

## Technical Instructions for Functional Skills Learners

Before you sit your online functional skills exam, you must read and understand these instructions to ensure you are fully prepared. If you are found to not be compliant with these instructions your exam may be rescheduled or cancelled.

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### **General Equipment:**

For your online functional skills exam you will require the following:

- 1) A suitable device - any of the following with a minimum screen size of 13 inches (measured diagonally from corner to corner):
  - PC (desktop or laptop) running Windows 10 or higher
  - Apple Mac (desktop or laptop)
  - Chromebook
- 2) A working webcam and microphone. These must be tested and confirmed to be working for video calls. No wireless devices are permitted. This includes keyboards, mice, webcams, microphones, and headphones if permitted.
- 3) A pen or pencil.
- 4) Plain paper for working out.
- 5) A dictionary (for English Reading exams only).
- 6) A non-scientific calculator (for Maths exams only). Please note that there will be an on-screen calculator available but if you prefer to use your own you will need to add all your workings to the spaces provided on the screen so they can be marked.
- 7) Valid photographic ID - bearing your image, full name and date of birth. Accepted forms of photographic ID include passports, driving licences, UK biometric residence permits and citizen cards ([link](#)).

*Please note:*

- *You cannot sit your online exam using a tablet or phone.*
- *If your webcam is integrated, you will need a hand mirror or some kind of reflective surface to show the invigilator the space around your screen and keyboard*
- *Scientific calculators are not permitted.*
- *You MUST NOT write down any of the questions on the paper.*
- *Bi-lingual dictionaries or a thesaurus are not permitted in Reading, Writing or SLC exams.*
- *If a learner is unable to supply valid photo ID, authentication of a learner's identity by a third-party representative, (teacher/employer/doctor/etc.) can be accepted by means of a verified photo, provided to Pass Functional Skills at least 5 working days before the exam.*
- *Learners are only permitted to use a single screen. Double-screen set ups are not permitted.*

### **Internet:**

For your online functional skills exam, your internet must meet the necessary requirements:

- 1) 10Mb/s download
- 2) 1Mb/s upload

You can test your speed via this link: <https://www.speedtest.net/>

*Please note:*

- *Mobile hotspots cannot be used*

### **Setting up your device:**

For your online functional skills exam, your device needs to be set up appropriately:

- 1) You must use one of the following internet browsers:
  - Google Chrome (version 34.0 or above)
  - Microsoft Edge (version 88.0.705.81 or above)
  - Firefox (version 31.0 or above)
  - Safari (version 6.2 or above)
- 2) Ensure that whichever of the above browsers you use, it is up to date.
- 3) The online exam will take place over a video call. Wherever possible we strongly recommend downloading the Zoom app ([link](#) - select Desktop Client) as this has proven to be the most reliable platform over time.
- 4) If using an Apple Mac, you must edit your system preferences to enable screen sharing.
- 5) Pop-ups must be allowed on your device.
- 6) Grammarly, and any other plug-ins that could give an advantage during the exam must be uninstalled or deactivated.
- 7) Ensure that predictive text has been disabled in your computer settings.

*Please note:*

- *Windows devices must not be in S-mode. Here is a guide on how to take your device out of S-mode ([link](#))*

### **Setting up your room:**

For your online functional skills exam, the exam room must be set up appropriately:

- 1) Your exam room should have adequate lighting, warmth and ventilation.
- 2) If you do not have overhead lighting, you should ensure your lamp is not positioned behind you, and you are not sat with your back to a window.

- 3) You must be alone in the room for the whole exam, so ensure that all members of your household are aware of this, and that you have made adequate childcare arrangements if necessary. Failure to comply may result in your exam being voided.
- 4) You cannot consume food during the exam.
- 5) Only drinks in clear containers are permitted during the exam.
- 6) Smoking or vaping are not permitted during the exam.
- 7) Pets must be removed from the exam room.
- 8) As far as possible, the exam room should be free of posters/books/words on the walls.
- 9) As far as possible, the exam room should be free of other technology such as intercoms, wired telephones, other computers, televisions, etc. If these cannot be removed they should be turned off/covered.
- 10) Learners are only permitted to use a single screen. Double-screen set ups are not permitted.

**Apparel:**

- 1) You must not wear hats or sunglasses.
- 2) If you will be wearing religious apparel, please inform Pass Functional Skills beforehand so that necessary arrangements can be made for your identification check.

**Headphones and hearing aids:**

- 1) If you require the use of headphones, they must be wired, and you must inform Pass Functional Skills at least 3 days before your exam.
- 2) Wireless headphones are not permitted under any circumstances.
- 3) If you require the use of hearing aids, you must inform Pass Functional Skills at least 3 days before your exam.

**If you cannot meet any of these requirements, you must inform Pass Functional Skills at the earliest opportunity. Please note that failure to meet these requirements may result in your exam needing to be rescheduled.**

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**Preparation Tips:**

- 1) You will be required to share your screen during your online exam, so please make sure you are comfortable doing this on video calls beforehand.
- 2) Check all of your equipment is working before the exam.
- 3) If you are using a laptop or Chromebook, make sure it is plugged in rather than relying on battery life.

- 4) Go to the toilet before your exam, as once your exam begins you will not be able to leave the room.
  - 5) Ensure there is minimal background noise to avoid distractions.
  - 6) If you have any questions, contact Pass Functional Skills before the day of your exam.
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### **Pre-exam Checks:**

Your online exam will be remotely invigilated by one of our trained invigilation staff. Your exam invigilator will conduct various pre-exam checks before your exam begins. Please be aware of the following:

- 1) Your exam will be recorded for quality assurance purposes.
- 2) Your invigilator will check all of your equipment and your room set up. If you are found not to meet exam board requirements your exam will need to be rearranged and a fee charged.
- 3) You will be emailed your exam meeting details/link 15 minutes before your scheduled exam time. Please ensure you are set up and ready to begin promptly.
- 4) You will be required to show your photographic ID to the invigilator.
- 5) You must ensure that both your webcam and microphone are enabled so that the invigilator can communicate with you and verify that your room setup is correct.
- 6) Your invigilator will have their camera turned off, and will only have their microphone on for essential communication - this is to minimise distraction for you as you sit your exam.
- 7) The invigilator may ask you to move your chair or camera to make sure you are clearly positioned on the screen for the recording.
- 8) The invigilator will give you clear instructions regarding the controlled conditions of the online exam, and will ask you to confirm that you fully understand these instructions before the exam begins.
- 9) The pre-exam checks will include:
  - Suitable visual and sound quality.
  - Confirmation that the device is plugged in.
  - Confirmation that the internet speeds meet the minimum requirements, outlined above.
  - A thorough "room sweep" to ensure the room is setup correctly.
  - Confirmation that mobile phones and all other electronic devices (other than the device used for the exam) are switched off and have been removed.
  - Confirmation that no paperwork or books containing notes or prompts are within reach.
  - Confirmation that no food is visible, and that all drinks are in clear containers with no labels.
  - Confirmation that there will be no smoking or vaping during the exam.
  - Confirmation that appropriate calculators and dictionaries (where applicable) are used, and placed out of reach where necessary.

- Confirmation that all unnecessary open windows/tabs and applications on your device are closed.
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### **The Exam:**

Once the invigilator is satisfied that you meet the required conditions, they will send you login details for your exam and assist you to access the exam. This may involve the invigilator taking remote control of your device.

- 1) The invigilator will be able to view you and your room through your webcam, as well as being able to view your device screen.
  - 2) The invigilator will pay attention to any behaviour that may suggest controlled conditions are being breached.
  - 3) The invigilator will challenge you about any suspicious behaviour or activity, and they may ask you to undertake additional thorough "room sweeps" before allowing you to continue with the exam.
  - 4) The invigilator will stop the exam if the controlled conditions cannot be met, and the exam may be voided.
  - 5) Any malpractice will result in disqualification from the functional skills qualification.
  - 6) You cannot communicate with anyone other than the invigilator during the exam.
  - 7) If you believe the exam platform is not functioning properly, inform your invigilator at once.
  - 8) The invigilator is limited in the questions that they can answer, but will always advise and support as best they can within the appropriate parameters.
  - 9) Pay attention to the countdown clock in the on-screen window. This will change colour from white to amber when you are entering the last ten minutes of your assessment.
  - 10) The invigilator will also verbally advise you when you are entering the last ten minutes of your assessment.
  - 11) In order to maintain the confidentiality of the exam, you **MUST NOT** write down any of the questions on your working out paper. This may result in disqualification from the exam and the qualification.
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### **After the Exam:**

Once the exam is over, the invigilator will do the following:

- 1) Guide you to log out of the exam.
- 2) Check any writing you have recorded on your working out paper.
- 3) Direct you to destroy any paper you have written on.
- 4) End the session and stop the recording.

Your answers will then be reviewed by the exam board, and Pass Functional Skills will receive your exam results 10-16 working days later. As soon as results are received, Pass Functional Skills will contact you.

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**Exam Conduct:**

Learners are expected to abide by all rules laid out below, as well as the exam instructions. Failure to comply with the rules may result in the invigilator removing you from the exam and your exam being voided with no refund:

- 1) Learners should be ready with all required materials 30 minutes before their scheduled exam start time.
  - 2) Learners may not leave the exam room once the invigilator has confirmed controlled conditions have begun.
  - 3) Learners must remain visible on the camera at all times.
  - 4) Learners must comply with any requests the invigilator makes to allow the establishment and maintenance of controlled conditions.
  - 5) No aggressive or abusive behaviour towards staff or other learners will be tolerated.
  - 6) Malpractice, or attempts to gain an unfair advantage in the assessment, will result in immediate disqualification.
  - 7) Disruptive behaviour, especially when in exams with other learners, will not be tolerated and will result in your removal from the exam.
  - 8) The use of any items not listed in the exam instructions could void your exam.
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**Additional information:**

- 1) Our full terms and conditions can be found [here](#).
- 2) Our complaints and appeals policy can be found [here](#).
- 3) Our learner malpractice and plagiarism policy can be found [here](#).