

## **Functional Skills**

### **English**

**Entry Level – 09495, 09496, 09497 (Unit 1, 2 and 3)**

## **OCR Report to Centres September 2017**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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## Functional Skills English

Entry Level – 09495, 09496, 09497 (Unit 1, 2 and 3)

### OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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# Functional Skills English Entry Level 1-3 (Unit 1, 2 and 3)

## 1 Overview

The OCR Functional Skills in English Entry Level qualifications are suitable for learners of all ages who are developing their skills and knowledge in a range of learning situations, including ESOL learners, learners with special educational needs, learners in secure establishments and learners taking traineeships.

These qualifications are available at Entry Level 1, Entry Level 2 and Entry Level 3 and the units available are:

- Speaking, Listening and Communication
- Reading
- Writing

### Best practice

The majority of Centres have submitted Speaking, Listening and Communication (SLC) Assessor Observation Records that have been completed in a detailed and comprehensive way, often with supporting notes and PowerPoint slide handouts being included with these records. Centre assessors have been more competent at providing examples of what the learners said or carried out to fully demonstrate exactly how the Assessment Criteria was met by the learners. In addition, the reading and writing assessments were correctly marked with only minor adjustments being made by the External Moderators.

## 2 General Comments

### At all levels

The real-life themes, e.g. a driving lesson, an accident witnessed at work and a haircut, that are a key aspect of the OCR Functional Skills in English Entry Level live assessments, have clearly been an essential part of the success across all Entry Levels. Centres are encouraged to continue to coach learners to engage in discussion, reading and writing activities that are centred around real-life scenarios, so that learners are able to transfer their skills and knowledge and apply these effectively to a range of tasks.

### Entry Level 1

The Entry Level 1 performance has been extremely good, which indicates good understanding of the qualification at this level and the good quality teaching and learning that is taking place within the Centres.

### Entry Level 2

The Entry Level 2 performance has been very good. Centres clearly understand that the demand is higher at this level. This demonstrates that teaching and learning is effectively differentiated within Centres. This is very encouraging.

### **Entry Level 3**

The Entry Level 3 performance has also been very good. This is reassuring, as this shows that learners are being well-coached within the Centres and also being entered for the qualification at the correct skill level.

## **3 Comments on Individual Units**

### **Contextualisation**

The SLC and the writing units can be contextualised. Therefore, where the live assessment tasks do not match the learners' interests, Centres have been competent at providing suitable, alternative tasks to ensure their learners' success. The reading tasks, which cannot be contextualised, have a range of topics to choose from, so that assessors can access subjects that the learners will be motivated to complete. The reading topics have included 'Part-time job', 'Local football team', 'Training', 'Broken watch', 'New flat' etc.

### **Unit 1 – Speaking, Listening and Communication**

The OCR Assessor Observation Records (AORs) have been designed to encourage Centres to make written comments to demonstrate what the learners have said or carried out to achieve the individual Assessment Criteria. There has been some excellent good practice in Centres in terms of completing the records in a fully detailed and individualised way. Centres are reminded to ensure that the Assessment Criteria tick boxes are ticked on page one of the AORs and the pass/fail box is also ticked on page two as appropriate. In the main, Centres clearly understand that failed assessment tasks should not be submitted for external moderation.

### **Unit 2 – Reading**

The reading task topics are purposely varied to allow Centres to select the ones that best suit their learners' interests. The mark schemes are uncomplicated and very accessible, which means that the majority of the marks were correctly allocated by the Centres.

### **Unit 3 – Writing**

Overall, there is good Centre understanding of what is required to achieve this unit. However, Centres are reminded to bear in mind that the overarching Assessment Criteria, as well as the pass mark, must be achieved by the learners, if they are to be awarded the unit. Clarification of this is as follows:

- Entry Level 1 – The learners must write at least two short simple sentences in BOTH Task A and Task B, achieve at least one mark against each evidence statement in BOTH Task A and Task B and achieve the pass mark of 8/16.
- Entry Level 2 – The learners must write at least three sentences. Two of these must be compound sentences. This applies to BOTH Task A and Task B. The learners must also achieve at least one mark against each evidence statement in BOTH Task A and Task B and achieve the pass mark of 11/22.
- Entry Level 3 – The learners must write at least four sentences, which are clearly written and logically organised. Two of these must be compound sentences. This applies to BOTH Task A and Task B. The learners must also achieve at least one mark against each evidence statement in BOTH Task A and Task B and achieve the pass mark of 18/36.

#### **4 Sector Update**

There are many useful resources, such as delivery guides and lesson elements, available for Centres in the Functional Skills in English Entry Level section of the OCR website.

OCR is actively participating in the Functional Skills Reform Programme, which is being led by the Education and Training Foundation. This reform involves the review of the Functional Skills standards. The reformed Functional Skills qualifications are due to be available for first teaching in September 2019.

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