

# Principal Examiner Feedback

May 2013

Functional Skills Mathematics  
Level 1 (FSM01)

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## **General Comments**

This paper proved accessible to most of the candidates with marks being achieved evenly across the sections.

There is a need for centres to ensure that their candidates read and understand the requirements of each question. Marks are often lost because the candidate having done all of the mathematics required fails to give their decision as to which hotel / meal choice etc. should be made.

Checking that the candidate's answer meets the demand should be the last action on every question.

The use of a calculator is functional and many candidates are disadvantaged by not having access to this essential tool during the examination.

## Report on Individual Questions

### Section A

Q1a – Many candidates failed to give the dates or just repeated the question. There are a lot of Mondays etc. on the calendar so the day of the week is insufficient. In answering questions of this type candidates must learn to be precise.

Q1b – Candidates were given full credit for the number of nights they chose to compare. Many did not make it clear how many nights they were working with. Many thought the Splendide offer only applied to the first 2 nights. The discount at the Royal was frequently only given for 1 night. Centres are advised to remind students to look at the number of marks per question as an indication of the level of detail to include and always remember to answer the question ie write what decision (hotel) they have made.

Q1c – Many read from the wrong axes or gave 260 when the crossing was clearly not on that given line. Candidates need practice in reading information from graphs and estimating values between the given lines.

Q2a – This was quite well done with most candidates understanding the process however those who did not use a calculator frequently misaligned the decimal point and lost the accuracy mark.

Q2b - Most candidates coped well with the 24 hour clock and managed to sort out 60 minutes in an hour. All but a few candidates, who worked backwards and wanted to book a morning flight, managed to find the correct flight. A number failed to show any interim times so could not be credited with all of the process marks.

Q3 - This question did prove challenging but there were some excellent responses. Checking is very important in this type of question and candidates are advised to check their work to ensure there are no double bookings and that if they were given the resulting timetable they would know where to go at which time. This could make a nice classroom exercise with learners testing the functionality of their partner's timetable and suggesting improvements.

## Section B

There are at least 3 marks in this section that are helped by having a calculator. So the difference between passing and failing could be using a calculator.

Q4a – Many candidates found the flow chart reasonably easy to follow. The first part was generally well answered. Candidates were able to substitute in to the formula well. A few misinterpreted multiply and added but the main loss of marks was candidates failing to state 'No' or 'Hal is wrong'. Some candidates were awarded the marks for being functionally correct by stating Hal is correct as that is what it would be if you rounded the answer.

Q4b – It was pleasing to see most candidates did include units in their answer. The ratio part of this question proved challenging. Many candidates were unable to work with ratio.

Q5a - This scale drawing proved quite difficult for candidates of this ability, although there were many excellent answers. They are again advised to consider functionality. Many had stables with no space for a door.

Q5b – This question produced a variety of excellent responses. The checking part was quite often missed. When awarded it was usually for a candidate using an alternate method. Candidates need to read the question as a reverse calculation could have yielded an extra mark.

Q6 - The better candidates did achieve full marks however working with every 6 weeks caused some problems. A number shod the pony every week and some decided as they wear 4 shoes they needed to be shod 4 times as often.

## Section C

Q7a & Q7b - Many candidates were confused about range and mean and demonstrated a lack of understanding of what they represent. Errors included using the range for both parts (a) and (b), or using the mean for both parts. Some candidates chose to work out the median value for part (b) which was also acceptable. A substantial number of candidates did not make a decision after calculating the average in part (b) and did not compare their answer with 80 calories, so they did not achieve the final mark in this question.

Q7c – Marks were often lost by failing to label the calories axis. Scales sometimes became non-linear towards the upper end, with 110 often omitted. A minority of candidates used the given data (62,66,76,84,120) as equal divisions on the vertical scale.

Candidates should be given practice in choosing a sensible scale for plotting graphs using a range of data sets and using a given size of grid which may not fit the data conveniently.

Q8 - This was not well done by many candidates. The candidates that attempted this question frequently produced data collection sheets that gave a written list of food items for each person/table instead of the more efficient way of writing the food items once as a heading, so that the inputs could then be ticks. Many combined the food items for each table and so did not show the order for each individual customer which was not fit for purpose.

Candidates should be given practice in designing data collection sheets. When 3 'variables' need recording in a data collection sheet it is advised that the sheet is designed as a grid with the 3rd variable being in the title and having a number that can be altered. In this case, a suitable solution is one grid for item and customer with the table number changing. Candidates need to appreciate that a 'data collection sheet' is not a written list, but either a tally chart or a two way table.

Q9a – Most candidates were able to engage with this question, however, many candidates lost marks by not naming the food items and/or drinks that Destiny was buying. Many simply added amounts together without identifying what the question asked for, the actual items. Some candidates found the correct cost for food and drink but above the maximum amount of £7.50 and did not amend their choices. To keep in budget most candidates realised that using the lowest cost items would give an appropriate answer.

Candidates should be encouraged to comment on what the figures represent in their calculations and communicate their solutions in full, in this case naming the food and drink items that they were working with.

Q9b – The most common error was in failing to show a correct process to find half of £3.50 for the cost of Alfie's lunch. Some lost all the marks available for this question by stating an incorrect value for Alfie's lunch without showing their working. Many candidates lost a mark by failing to make a decision after doing the correct calculation.

Candidates should be encouraged to show workings throughout their solutions. They should always read the question carefully and check they have completely answered the question. They should be reminded that the focus in Functional maths Skills assessment is on the process and that they should write down all stages in their working.

### Pass mark for FSM01

Maximum mark	48
Pass mark	30
UMS	6

**Note:** Grade boundaries vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the questions.



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