



Maple Haven School

NOCN Functional Skills

Literacy Levels 1 and 2

Pathway 6 & 7

This map covers reading, writing, and speaking, listening and communicating for NOCN Functional Skills English. Shared themes support separate level classes or a mixed level group, with progression from straightforward texts and communication at Level 1 to more complex texts, developed arguments and greater independence at Level 2.

Qualifications and scope

Qualification	Qualification number	Hours
Functional Skills English Level 1	603/5266/8	55 GLH and TQT
Functional Skills English Level 2	603/5264/4	55 GLH and TQT

This is a suggested centre curriculum based on the DfE subject content used by NOCN. It covers Functional Skills English rather than the separate English Skills awards or certificates. Each level is a separate programme. The sequence allocates 55 guided hours at the learner's selected level, including assessment; adapt the pace and session lengths to diagnostic findings and readiness. [1,2]

How to read the references

L1.9 means Level 1 subject content statement 9; L2.20 means Level 2 statement 20. These planning references use DfE statement numbers and are not NOCN unit codes. Level 1 has 25 statements and Level 2 has 28. The final coverage audit shows where every statement is introduced.

Speaking, listening and communicating is abbreviated to SLC. Spelling, punctuation and grammar is abbreviated to SPaG. Teach all three components throughout the programme. Revisit spelling, sentence accuracy, reading strategies and discussion conventions in every block; higher level learning builds on lower level skills.

Programme intent

Learners will understand and evaluate texts, write clearly for different purposes and audiences, and communicate confidently in work, study and daily life. They will select relevant information, support opinions with evidence, plan and edit independently, and respond constructively to others.

Relationship to GCSE

Level 1 Functional Skills sits at the same qualification level as GCSE grades 1-3, and Level 2 at the same level as GCSE grades 4-9. Functional Skills has its own curriculum and pass or fail assessment; it does not award a GCSE grade. Check the requirements of the intended course or employer when using it to meet an English entry requirement. [3]

Term 1 Understanding texts and writing accurately

Suggested allocation 20 guided hours per learner at the selected level. Reading, writing accuracy and SLC continue across all themes.

Weeks and focus	Level 1 outcomes	Level 2 outcomes
1-2 4 hours Baseline and meaning	Find main points, ideas and details in straightforward texts; identify relevant information and argument in spoken explanations; communicate ideas clearly in writing. L1.1,9,22	Decide when main points are enough and when detail is needed; identify information in extended explanations; communicate ideas coherently in writing. L2.1,11,23
3-4 4 hours Purpose and audience	Recognise how textual features and vocabulary suit audience and purpose; select appropriate format, detail and length in writing; adapt spoken register. L1.7,12,16,23-24	Explain how textual features and devices shape meaning; adapt spoken contributions; choose writing length, detail, format and structure. L2.9,14,24-25
5-6 4 hours Vocabulary and references	Use reference materials and strategies to find meaning; understand specialist words in context; spell common work, study and daily life words including specialist words. L1.13,17,21	Use reference resources including glossaries, legends and keys in straightforward and complex sources; analyse vocabulary and formality; spell a range of specialist and everyday words. L2.15,17,22
7-8 4 hours Organisation and punctuation	Use indexes, menus, subheadings and paragraphs to locate information; use punctuation to understand text; write with full stops, question and exclamation marks, commas and possessive apostrophes. L1.14,18-19	Locate information through organisational features in straightforward and complex sources; use a wide punctuation range including colons, commas, apostrophes and inverted commas or quotation marks. L2.16,20
9-10 4 hours Grammar and sentences	Use correct subject-verb agreement, consistent tenses and articles; write complex sentences accurately and use paragraphs where appropriate. L1.20,25	Use correct agreement, a range of consistent tenses and articles; use modality to express probability or desirability; construct accurate complex sentences and paragraphs. L2.21,28

Practical learning and evidence

1-2: Diagnose reading, independent writing and SLC separately. Use an everyday notice and spoken briefing; record strengths and individual targets.

3-4: Compare a formal email, leaflet and instructions. Rewrite a message for a different audience and explain the language choices.

5-6: Read a workplace or course text, build a glossary and keep a personal spelling log. Check unfamiliar words in context before using them.

7-8: Locate information in a handbook or website printout. Explain how punctuation changes meaning, then edit a short text.

9-10: Combine clauses and develop paragraphs in a short report. Review grammar and punctuation in an independent writing checkpoint.

Term 2 Comparing ideas and writing for purpose

Suggested allocation 18 guided hours per learner at the selected level. Reading, writing accuracy and SLC continue across all themes.

Weeks and focus	Level 1 outcomes	Level 2 outcomes
11-12 4 hours Facts opinions and argument	Identify meaning and distinguish fact from opinion; express spoken opinions and arguments with supporting evidence. L1.5,11	Follow an argument, identify viewpoints and distinguish fact from opinion; follow spoken narratives and argument; support opinions with relevant persuasive evidence. L2.2,6,18
13-14 4 hours Compare and discuss	Compare information, ideas and opinions across texts; contribute relevant points to discussion and respect turn taking with appropriate interjections. L1.6,8,10	Compare ideas and opinions including how they are conveyed; make constructive contributions that move discussion forward; interject and redirect appropriately. L2.8,10,12
15-16 4 hours Inference and explanation	Infer meanings from images beyond the accompanying text; explain findings clearly and accurately on a range of topics. L1.4,15	Identify implicit and inferred meanings; develop clear spoken information, ideas and opinions with further detail when needed. L2.5,13
17-18 3 hours Inform explain and narrate	Write clear, coherent and accurate information, ideas and opinions; match detail, length, format and language to audience and purpose; use complex sentences and paragraphs. L1.22-25	Write clear and effective explanations, narratives and reports; meet detail and length requirements; organise the format and structure and use markers to establish cohesion. L2.23-26,28
19-20 3 hours Persuasion style and register	Recognise persuasive and other text vocabulary; write for an audience and purpose and support a spoken argument with evidence. L1.5,12,16,24	Analyse formality and bias, writer's voice and different writing styles; use persuasive language, supporting evidence, specialist words and suitable register. L2.14,17,19,27

Practical learning and evidence

11-12: Annotate an article or review for fact, opinion and evidence. Explain whether the evidence supports the claim.

13-14: Compare two accounts of the same issue, then discuss the differences. At Level 2 compare how each writer presents the issue.

15-16: Interpret a poster or illustrated leaflet at Level 1; at Level 2 infer unstated attitudes in text and support the inference with evidence.

17-18: Plan, draft and edit instructions, an explanation or a narrative report. Use a task brief that specifies audience and length.

19-20: Compare persuasive letters or articles and write a reasoned recommendation. Complete a reading and writing checkpoint with SPaG feedback.

Term 3 Spoken communication and independent application

Suggested allocation 17 guided hours per learner at the selected level. Reading, writing accuracy and SLC continue across all themes.

Weeks and focus	Level 1 outcomes	Level 2 outcomes
21-22 3 hours Questions and responses	Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information; respond effectively to detailed questions. L1.2-3	Ask detailed pertinent questions and make requests in varied contexts; respond effectively to detailed or extended questions and feedback. L2.3-4
23-24 3 hours Presentations and listening	Extract relevant information and lines of argument; communicate clearly and accurately; adapt phrases and register to audience, purpose and medium. L1.1,4,7	Listen to extended explanations and narratives; present clear developed information; use accurate effective language and adapt to audience, purpose and medium. L2.1-2,5,7,9
25-26 3 hours Constructive discussion	Follow and understand discussions; make relevant contributions, respect turns and use appropriate interjections; support arguments with evidence. L1.5-6,8	Move discussion forward with constructive contributions; interject and redirect appropriately; use persuasive evidence and adapt language and register. L2.6-10
27-28 4 hours Application and SLC assessment	Integrate reading, writing and spoken communication in a practical project; review SLC evidence and undertake formal SLC assessment when ready. L1.1-25	Evaluate sources, write a developed response and communicate a supported decision; undertake formal SLC assessment when ready. L2.1-28
29-30 4 hours Review and assessment	Review reading and writing gaps; complete sample practice and live reading and writing assessments when ready. L1.9-25	Review complex reading and developed writing; complete sample practice and live reading and writing assessments when ready. L2.11-28

Practical learning and evidence

21-22: Practise an enquiry, interview or service request. Record question relevance, listening and how well the response addresses the question.

23-24: Present a recommendation to the group and answer follow-up questions. Listeners record the main information and argument.

25-26: Discuss a community, study or workplace issue. Observe every learner's contributions and response to others; reduce tutor prompts.

27-28: Use a project such as proposing a class event or improving a service. Collect practice evidence; use current NOCN task guidance for formal SLC assessment.

29-30: Use suitable sample papers, timed independent practice and platform familiarisation. Give feedback, reteach gaps and schedule live components when ready.

Teaching assessment and progression

Develop independent literacy

Use age appropriate authentic and adapted texts: emails, notices, instructions, narratives, articles, reports, reviews and persuasive writing. At Level 1 use straightforward texts of varying lengths; at Level 2 include both straightforward and complex texts. Include extended spoken explanations and presentations at Level 2.

Model reading for gist, detail and inference, then require evidence from the text. Teach planning, drafting, revising and proofreading as distinct stages. Revisit spelling patterns, specialist vocabulary and sentence accuracy through learners' own errors. Build discussion routines that enable everyone to contribute and respond.

Keep a learner record with statement reference, task, date, accuracy, independence, feedback and next action. Support practice with accessible materials and gradual removal of prompts; use approved arrangements for formal assessment.

Checkpoint	Suggested evidence
Weeks 1-2	Separate baseline tasks for reading, writing and SLC; selected qualification level and individual targets.
Each block	Reading response, independent writing or observed communication task; record evidence against specific statements.
Weeks 9-10	Writing accuracy review and reading strategy check; plan targeted sentence and spelling work.
Weeks 19-20	Reading comparison and independent writing review; check purpose, evidence, cohesion and accuracy.
Weeks 23-26	Presentation and discussion practice with questions and feedback; track each learner's SLC coverage.
Weeks 27-30	SLC assessment and reading and writing assessments when ready; retain required records and address remaining gaps.

NOCN summative assessment

Reading and writing are set and marked by NOCN. SLC is set by NOCN, assessed and internally quality assured by centres, and externally quality assured by NOCN. Normally, learners must pass all three components at the same level; approved exemptions may apply. The qualification is pass or fail.

[1]

Level	Reading	Writing	SLC
Level 1	60 minutes 32 marks	60 minutes 54 marks	30 minutes Tutor assessed
Level 2	60 minutes 35 marks	60 minutes 54 marks	30 minutes Tutor assessed

These details are from NOCN specification version 1.6 March 2025. Follow current component guidance for SLC task structure and timings. Dictionaries are permitted in reading, not writing; spelling and grammar software functions must be disabled where technology is approved. [1]

Progression

Plan Level 1 to Level 2 progression from evidence across all components. Look for independent reading, accurate purposeful writing and effective contributions to discussion. After Level 2, identify the learner's next work or study goal and any further English requirements.

Coverage audit and sources

The table identifies the first explicit teaching block for every DfE statement. Statements are revisited through the integrated work in weeks 27-28 and relevant component review in weeks 29-30.

Level and component	Statement references and teaching blocks
Level 1 SLC Statements 1-8	1: weeks 1-2; 2-3: weeks 21-22; 4: weeks 15-16; 5: weeks 11-12; 6 and 8: weeks 13-14; 7: weeks 3-4.
Level 1 reading Statements 9-18	9: weeks 1-2; 10: weeks 13-14; 11: weeks 11-12; 12 and 16: weeks 3-4; 13 and 17: weeks 5-6; 14 and 18: weeks 7-8; 15: weeks 15-16.
Level 1 writing Statements 19-25	19: weeks 7-8; 20 and 25: weeks 9-10; 21: weeks 5-6; 22: weeks 1-2; 23-24: weeks 3-4.
Level 2 SLC Statements 1-10	1: weeks 1-2; 2 and 6: weeks 11-12; 3-4: weeks 21-22; 5: weeks 15-16; 7: weeks 23-24; 8 and 10: weeks 13-14; 9: weeks 3-4.
Level 2 reading Statements 11-19	11: weeks 1-2; 12: weeks 13-14; 13: weeks 15-16; 14: weeks 3-4; 15 and 17: weeks 5-6; 16: weeks 7-8; 18: weeks 11-12; 19: weeks 19-20.
Level 2 writing Statements 20-28	20: weeks 7-8; 21 and 28: weeks 9-10; 22: weeks 5-6; 23: weeks 1-2; 24-25: weeks 3-4; 26: weeks 17-18; 27: weeks 19-20.

Sources

[1] NOCN Suite of Functional Skills Qualifications in English at Level 1 and Level 2. Specification version 1.6 March 2025, sections 2.1 and 2.4. Public source inspected 5 October 2026.

https://www.nocn.org.uk/Data/Asset_Downloads/QualificationSpecificationFSQEnglishL1andL2v1.6.pdf

[2] Department for Education English Functional Skills subject content. Updated 9 April 2025. Level 1 and Level 2 statements and scope of study. Adapted under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

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

[3] GOV.UK What qualification levels mean England Wales and Northern Ireland.

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

Teaching sequence, hours, contexts and checkpoints are suggested centre planning choices. Check the latest NOCN assessment guidance before delivery. This independently prepared document is not an NOCN endorsed publication.