

**VTCT****SKILLSFIRST**

Reformed Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Senior Examiner's Report November 2023

Overall Learner Performance

The performance of learners has been quite varied. While some learners were adequately prepared and achieved exceptionally high marks, the majority performed reasonably well. However, there were some learners who were not adequately prepared for the assessment, resulting in lower marks.

Areas for Improvement for Weaker Learners

At both levels, across all components, the areas that need improvement are consistent with those mentioned in previous reports.

Level 1 Reading

- 1) Identifying the distinction between fact and opinion (SoS 11).
- 2) Recognising how the author employs language (SoS12). It's worth noting that some learners confuse this with identifying features that make the text easier to read, which is the second part of SoS 12.
- 3) The ability to make comparisons (SoS10).
- 4) Ensuring that all parts of a question are addressed. For instance, if a question requires candidates to identify features and provide examples, many learners either identify the features **or** provide examples but fail to do both as required.

Level 2 Reading

- 1) Distinguishing between style and purpose (SoS 19). Some learners tend to confuse this with identifying the type of document.
- 2) Recognising bias (SoS 17). When asked to identify which document is most or least biased, learners should consider all texts, not just the one they've chosen.
- 3) Ensuring that all parts of a question are addressed. For example, if a question requires learners to identify the writer's views and explain how they are conveyed, many learners either

identify the writer's views **or** explain how they are conveyed but rarely do both as required by the question.

Level 1 Writing

- 1) Using the correct format as required by the task (SoS 24).
- 2) Incorporating an appropriate level of detail (SoS 23).
- 3) Writing in complex sentences (SoS 25).
- 4) Demonstrating accuracy in spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SoS 19, 20 & 21).

Level 2 Writing

- 1) Using the correct format as required by the task (SoS 25).
- 2) Incorporating an appropriate level of detail (SoS 24).
- 3) Constructing complex sentences (SoS 28).
- 4) Ensuring accuracy in spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SoS 20, 21 & 22).

Advice for Centres

Concentrate on teaching the relevant Subject Content, including all Scopes of Study. Ensure that learners are well-informed about the requirements of the Subject Content. For instance

- Level 1 Reading learners should be capable of making comparisons, distinguishing between fact and opinion (SoS 11), and recognizing vocabulary associated with specific types and purposes of texts (SoS 16).
- Level 2 Reading learners should be able to compare how ideas and opinions are conveyed in different texts (SoS 12), understand the relationship between textual features and devices and their role in shaping meaning (SoS 14), identify levels of formality and bias (SoS 17), and recognise different writing styles and writer's voice (SoS 19).
- Level 1 Writing learners should be proficient in using commas and possessive apostrophes (SoS 19), employing definite and indefinite articles (SoS 20), writing text of an appropriate length (SoS 23), using formats suitable for the audience and purpose (SoS 24), and writing complex sentences accurately (SoS 25).
- Level 2 Writing learners should be capable of using colons, commas, inverted commas, apostrophes, and quotation marks (SoS 20), employing various tenses and modality devices (SoS 21), writing text of appropriate length (SoS 24), organising information using suitable formats and structures for the intended purpose (SoS 25), effectively using organisational markers (SoS 26), consistently and accurately constructing complex sentences and using paragraphs (SoS 28).

Teach exam techniques, such as reading and addressing all parts of a question, as well as time management, like using mark allocations to gauge how much time should be allocated to each question.

Encourage learners to take a practice test on the XAMS system before attempting the live test.

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Department for Education. Subject Content Functional Skills.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-skills-subject-content-english>)

Scope of Study - pages 13 – 16 of the above document.