Setting Centre-Devised Speaking, Listening and Communicating Tasks

Entry Level 2

Contents

1. Introduction

Open Awards has designed the following structure for Functional Skills English Entry Level 2 Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment tasks to meet the requirements of the Functional Skills English Subject Content and Ofqual Functional Skills English Conditions and Requirements.

All learners must undertake all sub-tasks outlined in the assessment structure (Appendix 1) in order to achieve this component part of the Open Awards Entry Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification in English.

Centres can choose their own topics for the discussion sub-task (s) to tailor tasks for specific individuals or learner groups. Topics should be chosen to provide sufficient scope for learners to demonstrate their ability in line with the subject content outlined in Section 2.

Centres who do not wish to use the provided assessment tasks may produce their own. However, centre devised tasks must be approved by Open Awards before use. New tasks, along with a completed assessment mapping document, should be sent to Open Awards for review at least **eight weeks** before assessment is due to take place. Only if your new tasks meet the requirements, approval will be given. If approval is not received by the time the assessment takes place, centres should use one of the tasks already approved by Open Awards.

2.   Purpose of assessment

To ensure that learners who achieve a pass mark have the required level of competence in the Speaking, Listening and Communicating skills set out in the Subject Content, including meeting the full scope of study and range of contexts.

Entry Level 2

The scope of study (SoS) for Speaking, Listening and Communicating, including the SoS references from the DfE Subject Content is included below:

Scope of Study ref	Entry Level 2 Subject Content
SoS1	Identify and extract the main information and detail from short explanations
SoS2	Make requests and ask clear questions appropriately in different contexts
SoS3	Respond appropriately to straightforward questions
SoS4	Follow the gist of discussions
SoS5	Clearly express straightforward information and communicate feelings and opinions on a range of straightforward topics
SoS6	Make appropriate contributions to simple group discussions with others about a straightforward topic

Learners should be able to apply their speaking, listening and communicating skills in the following contexts at Entry Level 2:
- Short narratives;
- Explanations and instructions;
- Discussions; and
- Straightforward information and instructions

all of varying lengths.

The learner must achieve a pass on each scope of study reference to pass the assessment.

Table 1: The criteria for a Pass

	Performance descriptor
Pass	■ Learners demonstrate the requirements for the level: □ consistently, □ effectively, and □ 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.

Reference: Ofqual/18/6385/4

3. Assessment tasks

The SLC assessment at Entry Level 2 is 20 minutes in duration excluding preparation time. The assessment consists of two tasks.

Task 1 (10 minutes): the learner participates in a one to one or group activity as appropriate
- identifying and extracting main information and detail from short explanations
- responding appropriately to straightforward questions
- making requests and asking clear questions.

Task 2 (10 minutes): the learner participates in a group discussion
- making requests and asking clear questions
- responding appropriately to straightforward questions
- following the gist of discussion
- clearly expressing straightforward information
- communicating feelings and opinions
- making appropriate contributions to discussions with others.

Every assessment task must be designed to assess a single level, i.e. Entry Level 2. The assessment must provide a reliable measure of proficiency at this level by providing significant evidence of success against the requirements for the Subject Content as outlined above.

Each assessment task consists of related sub-tasks with guidance on the preparation required, instructions to the centre assessor on how to manage the sub-task and a set of ideas to help maintain discussion.

Learners complete the assessment task and any related sub-tasks under controlled conditions in groups of not less than three and not more than five.

Learners are permitted to use aids, but care must be taken to ensure that the use of any aid does not detract from the need to demonstrate the skill through the scope of study.

Conducting the Assessment and Support for Learner
- Learners can take the assessment when they, and the tutor, feel they are ready.
- The SLC assessment may be taken on a different day to the Reading/Writing assessments.
- The learner should speak to someone with whom they are familiar.
- Assessments can take place in the classroom or any other suitable setting that will ensure the learner is not disadvantaged by the environment.
- At all Entry levels, tutors are allowed to read any instructions and/or statements for the tasks.
- Tutors can use the example topics provided or prepare their own to meet the individual needs of the learners.

Scheduling Assessments and Entering Results Using XAMS
All Speaking, Listening and Communication assessments must be scheduled a minimum of 48 hours before the planned date of assessment using our XAMS system. Assessment results must be entered into the system within four weeks of the date of assessment. See our XAMS User Guidance for further information.

4.   Assessment Decisions

Marking of the Assessment
Centres are not required to produce mark schemes. This assessment involves competency-based marking, that is the Pass criteria are either met (observed) or not.

Each assessment and its sub-tasks must clearly enable performance against all of the coverage and range in the skills standard.

There is a standard Record of Learner Achievement and Assessor Sheet (see page 17) for the English Speaking Listening and Communicating Entry Level assessment components which should always be used. This clearly states how skills are observed and recorded, and when to award a Pass or Fail grade.

- Assessors provide topic details for each learner/group undertaking the activity.
- Assessors must complete an Assessment Record Sheet for the activity.
- Assessors must also complete individual performance-based judgements for each learner for the activity.
- Assessors evaluating an individual must judge whether the learner consistently meets the performance threshold for a given scope of study reference defined in the right-hand column (i.e. Achieved the level) or whether that performance generally aligns with the left-hand column (i.e. Below the level), while allowing for the variability and unpredictability inherent in discussions and exchanges.
- The assessment must produce a pass or fail outcome. Assessors must therefore make careful judgements about whether the learner's performance generally accords with the right-hand column or the left-hand column for each scope of study reference. Only learners who have a tick against all of the 'Achieved level' statements will be awarded a Pass.

Record of Learner Achievement and Assessor Sheet

The result must be entered onto the Record of Learner Achievement and Assessor Sheet after the assessment has been completed for each individual or group of 3 - 5 learners. Learners must not be shown their results which are provisional. Results are subject to internal verification by the Centre and external verification by Open Awards and are only confirmed on receipt of an Open Awards certificate.

- Learners should be observed in each speaking and listening sub-task.
- For both sub-tasks, the Assessor should insert a 'Y' or a tick if they have observed the candidate performing the stated skill within the sub-task. The Assessor should insert an 'X' if not.
- In the last column, titled 'Overall', the Assessor should insert a 'Y' or a tick if there is at least one 'Y' or tick on this row (ie if the candidate has been observed to have done this at least once / in at least one sub-task). Insert 'N' or a cross if there are no ticks on this row.
- If all rows under 'Overall' contain a tick or 'Y' then the candidate has met the requirement and the Assessor should indicate a Pass (P) decision.
- If any row under 'Overall' contains an 'N' or a cross, then the candidate has not met the requirements and the Assessor should indicate a Fail (F) decision.
- The record of learner achievement (along with any other evidence to support it e.g. learner notes, video recording etc) should be retained by the centre for external verification.
- Centres are reminded that work should also be part of a sample which has been internally verified or standardised before being submitted for external verification.

Evidence Requirements
Information on cohort and learner performance must be submitted via the XAMS system in order for the component to be awarded. The assessment templates provided in this document reflect the information that must be provided on the system. Use of the paper versions is optional during assessment delivery and internal verification.

Initially, and for a minimum of 6 cohorts, evidence of learners' participation (e.g. audio or video recording) should be submitted to Open Awards within 3 working days of the date of internal verification, for external verification. Evidence should be uploaded to the XAMS platform at the same time as submitting results.

Your Lead Quality Reviewer (LQR) will work with you through the external verification process to work towards a sampled approach to external verification once all parties are confident of a consistent approach to assessment decisions. You are required to retain evidence of assessment for at least 3 years from the end of the year to which they relate to support ongoing external verification. Access to these records may be requested at any time during unannounced visits and quality reviews.

Internal Verification
Centres are required to undertake internal verification of assessment decisions before uploading results and supporting evidence to the XAMs platform for external verification. These internal verification processes, including evidence of them being implemented, will be monitored and reviewed through external verification and as part of ongoing quality compliance monitoring

Once internal verification has been complete, and confirmed on the XAMS platform, the results will be allocated to your LQR for external verification.

External Verification
Record Learner Achievement and Assessor Sheets are uploaded to the XAMs platform, along with assessment decisions by the assessor and any required evidence. An LQR then samples this evidence in line with your risk rating.

The LQR will then confirm or reject the results via the XAMs platform and the results will be published. In the case of results being rejected, the LQR will liaise with you to gather further evidence or provide guidance and support as required. Outcomes from this activity will feed into the Centres ongoing Quality Assurance and risk rating for Functional Skills.

Standardisation
You should use exemplar material, and live assessment decisions, to carry out regular internal standardisation activities with anyone involved with the delivery, assessment and moderation of the SLC assessments. You are required to produce and retain evidence that these activities have taken place, as well as the outcome of the activity.

Guidance and support to centres will be part of the regular external quality assurance monitoring activity, which will also review and moderate the set SLC assessment tasks or any centre devised SLC tasks.

Attendance at external standardisation events will be required in addition to internal standardisation. Please visit our website for locations and dates of standardisation events.

Ongoing Centre Monitoring
In additional to the external verification of learners' SLC assessments, the LQR will also have responsibility for additional external quality assurance through a combination of annual quality compliance visits and unannounced visits. This will cover, as a minimum every three years, a check of policies, procedures and controls for ensuring it undertakes the delivery, setting and marking of assessments for the SLC Component consistently, appropriately, and in line with the guidance to Centres described above, and the standardisation of marking between assessors at that Centre.

As all centres receive an annual quality compliance visit or remote support session, it is anticipated that these checks will, in actuality, be completed on an annual basis. This will be monitored by the Head of Quality and Standards to account for any centres that do not require an annual quality compliance visit e.g. due to a period of inactivity, to ensure that the minimum standards are upheld.

The external quality assurance monitoring visit for the Speaking, Listening and Communicating component will:

- ensure, through appropriate sampling/moderation, that assessment arrangements are fit for purpose and are being delivered in accordance with the requirements specified for each SLC assessment task
- ensure the centre is taking all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of malpractice or maladministration
- confirm that assessments are conducted by appropriately qualified and occupationally expert assessors
- sample previously conducted Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment records and interview learners both in progress and having completed
- ensure that centre staff have access to up to date versions of the SLC Assessment Tasks & Assessment Documentation.

Centres will also be subject to unannounced visits and spot checks to ensure that set assessment structures and controlled assessment guidance is adhered to. Full guidance can be found here.

5. Level of language

Instructions that are given to the learner that are not part of the assessment task and its sub-tasks must be accessible to learners operating at the standard represented and no higher.

Setters (whether setting the assessment tasks for Open Awards, or from centres amending these tasks or devising their own) should also take care to ensure that use of English in any instructions to learners takes into account the fact that not all learners will have English as their first language.

All setters (again both those setting the Open Awards tasks and those from centres) are also responsible for ensuring that the content and instructions for the assessment task and its sub-tasks do not provide unnecessary obstacles to learners, for example, by demanding skills and knowledge outside those actually being assessed.

6. Inclusion

The assessment task and its related sub-tasks must support inclusion.

Speaking, listening and communicating within Functional Skills qualifications are defined as non-written communication, normally conducted face-to-face.

The term 'speaking, listening and communicating' as used in the Functional Skills Subject Content for this level is intended to be interpreted in a broadly inclusive way and is not intended to create any unnecessary barriers to learners with speech or hearing impairment.

The needs of individual learners will vary, but as guidance, the term should be interpreted as meaning communication, discussion and presentation that:

- Can include use of sign language (e.g. British Sign Language, sign-supported English) provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion. (It is recognised that BSL is a language in its own right and not a form of English. BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of speaking, listening and communicating, where BSL is the learner's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards). No other languages are permitted as alternatives to English;
- Can include access to augmentative speech equipment and such software as constitutes the learner's normal way of working;
- Does not depend solely on the use of written language, or require the individual/s with whom the learner is communicating to be able to read (as these skills are covered by the requirements for reading and writing).

7.   Equality issues

Open Awards is responsible for ensuring that, where controlled assessment is used, centres comply with the Functional Skills English Conditions and Requirements (Ofqual/18/6385/4), Functional Skills English Guidance (Ofqual/18/6385/5) and the relevant skills criteria in relation to equality, access and inclusion.

Additionally, Open Awards must ensure that qualifications are non-discriminatory on the grounds of disability, gender, race, age, sexual orientation and religion / belief. Inclusion documents detail the full range of strategies that learners are permitted to use to meet the requirements of the assessment and are available through Open Awards as well as Ofqual.

Centres must ensure when amending or developing tasks for SLC, no unnecessary barriers are placed in the way of learner achievement.

8. Assessment Structure

ENTRY LEVEL 2 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH SPEAKING, LISTENING AND COMMUNICATING

SAMPLE ASSESSMENT – SPORTS, GAMIES AND HOBBIES

TIME ALLOWED: 20 MINUTES

Learners need:
- Paper and pen/pencil to make notes
- Visual aids or pec/cue cards as appropriate

This assessment task must be kept secure until the assessment is scheduled to take place.

Instructions
- This assessment must be carried out under controlled conditions.

Preparation
Learners should be aware that there are TWO speaking and listening sub-tasks to be completed within a 20 minute window of time. It is recommended that suitable breaks are taken between the sub-tasks to allow learners a rest, allow them some time to think about and briefly prepare ideas for the second sub-task (discussion) and time for marking of the first sub-task to be completed. Learners may make notes of their ideas during this break.

The assessment at Entry Level 2 can take place as a 1-1 assessment or as part of a group (of no more than five learners) for sub-task 1.

Sub-task 2 requires participation in a group discussion. This should include between 3 and 5 people.

ONE-ONE OR GROUP ACTIVITY - Sub task 1
10 minutes

Introduction
The purpose of this assessment is to assess a learner's ability to:
- Identify and extract main information and detail from short explanations
- Respond appropriately to straightforward questions
- Make requests and ask clear questions.

Assessment instructions

The tutor/assessor prompts the learner(s) to participate formally and/or informally in simple discussions or exchanges by making a brief opening statement about a hobby/pastime they enjoy or sport/game that they play or watch. This should contain main points (e.g. 'My hobby is...'), an explanation (e.g. 'I like spending time on it because...') and some specific details (e.g. 'It is something that doesn't cost a lot of money... and 'we meet up once a week...').

The tutor then asks the learner questions about the statement they have just heard. These questions will be framed to ascertain whether the learner can:
- identify and extract the main information – e.g. what do I like doing in my spare time?
- respond to questions about specific information – e.g. how much do I spend on my hobby every week?

The tutor then prompts the learner(s) to make requests and ask clear questions based on/informed by what they have heard the tutor say. The learner should:
- make requests – e.g. tell me when you started...
- ask clear questions – e.g. how old do you have to be to...?

Whilst the tutor may offer prompts, it is the learner's responsibility to initiate requests and questions and to distinguish between the two.

After 10 minutes, or once the activity has been completed, close the session. Indicate there will be a break to prepare for the next part of the assessment

---

Assessor Guidance

For the purpose of this sample paper, the topic (chosen theoretically by the tutor) is 'Sports, Games or Hobbies'.

Tutors may prepare an alternative topic that is appropriate for the individual or group of learners, ensuring that it is something they can participate fully with.

Tutors should prepare the opening statement in advance to ensure that the language is appropriate for the level and it provides sufficient information to ensure a valid assessment.

Visual aids or cues can be used to aid understanding.

Group Discussion - Sub task 2
10 minutes

Introduction
The purpose of this assessment is to assess a learner's ability to engage in a group discussion, in which they:
- briefly explain their own preferences
- clearly express straightforward information
- instruct others
- listen to the explanations of others
- make requests and ask clear questions of others
- respond appropriately to straightforward questions from others
- follow the gist of discussion
- communicate feelings and opinions
- instruct others
- make appropriate contributions to the discussions with others.

Assessment Instructions

Remind learners of the task – and the chosen topic.
For the purpose of this sample paper, the topic is 'Sports, Games or Hobbies.'

The tutor must make sure that each learner has the opportunity to participate fully in the task and meet the standards set out in the relevant scope of study references. If one or more of the learners struggles to meet these standards, the tutor may join the discussion to ensure the other learners are not disadvantaged.

Whilst the tutor may offer prompts, it is the learner's responsibility to follow the gist of the discussion, contribute to it, express opinions and feelings, initiate requests and questions and to distinguish between the two.

Assessor Guidance

For the purpose of this sample paper, the topic (chosen theoretically by the tutor) is 'Sports, Games or Hobbies.'

Tutors may prepare an alternative topic that is appropriate for the individual or group of learners, ensuring that it is something they can participate fully with.

Tutors should prepare any opening instructions in advance to ensure that the language is appropriate for the level and it provides sufficient information to ensure a valid assessment.

Visual aids or cues can be used to aid understanding.

END OF ASSESSMENT

Appendix 1

ENTRY LEVEL 2 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH SPEAKING, LISTENING AND COMMUNICATING

RECORD OF LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT AND ASSESSOR SHEET

Learner full name:	
Date of birth:	Open Awards Learner no:
Assessment location:	
Date:	Time:

Centre name:	
Assessor name:	
Assessment task (including topic of discussion):	
Additional assessment requirements:	
Additional comments / incidents:	

Result (please insert 'Y' or tick as appropriate)	Pass	Fail

Learner signature:	Date:
Assessor signature:	Date:
Internal Verifier/Assessor signature: *(if sampled)*	Date:

Assessment Sheet
Speaking, Listening and Communicating: Entry Level 2

Entry Level 2 overall performance across the range of requirements for the level must be secure; and any insufficient demonstration of any individual content statement must be balanced by appropriate demonstration of that same content statement elsewhere.

SOS ref	On more than one occasion across the two sub-tasks, did the learner	Insert a tick (✓) if you have observed the learner doing this consistently and on at least two occasions across the sub-tasks. Insert a cross (X) if not.
1	Identify and extract the main information and detail from short explanations	
2	Make requests and ask clear questions appropriately in different contexts	
3	Respond appropriately to straightforward questions	
4	Follow the gist of discussions	
5	Clearly express straightforward information and communicate feelings and opinions on a range of straightforward topics	
6	Make appropriate contributions to simple group discussions with others about a straightforward topic	

Sub-Task 1 – Assessors Comments:

Sub-Task 2 – Assessors Comments: