

TEACHER'S NOTES

ICT Levels 1 and 2

Chapter 7

Presenting information

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TEACHER'S NOTES

ICT Levels 1 and 2

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Draft for pilot centres

- Chapter 1:** Using ICT systems
Chapter 2: Safety and security
Chapter 3: Find and select information
Chapter 4: Using ICT-based information
Chapter 5: Entering, developing and combining information (Part A)
Chapter 6: Entering, developing and combining information (Part B)
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How to use the Functional ICT materials

These materials have been developed to help learners acquire the skills that are outlined in the QCA Functional Skills Standards for ICT under the three skills areas of 'Use ICT systems', 'Find and select information', 'Develop, present and communicate information'.

The structure of the materials

The chapters follow the sequence of the standards, with each chapter divided into sections matching the coverage of the standard or standards indicated. The standards are given at the start of each chapter, using the wording from the official document on the teacher pages and an adapted version, more appropriate to learners' needs, on the learner pages.

This structure should not be taken as a recommended teaching framework but merely as the method deemed most appropriate to demonstrate complete coverage of the standards. It is expected that teachers will organise their teaching sessions according to the needs, level of experience and interest of their learners, and the contexts in which they are working.

It should also not be assumed that material included here will form part of the functional skills assessment: by its very nature, the assessment will cover only part of the standards.

Level differentiation

The learner's materials are for learners working at Levels 1 and 2, and the content and activities are designed to be accessible to Level 1 learners. No attempt has been made to differentiate between the two levels in the pages of the learner's materials. The teacher's notes, however, use text presented in a tinted box to identify those activities and teaching points that are intended for Level 2 learners. The basis of the design of the materials is that, as in the standards, differentiation will be as much by outcome as by activity. The other key level differentiators – complexity, familiarity, technical demand and independence – are reflected in the tasks, which are designed to show the progression that is a feature of the standards:

At Level 1, learners would be expected to:

- identify the ICT requirements needed to solve a straightforward task and apply their knowledge and understanding to produce an appropriate solution (complexity)
- apply their knowledge and skills within a non-routine but familiar context (familiarity)
- apply a range of techniques in a number of applications to produce an appropriate outcome (technical demand)
- solve problems that are essentially instructor/tutor guided, demonstrating the confidence to make informed choices and knowing when to seek guidance (independence)

At Level 2, learners would be expected to:

- analyse multi-step tasks and separate the components, identifying the relevant ICT requirements and applying their knowledge and understanding to produce an appropriate solution (complexity)
- apply their knowledge, skills and understanding within non-routine and non-familiar contexts (familiarity)
- demonstrate the application of a wide range of techniques across several applications to produce an appropriate outcome (technical demand)
- solve problems independently, overcoming challenges to produce successful outcomes (independence)

This differentiation between levels requires the teacher to provide more guidance at Level 1 than at Level 2. With Level 1 learners, for example, teachers may choose to use a simplified task to allow a learner to practise the skill within their prior experience, whereas they may choose to enhance the challenge for Level 2 learners by using a more complex task that matches the learner's experience (more specific suggestions for differentiation are contained in the teacher's notes).

The activities have been developed with this varying guidance in mind, so that later activities in each section are expected to be undertaken with less teacher support. The expectation is, though, that all learners will be engaged in the learning process through discussion and social interaction.

The elements of the chapter

The chapters follow the standards and are divided into sections broadly corresponding to the coverage of those standards. Within each section there are two main sub-sections: 'Learn the skill', which provides information and facts for discussion and exploration; 'Develop the skill', which provides activities to practise the skills, test understanding and extend knowledge. The pages of the learner materials also direct the learner to additional electronic resources in the form of 'skills demonstrations' (captivates) and 'assets'.

➡➡ Captivates are screen-based skills demonstrations of points made in the text, which can be clicked on for instruction or information.

📁 Assets are files of information provided or stored digitally, which may include photographs, sound clips, databases, spreadsheets, etc. These may also include material needed to perform the activities (e.g. tables to complete).

These resources are available on the website, at the same point where these materials were available for downloading.

A note on resources and providing a safe working environment for learners

Any suggestion for software to be used with activities is not meant to be exclusive. It is understood that different centres will have different resources, and that some centres will allow learners only limited access to the internet, will not accept downloading and will allow learners only partial control over their work-station. The resources have been developed on the understanding of variations in resources, access and control, but there are still bound to be activities that present challenges for some centres. Where possible, suggestions for alternatives have been given in the teacher's notes; teachers are expected, in any case, to adapt activities for the use of their own favourite, or personally developed, resources.

These restrictions on internet browsing, downloading, and altering machine configurations may create difficulties on functional skills courses, where the standards require learners to actively engage in such tasks. One possible technical solution to this problem is to employ **virtual machine software**, which allows an instance of an operating system (usually Windows or Linux) to be run in a virtual environment that is isolated from the real machine. Changes made in the virtual machine have no effect on the real machine and can be completely discarded when the virtual machine is closed. Alternatively, a working state can be preserved in the virtual machine by taking a 'snapshot' before closing the virtual machine.

A virtual machine can be used to safely browse the internet, download and install software, and explore machine settings, with no risk to the real machine or associated network.

The best-known virtual machine products are Microsoft Virtual PC (currently free) and VMWare Workstation.

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7 Presenting information

(pages 2–11 in the learner materials)

Skills area	Skill	Coverage	Unit
	Level 2 content in bold, content that only appears at Level 1 in brackets	Level 2 content in bold	
C Develop, present and communicate information	C3 present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	C3.1 work accurately and proofread, using software facilities where appropriate for the task ensure meaning is clear, seek views of others, check spelling, check calculations, ensure consistent layout, print preview	A Checking your work
		C3.2 produce information that is fit for purpose and audience, using accepted layouts and conventions as appropriate letter, memo, report, newsletter, brochure , poster, information sheet, webpage, multi-media presentation	B Fit for purpose
	C4 evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	C4.1 evaluate the effectiveness of ICT tools to meet presentation needs time taken, quality, range of facilities, versatility, transferability of information into other formats, speed of internet connection, time constraints of downloading large files	C Which ICT tool do I use?
		C4.2 review and modify work as it progresses to ensure the result is fit for purpose and audience, and to inform future judgements produce drafts, review against initial plans, check with intended audience	D Reviewing and modifying work

A Checking your work

This section is designed to help learners understand the importance of checking their work, making sure it is accurate and the meaning clear. There are ICT tools to assist this checking but learners must realise the limitations of these tools. Show learners how to use the spellchecker but emphasise that they must also proofread their work. When does the spellchecker not help? Discuss the benefits of using print preview to help with checking work. When using spreadsheets, encourage learners to use some test data which is easy to calculate both on the spreadsheet and on a calculator before using the actual data – it's even better if they use estimation skills, as they won't have been able to use a calculator in the assessment.

Level 2

Extend skills by introducing the grammar checker.

B Fit for purpose

When presenting information, learners must take the audience into consideration, and use appropriate layouts and types of publication.

Level 2

Talk about the accepted conventions and layouts used in specific publications. Ask learners to review their own English skills to be able to make a publication fit for purpose.

C Which ICT tool do I use?

Encourage learners to evaluate the worth of ICT tools. How much time was spent on a publication? Was the ICT tool chosen the best one available? Was too much time spent researching the internet? Discuss issues about downloading large files.

Level 2

Ask learners to measure actual download times for some large files and calculate download speed from file size and download time. Calculate results in kilobits per second (Kb/s) and kilobytes per second (KB/s).

Compare results with the stated connection speed.

Then repeat the exercise to upload files to a website.

D Reviewing and modifying work

Talk about producing drafts and getting feedback. How should feedback be gathered? What is the best way to annotate changes that need to be made? Encourage learners to critically review their own work and give constructive criticism to others.

Level 2

Discuss ways of recording comments to inform future decisions. What if you do not have enough time to implement the changes now? How can you take account of recommendations for future use?