

Functional Skills Strategy

The Business Portfolio (UK) Ltd is committed to providing high quality Functional Skills programmes to support progression and achievement. This policy relates to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of Functional Skills English and Maths at the academy. The implementation of the policy is intended to improve the quality of the learners experience by developing the individual's ability to apply the fundamental skills that underpin most vocational and academic work. Developing the Functional Skills should improve the learner's personal effectiveness and employability. This policy will ensure that Functional Skills are relevant to learners' needs and are effectively delivered.

This policy document sets out TBP's objectives and strategies for planning, managing and delivering Functional Skills, as well as describing aspects of quality assurance and staff development relating to Functional Skills. The strategies within the Functional Skills policy apply to Functional Skills across the academy, for all programmes and all learners. All staff involved directly or indirectly in the managing, delivering and supporting Functional Skills will be familiar with the purpose, principles and strategy for delivery.

TBP believe that Functional Skills are important to educational and personal development for learners because they are:

- Essential for individuals to function in everyday life, work, leisure and education.
- Necessary in developing a commitment to lifelong learning to enhance the lives of individuals, improve employability and to create the skills that our economy and employers need.
- Help towards meeting the Government's drive for improvements in the Maths and English skills of all students.

Functional Skills provision at the TBP aim to meet the following needs:

- Mandatory for the completion of Apprenticeship frameworks
- Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE A*-C in English and/or Maths will be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications, or which provide significant progress towards future GCSE entry or success.

TBP is committed to providing opportunities for learners to develop their English and Mathematics beyond their level at entry and where appropriate gain external accreditation for this. Successful delivery of Functional Skills is achieved through a whole organisational approach concentrating on the following key features:

- Ensuring a coordinated approach.
- Defining support systems (managerial, resources, learner support, staff development).
- Defining procedures for initial assessment and review and monitoring of learners' progress.
- Supporting effective internal verification and moderation.
- Ensuring clear communication and to define procedures for sharing good practice.
- Maintaining the standards set by the assessment, moderation and external examination process.
- Ensuring that there are robust and comprehensive continuous quality improvements.

TBP will provide the following Functional Skills opportunities to learners. This will provide learners with the opportunity to become functionally literate and numerate to Level 2 where appropriate:

- All learners will be offered an effective and robust initial assessment. The completion of this initial assessment and diagnostic assessment will ensure that each learner's current levels of skills will be identified on his or her ILP (Individual Learning Plan). Key information, advice and guidance on the opportunities available to them to improve skills and qualification up to level 2 in Literacy and Numeracy will be given.
- For students on Apprenticeship programmes, Functional Skills specified in their respective frameworks will be included in their learning programmes.
- All learners will have access to appropriately trained and qualified Functional Skills tutors.

Functional skills and additional support co-ordinators will provide:

- A high-quality learning experience
- Set and support achievement targets for achievement at course level
- Monitor and track students' progress
- Provide screening, initial assessment and diagnostic assessment
- Plan schemes of work and assessment
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- Effective registration, examination entry arrangements where required
- Develop Functional Skills to the levels suited to individual needs and goals.
- Practice and apply the skills in relevant and meaningful contexts
- Review their own on-going skills development
- Prepare for external and internal assessment

Consistency/standardisation will be addressed through the following:

- Staff development sessions to ensure continuous professional development (CPD)
- Discussions and co-ordination within the delivery team
- Through the work of external bodies
- Peer observations
- Quality Assurance checks
- Feedback from external standards moderators liaising with Functional Skills tutors.
- Standardisation meetings

Staff will be confident and competent to teach Functional Skills through:

- Being fully conversant with the Functional Skills standards from the standards and the assessment criteria contained within the respective handbook and marking criteria for each Functional Skills, Apprentice standards or Skills for Life assessments.
- To be competent in the Functional Skills being taught it is highly recommended that all relevant consultants providing Functional Skills for TBP be encouraged to work towards a relevant subject specialist qualification if not already doing so.
- Anybody assessing and/or internally verifying these qualifications will need to be competent and confident in the skills being assessed. It is best practice that all subject tutors who deliver Functional Skills should hold the relevant qualification at one level higher than that at which they are teaching.

TBP's internal verifier will also ensure that training is/has been undertaken around Functional Skills.