

LMP Group Stance on Functional Skills in Apprenticeships

LMP Group acknowledges the recent relaxation of Functional Skills requirements for apprentices aged 19 and over. While this change may benefit some learners by facilitating apprenticeship completion, we firmly believe in the value of Functional Skills in supporting long-term career progression.

Functional Skills in English and mathematics are fundamental workplace competencies that enhance communication, problem-solving, and numeracy—key skills required across various industries. Employers, particularly in education and Early Years sectors, continue to recognise the importance of these qualifications for career advancement and professional credibility.

For example, in Early Years education, practitioners must hold a full and relevant Early Years Educator qualification alongside a Level 2 English qualification to be counted in staff-to-child ratios. Managers appointed after 4 January 2024 must also obtain a Level 2 maths qualification within two years. Similarly, schools and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) prioritise staff with robust Functional Skills qualifications, recognising their role in ensuring quality education and effective administration.

LMP Group remains committed to supporting learners in achieving Functional Skills qualifications where appropriate. We will continue to provide tailored support and collaborate with employers to ensure apprentices receive the essential skills required for long-term success.

While we acknowledge the flexibility introduced by this policy change, our focus remains on maintaining high educational standards and equipping learners with the necessary skills to thrive in their careers.

LMP Group Full Position: Functional Skills in Apprenticeships

Introduction The recent relaxation of Functional Skills requirements for apprentices aged 19 and over has sparked discussion within the education and training sector. While this change may remove barriers to apprenticeship completion for some learners, LMP Group remains committed to the value of Functional Skills and their role in supporting long-term career progression. This paper outlines our position on this policy change and our continued approach to supporting learners and employers.

The Value of Functional Skills Functional Skills qualifications in English and mathematics are essential components of workplace competency. These skills are critical in professional settings and provide apprentices with the tools necessary to excel in their careers. Key benefits include:

- **Communication Skills:** Ensuring clear and effective workplace interaction, both verbal and written.
- **Numeracy and Problem-Solving:** Enabling financial accuracy, data interpretation, and logical reasoning.
- **Workplace Readiness:** Supporting confidence and adaptability in diverse professional environments.

Sector-Specific Requirements In certain professions, Functional Skills qualifications are not just beneficial but essential for career progression.

- **Early Years Education:** To progress within the sector, practitioners must meet specific English and maths requirements. For instance, to be counted in staff-to-child ratios at Level 3, individuals must hold a full and relevant Early Years Educator qualification alongside a Level 2 qualification in English. Additionally, managers appointed after 4 January 2024 must hold or obtain a Level 2 maths qualification within two years of starting their role.
- **Education Sector:** Employers within schools and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) highly value staff with strong Functional Skills qualifications. These skills enhance teaching quality and ensure staff can effectively support pupil learning and school administration.

LMP Group's Commitment LMP Group has a dedicated team providing comprehensive support for learners working towards their Functional Skills qualifications. While we recognise the potential benefits of the recent relaxation, we remain committed to upholding high educational standards and ensuring learners are equipped with the skills necessary for long-term success.

We will continue to:

- Support learners in achieving Functional Skills qualifications where possible.
- Collaborate with employers to determine the best approach for each learner's development.
- Advocate for the long-term benefits of maintaining strong literacy and numeracy skills across all professional sectors.

Conclusion While the relaxation of Functional Skills requirements may offer flexibility for some apprentices, LMP Group remains steadfast in its belief that these qualifications are essential for workforce readiness and career progression. We will continue to provide robust Functional Skills support and work closely with learners and employers to ensure high standards of education and employability are maintained.