Update to the Design Principles for the Essential Skills Wales suite of qualifications

Essential Application of Number Skills

Essential Communication Skills

Essential Digital Literacy Skills

Essential Employability Skills

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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Overall structure and aims	3
3. Awarding body guidance	4
4. Essential Application of Number Skills specification	6
4.1 Essential Application of Number Skills amplification of assessment requirements	13
4.2 Controlled task and confirmatory test specification	14
5. Essential Communication Skills specification	28
5.1 Essential Communication Skills amplification of assessment requirements	35
5.2 Controlled task and confirmatory test specification	36
6. Essential Digital Literacy Skills specification	48
6.1 Essential Digital Literacy Skills amplification of assessment requirements	60
6.2 Controlled task and structured discussion specification	61
7. Essential Employability Skills specification	64
7.1 Essential Employability Skills amplification of assessment requirements	73
7.2 Controlled task and structured discussion specification	74

1. Introduction

These Design Principles outline the rationale, structure, aims, learning outcomes and assessment requirements for the Essential Skills Wales suite of qualifications. They set out the criteria which all awarding bodies who offer Approved Essential Skills qualifications must meet. For the purposes of section 20 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015, this document should be considered the criteria which will be applied by Qualifications Wales in deciding whether to Approve a form of this qualification.

This is a **Regulatory Document** under **Condition B7** of our Standard Conditions of Recognition.

Published in January 2024, this is Version 5 of the Design Principles and includes updates to the skills specifications for all entry level 3-level 3 of Essential Digital Literacy Skills qualifications.

This version of the Design Principles supersedes the four previous versions published in 2015, 2017,2022 and 2023.

The updates apply to learners who take Essential Digital Literacy qualifications from 01 September 2025.

This document should be used alongside the existing subject and assessment specifications for the entry level Essential Skills Wales qualifications in Application of Number and Communication. These can be located here:
Essential Skills Wales (agored.cymru)
Essential Skills Wales qualifications and training courses | City & Guilds (cityandguilds.com)
Edexcel Essential Skills Wales | Pearson qualifications
Essential Skills Wales Qualification Suite (wjec.co.uk)

Enquiries about this document should be directed to: enquiries@qualifications.wales

2. Overall structure and aims

The Essential Skills Wales suite of qualifications comprises:

Essential Application of Number Skills;
Essential Communication Skills;
Essential Digital Literacy Skills; and
Essential Employability Skills.

All Essential Skills qualifications are available from entry level 1 to level 3, except for Essential Employability Skills, which is available from entry level 3 to level 3.

2.1 Aims

Essential Skills qualifications should enable candidates to develop and demonstrate an understanding of, and proficiency in, the essential skills that employers and next-stage educators value and that candidates need for progression and effective performance in learning, work and life.

They have been developed for use in Further Education, Work-based Learning, Adult Community Learning and alternative settings.

3. Awarding body guidance

To achieve the qualification in Essential Application of Number Skills or Essential Communication Skills at levels 1, 2 or 3, candidates must demonstrate their skills in both:

- a controlled task; and
- a confirmatory test.

To achieve the qualification in Essential Digital Literacy Skills or Essential Employability Skills at all levels, candidates must demonstrate their skills in both:

- a controlled task; and
- a structured discussion.

The controlled task measures subject-specific skills and candidates will need to show that they can utilise skills in a holistic manner which is relevant to real-life contexts.

The purpose of the confirmatory test and structured discussion is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.

The controlled task, confirmatory test and structured discussion are **summative assessments**. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at the required level.

Assessments can be taken only once, however a candidate may undertake a **different** controlled task, confirmatory test or structured discussion at another time if they do not pass. Any candidate unsuccessful at the controlled task, confirmatory test or structured discussion should be allowed an opportunity for further learning and preparation before attempting to re-sit the Task or Test or reconvene the discussion.

3.1 Controlled tasks are:

- externally set by awarding bodies *or* developed by centres and approved by awarding bodies;
- internally assessed by appropriately qualified staff using the relevant marking schemes;
- internally standardised by centres;
- externally quality assured by awarding bodies; and
- taken in accordance with controlled task guidance issued by the awarding bodies.

3.2 Controlled task time-period

The controlled task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight-week period. The eight-week period does not include academic holiday periods and valid candidate absence. Special dispensation on the task duration and working period requirements may be allowed in extenuating circumstances (see awarding bodies' special considerations policies).

Assessors may provide candidates with the opportunity to clarify task requirements during the task but must not provide feedback on any work carried out by a candidate during the task. For example, informing a candidate that they have incorrectly answered a specific question in the task would be inappropriate. Appropriate clarification could be recommending that the candidate reviews their responses before submitting their completed task.

3.3 Controlled task duration

- Entry level - up to 6 hours (Essential Digital Literacy Skills and Essential Employability Skills)
- Level 1 - up to 4 hours
- Level 2 - up to 5 hours
- Level 3 - up to 8 hours

Any additional research activity may take place outside of the maximum number of hours but must be within the consecutive eight-week period.

3.4 Confirmatory tests are:

- externally produced by awarding bodies;
- treated as confidential material by centres;
- taken unseen by candidates and completed unaided (except for any assistance allowed by reasonable adjustments);
- non-calculator for Essential Application of Number Skills;
- non-dictionary for Essential Communication Skills;
- externally marked; and
- compliant with confirmatory test guidance issued by awarding bodies.

3.5 Structured discussions are:

- a one-to-one or a small group discussion of up to four candidates, held with the assessor;
- requiring candidate preparation;
- not a question and answer session;
- informed by the assessment of the controlled task; and
- directly related to candidates' responses to the controlled task.

4. Essential Application of Number Skills specification

Essential Application of Number Skills Level 1	
N1.1 Understand Numerical Data	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N1.1.1 Understand, plan and describe how to tackle a given practical problem or task that involves numerical data and information	a) plan and describe how to tackle a problem or task.
N1.1.2 Select relevant numerical data and information from at least two different sources relevant to meeting the purpose of a task	a) read, understand and extract information from tables, charts, simple graphs and diagrams; b) read and understand numbers presented in different ways, including large numbers in figures or words, simple fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and negative numbers; c) read scales on familiar measuring equipment using everyday units; d) read, measure and record time in common date and time formats and in context; e) use appropriate units and instruments to estimate, read, measure and compare length, weight, capacity, time and temperature; f) use scales on diagrams to find and interpret information; g) use mathematical properties of 2-D shapes to record measurements.
N1.2 Carry Out Calculations	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N1.2 Use the data and information identified in N1.1 to carry out	a) work to given levels of accuracy; b) add and subtract with whole numbers and simple decimals, with and without a calculator; c) multiply and divide a whole number or a simple

calculations appropriate to a task to do with: a) amounts or sizes b) scales or proportion c) handling statistics	decimal by a whole number, with and without a calculator; d) use simple fractions and percentages; e) use equivalencies between common fractions, percentages and decimals; f) add, subtract, multiply, divide and record sums of money; g) calculate within a system by: - adding and subtracting common units of measure; - converting units of measure; h) work out perimeters, areas and volumes; - perimeter of regular or irregular 2D shapes - area of a rectangle - volume of a cuboid i) use ratios and proportions; j) use probability to show (using fractions, decimals and percentages) that some events are more likely to occur than others; k) find the range and average (mean) of up to 10 items; l) use different ways of checking methods and calculations; m) identify and correct errors; n) check that results make sense.
N1.3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N1.3.1 Present the results of calculations using tables, charts, graphs or diagrams	a) identify more than one appropriate way to present findings to a given audience, including using tables, charts, graphs or diagrams; b) use appropriate ways to present findings, including a table, chart, graph or diagram, using the correct units; c) label work correctly.
N1.3.2 Describe the meaning of results and explain how they meet the purpose of a task	a) interpret results of calculations; b) show how results relate to a problem or task; c) describe meaning of results and explain how they meet the purpose of a task.

Essential Application of Number Skills Level 2	
N2.1 Understand Numerical Data	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N2.1.1 Identify and then plan and describe how to tackle a practical problem or task that involves numerical data and information	a) plan and describe how to tackle a problem or task; b) select and compare relevant information; c) explain choice of methods.
N2.1.2 Collect relevant numerical data and information from a range of sources to meet the purpose of a task	a) read, understand and interpret information from tables, charts, graphs and diagrams; b) read and understand numbers presented in different ways; c) read scales on a range of equipment to appropriate levels of accuracy; d) calculate time in different formats; e) estimate, measure and compare length, weight, capacity, temperature, using metric and, where appropriate, imperial units; f) recognise and use common 2-D representations of 3-D objects; g) estimate amounts and proportions; h) understand compound measures.
N2.2 Carry Out Calculations	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N2.2 Use data and information collected in N2.1 to carry out calculations appropriate to a task to do with: a) amounts or sizes b) scales or proportion c) handling	a) show clearly methods of carrying out calculations including working to appropriate levels of accuracy; b) carry out calculations involving two or more steps, with numbers of any size, with and without a calculator; c) use mental arithmetic involving whole numbers and simple fractions; d) fractions, decimals and percentages - convert between fractions decimals and percentages - express one number as a fraction or percentage

statistics d) using formulae	of another e) calculate with sums of money and convert between currencies; f) calculate within a system and between systems using: - conversion tables and scales; - approximate conversion factors; g) solve problems involving 2-D shapes and parallel lines; h) use proportions and calculate using ratios; i) identify the range of possible outcomes of combined events through probability and record the information using diagrams or tables; j) compare sets of data of a suitable size, selecting and using the mean / median / mode as appropriate; k) use range to describe the spread within sets of data; l) understand and use relevant formulae; m) calculate efficiently using whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages; n) use different ways of checking methods and calculations; o) identify and correct errors; p) check that results make sense.
N2.3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N2.3.1 Select and use different ways to present results using tables, charts, graphs or diagrams, as appropriate to meet the purpose of a task	a) identify and describe appropriate ways to present findings to different audiences, including numerical, graphical and written formats; b) construct complex tables, charts, graphs and diagrams and label with titles, scales, axes and keys appropriate to purpose and audience; c) use two different ways to present findings effectively.
N2.3.2 Explain methods and results, and how they meet the purpose and are appropriate for a task	a) understand what the results of calculations mean in the context of a problem or task; b) explain methods used and how/if they meet purpose c) identify main points of findings, draw conclusions, make comparisons and give valid explanations.

Essential Application of Number Skills Level 3	
N3.1 Understand Numerical Data	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N3.1.1 Identify, analyse, effectively describe and plan how to tackle a practical problem or task that involves a range of numerical data and information	a) identify, analyse and describe a problem or task and its sub-problems; b) plan how to tackle a problem by breaking it down into a series of tasks; c) plan how to obtain required data and information d) select and critically compare relevant information; e) consider possible methods to be used, including grouping data; f) choose relevant methods; g) adapt methods as appropriate; h) justify why methods are appropriate for a task.
N3.1.2 Collect relevant numerical data and information from a range of sources to meet the purpose of a task	a) read and understand numbers presented in different ways; b) read, understand and interpret information from tables, charts, graphs and diagrams; c) use at least one large data set of a size appropriate to a planned activity, and use this to meet the purpose of the activity; d) make accurate and reliable observations over time and use suitable equipment to measure in a variety of appropriate units; e) group data into classes of width appropriate to the data; f) use estimation to help planning; g) read and understand ways of writing very large and very small numbers; h) understand compound measures.
N3.2 Carry Out Calculations	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N3.2 Use the data and information obtained in N3.1 to carry out calculations relevant to a task to do with:	a) show clearly methods of carrying out calculations, justifying levels of accuracy of results; b) carry out multi-stage calculations efficiently with numbers of any size; c) use powers and roots;

a) amounts or sizes b) scales or proportion c) handling statistics d) using formulae	d) use compound measures; e) use mental arithmetic involving numbers, simple fractions and percentages; f) calculate missing angles and sides in right-angled triangles from known sides and angles; g) calculate with sums of money in different currencies; h) calculate, measure, record and compare time in different formats; i) estimate, measure and compare dimensions and quantities using metric and, where appropriate, imperial units, and check accuracy of estimates; j) calculate within and between systems and make accurate comparisons; k) solve problems involving irregular 2-D shapes l) work out actual dimensions from scale drawings and scale quantities up and down; m) work out proportional change; n) compare distributions, using measures of average and interquartile range, and estimate mean, median and range of grouped data; o) rearrange and use formulae, equations and expressions; p) use estimation and other checking procedures to identify and correct errors in methods, calculations and results; q) check that results make sense.
N3.3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
N3.3.1 Select two different ways to present results using tables, charts, graphs or diagrams, as appropriate to meet the purpose of a task, and justify choice	a) select and use appropriate methods to effectively present and illustrate findings, showing trends and making comparisons, including numerical, graphical and written formats; b) use more than one way to present results including numerical, graphical and written formats; c) construct complex tables, charts, graphs and diagrams, and label with titles, scales, axes, and keys appropriate to purpose and audience; d) justify choice of methods of presentation.
N3.3.2 Highlight the main points of results,	a) understand what the results of calculations mean in the context of a problem or task; b) justify methods used highlighting main points of findings and explain how far results meet purpose;

draw conclusions from findings and justify how the methods used have met the specified purpose.	c) draw appropriate conclusions based on findings, make comparisons and give valid explanations d) describe how possible sources of error might have affected results.

4.1 Essential Application of Number Skills amplification of assessment requirements

These qualifications are about demonstrating skills in:

- understanding numerical data;
- carrying out calculations; and
- interpreting and presenting results and findings;

in order to tackle problems or tasks that are met in education, training, work or social roles.

4.1.1 Assessment

Candidates will be assessed via a controlled task and a confirmatory test to confirm that their skills meet the Essential Application of Number Skills specification at the required level.

The controlled task is an activity that covers all three components (N1/2/3.1, N1/2/3.2 and N1/2/3.3).

The confirmatory test is externally assessed and confirms candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.

Assessments will be taken when skills have been taught and developed at the required level.

4.1.2 Access Statement

The controlled task and confirmatory test should be made accessible to those with particular assessment requirements without compromising achievement at the required standard. Centres should use initial assessment to identify any necessary individual support or adjustments.

4.2 Controlled task and confirmatory test specification

1. The Essential Application of Number Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet the specification in both the controlled task and the confirmatory test.

2. The controlled task assesses subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the confirmatory test and must show candidates utilising the skills in relevant and real-life contexts.

3. The purpose of the confirmatory test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.

4. Both the controlled task and confirmatory test are summative assessments. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills to the required level.

5. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at levels 1, 2 and 3.

6. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in Welsh and English.

7. This specification should be read in conjunction with:

    a) Level 1, 2 and 3 Essential Application of Number Skills specifications; and
    b) Essential Skills Wales Suite of Qualifications Handbook, as issued by awarding bodies.

4.2.1 Controlled task

Controlled tasks are externally set or developed by centres and approved by awarding bodies.

All controlled tasks must meet the requirements of the Essential Application of Number Skills specifications.

A marking guide must be produced to accompany each controlled task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.

Assessors may provide candidates with the opportunity to clarify task requirements during the assessment. However, assessors must not provide feedback on any work carried out by a candidate during the assessment. For example, informing a candidate that they have incorrectly answered a specific question in the task would be inappropriate. Appropriate clarification could be recommending that the candidate reviews their responses before submitting their completed task.

4.2.2 Duration

Level 1 - up to 4 hours
Level 2 - up to 5 hours
Level 3 - up to 8 hours

The task must be designed to be completed in its entirety within the maximum hours stated for each level. The task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight-week period. The eight-week period does not include academic holiday periods and valid candidate absence. Special dispensation on the task duration and working period requirements may be allowed in extenuating circumstances (see awarding bodies' special considerations policies).

4.2.3 Confirmatory test

The confirmatory test for Essential Application of Number Skills at levels 1, 2 and 3 must be completed in addition to the controlled task. The confirmatory test is intended to:

- confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills in relation to the relevant standard; and
- provide additional rigour to the assessment process.

All tests developed for this purpose will be based on a common specification. They should consist of fixed-response (multiple choice) items, delivered as an onscreen or paper-based test. Each test at levels 1 and 2 should include a maximum of 20 items, and is intended to have a maximum duration of 30 minutes at level 1 and 45 minutes at level 2. Each test at level 3 should include a maximum of 30 items and is intended to have a maximum duration of 60 minutes.

Each multiple-choice item must have one correct answer (key statement) with three strong distractors. Each item should be worth one mark.

Questions should be broadly scenario-based, using everyday contexts that are likely to be relevant and engaging to candidates.

Source materials must be free of any form of bias (for example, gender, ethnicity, or age-related) which might favour or disadvantage any candidate or groups of candidates.

All tests must be conducted under invigilated conditions (e.g. Joint Council for Qualifications Instructions for Conducting Examinations or similar).

Candidates are **not** permitted to use calculators during any of the Essential Application of Number Skills confirmatory tests.

A pass mark will be determined for each test following an agreed statistical procedure.

4.2.4 Controlled task – Essential Application of Number Skills

Controlled task specification

The task must be designed to integrate the assessment of the three components. Marks must be allocated within the following ranges:

Understanding Numerical Data	Levels 1, 2 and 3 (N1.1, N2.1, N3.1)	25-30%
Carry out calculations	Levels 1, 2 and 3 (N1.2, N2.2, N3.2)	35-45%
Interpret and Present Results and Findings	Levels 1, 2 and 3 (N1.3, N2.3, N3.3)	30-35%

When completing the task, candidates must show all their workings, the values and operators they input into a calculator and/or the formulas they use in a spreadsheet.

Task plan

Candidates will be required to follow the process below in line with the three skill areas:

- What do I want to find out?
- How will I do it?
- How do I present my findings?

Level 1 Understand Numerical Data	**Level 2 Understand Numerical Data**	**Level 3 Understand Numerical Data**
N1.1 Understand Numerical Data	*N2.1 Understand Numerical Data*	*N3.1 Understand Numerical Data*

The task must require candidates to select relevant numerical data and information from **at least two** different source documents. A range of source documents must be provided to support the task. The source documents must include at least two of the following at the appropriate level: • tables • charts • graphs • diagrams	The task will require candidates to select relevant numerical data and information from **at least three** different source documents. A range of source documents must be provided to support the task. The source documents must include at least two of the following at the appropriate level: • tables • charts • graphs • diagrams	The task must require candidates to select numerical data and information from **at least three** different source documents. A range of source documents must be provided to support the task. The source documents must include at least two of the following at the appropriate level: • tables • charts • graphs • diagrams At least one source document must be a large, complex data set.
The task must require candidates to plan how they will approach the task, including: • the information they will use • the calculations they will do • how they will present their results.	The task must require candidates to plan how they will approach the task, including: • the information they will use • the calculations they will do, with reason(s) for their choice • how they will present their results.	The task must require candidates to plan how they will approach the task, including: • the information they will use • the calculations they will do, with a justification for their choice • how they will present their results.

Level 1 Carry Out Calculations	**Level 2 Carry Out Calculations**	**Level 3 Carry Out Calculations**
N1.2 Carry Out Calculations	*N2.2 Carry Out Calculations*	*N3.2 Carry Out Calculations*
The task must be designed to require the candidate to carry out calculations from **at least two** of the following three categories: 1) amounts or sizes 2) scales or proportion 3) handling statistics	The task must be designed to require the candidate to carry out calculations from **at least two** of the following three categories: 1) amounts or sizes 2) scales or proportion 3) handling statistics The task should require the use of formulae in at least one of the above categories.	The task must be designed to require the candidate to carry out calculations from **at least two** of the following three categories: 1) amounts or sizes 2) scales or proportion 3) handling statistics The task should require the use of formulae in at least one of the above categories.
The task must require candidates to demonstrate the skills that comprise these categories in a way that provides evidence of proficiency at the level. This must include **a minimum of four** of the underpinning skills from N1.2 b – k. The task must require candidates to show they have worked to the levels of	The task must require candidates to demonstrate the skills that comprise these categories in a way that provides evidence of proficiency at the level. This must include **a minimum of five** of the underpinning skills from N2.2 b, d-m. The task must require candidates to show that they have worked to the levels of accuracy required for the purpose and	The task must require candidates to demonstrate the skills that comprise these categories in a way that provides evidence of proficiency at the level. This must include **a minimum of six** of the underpinning skills from N3.2 b-d, f-o. The task must require candidates to show that they have worked to the levels of accuracy required for the purpose and

accuracy required for the purpose and context.	context.	context.
Level 1 Interpret and Present Results and Findings	**Level 2 Interpret and Present Results and Findings**	**Level 3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings**
N1.3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings	*N2.3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings*	*N3.3 Interpret and Present Results and Findings*
The task must require candidates to choose how to present the results of their calculations, using two different and appropriate ways, from: • tables • charts • graphs or • diagrams	The task must require candidates to select how to present the results of their calculations, using two different and appropriate ways, from: • tables • comparative / component bar charts or pie charts • line graphs or • diagrams	The task must require candidates to select how to present the results of their calculations, using two different and appropriate ways, from: • complex tables • comparative / component bar charts or pie charts • multiple line graphs / line graphs or • complex diagrams and justify their choice of methods of presentation, with reference to the purpose of the task.

The task must require candidates to present and describe their findings – they must explain their results and how they relate to the purpose of the task.	The task must require candidates to: • present their results and findings effectively • explain how their results meet the purpose of the task • identify main points of findings, draw conclusions, make comparisons and give valid explanations. The task must require candidates to explain, emphasising the key points, what their results mean and how, and / or if, their methods and results meet their purpose, and are appropriate to the task.	The task must require candidates to: • explain the main points of their findings, draw conclusions, make comparisons and give valid explanations • explain how their results meet the purpose of the task • describe how possible sources of error might have affected the results.

4.2.5 Confirmatory test - Essential Application of Number Skills Level 1

Confirmatory test specification

- The Essential Application of Number Skills test at level 1 will assess aspects of N1.1 and N1.2.
- The test should consist of a maximum of 20 items, structured as follows to address these areas of the specification for Essential Application of Number Skills at level 1:

Skill Standard	**Skills being assessed *(Candidates need to know how to)***	**Covered**	**Number of items / marks**	**Weighting**
N1.1	read, understand and extract information from tables, diagrams, charts and simple graphs	Always	2-3	7-9 items
	read and understand numbers presented in different ways, including large numbers in figures or words, simple fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios and negative numbers	Always	2	
	read scales on familiar measuring equipment using everyday units	Always	1-2	
	read, measure and record time in common date and time formats and in context	Sampled	0-1	
	use scales on diagrams to find and interpret information	Sampled	0-1	
	use mathematical properties of 2D shapes to record measurements	Sampled	0-1	
N1.2	add and subtract with whole numbers and simple decimals	Always	2	

	multiply and divide a whole number or a simple decimal by a whole number	Always	2	11-13 items
	use simple fractions and percentages	Always	2	
	use equivalences between common fractions, percentages and decimals	Always	2	
	add, subtract, multiply, divide and record sums of money	Always	2	
	calculate within a system by • adding and subtracting common units of measure • converting units of measure	 Sampled Sampled	 0-1 0-1	
	work out perimeters, areas and volumes; • perimeter of regular or irregular 2D shapes • area of a rectangle • volume of a cuboid	Sampled	0-1	
	use ratios and proportions	Sampled	0-1	
	find the range and average (mean) of up to 10 items	Always	1	
	Total		**20**	

4.2.6 Confirmatory test - Essential Application of Number Skills Level 2

Confirmatory test specification

- The Essential Application of Number Skills test at level 2 will assess aspects of N2.1 and N2.2.
- The test should consist of a maximum of 20 items, structured as follows to address these areas of the specification for Essential Application of Number Skills at level 2:

Skill Standard	**Skills being assessed *(Candidates need to know how to)***	**Covered**	**Number of items / marks**	**Weighting**
N2.1	read, understand and interpret information from tables, diagrams, charts and graphs	Always	2-3	4-6 items
	read and understand numbers presented in different ways	Sampled	0-1	
	read scales on a range of equipment to given levels of accuracy	Sampled	0-1	
	calculate time in different formats	Sampled	0-1	
	understand compound measures	Sampled	0-1	
N2.2	carry out calculations involving two or more steps, with numbers of any size	Always	2	
	fractions, decimals and percentages: • convert between fractions decimals and percentages	Always	2	

	• express one number as a fraction or percentage of another			14-16 items
	calculate with sums of money and convert between currencies	Always	2	
	calculate within a system and between systems using: • conversion tables and scales • approximate conversion factors	 Sampled Sampled	 0-1 0-1	
	solve problems involving 2D shapes and parallel lines	Sampled	0-1	
	use proportions and calculate using ratio	Always	2	
	identify the range of possible outcomes of combined events through probability and record the information	Sampled	0-1	
	compare sets of data of a suitable size, selecting and using the mean/median/mode as appropriate	Sampled	0-1	
	use range to describe the spread within sets of data	Sampled	0-1	
	understand and use relevant formulae	Always	2	
	calculate (efficiently) using whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages	Always	2	
	Total		**20**	

4.2.7 Confirmatory test - Essential Application of Number Skills Level 3

Confirmatory test specification

- The Essential Application of Number Skills test at level 3 will assess aspects of N3.1 and N3.2.
- The test should consist of a maximum of 30 items, structured as follows to address these areas of the specification for Essential Application of Number Skills at level 3:

Skill Standard	**Skills being assessed *(Candidates need to know how to)***	**Covered**	**Number of items / marks**	**Weighting**
N3.1	read and understand numbers presented in different ways	Always	1-3	7-10 items
	read, understand and interpret information from tables, diagrams, charts and graphs	Always	4-7	
N3.2	carry out multi-stage calculations efficiently with numbers of any size	Always	3	
	use powers and roots	Always	2-3	
	use compound measures	Always	2-4	
	calculate missing angles and sides in right-angled triangles from known side and angles	Always	1-2	
	calculate, measure, record and compare time in different formats	Always	1-2	

	calculate within and between systems and make accurate comparisons	Always	2-4	20-23 items
	solve problems involving irregular 2-D shapes	Always	1-3	
	work out actual dimensions from scale drawings and scale quantities up and down	Always	1-2	
	work out proportional change	Always	1-2	
	compare distributions using measures of average and interquartile range, and estimate mean, median and range of grouped data	Sampled	0-1	
	rearrange and use formulae, equations and expressions	Always	2-3	
	Total		**30**	

5. Essential Communication Skills specification

Essential Communication Skills Level 1	
C1.1 Speaking and Listening	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C1.1 Take part in formal discussions with two or more people	Understand and respond to spoken language in different contexts: a) prepare for discussions in order to say things and provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion; b) make clear and relevant contributions to discussions; c) respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussion; d) use appropriate phrases or gestures in order to join in the discussion; e) identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions in at least two different contexts; f) pay close attention and respond constructively to what others say; g) clarify and confirm understanding.
Speak to communicate: - information - feelings - opinions - questions on familiar topics using appropriate language and in two or more contexts:	h) judge when to speak and how much to say; i) clearly express statements of fact, opinion, questions, explanations and descriptions of familiar topics as appropriate; j) use strategies to support speech; k) present information and ideas in a logical sequence so that it is easy for listeners to follow and understand; l) respond to questions about familiar topics; m) clearly convey feelings and opinions in a way that is balanced and assertive without being aggressive; n) use language appropriate to listeners and context.

C1.2 Reading	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C1.2 Read, understand and obtain information independently to meet purpose(s) from at least two different types of document	a) identify the main points and ideas in documents and images; b) read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit purpose; c) recognise the purpose of a variety of documents; d) use organisational and structural features to locate information; e) obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required; f) find the meaning of words and phrases that have not been understood.
C1.3 Writing	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C1.3 Write two short documents to communicate information to familiar audiences using language that is appropriate to purpose and audience	a) plan and draft writing; b) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit purpose and audience; c) make meaning clear; d) construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences using appropriate conjunctions; e) organise writing in paragraphs that demonstrate a logical sequence; f) judge the relevance of information and the amount of detail to include for the purpose; g) use language suitable for purpose and audience; h) use relevant images, where appropriate, to help the reader understand main points; i) spell correctly; j) use punctuation correctly; k) use grammar correctly; l) check and, where necessary, revise documents.

Essential Communication Skills Level 2	
C2.1 Speaking and Listening	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C2.1 Take part in formal discussions with two or more other people Give a talk /presentation of at least four minutes to an audience of at least three people Understand and respond to spoken language on different topics and in different contexts Speak to communicate: - information - feelings - opinions - questions on familiar and unfamiliar topics, using appropriate language and non-verbal communication	a) prepare for discussions and talks / presentations in order to say things and provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion and talk / presentation; b) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits purpose and situation; c) use appropriate phrases and gestures in order to join in the discussion; change the topic or bring it back to the point, without interrupting the speaker, being over-assertive or aggressive or appearing to be 'taking over'; d) support opinions and arguments with evidence; e) summarise information from reading and from other sources to suit purpose; f) speak clearly in a way suitable for subject, purpose, audience and situation; g) keep to the subject and structure talk/presentation in a logical sequence to help the audience follow a line of thought or series of events; h) use a variety of ways to support the main points of the talk/presentation; i) identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions on at least two topics and in at least two contexts; j) respond constructively to criticism; k) clarify and confirm understanding; l) identify the speaker's intentions; m) use varied vocabulary and expressions to suit purpose; n) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding; o) use appropriate strategies including language and non-verbal communication to support speech; p) confirm that listeners understand meaning.

C2.2 Reading	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C2.2 Read, understand and summarise information independently from at least two different documents about the same subject	a) use a variety of strategies to identify the main points, ideas and lines of argument and reasoning from text and images including by inference; b) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit; c) read and understand a wide range of vocabulary; d) locate and understand information using organisational features; e) find the meaning of words and phrases not understood, using reference materials f) use different types of continuous documents to obtain relevant information; g) read critically to evaluate information and to compare information, ideas and opinions from different sources; h) summarise information from documents.
C2.3 Writing	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C2.3 Write documents that communicate different information to different audiences using language that is appropriate to purpose and audience	a) summarise information from reading and / or other sources to suit purpose; b) plan and draft writing; c) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit both purpose and audience; d) make meaning clear; e) construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions; f) organise writing in paragraphs that help to make meaning clear; g) structure writing to help readers follow and understand main points; h) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence; i) use different styles of writing including formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences; j) spell correctly;

	k) use punctuation correctly; l) use grammar correctly; m) check and, where necessary, revise document.

Essential Communication Skills Level 3	
C3.1 Speaking and Listening	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C3.1 Take part in formal discussions with two or more other people Give a talk/ presentation of at least eight minutes to an audience of at least three people	a) prepare for discussions and talks / presentations in order to say things and communicate complex information that is relevant to the purpose of the discussion and talk / presentation; b) take part in a group discussion to move the discussion forward and work towards agreement, where appropriate; c) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits purpose and situation; d) develop points and ideas with a sensitive awareness of others' feelings, beliefs and opinions; e) use techniques and identify signals to contribute to the discussion and enable others to contribute; f) summarise and synthesise complex information to suit purpose; g) speak clearly and use language and a style of presentation to suit the complexity, purpose and formality of the situation and needs of the audience; h) keep to the subject and structure talk/presentation in a logical sequence to help the audience follow a line of thought or series of events; i) use a variety of techniques to engage the audience, including using images and other material to support or enhance speech; j) identify relevant detail in complex spoken language; k) understand and follow detailed explanations and complex instructions on a range of topics in familiar and less-familiar contexts; l) respond appropriately to enquiries; m) give and respond constructively to feedback, including criticism;

	n) use strategies to show listening and to clarify and confirm understanding; o) identify the speaker's intentions; p) use appropriate varied and specialist vocabulary and expressions to suit topics, purposes and situations; q) confirm that listeners understand meaning; r) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding; s) use appropriate strategies, including language and non-verbal communication to support speech; t) adapt language and speech to suit different subjects, purposes and situations.
C3.2 Reading	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C3.2 Read, understand and synthesise information from different documents about the same subject	a) read and understand specialist and complex vocabulary; b) use a variety of strategies to identify the main points, ideas and lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images including by inference; c) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit; d) locate and understand information using organisational features; e) find the meaning of words and phrases not understood using reference materials; f) read critically to compare and evaluate accounts and recognise opinion and possible bias; g) select and explore a range of documents to obtain relevant information; h) explore and understand complex information and lines of reasoning in documents; i) synthesise information from documents.
C3.3 Writing	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
C3.3 Write documents of different types communicating	a) plan and draft writing; b) select and use formats, styles and techniques of writing that are appropriate to communicating purpose and the complexity of the subject matter to

different complex information, using language and formats that are appropriate both to purpose and audience	the audience; c) organise material coherently to suit the length, complexity and purpose of the document; d) use an appropriate style and tone to suit the audience, the degree of formality required and the nature of the subject; e) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence; f) make meaning clear; g) spell correctly; h) use punctuation correctly; i) use grammar correctly; j) check and, where necessary, revise documents.

5.1 Essential Communication Skills amplification of assessment requirements

These qualifications are about demonstrating skills in:

- speaking and listening;
- reading; and
- writing;

in:

- familiar contexts, some of which must be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles at level 1.

- familiar and less familiar contexts some of which must be formal, connected with education, training or social roles at levels 2 and 3.

5.1.1 Assessment

Candidates will be assessed via a controlled task and a confirmatory test to confirm that their skills meet the Essential Communication Skills specification at the required level.

Assessments will be taken when skills have been taught and developed at the required level.

5.1.2 Access statement

The controlled task and confirmatory test should be made accessible to those with particular assessment requirements without compromising achievement at the required standard. Centres should use initial assessment to identify any necessary individual support or adjustments.

5.2 Controlled task and confirmatory test specification

1. The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet the specification in both the controlled task and the confirmatory test.

2. The controlled task assesses subject-specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the test and must show candidates utilising the skills in relevant and real-life contexts.

3. The purpose of the confirmatory test is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills.

4. Both the controlled task and the confirmatory test are summative assessments. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at the required level.

5. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at levels 1, 2 and 3.

6. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.

7. This specification should be read in conjunction with:
    a) Level 1, 2 and 3 Essential Communication Skills specifications, and
    b) Essential Skills Wales Suite of Qualifications Handbook as issued by awarding bodies.

5.2.1 Controlled task

Controlled tasks are externally set or developed by centres and approved by awarding bodies.

All controlled tasks must meet the requirements of the Essential Communication Skills specifications.

A marking guide must be produced to accompany each task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.

Assessors may provide candidates with the opportunity to clarify task requirements during the assessment. However, assessors must not provide feedback on any work carried out by a candidate during the assessment. For example, informing a candidate that they have incorrectly answered a specific question would be inappropriate. Appropriate clarification could be recommending that the candidate reviews their responses before submitting their completed task.

5.2.2 Duration

Level 1 - up to 4 hours
Level 2 - up to 5 hours
Level 3 - up to 8 hours

The task must be designed to be completed in its entirety within the maximum hours stated for each level. The task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight-week period. The eight-week period does not include academic holiday periods and valid candidate absence. Special dispensation on the task duration and working period requirements may be allowed in extenuating circumstances (see awarding bodies' special considerations policies).

5.2.3 Partial re-sits

Partial re-sits will be permitted for the controlled task for Essential Communication Skills at levels 2 and 3 from 1 August 2018. Specific information about partial re-sits, including the time allowance for re-sits, can be found in the controlled task guidance issued by awarding bodies.

5.2.4 Confirmatory test

The confirmatory test for Essential Communication Skills at levels 1, 2 and 3 is completed in addition to the controlled task. The confirmatory test is intended to:

- confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills in relation to the relevant standard, and
- provide additional rigour to the assessment process.

All tests developed for this purpose will be based on a common specification. They should consist of fixed-response (multiple choice) items that are delivered as either an onscreen or paper-based test. Each test at levels 1 and 2 should include a maximum of 20 items, and is intended to have a maximum duration of 30 minutes at level 1 and 45 minutes at level 2. Each test at level 3 should include a maximum of 30 items and is intended to have a maximum duration of 60 minutes.

Each multiple-choice item must have one correct answer (key statement) with three strong distractors. Each item should be worth one mark.

Questions should be broadly scenario-based, using everyday contexts that are likely to be relevant and engaging to candidates.

Source materials must be free of any form of bias (for example, gender, ethnicity, or age-related) which might favour or disadvantage any candidate or groups of candidates.

All tests will be conducted under invigilated conditions (e.g. Joint Council for Qualifications - Instructions for Conducting Examinations or similar).

Dictionaries (of any kind) must **not** be used during any of the Essential Communication Skills tests.

A pass mark will be determined for each test following an agreed statistical procedure.

5.2.5 Controlled Task – Essential Communication Skills

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Controlled Task Specification Part 1</th></tr>
<tr><th>Level 1 Speaking and Listening – Formal Discussion</th><th>Level 2 Speaking and Listening – Formal Discussion</th><th>Level 3 Speaking and Listening – Formal Discussion</th></tr>
<tr><td>C1.1 Speaking and Listening</td><td>C2.1 Speaking and Listening</td><td>C3.1 Speaking and Listening</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Candidates should use their preparation from the reading task to inform their discussion.

The task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. The minimum duration of the discussion must be between 10 – 20 minutes, depending on the size of the group. The discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements.</td><td>Candidates should use their preparation from the reading task to inform their discussion.

The task must require candidates to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people. If there are 3 people in the discussion, the minimum duration of the discussion must be 15 minutes and 25 minutes for six candidates in the group. Centres may use their discretion for group sizes within this range; however, the discussion must be of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the subject specification at this level.</td></tr>
</table>

The task must require candidates to understand and respond to discussion communicating at least two from: • information • feelings • opinions • questions	The task must require candidates to understand and respond to discussion communicating as appropriate from: • information • feelings • opinions • questions	The task must require candidates to understand and respond to spoken language. This will involve the communication of complex information, as appropriate, by: • information • providing explanations • expressing feelings and opinions • asking questions
	Across the two discussions and talk/presentation (part 1, 2 and 3), the task must provide candidates with adequate opportunities to demonstrate competence in all these skills.	
Level 1 Reading	**Level 2 Reading**	**Level 3 Reading**
C.1.2 Reading	*C2.2 Reading*	*C3.2 Reading*
A source document must be provided which must be of at least 250 words and contain an image. The task must require candidates to independently read, understand and	Two source documents about the same subject must be provided each of which must be at least 500 words. One must contain an image and one must contain reasoning. The two documents must be of different text and document types. The task must require candidates to independently read, understand and	At least two source documents about the same subject must be provided, one of which must be at least 1000 words. At least two documents must communicate complex information or reasoning and at least one must contain an image. The task must require candidates to independently read, understand and

obtain information from this document for a purpose. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the task. The task must require candidates to use the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a discussion on the topic and then to write a document on the topic.	summarise information from these documents for a given purpose. The explicit evidence of this summary must be required in the writing task. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the task. The task must require candidates to summarise the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a formal discussion on the topic, and then to write a document on the topic.	synthesise information from these documents for a given purpose. The explicit evidence of this synthesis must be required in the writing task. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the task. The task must require candidates to synthesise the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a discussion on the topic, and then to write a document on the topic.
Level 1 Writing	**Level 2 Writing**	**Level 3 Writing**
C1.3 Writing	*C2.3 Writing*	*C3.3 Writing*
The task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document must be a minimum of 250 words long and of a sufficient length to give candidates adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the subject specification at this level.	The task must require candidates to summarise the information from the two documents in the reading activity for a given purpose. The task must require the written document to be a minimum of 500 words.	The task must require candidates to synthesise the information from the documents in the reading activity for a given purpose. The task must require the written document to be a minimum of 750 words.

For this task, the candidate must use the information they have gained from the reading assessment activity and may also include content from the speaking and listening assessment activity.	The task must require candidates to: • use some of the information or opinions gained from the reading and speaking and listening activity to support planning for their writing to draft/check their writing, and; • to produce a final document which is fit for purpose and audience	
Controlled Task Specification Part 2		
Level 1 Reading	**Level 2 Reading**	**Level 3 Reading**
C.1.2 Reading	*C2.2 Reading*	*C3.2 Reading*
A source document must be provided which must be of at least 250 words and contain an image. The task must require candidates to independently read, understand and obtain information from this document for a purpose. The purpose and audience must be clearly specified in the task. The task must require candidates to use the information that they have obtained to prepare for, and take part in, a discussion on the topic, plan, draft and write a document for a given purpose and then to write a document on the topic.		

Level 1 Writing	**Level 2 Writing**	**Level 3 Writing**
C1.3 Writing	*C2.3 Writing*	*C3.3 Writing*
The task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document written must be of a sufficient length to give adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the subject specification at this level.	The task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document written must be of a sufficient length to give adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the subject specification at this level.	The task must require candidates to write a document for a given purpose and audience. The document written must be of a sufficient length to give adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the subject specification at this level.
For this task, candidates must use the information that they have gained from the reading assessment activities.	The task must require candidates to write a different document type and text type to Part 1.	
The task must require candidates to: • produce a plan for what they are going to write • to draft/check their writing, and • to produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.		

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Controlled Task Specification Part 3</th></tr>
<tr><th>Level 1 Speaking and Listening - Talk / Presentation</th><th>Level 2 Speaking and Listening – Talk / Presentation</th><th>Level 3 Speaking and Listening – Talk / Presentation</th></tr>
<tr><td>C1.1 Speaking and Listening</td><td>C2.1 Speaking and Listening</td><td>C3.1 Speaking and Listening</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td>The task must require candidates to prepare for, and deliver, a talk/presentation of at least four minutes to an audience of at least three people. The task must require candidates to include an image or other support materials which will enhance the talk/presentation and help the audience's understanding.</td><td>The task must require candidates to prepare for, and deliver, a talk/presentation of at least eight minutes to an audience of at least three people. The task must require candidates to communicate complex information and include an image or other support materials which will enhance the talk/presentation and help the audience's understanding.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">The task provided does not need to specify the topics or themes for the talk/presentation but may offer suggestions and guidance.</td></tr>
<tr><td>The task should not be heavily dependent on additional reading and research.</td><td>There is no requirement for the task to be heavily dependent on additional reading and research. The topic can be related to an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests.</td></tr>
</table>

5.2.6 Confirmatory test - Essential Communication Skills Level 1

Confirmatory test specification

- The Essential Communication Skills test at level 1 will assess both reading and writing skills. It will involve at least two source documents, each providing a scenario and/or information to support a series of questions.

- The test should consist of a maximum of 20 items, structured as follows to address these areas of the specification for Essential Communication Skills at level 1:

Skill Standard	**Skills being assessed *(Candidates need to know how to)***	**Covered**	**Number of items / marks**	**Weighting**
C1.2	1.2a identify the main points and ideas in documents and images	Always	2-3	9-12 items
	1.2b read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit purpose	Always	2-3	
	1.2c recognise the purpose of a variety of documents	Always	1-3	
	1.2e obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required	Always	1-3	
C1.3	1.3d construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences, using appropriate conjunctions	Always	2-3	8-11 items
	1.3g use language suitable for purpose and audience	Always	1-2	
	1.3i spell correctly	Always	1-2	
	1.3j use punctuation correctly	Always	1-2	
	1.3k use grammar correctly	Always	1-3	
	Total		**20**	

5.2.7 Confirmatory test - Essential Communication Skills Level 2

Confirmatory test specification

- The Essential Communication Skills test at level 2 will assess both reading and writing skills. It will involve at least two source documents, each providing a scenario and/or information to support a series of questions.

- The test should consist of a maximum of 20 items, structured as follows to address these areas of the specification for Essential Communication Skills at level 2:

Skill Standard	**Skills being assessed *(Candidates need to know how to)***	**Covered**	**Number of items / marks**	**Weighting**
C2.2	2.2a use a variety of strategies to identify: i) the main points ii) ideas, including by inference iii) lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference	 Always Always Always	 2-3 2-3 2-3	9-12 items
	2.2b recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit	Always	2-3	
C2.3	2.3e construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions	Always	1-3	8-11 items
	2.3i use formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences	Always	1-3	
	2.3j spell correctly	Always	1-2	
	2.3k use punctuation correctly	Always	1-2	
	2.3l use grammar correctly	Always	1-2	
	Total		**20**	

5.2.8 Confirmatory test - Essential Communication Skills Level 3

Confirmatory test specification

- The Essential Communication Skills test at level 3 will assess both reading and writing skills. It will involve at least three source documents, each providing a scenario and/or information to support a series of questions.

- The test should consist of a maximum of 30 items, structured as follows to address these areas of the specification for Essential Communication Skills at level 3:

Skill Standard	**Skills being assessed *(Candidates need to know how to)***	**Covered**	**Number of items / marks**	**Weighting**
C3.2	3.2b use a variety of strategies to identify: i) the main points ii) ideas, including by inference iii) lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference	 Always Always Always	 3-4 3-4 3-4	14-16 items
	3.2c recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit	Always	3-4	
C3.3	3.3d use an appropriate style and tone to suit your audience, the degree of formality required and the nature of the subject	Always	3-5	14-16 items
	3.3g spell correctly	Always	3-4	
	3.3h use punctuation correctly	Always	3-4	
	3.3i use grammar correctly	Always	3-5	
	Total		**30**	

6. Essential Digital Literacy Skills specification

Essential Digital Literacy Skills Entry Level 1	
DLE1.1 Digital Responsibility	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to access a digital device	a) turn on and turn off a digital device; use a security feature to access the device e.g. password, passcode, fingerprint.
Know how to stay safe online	b) state ways of keeping safe online.
DLE1.2 Digital Productivity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to open a file	a) open a file.
Be able to use a keyboard/interface on a digital device	b) Use a keyboard or interface to input information.
Be able to present information digitally	c) present at least one piece of information for the task in a digital format.
DLE1.3 Digital Information Literacy	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Know a digital source of information	a) identify a digital source of information.
DLE1.4 Digital Collaboration	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to use digital tools to collaborate with others	a) use digital tools to collaborate with others to complete a task.

DLE1.5 Digital Creativity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to enhance a digital resource	a) use the creative features of digital tools to enhance a digital resource.

Essential Digital Literacy Skills Entry Level 2	
DLE2.1 Digital Responsibility	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to keep own device, digital content and identity safe in a digital world	a) use security settings to keep yourself safe in a digital world *(e.g. passwords, fingerprints, passcodes).*
Be able to open and respond to digital messages	b) open and respond to digital messages; c) use appropriate language and behaviour.
Know how to access transaction-based online services	d) List tools that can be used to carry out routine transactions.
Know how to stay safe online	e) state ways of keeping yourself safe in a range of contexts (including messages, social media and websites).
DLE2.2 Digital Productivity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to create and save a file	a) create and save a file.
Be able to enter and present digital information	b) enter basic digital information; c) use basic formatting techniques to present digital information;

Be able to identify basic digital technologies	d) identify basic digital technologies.
DLE2.3 Digital Information Literacy	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to locate digital information	a) locate information from a given digital source.
DLE2.4 Digital Collaboration	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to use digital tools to collaborate with others	a) identify digital collaborative tools; b) communicate digitally with others to plan a task; c) work online synchronously (in real time) with others to complete the task.
DLE2.5 Digital Creativity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to create/edit a digital resource	a) choose appropriate creative tools; b) use creative features of digital tools to create and/or edit a digital resource.

Essential Digital Literacy Skills Entry Level 3	
DLE3.1 Digital Responsibility	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Know how to interact safely in a digital world	a) outline how to interact safely and appropriately in a digital world in a range of contexts (including using social media, messages, websites and online-transactions);
Know what is meant by a digital footprint	b) state what is meant by a digital footprint.

Know how artificial intelligence (AI) is used in everyday life	c) give examples of where AI is used in all aspects of life
DLE3.2 Digital Productivity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to organise and store digital information	a) create basic folder structures to store information; b) organise files in folders appropriately; c) add and retrieve information from the folder structure;
Be able to create and present digital information	d) identify digital tools, technologies and techniques to present digital information; e) use appropriate formatting/editing techniques to present digital information.
DLE3.3 Digital Information Literacy	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to select digital information	a) search for appropriate digital information; b) identify reliable resources and give reasons why they are reliable;
Be able to use digital information	c) use appropriate digital information to complete a task.
DLE3.4 Digital Collaboration	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Know when to use digital collaboration when carrying out a task	a) outline when digital collaboration can be useful; b) list advantages and disadvantages of different methods of digital collaboration and communication;
Be able to use appropriate digital tools to collaborate with others	c) identify and use appropriate synchronous (real time) and asynchronous methods to collaborate and communicate digitally to complete a task; d) outline reasons for the methods used.
DLE3.5 Digital Creativity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**

Be able to create a digital resource	a) choose appropriate digital tools for a specific purpose; b) Use creative features of digital tools to create a digital resource.

Essential Digital Literacy Skills Level 1	
DLL1.1 Digital Responsibility	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand the importance of digital responsibility	a) outline the risks associated with interacting online; b) outline the importance of reporting inappropriate interactions and/or content; c) give examples of methods of staying safe in a digital world; d) outline personal responsibility to others in a digital world.
Be able to work safely with a range of digital tools and techniques	e) use appropriate tools and techniques to work safely in the digital world; f) use appropriate language and behaviour.
Understand how to manage a personal digital footprint	g) state appropriate methods to manage a digital footprint; h) outline how online information can impact on self and others; i) State the impact of cookies and website tracking.
DLL1.2 Digital Productivity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to organise, store and protect digital information	a) organise folder structures to store information; b) manage files in folders efficiently; c) identify methods of protecting digital information; d) store and access digital data.
Understand how to maintain devices and	e) state how to maintain a digital device and resolve common digital issues;

resolve common digital issues	
Be able to use digital technologies and tools to complete a task	f) select and use at least one appropriate digital technology and one appropriate digital tool to complete a task or solve a problem.
DLL1.3 Digital Information Literacy	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to search efficiently for and save digital information	a) use suitable keywords or phrases to search for information to complete a task or solve a simple problem; b) save the information for efficient retrieval;
Know why a digital source of information is reliable and relevant	c) give reasons why the located source of information is reliable and relevant; d) state why search result order does not determine reliability and relevance;
Be able to retrieve and use digital information to complete a task	e) retrieve and use digital information to complete a task.
DLL1.4 Digital Collaboration	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand the range of digital collaborative tools that can be used in personal or professional practice.	a) outline the digital collaborative tools that could be used for personal and professional practice; b) identify security and ethical considerations when working collaboratively;
Be able to digitally collaborate effectively and efficiently with others	c) identify opportunities to collaborate using digital tools to complete a task or solve a simple problem; d) demonstrate effective and efficient synchronous and asynchronous digital methods of digitally collaborating with others to complete a task or solve a problem;

	e) review the selected methods of collaborating.
DLL1.5 Digital Creativity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to demonstrate how digital creativity can be used to complete tasks	a) use an appropriate creative digital approach to complete a task.
Be able to outline why a digital approach has been used	b) describe the reasons for using the digital approach, and its impact for a specific audience.
Know how AI can be used in digital creative solutions	c) outline an advantage and disadvantage of using AI in digital creative solutions d) state when AI tools should not be used to create digital resources

Essential Digital Literacy Skills Level 2	
DLL2.1 Digital Responsibility	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand the importance of digital responsibility in a wide range of digital communities	a) describe the risks when interacting digitally; b) describe ways of staying safe in a wide range of digital communities c) describe potential consequences of inappropriate or unlawful online activity.
Be able to select and use the most appropriate tools and techniques to work safely for a specific purpose	d) select and use the most appropriate tools and techniques to work safely for a specific purpose.
Be able to review a personal digital	e) conduct a review of personal digital footprint.

footprint	
DLL2.2 Digital Productivity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to organise, store, share and protect digital information	a) construct appropriate folder structures to manage projects and store information; b) organise personal and professional files and folders; c) identify , use and review appropriate methods of protecting digital information;
understand how to maintain devices and resolve common digital problems	d) describe common digital problems and how they are resolved.
Be able to, select and use appropriate digital technologies and tools to complete a task or solve a problem	e) select the most appropriate digital technologies and tools to complete a task or solve a problem; f) review and evaluate choices; g) use the selected digital technologies and tools to complete a task or solve a problem.
DLL2.3 Digital Information Literacy	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to efficiently search for, refine, assess and organise digital information	a) carry out a refined search using appropriate keywords or phrases; b) assess the digital information for currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and purpose; c) define the term 'Search Engine Optimisation'; d) organise and classify digital information into a structured format to complete a task or solve a problem;

Be able to retrieve and use digital information to complete a task or solve a problem	e) retrieve and use digital information which is in a suitable format for a specified target audience and purpose to complete a task or solve a problem.
Know how AI can be used to search for information and its limitations	f) describe how AI can be used to search for information g) describe the potential limitations of information sourced using AI
DLL2.4 Digital Collaboration	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand how digital collaboration can be used in personal and professional practice	a) describe how digital collaborative tools could be used in personal and professional practices; b) describe potential benefits and risks of digital collaborative tools and their use, including ethical considerations; c) compare a range of digital collaborative tools;
Be able to use digital collaboration effectively and efficiently	d) identify and assess a task or solve a problem by using digital collaborative tools and techniques; e) select a combination of digital tools and techniques to communicate with others to complete a task or solve a problem; f) collaborate digitally using a range of synchronous and asynchronous digital tools and techniques to complete the task or solve the problem; g) reflect on the collaborative process.
DLL2.5 Digital Creativity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand how a digital creative solution can be used to complete a task or solve a problem for a specified audience and purpose	a) Describe how digital creative solutions can be used to complete a task or solve a problem for a specified audience and purpose;
Be able to select and	b) select and use a range of digital creative tools and

use a range of features of digital tools and techniques to complete a task	techniques to produce a resource for a given task;
Be able to review creative digital outcomes	c) review the success and limitations of the chosen creative/digital tools and techniques.
Know how generative AI tools can be used in digital creative solutions	d) describe how generative AI can be used to benefit the production of digital creative solutions e) describe inappropriate or ethical use of generative AI tools in digital creative solutions

Essential Digital Literacy Skills Level 3	
DLL3.1 Digital Responsibility	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand a range of protocols for digital responsibility and digital security in a different digital communities and contexts	a) explain how to minimise risks for personal and professional digital projects using a range of protocols;
Be able to apply a range of protocols for digital responsibility and digital security in a wide range of digital communities and contexts	b) select and justify the choice of protocols for digital responsibility and digital security in a wide range of digital communities and contexts;.
Be able to refine a digital footprint	c) review and publish appropriate and relevant profiles and resources; d) ensure protocols are in place for the audience; e) refine a digital footprint for community, employability or global purposes.

Understand responsible use of AI	f) give examples of responsible use of AI in the workplace/education g) describe the environmental impact of using AI
DLL3.2 Digital Productivity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to organise, store, share, and protect digital information	a) effectively organise storage structures of digital resources; b) compare, implement and review methods of protecting digital information, including efficient ways of 'permissioning' when sharing files.
Understand how to select, use and evaluate appropriate digital technologies, tools and techniques to complete complex tasks or solve complex problems	c) critically evaluate a combination of digital technologies, tools and techniques and their appropriateness for completing given complex tasks; d) critically evaluate the capacity of the selected technologies, tools and techniques to create and present solutions proficiently.
Understand how generative AI can be used in the workplace, education and in research	e) give examples of generative AI tools and how they can be used in the workplace, education and in research f) explain the potential restrictions and limitations around using AI in the workplace, education and in research
DLL3.3 Digital Information Literacy	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to search for, evaluate and use digital information to complete complex tasks or solve complex problems	a) carry out advanced searches using appropriate search engines, functions and features; b) retrieve, evaluate and organise digital information into a structured format;; c) complete complex tasks or solve complex problems for a range of audiences, by using digital information which is in a suitable format;
Understand how to critically analyse and review techniques to	d) critically analyse digital sources of information with reference to how search engine results are manipulated by a variety of processes.

gather digital information	
Understand how AI can be used to summarise information and its limitations	e) explain how generative AI can be used to summarise information and its limitations
DLL3.4 Digital Collaboration	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Understand effective use of digital collaboration in personal and professional practice	a) evaluate how collaborative tools, technologies and techniques can be used effectively and ethically in personal, professional, academic and organisational practice; b) assess safe and secure ways to digitally collaborate with others; c) critically compare a range of digital collaboration tools and the techniques they support;
Be able to, organise and apply effective and efficient collaborative working practices	d) explore opportunities to collaborate with others to complete a complex task or solve a complex problem; e) select and use appropriate digital tools and techniques to communicate with a team; f) justify choice with reference to appropriateness and accessibility.
DLL3.5 Digital Creativity	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
Be able to use a wide range of creative features of digital tools to complete a complex task	a) select creative features of digital tools to complete a complex task; b) respond appropriately to constructive feedback.
Understand how to critically evaluate creative digital solutions	c) critically analyse the advantages and disadvantages of creative digital solutions when completing complex tasks; d) critically evaluate the process used to complete a complex task.

	e) Consider the potential impact of the digital solution on different audiences.
Understand how AI can be used for resource development and its limitations	f) explain how AI can be used for the development of resources and its limitations

6.1 Essential Digital Literacy Skills amplification of assessment requirements

These qualifications are about demonstrating skills in:

- digital responsibility;
- digital productivity;
- digital information literacy;
- digital collaboration;
- digital creativity; and
- digital learning;

in:

- familiar contexts connected with education, training, work or social roles at entry level 1;
- familiar contexts, some of which must be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles at entry level 2, entry level 3 and level 1;
- familiar and unfamiliar contexts, some of which must be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles at level 2 and level 3.

Notes

- Entry level 1 subject matter and materials should be basic, i.e. the type that candidates will often meet in their work, studies or other activities.
- Entry level 2 and entry level 3 subject matter and materials should be straightforward, i.e. those that candidates will often meet in their work, studies or other activities, and, in which they use digital technology in a basic way.
- Level 1 subject matter and materials should be straightforward, i.e. those that candidates will often meet in their work, studies or other activities, and which requires them to use digital technology in a straightforward way.
- Level 2 subject matter and materials should be less familiar, i.e. those that

candidates could meet in their work, studies or other activities, and in which they use digital technology in increasingly sophisticated ways.
- Level 3 subject matter and materials should be less familiar/ unfamiliar, i.e. those that candidates may meet in their work, studies or other activities, and, in which they use digital technology in increasingly sophisticated and complex ways.

6.1.1 Assessment

Candidates will be assessed via a controlled task and a structured discussion to confirm that their skills meet the Essential Digital Literacy Skills specification at the required level.

The controlled task is designed to assess the application of digital literacy skills in an integrated and holistic way that is relevant to real-life contexts.

The structured discussion confirms the candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills, and requires them to reflect on and evaluate their learning.

Assessments will be taken when candidates have been taught and developed the skills at the required level. The structured discussion must always take place after the controlled task. Where candidates have failed a controlled task, they must not sit the structured discussion. However, candidates may undertake a different controlled task and, if successful, progress to the structured discussion.

6.1.2 Access statement

The controlled task and structured discussion should be made accessible to those with particular assessment requirements without compromising achievement at the required standard. Centres should use initial assessment to identify any necessary individual support or adjustments.

6.2 Controlled task and structured discussion specification

1. The Essential Digital Literacy Skills qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet the specification in both the controlled task and the structured discussion.

2. The controlled task assesses subject-specific skills and must show candidates utilising the skills in relevant and real-life contexts.

3. The purpose of the structured discussion is to confirm candidates'

underpinning knowledge and skills. It is an opportunity to promote more proficient and independent learning through reflection and evaluation of performance.

4. Both the controlled task and structured discussion are summative assessments. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at the required level.

5. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at entry level 1 to level 3.

6. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.

6.2.1 Controlled task

Controlled tasks are externally set or approved by awarding bodies.

All controlled tasks must meet the requirements of the Essential Digital Literacy Skills specification. A marking guide must be produced to accompany each controlled task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.

In the event candidates fail the controlled task, they must not progress to the structured discussion.

Assessors may provide candidates with the opportunity to clarify task requirements during the assessments. However, assessors must not provide feedback on any work carried out by a candidate during the assessment. For example, informing a candidate that they have incorrectly answered a specific question in the task would be inappropriate. Appropriate clarification could be recommending that the candidate reviews their responses before submitting their completed task.

6.2.2 Duration

Entry level - up to 6 hours
Level 1 - up to 4 hours
Level 2 - up to 5 hours
Level 3 - up to 8 hours

The task must be designed to be completed in its entirety within the maximum stated for each level. The task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight-week period. The eight-week period does not include academic holiday periods and valid candidate absence. Special dispensation

on the task duration and working period requirements may be allowed in extenuating circumstances (see awarding bodies' special considerations policy).

6.2.3 Structured discussion

This is a one-to-one or a small group discussion of up to four candidates held with the assessor. It is not designed to be a question and answer session.

There are some learning outcomes that can only be assessed via the controlled task and therefore must not be included in the structured discussion.

7. Essential Employability Skills specification

Essential Employability Skills Entry Level 3	
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CPE3.1 Identify information within a task which require decisions to be made	a) identify the elements of the task; b) identify information required to complete the task.
CPE3.2 Know decision-making techniques	a) identify a decision-making technique to use in completing the task.
CPE3.3 Be able to use a decision-making technique	a) use a decision-making technique during the task
CPE3.4 Know critical thinking and problem-solving skills used during a task	a) give reasons for the decisions made during the task; b) identify strengths and weaknesses of the decisions made during the task.
Planning and Organisation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
POE3.1 Be able to plan a task	a) identify the main purpose of the task; b) set targets and timescales; c) identify the actions required to achieve each target.
POE3.2 Identify and agree roles and	a) identify and agree roles and responsibilities for the task.

responsibilities	
POE3.3 Know the planning and organisation skills used during a task	a) give reasons for the planning and organisation skills used.
Creativity and Innovation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CIE3.1 Be able to generate an idea relevant to a task	a) outline an individual idea relevant to the task.
CIE3.2 Be able to choose and develop an idea	a) choose an idea, giving reasons; b) develop the chosen idea.
CIE3.3 Know the creative processes used during a task	a) give examples of the creative processes used.
Personal Effectiveness	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
PE3.1 Be able to use personal and team working skills during a task	a) use personal and team working skills during the task.
PE3.2 Be able to complete a task and evidence how this was achieved	a) follow a plan to complete the task; b) record information and evidence relating to the task.

PE3.3 Know the personal and team working skills used during a task	a) give examples of personal and team working skills used during the task.

Essential Employability Skills Level 1	
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CP1.1 Identify appropriate information within a task which requires decisions to be made	a) identify key issues relating to the task; b) identify key information required to complete the task.
CP1.2 Know decision-making techniques	a) identify decision-making techniques to use in completing the task.
CP1.3 Be able to select and use a decision-making technique	a) select and use a decision-making technique during the task.
CP1.4 Know critical thinking and problem-solving skills used during a task	a) reflect on the information gathered, the decisions made and the outcomes of the task; b) identify strengths and weaknesses of the decisions made during the task.
Planning and Organisation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**

PO1.1 Be able to plan and organise a task	a) identify the main purpose of the task; b) produce a plan for the task which include specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART) targets; c) identify arrangements for reviewing the plan.
PO1.2 Identify and agree roles and responsibilities	a) identify and agree the appropriate roles and responsibilities for the task.
PO1.3 Know the planning and organisation skills used during a task	a) reflect on the planning and organisation skills used during the task; b) identify strengths and weaknesses of the planning and organisation skills used during the task.
Creativity and Innovation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CI1.1 Be able to generate and share ideas relevant to a task	a) outline individual ideas relevant to the task; b) share relevant ideas with others during the task.
CI1.2 Be able to choose and develop an appropriate idea	a) choose an appropriate idea, giving reasons; b) identify strengths and weaknesses of the chosen idea; c) develop the chosen idea.
CI1.3 Know the creative processes used during a task	a) reflect on the creative processes used during the task; b) identify what went well and what could be improved.
Personal Effectiveness	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**

P1.1 Be able to use appropriate personal and team working skills during a task	a) use appropriate personal and team-working skills during the task.
P1.2 Be able to complete a task and evidence how this was achieved	a) follow a plan to complete the task; b) record information and evidence relating to the task.
P1.3 Know the personal and team working skills used during a task	a) reflect on the personal and team-working skills used during the task.
Essential Employability Skills Level 2	
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CP2.1 Describe appropriate information within a task which requires multiple decisions to be made	a) describe underlying issues relating to the task; b) describe information required to complete the task.
CP2.2 Understand appropriate decision-making techniques	a) compare appropriate decision-making techniques to use in completing the task.
CP2.3 Be able to select and use effective	a) select and use effective decision-making techniques during the task.

decision-making techniques	
CP2.4 Understand critical thinking and problem-solving skills used during a task	a) reflect on and review the information gathered, the decisions made and the outcome of the task; b) describe strengths and weaknesses of the decisions made during the task.
Planning and Organisation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
PO2.1 Be able to plan and organise a task	a) describe the main purpose of the task; b) produce an organised plan for the task which includes SMART targets; c) identify resources required; d) identify arrangements for reviewing the plan.
PO2.2 Describe and agree roles and responsibilities	a) Describe the appropriate roles and responsibilities for the task; b) Negotiate and agree the assignment of appropriate roles and responsibilities for the task.
PO2.3 Understand the planning and organisation skills used during a task	a) reflect on and review the planning and organisation skills used during the task; b) describe strengths and weaknesses of the planning and organisation skills used during the task.
Creativity and Innovation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CI2.1 Be able to generate and share creative ideas relevant to a task	a) individually identify creative ideas relevant to the task; b) share creative ideas with others during the task.
CI2.2 Be able to choose	a) assess the suitability of ideas; b) choose an appropriate idea, giving reasons;

and develop an appropriate idea	c) describe strengths and weaknesses of the chosen idea; d) develop the chosen idea.
CI2.3 Understand the creative processes used during a task	a) review the creative processes used during the task; b) reflect on what went well and suggest improvements.
Personal Effectiveness	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
P2.1 Be able to apply personal and team working skills effectively during a task	a) apply appropriate personal and team-working skills effectively during the task;
P2.2 Be able to complete a task and evidence how this was achieved	a) follow a plan to complete the task and make changes where appropriate; b) record and organise information and evidence relating to the task.
P2.3 Understand the personal and team working skills used during a task	a) review the personal and team working skills used during the task; b) reflect upon own contribution to the task.

Essential Employability Skills Level 3	
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CP3.1 Explain appropriate	a) explain underlying issues relating to the task;

information within a task which requires multiple decisions to be made	b) explain information required to complete the task.
CP3.2 Understand a range of appropriate decision-making techniques	a) evaluate a range of appropriate decision-making techniques to use in completing the task.
CP3.3 Be able to select, justify and use effective decision-making techniques	a) select, justify and use effective decision-making techniques during the task.
CP3.4 Understand and evaluate critical thinking and problem-solving skills used during a task	a) reflect on and review the information gathered, the decisions made and the outcome of the task; b) evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the decisions made during the task.
Planning and Organisation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
PO3.1 Be able to plan and organise a task	a) explain the main purpose of the task; b) construct a detailed plan for the task which includes SMART targets; c) identify appropriate resources required; d) undertake a risk assessment; e) describe relevant contingencies for the actions within the plan; f) identify arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the plan.
PO3.2	a) explain and justify the appropriate roles needed for

Explain, justify and agree roles and responsibilities	the task; b) negotiate and agree the assignment of appropriate roles and responsibilities for the task.
PO3.3 Understand and evaluate the planning and organisation skills used during a task	a) reflect on and evaluate the planning and organisation skills used during the task; b) evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the planning and organisation skills used during the task.
Creativity and Innovation	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
CI3.1 Be able to generate and share creative ideas relevant to a task	a) individually identify creative ideas relevant to the task; b) share a range of creative ideas with others during the task.
CI3.2 Be able to choose, justify and develop an appropriate idea	a) evaluate the suitability of a range of ideas; b) choose an appropriate idea giving reasons; c) justify reasons considering possible uncertainties and risks; d) develop the chosen idea.
CI3.3 Understand and evaluate the creative processes used during a task	a) evaluate the creative processes used during the task; b) critically reflect on what went well and suggest improvements.
Personal Effectiveness	
Learning outcome:	**Candidates need to know how to:**
P3.1 Be able to apply personal and team working skills effectively during a task	a) apply appropriate personal and team working skills effectively during the task.

P3.2 Be able to complete a task and evidence how this was achieved	a) follow a plan to complete the task and make changes where appropriate; b) logically record and organise information and evidence relating to the task.
P3.3 Understand and evaluate the personal and team working skills used during a task	a) review the personal and team working skills used during the task; b) evaluate own contribution to the task; c) evaluate own contribution to the overall team performance.

7.1 Essential Employability Skills amplification of assessment requirements

These qualifications are about demonstrating skills in:

- critical thinking and problem solving;
- planning and organisation;
- creativity and innovation; and
- personal effectiveness;

in familiar contexts, some of which must be formal and connected with education, training, work or social roles.

Notes

- Entry level 3 subject matter and materials should be basic, i.e. the type that candidates may meet in their work, studies or other activities.
- Level 1 and level 2 subject matter and materials should be straightforward, i.e. those that candidates will often meet in their work, studies or other activities.
- Level 3 subject matter and materials should be complex in that they may be challenging in terms of the ideas they present, have multiple strands, deal with

abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear.

7.1.1 Assessment

Candidates will be assessed via a controlled task and a structured discussion to confirm that their skills meet the Essential Employability Skills specification at the required level.

The controlled task is designed to assess the application of employability skills in an integrated and holistic way that is relevant to real-life contexts.

The structured discussion confirms the candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills, and requires them to reflect on and evaluate their learning. The structured discussion must directly relate to the controlled task.

Assessments will be taken when candidates have been taught and developed the skills at the required level. The structured discussion must always take place after the controlled task. Where candidates have failed a controlled task, they must not sit the structured discussion. However, candidates may undertake a different controlled task and, if successful, progress to the structured discussion.

7.1.2 Access statement

The controlled task and structured discussion should be made accessible to those with particular assessment requirements without compromising achievement at the required standard. Centres should use initial assessment to identify any necessary individual support or adjustments.

7.2 Controlled task and structured discussion specification

1. The Essential Employability qualification will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate that their skills meet the specification in both the controlled task and the structured discussion.

2. The controlled task assesses subject-specific skills and must show candidates utilising the skills in relevant and real-life contexts.

3. The purpose of the structured discussion is to confirm candidates' underpinning knowledge and skills. It is an opportunity to promote more proficient and independent learning through reflection and evaluation of performance.

4. Both the controlled task and structured discussion are summative

assessments. Candidates should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at the required level.

5. This specification is intended to provide writers with detailed information about the acceptable content, coverage and questions to support the development of assessments at entry level 3 to level 3.

6. This specification has been designed to support the development and production of assessments in English and Welsh.

7.2.1 Controlled task

Controlled tasks are externally set or developed by centres and approved by awarding bodies.

All controlled tasks must meet the requirements of the Essential Employability Skills specifications. A marking guide must be produced to accompany each controlled task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.

In the event candidates fail the controlled task, they must not progress to the structured discussion.

Assessors may provide candidates with the opportunity to clarify task requirements during the assessment. However, this must not extend to any form of formative assessment. However, assessors must not provide feedback on any work carried out by a candidate during the assessment. For example, informing a candidate that they have incorrectly answered a specific question in the task would be inappropriate. Appropriate clarification could be recommending that the candidate reviews their responses before submitting their completed task.

7.2.2 Duration

Entry level - up to 6 hours
Level 1 - up to 4 hours
Level 2 - up to 5 hours
Level 3 - up to 8 hours

The task must be designed to be completed in its entirety within the maximum hours stated for each level. The task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight-week period. The eight-week period does not include academic holiday periods and valid candidate absence. Special dispensation on the task duration and working period requirements may be allowed in extenuating circumstances (see awarding bodies' special considerations policy).

7.2.3 Structured discussion

This is a one-to-one or a small group discussion of up to four candidates held with the assessor. It is not designed to be a question and answer session.

There are some learning outcomes that can only be assessed via the controlled task and therefore must not be included in the structured discussion.