

Skills for Life Webinar

24th July 2023

FAQs

Skills for Life

What is Skills for Life?

Skills for Life include literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

As NHS England we understand the importance of these skills to the NHS workforce and our Skills for Life programme is dedicated to promoting and enabling the development of these critical skills. You can find out more and access free tools and resources on our website here - <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/skills-for-life/>

bksb and Open Awards

Do NHS England fund access to functional skills exams for English and Maths?

Yes, as NHS England we help employers to support their workforce the below:

- Free access for health and care employers to [bksb](#) English and maths learning
- Free access to [Open Awards functional skills exams and assessments](#)
- Free access to [ENIC service](#). (UK ENIC – the UK National Information Centre for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills)
- and sharing practice in [ESOL teaching and learning](#) to support progression through a range of English and maths qualifications.

Are these qualifications free for NHS staff?

Yes, there is no cost access bksb English and maths learning or to undertake Functional Skills exams with Open Awards. These are fully funded via NHS England.

You can also access local provision through your local college. This is funded via the [Adult Education Budget](#). Please speak to your local college directly about their qualifications and funding.

Can adults who have lost their certificates, but may have achieved a grade C GCSE in the past access functional skills?

Yes, learners who have lost their certificates can undertake functional skills exams through Open Awards.

How can bksb support learners with low confidence and who are out of practice?

Bksb can be used to refresh learning and build confidence, it doesn't need to lead to learners taking formal functional skills exams at the end.

Is there a limit on the number of resits of functional skills exams with Open Awards? and would these resits be free of charge?

There is no charge for resits. These are capped at one resit. So the first attempt and then a resit would be funded.

Are the functional skills exams and learning only offered to employees? Can the offer be extended to NHS volunteers?

NHS volunteers and bank staff can also access bksb and Open Awards.

Where can I find out more?

- Open Awards – email customerservices@openawards.org.uk or call 0151-494-2072
- bksb – email hee@bksb.co.uk

Can Primary care also access bksb and Open Awards?

Primary care can also access bksb, GP practices and training hubs can email traininghubs@hee.nhs.uk to start the process.

Are there user guides or support material available for bksb?

Yes, you can access guides and videos to help you use bksb, please contact hee@bksb.co.uk

Digital Skills

Where has the ICT functional skill gone?

From July 2022 the ESFA removed post-16 funding from Level 2 Functional Skills Qualifications in ICT. Due to the introduction of reformed qualifications for digital skills.

What will replace the ICT functional skill?

The following will replace ICT functional skill:

- **Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs)** are a new qualification type designed to meet the diverse needs of adults with no or low digital skills.
- **Digital Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs)** will replace FSQs in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) from August 2023.

When will the new digital functional skills be available?

DFSQ at Entry Level 3 and Level 1 will be available for delivery from August 2023.

Will Open Awards offer the Digital Skills exams?

Yes, Open Awards are just going through the final stages of approval for essential digital skills and hope to be live soon.

Will Open Awards offer Digital Skills mock assessments?

Yes, Open Awards will be launching digital skills mock assessments soon. At present it is mock assessments across L1 and L2 Maths and English.

Multiply

What is Multiply?

Multiply is govt funding that local areas can use to develop a broad range of numeracy provision. You can find out more here - <https://skillsforlife.campaign.gov.uk/courses/multiply/>

How can multiply support the NHS workforce?

Multiply can Strengthen numeracy skills needed for the changing skills requirements in the NHS, to support upskilling and staff to progression. For example it could also be used to reach staff (e.g. shift workers) who are not able to access numeracy learning through the Adult Education Budget

How can I contact my local authority area to find out more?

You can contact you Contact Multiply lead in relevant local authority or MCA/GLA to get involved. If you don't know who this is, you can contact multiply.localallocations@education.gov.uk who will link you to your regional lead.

How is Multiply different to National Numeracy?

Multiply is government funding that local areas can use to develop a broad range of numeracy provision. The National Numeracy Challenge is a brilliant way for people to check their numeracy levels and think about what learning would work for them.

National Numeracy

Who are National Numeracy?

National Numeracy was established as an independent charity in 2012 to help raise low levels of numeracy among both adults and children and to promote the importance of everyday maths skills.

As NHS England we work strategically with National Numeracy to support the NHS workforce improve their confidence views, and attitudes towards numeracy.

What is the National Numeracy Challenge?

The [National Numeracy Challenge](#) is designed to give you an accurate picture of your everyday maths skills. You start by registering and completing a quick-check of your skills, which highlights the areas you need to improve.

Users are then guided towards appropriate learning resources online to help them upskill in just 10 minutes a day. They are led through a personalised learning plan with links to online learning tools which cover the topics they need to work on.

Employer Case Studies

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust and Lincolnshire Community Health Service NHS Foundation Trust presented about how they have successfully embedded and grown literacy and numeracy skills in their Trusts. We will be capturing this best practice and adding to our website. In the meantime, please do check out our other skills for life case studies - <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/case-studies-3/>