



Department
for Education

Digital Functional Skills qualifications: proposed subject content

Contents

Purpose	3
Learning aims at Entry Level	4
Subject content: Entry Level	4
Learning aims at Level 1	7
Subject content: Level 1	7

Introduction

This document proposes the purpose, learning aims and subject content common to all digital Functional Skills qualifications. It provides the framework within which awarding organisations create the detail of their specifications.

Purpose

Digital Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs) should fulfil the following purposes:

- provide reliable evidence of an individual's achievements against demanding content that is relevant to the workplace and real life;
- provide assessment of an individual's underpinning knowledge as well as their ability to apply this in different contexts; and
- provide a foundation for progression into employment or further education, and develop skills for everyday life.

The subject content for digital FSQs reflects the full range of skills set out in the new essential digital skills national standards¹.

The purpose of digital FSQs at entry level is to demonstrate the ability to apply digital knowledge and skills to complete simple tasks safely in real-life contexts. Achievement of this qualification can provide a basis for further study at level 1.

The purpose of digital FSQs at level 1: a qualification for work, study and life. Achievement of the qualification demonstrates a sound grasp of digital knowledge and the ability to apply these skills to complete tasks safely in the workplace and in other real-life contexts.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-for-essential-digital-skills>

Learning aims at Entry Level

Digital FSQs at this level will enable individuals to initiate and participate in simple digital and online activities safely, in real-life contexts.

At entry level it is expected that individuals are able to:

- demonstrate the subject content through the completion of contextualised and authentic scenarios which require few steps (or a single step) to complete; and
- select an appropriate approach, technique or tool to complete a task without explicit guidance.

Subject content: Entry Level

The tables below set out the proposed subject content for digital FSQs at entry level.

1. Using devices and handling information	
1.1.	Know the main features and uses of different types of device (desktop, laptop, mobile devices, smart devices, wearable technology).
1.2.	Know the main functions of an operating system (managing hardware, providing a user interface, loading and executing programmes) and the main operating systems available on different types of device (desktop, laptop, mobile devices).
1.3.	Know what an application is and the main types of application software (for example, email clients, word processors, presentation software, web browsers).
1.4.	Locate an application, download it to a device and install it.
1.5.	Apply system settings (display, sound, Wi-Fi, time, language) and be aware of settings relating to accessibility (use of magnifier, screen readers, voice controls).
1.6.	Navigate online content using hyperlinks, menus and other navigation elements to locate required information.
1.7.	Carry out searches of the World Wide Web (for information, images, videos).
1.8.	Know internet terminology (website, domain name, HTML, URL, hyperlink, cloud, browser, download, upload).
1.9.	Work with files (create a file, open a file, read information from a file, edit a file, save a file) to create, read and store information.
1.10.	Work with files and folders to organise and retrieve information using local, remote and cloud storage.

1.11. Recognise when there is a problem with a device or software and distinguish between system errors (for example device crashing or freezing, slow response) and user errors (for example using incorrect credentials, inaccurate use of input devices).
1.12. Apply a solution to solve a simple technical problem (for example, restart a device to address a system error, correct a user error).
1.13. Seek assistance of others when unable to solve a technical problem.

2. Creating and editing
2.1. Use a suitable application to enter, edit and format text (bold, underline, italics, font sizes and colours, text alignment, bulleted lists, numbered lists).
2.2. Use a suitable application to enter, edit and format graphics (position, size).
2.3. Capture digital media (image, sound, video).
2.4. Use a suitable application to open a digital media file.
2.5. Know common file types for images (JPEG, GIF, PNG), video (AVI, MOV, MP4) and audio (WAV, MP3, AAC).

3. Communicating
3.1. Create and edit contact details in an address book.
3.2. Compose and reply to online communications comprising text and other digital content to individual and multiple recipients.
3.3. Initiate and participate in a video call.
3.4. Know what is meant by a digital footprint, understand the implications of a digital footprint, and know the range of digital activities (social media activity, web searches, emails, uploaded images) that leave a digital footprint.

4. Transacting
4.1. Complete and submit an online form (for example, name, address, telephone number, email address, date) and comply with data validation and verification checks.
4.2. Securely buy an item/service online.

5. Being safe and responsible online	
5.1.	Know the type of situations where personal information may be stored by devices and online activity.
5.2.	Know simple methods to protect personal information and privacy (for example, not sharing personal information, private browsing, using online pseudonyms, looking for HTTPS when logging in).
5.3.	Understand the threat posed to the security of devices and data by viruses and phishing attacks.
5.4.	Set up and use security features (PINs, strong passwords, fingerprint recognition, facial recognition, voice recognition, screen lock) to access devices and online services.
5.5.	Understand the benefits of using security software (anti-virus, firewall) to prevent, detect and remove viruses, malware and other threats.
5.6.	Run a virus scan on a device and note the results of the scan.
5.7.	Know how to report concerns with online content in different contexts (browsing the World Wide Web, participating in social media, or in the workplace).
5.8.	Know risks (for example, disclosure of private information, cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, extremist activities, offensive activities) which might occur when communicating online (for example, blogs, chatrooms, and social networking sites).
5.9.	Know that engaging in online activity or sharing content that results in harassment, is defamatory, or risks inciting hatred may be against the law and could result in prosecution.
5.10.	Recognise and know how to minimise the effects of physical stresses that may result from using devices (pain from poorly positioned equipment and/or bad posture, repetitive strain injury, eye strain).

Learning aims at Level 1

Digital FSQs at this level will enable individuals to initiate and participate in digital and online activities (as described in the content), safely in the workplace and in other real-life contexts, and be confident in their use of knowledge and digital skills.

At Level 1 it is expected that individuals are able to:

- demonstrate the subject content through the completion of contextualised and authentic scenarios which may require several steps to complete; and
- select from a variety of approaches, techniques or tools to complete a task without requiring explicit or step-by-step instructions.

Subject content: Level 1

The tables below set out the proposed subject content for Digital FSQs at level 1.

1. Using devices and handling information	
1.1.	Keep the operating system and applications on a device up to date.
1.2.	Carry out and refine searches for information on the World Wide Web (narrow/broaden keywords, search for specific phrases, apply search filters (time, type, origin of content), search within a specific website).
1.3.	Take into account currency and reliability of information when searching the World Wide Web for information (for example, check the publication date, check information is from a reliable source).
1.4.	Understand that search results may include sponsored results or advertisements, and be able to recognise these.
1.5.	Carry out searches for files (on file names, partial file names, file content, tags) on a device.
1.6.	Create and use a hierarchical folder structure to organise files and use an appropriate file naming convention.
1.7.	Apply tags to digital content to identify the contents and to enable efficient information retrieval.
1.8.	Save a file on cloud storage using one device and open it on another device.
1.9.	Know terminology describing data storage requirements (bytes, kilobyte, megabyte, gigabyte, terabyte).
1.10.	Know and understand limitations on file sizes when using some online services, and the benefits of using file compression to make effective use of storage capacity and to reduce data transfer times.

1.11. Use online tutorials, FAQs or help facilities to identify the solution to a common technical problem (for example, how to disable an app, reinstall software, change Wi-Fi settings, change a system or software setting) and apply the solution.
1.12. Identify and use online learning resources to improve and maintain own digital skills.

2. Creating and editing
2.1. Use suitable applications (word-processing and presentation applications) to enter, edit, format, layout and save information (text, tables, graphics, charts) for a range of purposes and audiences.
2.2. Use appropriate layout conventions for specific purposes (for example, a report, a newsletter, a presentation, an advertisement etc.) and audiences (friends, colleagues, teachers, general public).
2.3. Edit (caption, crop, resize, change contrast, change colour balance) an image using an appropriate tool.
2.4. Process numeric data using simple formulae (sum, subtraction, multiplication, division, maximum, minimum, average) using relative cell references.
2.5. Sort (ascending/descending order) and filter numeric data by the values in a column.
2.6. Format (font sizes, font styles (bold, underline, italic), alignment, cell formatting (number, currency, date, percentage), merging cells, splitting cells, row height, column width) numeric data.
2.7. Chart a single series of numeric data using an appropriate type of chart, applying suitable chart titles, axis titles, data legends and data labels.

3. Communicating
3.1. Use appropriate modes of online communication (email, instant message, text message, social media, blog) for a range of contexts and audiences (for example, colleagues, friends, users of a social media platform).
3.2. Use appropriate language and style when communicating online with different audiences (for example, colleagues, friends, users of a social media platform).

3.3. Know what steps can be taken to limit a digital footprint (for example, use of privacy tools to manage cookies and website tracking, private browsing, use of an online alias, use of secondary email accounts).

4. Transacting

4.1. Manage account settings for an online service (personal details, login credentials, marketing and communication preferences).

4.2. Interact with a transactional online service (complete forms, upload or download documents or images).

4.3. Compare product options offered by different online retailers and select the best option in terms of price, specification and delivery.

4.4. Know how to verify the legitimacy of an online retailer (for example, check for the padlock next to the URL in the browser, check if the website appears professional with a legitimate domain name, check reviews of the retailer).

5. Being safe and responsible online

5.1. Know how to protect personal information and privacy online (private browsing, appropriate social media settings, appropriate settings on a mobile device to restrict or grant GPS location information, using a secondary email address).

5.2. Understand key rights under data protection laws (right to see what personal data organisations hold about you, right to withdraw consent and demand that personal data be rectified or deleted).

5.3. Configure and use multifactor authentication to access and use online services.

5.4. Backup files to the cloud.

5.5. Know how to minimise the risk posed by worms, trojans and ransomware.

5.6. Recognise and take account of copyright, trademarks and software license terms that may restrict access or reuse of online content (for example, only using images that permit reuse and citing sources of information and images).

5.7. Know what activities may be judged illegal to protect individuals from offensive or malicious activity (for example, cyber-bullying, trolling and cyber-stalking), and know what actions can be taken in response to these.

5.8. Know what activities are legal when publishing or sharing content, and know that there are consequences of posting offensive or inappropriate comments,

malicious communication, or of inciting hatred on the grounds of religion, race, gender or gender orientation.

5.9. Know simple methods to avoid physical and psychological health risks while using devices.



Department
for Education

© Crown copyright 2019

This document/publication (not including logos) is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

To view this licence:

visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

About this publication:

enquiries www.education.gov.uk/contactus

download www.gov.uk/government/consultations



Follow us on Twitter:

[@educationgovuk](https://twitter.com/educationgovuk)



Like us on Facebook:

facebook.com/educationgovuk