

Functional Skills

Screening Test

User Guide

What is the Screening for?

This short and speedy screening test can be used to give a quick indication as to whether a learner is working at or above Entry level in both English and Mathematics. It facilitates decisions regarding referrals for further assessment for both additional learning support (ALS) and English as a second or other language (ESOL).

Subsequent to this screening test, it is best practice for all learners to take an initial assessment to identify the general level at which they are working eg Entry 2, Level 1 etc. This should be followed (where appropriate) by an in-depth diagnostic assessment to identify precise strengths and weaknesses and to produce an individual learning plan.

When should I use it?

You can use the screening test at any time. Most organisations are using it either at interview/enrolment or during their induction period. **This paper based version** will be used with many work-based and mature part-time learners, during interview or induction.

How do I use it?

The test is a short paper based assessment which covers both English and Mathematics. In addition there is the **option** of a pre-assessment questionnaire which can be filled in to accompany the test. See notes on pre-assessment questionnaire on page 5. Administering the test is simple! Ensure that the learner has a pen/pencil and a quiet place to complete the assessment. No calculators are allowed. The test has one mark per question, making it quick and easy to mark! The marking scheme and how to interpret the results can be found on pages 3-4.

How long will it take?

The test should take a learner approximately 10-15 minutes. If the pre-assessment questionnaire is used you may wish to allow a little longer.

How accurate is it?

The Screening Test has been piloted with learners of ranging ages and abilities. The results of the screening test have been validated against records of current abilities and subsequent initial assessments and diagnostic results.

Caution - In very few cases, the anomalies occurred which apply to all short, sharp screening tests ie candidate failure to take the assessment seriously or to take sufficient time to read the questions properly. Otherwise, staff were delighted with both learner reaction to the assessment and the results.

Bearing the above caution in mind, it is most important that assessors/administrators of the screening stress that the assessment begins on page one with the personal details and that care should be taken. In addition, learners should be reminded to check their answers.

Marking the Screening Test

Answers

Section A - English Screening

Question	Answer
1	2
2	3 - 4
3	Body Pump
4	Elena
5	5
6	2

Section B - Mathematics Screening

Question	Answer
1	14/276/323/438/791
2	83
3	900
4	12,006
5	0.5

Interpreting the results

Section A - English

0-3 marks Suggests learner working at Entry level

4-6 marks Suggests learner working at or above level 1

PROVIDING THAT NO ERRORS ARE MADE IN PERSONAL DETAILS

Personal details

The personal details section forms part of the English assessment and errors or lack of errors contribute to the decision on the final result.

Errors to look for include:

- Omission or incorrect use of capital letters
- Incorrect spellings
- Illegible writing
- Vital details missing (eg name of street, county etc.)

If one or more errors are present in the completion of personal details and a learner scores 4 - 5 out of 6 in Section A, we suggest s/he is working at Entry Level. However, it would be unfair to suggest a learner is generally working at Entry if they have made one mistake in their personal details, yet answered all the other English questions correctly.

If more than one error is made, yet all questions are answered correctly, then the learner should be classed as Entry in the first instance.

Note - If the errors are all the same eg the same lower case letter is used instead of a capital, this should be counted as just one error as it may be idiosyncratic.

Below is a quick and easy guide to interpreting the English results, combining both components of the English assessment and determining the level.

English Marks	No. of errors in Personal Details	Level
1 - 3	Any errors or none	Entry (E)
4 - 6	No errors present	Level 1 or above (1+)
4 - 5	One or more errors	Entry (E)
6	More than one error	Entry (E)
6	One error or no errors	Level 1 or above (1+)

Example English Result

No. of errors in Personal Details ...3

English Marks ...5

ENGLISH LEVEL E

Section B - Mathematics

0 - 2 marks Suggests learner working at Entry level

3 - 5 marks Suggests learner working at or above level 1

The Mathematics assessment comprises one section and the level achieved is determined solely on the marks gained. See chart above.

Recording results on test papers

We have included a space on each test paper where the assessor should tick whether the learner is working at Entry Level or Level 1 or above in English and Mathematics. This section should be completed after interpreting the results so that the level the student is working at can be seen at a glance. This section appears at the bottom of page one.

The box to the right of the 'E' should be ticked for students working at Entry Level and the box to the right of '1+' should be ticked for those working at Level 1 or above.

Referrals for further assessment

ALS - If the policy of your organisation is to refer any learner working below level 1 in English or Mathematics for further assessment, you should circle 'YES' for ALS (additional learning support) and pass on as appropriate.

ESOL - If personal details reveal that the learner regards English as their second language or frequently uses another language and the results indicate working at Entry in either English or Mathematics, you should circle 'YES' for ESOL (English as a second or other language) and pass on as appropriate.

Pre-assessment questionnaire

It is not obligatory to use this, indeed you may not wish to use a questionnaire or already have a similar tool. Use, either as a stand-alone questionnaire, in conjunction with the screening or before the paper Entry Diagnostic assessments. It has been supplied to enable you to gather more information about a learner during interview/enrolment. Failure to complete the questionnaire appropriately would already indicate pre-Entry or Entry level in English and requests by learners for the interviewer to complete the personal details for them would definitely indicate a basic skills need. A completed questionnaire along with the screening result would give a support tutor a great deal of information before further assessment is conducted.