



## THE ANNEX SCHOOL FUNCTIONAL SKILLS POLICY

### Purpose

The purpose of the functional skills Policy is to:

- Raise awareness of functional skills throughout the school.
- Improve standards of skills across the school.
- Ensure consistency of practice including methods, vocabulary, notation, etc.
- Promote a positive attitude towards functional skills.
- Develop the confidence and independence of all students.
- Encourage students to appreciate the relevance and importance of functional skills to both their studies and everyday life.

### **What are Functional Skills?**

Functional skills are qualifications in English and Mathematics. The two subjects equip learners with the practical skills needed to live, learn and work successfully.

Edexcel functional skills are available in England only from Entry Level 1 to Level 2. They are suitable for students of all ages, as mandatory part of all apprenticeship frameworks in England. There are no set age limits for taking functional skills tests as students maturity and their readiness for assessment should be considered when entering for examinations. Following an assessment, a decision will be made to determine the level which is suitable for individual students.

Students can re-sit the tests as many times as required. The centre will have to make a new entry each time for Level 1 and 2.

At Entry Level there are three sets of assessments per level for each subject. If a student does not pass their assessment, they may sit the alternative test providing there is a gap of at least 14 days.

More information about Functional Skills Standards can be found on the Internet. The Examination Board that we use is Pearson Edexcel.



## **Delivery and Curriculum.**

Qualifications for functional skills are offered to students aged 10 and over at the Annex School. The Schemes of Work for formally taught lessons are taken from the Pearson Edexcel support materials and can be found at the following web address:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-functional-skills/teaching-support.html>

This site gives access to a comprehensive range of support and an extensive range of free resources to help plan and deliver Functional Skills. There is also an online initial assessment tool which is used to assess our pupils on arrival.

Functional Skills resources include:

- Sample activities.
- Lesson plans.
- Sample schemes of work.
- Curriculum models.
- Mapping documents.
- Sample assessment materials.
- Complete delivery guides.

The schemes of work last from between 18 and 22 weeks however this is a guide and may be flexible dependent on the understanding of the students. When a student has worked through a scheme of work and achieved at the level they are studying for, it is expected that the student will progress to the next level.



## How Edexcel Functional Skills are assessed

	English	Mathematics
Entry Level 1-3	Internally assessed, externally verified, on demand. Three components: Speaking, Listening and Communication; Writing; Reading. Assessed separately – all three must be completed for certification.	Internally assessed, externally verified, on demand. Single component.
Paper-based Level 1-2	Assessed in fixed pre-published exam windows, externally set and assessed. Three components: Speaking, Listening and Communication; Writing; Reading. Assessed separately – all three must be completed for certification.	Assessed in fixed pre-published exam windows, externally set and assessed. Single test.
Onscreen, on demand Level 1-2	Tests on demand. Three components: Speaking, Listening and Communication; Writing; Reading. Assessed separately – all three must be completed for certification. Internet required for downloading tests. Tests will run offline.	Tests on demand. Single test. Internet required for downloading tests. Tests will run offline.

## Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Raise awareness of functional skills with both staff and students.
- Share the responsibility for learning. Ensure students realise the skills they learn in Maths and English can be developed and applied in other subject areas. This will enable them to achieve higher expectations.
- Share good practice.
- Plan opportunities to use and assess these skills (these are all skills that are commonly used in teaching) so this should not create extra work.



Functional skills reflect facets of learning and life. The teaching of Functional Skills should be monitored using schemes of work and embedded within the School Development Plan.

### **Functional Skills Ethos**

We offer Functional Skills as an alternative accreditation to the GCSE format. This is due to the fact that our specific students have Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (S.E.M.H.). The students often find it hard to cope with and complete the English and Maths GCSE courses. Historically our student's general sporadic attendance and lack of ability to focus for any length of time, makes the English and Maths GCSE unachievable and unsuitable for the majority of our students.

The Annex School English and Maths functional skills are offered to students who were working at Entry Level. This has been such a success for our student's achievement, that the school has progressed from delivering Entry Level to Level 1 and Level 2. We have registered for On-screen Testing which allows students who have difficulty with dexterous skills to take the examination using a computer.

Most of our K.S.5 will go on to study vocational courses at College. We are able to support these students with their functional skills studies which are provided by most F.E. establishments.

We have chosen functional skills to be sure of giving our students the best chance of success. There are unlimited re-sit opportunities for students diminishing the pressure of examinations on them.

It is our aim to try and get most of our students up to Level 1 and attain a good basic grounding by the time they leave us.

### **Links with other policies**

More information about each of the 2 areas of functional skills can be found in the:

- Literacy/English Policy
- Numeracy/Maths Policy

This policy was updated 2020 by GT/FR/LR