Skills for Life - Functional Skills

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Functional skills are important life skills including literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. They help people to gain the most from life, learning and working.

You can study for functional skills? qualifications in a practical way, applying key skills to actual situations so that the things you learn come in useful every day, at work or at home. Whilst developing your functional skills can help you to develop and progress in your career, they can also help you to feel more confident in yourself and these skills can be useful in all aspects of your life.

Developing your functional skills can help you to:

- Apply knowledge and skills to real life
- Take on challenges in a range of new and often unforeseen settings
- Support you in using your initiative
- Recognise and expect that tasks may be challenging and require persistence, thoughtfulness, and reflection.

A functional skills level 2 qualification is equal to a GCSE grade 4 (a C on the old grading system). If you decide to progress into registered roles in the future, you will need level 2 functional skills to do this. Read more about progressing into registered roles in the Careers progression section of this roadmap. [8]

Resources for developing your functional skills

Skills for Life [9]

This page on the Skills for Life website provides health-specific information on developing your functional skills.

National Numeracy [10]

National Numeracy is a charity that aims to improve numeracy skills by challenging negative attitudes about maths and creating tools to support adults to gain confidence to learn and practise the use of numeracy in

day-to-day life. The website is free to use and has online materials to enable adults to build their numeracy skills over time at their own pace.

National Numeracy has also worked in partnership with Health Education England to support people across the NHS workforce to gain confidence through developing skills. Read more about National Numeracy?s work with Health Education England [11].

Improve your English, maths and IT skills [12]

The Gov.UK website has information to support people to improve their English, maths and IT skills, including information on free courses available through the National Careers Service course finder. The course finder can be useful to you if you are interested in training as a registered healthcare professional, as it can help you to plan how to improve your functional skills to gain the qualifications you will need to meet the entry requirements for registered roles.

ESOL courses [13]

ESOL means English for Speakers of Other Languages. This website publishes free digital resources for teaching, learning and improving English, including interactive lessons, reading exercises, quizzes and games.

Unionlearn [14]

Unionlearn, part of the Trade Union Congress, supports unions in the delivery of training opportunities for their members. If you?re a member of a union at work, you can talk to your unions? learning representative about what is on offer through Unionlearn.

OpenLearn [15]

OpenLearn offers free courses designed to help you study alongside your busy life and develop your maths and English skills at a pace that suits you.

Open University [16]

If you enjoy developing your functional skills, you may want to look into further education options. The Open University offers a range of health and social care degrees, diplomas and certificates. These courses have a cost attached to them.

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