and interests of learners and employers; supporting apprentices with progression into further qualifications and/or employment in line with apprenticeship requirements
- ✓ Enable programmes, wherever possible, to be delivered in the context of the Apprenticeship Education Programme, the employer's main business and the learners needs
- ✓ Provide high quality learning experiences through active and innovative teaching; learning and coaching methods that inspire and challenge learners, enabling them to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for learners to develop their English and maths beyond their IAG level at entry
- ✓ Monitor and track learner's progress via Leicester college through assessment processes
- ✓ Provide supportive feedback to learners so they understand how to improve following an assessment of their learning
- ✓ Have in place processes to support a quality learning experience through the college, ensuring
  external standards are met and maintained using a variety of assessment and moderation
  processes with robust comprehensive continuous quality improvement plans in place
- ✓ Oversee the effective delivery of Functional Skills Programmes through the college, ensuring that learners achieve at least the national minimum standard.
- ✓ Plan Centre schemes of work and assessments during the apprenticeship in line with functional skills
- ✓ Continually develop teaching, learning and assessment practices through reflection and evaluation of sessions.