

## guroo: Resources for Functional Skills

Whether you consider Functional Skills to be the centrepiece of the secondary jigsaw or the glue in 14-19 education, Functional Skills are at the heart of every 14-19 qualification.

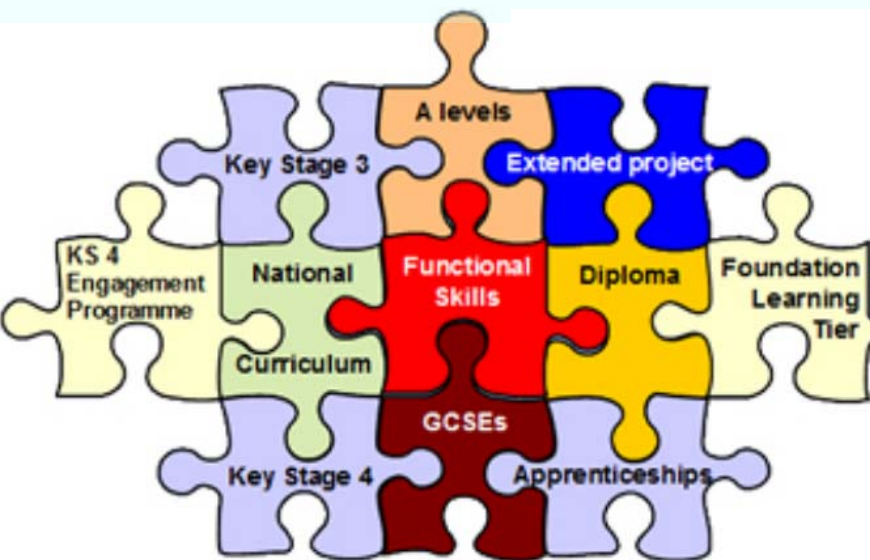
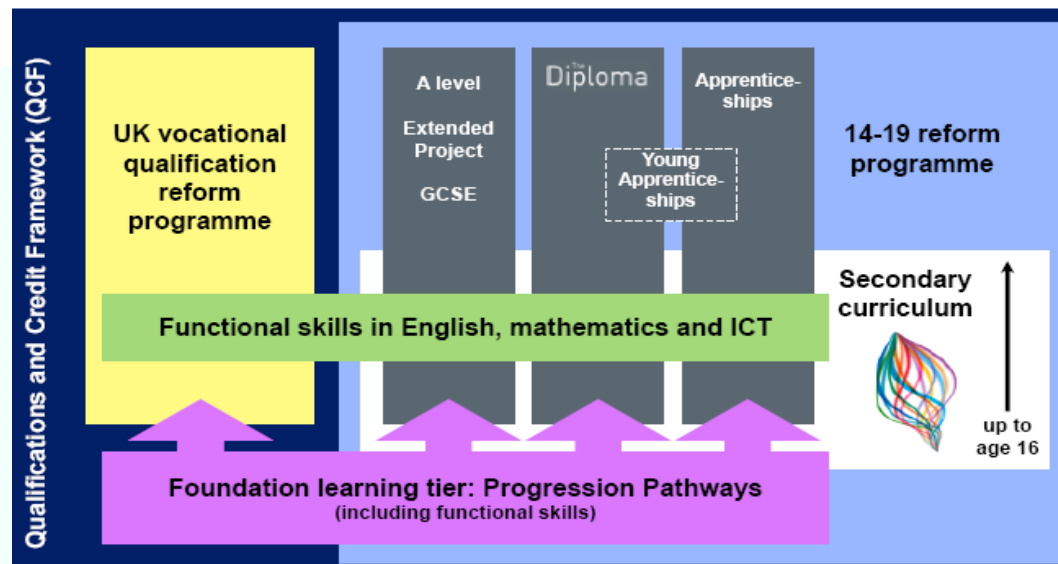
The guroo service helps you teach Functional Skills. At its core is a large bank of [functional skills resources](#) that are specifically designed to engage today's 14-19 learners. They're set in real-world contexts, include the types of media your students relate to, and help today's learners become truly functional in [Maths](#), [English](#) and [ICT](#).

But guroo is more than a set of online functional skills resources. There are printed materials in the form of tutor packs and student workbooks. Tutors can set tasks and monitor learner usage and performance.

We supply functional skills lesson plans and curriculum mappings along with regular management reports on usage.

And perhaps most importantly of all; every guroo subscription comes with our Active Engagement Program, a set of activities that ensure you can really embed, integrate and effectively teach functional skills. Our education consultants work on-site with your staff to demonstrate and explore how the functional skills resources in guroo can be most effectively used with your learners.

... in short, it's a comprehensive service that will make a significant impact on your ability to effectively teach functional skills and achieve your functional-skills related objectives - whether they are driven by diplomas, modern apprenticeships, GCSEs, the FLT or any other aspect of the new 14-19 curriculum.



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The leading independent source  
of Functional Skills resources

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## Need to Know

Functional Skills are a must-pass element of all Diplomas and Apprenticeships and, although a separate qualification, they will be extensively reflected in the new maths, English and ICT GCSEs from 2010.

*“Functional Skills are the core elements of English, mathematics and ICT that provide an individual with the essential understanding that will enable them to operate confidently effectively and independently in life, education and work.”*

They are at the heart of the 14-19 reform that aims to up-skill the workforce with a target of having 90% of students with a level 2 qualification by 2020.

## Key Dates

Five Year programme of introduction launched in Sept 07 with the start of a three year pilot.

Sep '08 – 12000 students start to follow the first 5 Diploma Lines

Jan '09 – replaces Key Skills in apprenticeships 1 year early

Sep '09 – 10 Diplomas available, all FE offer Functional Skills and many schools start pilots.

Apr '10 – QCA approves assessment models of all Boards

Sep '10 – New Maths and English GCSE's are 45% functional skills

Sep '11 – School Report Card introduced.

Sep '12 – FS now part of all learning routes.

## Myths

**They aren't important** – Schools will be expected to enter students for standalone FS qualifications and the results of students will be included in the new School Report Card.

**Wait until the tests are published** – every assessment test has been different to the previous and QCA suggest that “teaching to the test” will be actively discouraged.

**They will be easy to pass** – every indication is that learning is at a higher standard, more rigorous assessments will demand competence across all skills and all three subjects are intrinsically linked requiring good understanding of all three subjects together.

## Differences

**Compared to GCSE** – Likely to have relatively high pass marks demanding competence across all skills. Teaching and learning should focus on developing mastery at one level before progression to the next and be based around real life situations.

**Compared to Key Skills/ALAN** – Exam style tests with varied assessment methods based on problem solving and the application of skills in unfamiliar situations. Limited use of multi-choice questions with no portfolio or ongoing assessment requirements.

**Functional Skills are a lifetime qualification** replacing Key Skills and SFL and with no proxy or expiry.

## Teaching and Learning

**Changes** – DCSF recognise that Functional Skills requires a different approach to teaching and learning to bring about the changes necessary for success and provide extra support to help bring about the change.

**Practice** – It isn't the question that determines how well a student does within a level but the way they answer it. Students used to responding to questions will need lots of practice in this new style of learning.

**Mastery** – It isn't enough to just learn a skill and use it in routine situations. Students need to identify when to use it and master its use in a wide variety of contexts.

## Numbers

**Guided Learning Hours** – 35-50 hours per subject depending on level. Many students will need much more T&L help and guidance as without Functional Skills, they will not be able to access other lines of learning.

**Threshold Points** – A level 2 pass is worth 23 points or ½ an A\*-C GCSE pass in each subject so passes in all three are worth 1½ GCSE passes at A\*-C and this is in addition to other qualifications. Level 1 passes are worth 12.5 points or the equivalent of ½ D-G GCSE in each subject.

**There are more than 10 Awarding bodies** each with a different approach and no need to choose the same Board for GCSE and FS.