

# Essential Skills Wales Suite

**Implementation, Delivery and Assessment  
Guidance for Practitioners, Assessors and Learners**

## Essential Communication Skills

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## Acknowledgements

This document was developed as part of a wider project funded by Welsh Government (WG) to prepare and support practitioners to deliver the new ESW Suite of qualifications. This document was produced by ColegauCymru, working with WG and Awarding Bodies to ensure coherence and consistency.

It is intended that it is used in conjunction with Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' to ensure that practitioners are aware of regulatory requirements as well as those associated with effective delivery. Please note that for assessment and qualification achievement purposes, any requirements in the Awarding Bodies 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' take precedence.

All information contained in this guidance is correct at time of publishing.

# Essential Skills Wales Suite: implementation, delivery and assessment guidance for practitioners, assessors and learners

- Audience**
- Practitioners and assessors delivering qualifications within the Essential Skills Wales Suite from September 2015 (the qualifications)
  - Individuals conducting internal and external quality assurance of the qualifications
  - Learners undertaking any or all of the qualifications.

- Overview** This document:
- **Should be read in conjunction with the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook'**
  - provides information and guidance relating to the rationale for the qualifications and outlines their characteristics
  - includes subject-specific (Essential Application of Number Skills, Essential Communication Skills, Essential Digital Literacy Skills and Essential Employability Skills) guidance on assessment and access requirements for those involved in implementing and/or quality assuring the qualifications
  - incorporates guidance for learners which reflects the purpose and relevance of the qualifications in education and work-based contexts and explains assessment requirements.

- Action required** Practitioners, assessors and individuals conducting internal and external quality assurance roles can use the relevant ESW qualification document to inform and guide implementation, delivery and quality assurance to meet policy and specification requirements.

Learners can use this guidance to help them achieve the qualifications. It is however appropriate for learners at Entry Level and on L1 programmes to be assisted in interpreting and using this guidance.

Guidance Documents available are:

- Essential Application of Number Skills
- Essential Communication Skills
- Essential Digital Literacy Skills
- Essential Employability Skills

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## Introduction

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This document provides key information and guidance to assist the effective delivery, assessment<sup>1</sup> and quality assurance of all qualifications within the Essential Skills Wales Suite implemented from September 2015 (the qualifications). In addition, it provides guidance on the content and assessment of the qualifications specifically for learner reference and use.

The rationale for change is explained, with an overview of common features and assessment requirements applicable across the qualifications. Essential Skill-specific detail is provided outlining assessment requirements at each level. The document also acknowledges that practitioners will be delivering specifications provided by a range of awarding bodies and provides links to their documents.<sup>2</sup>

Essentially, the guidance seeks to assist effective and consistent implementation of the qualification by ensuring that:

- Practitioners have access to clear information on the rationale for and common elements in the qualifications
- Practitioners, assessors, learners and individuals involved in quality assurance of the qualifications are notified of the timescales that apply to implementation and assessment
- Practitioners and assessors are provided with explanation and amplification of assessment requirements across all Essential Skills at each available level
- Individuals involved in the quality assurance of the qualifications are made aware of requirements designed to secure robust standards
- Learners have useful information on the content of the qualifications and how they will be assessed.

The existing Entry Level subject specifications are available from Qualification Wales.

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook'.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook'.

## Rationale

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The availability of a range of qualifications to promote effective acquisition of skills for application in education, work and life is fundamental to successful implementation of the skills agenda in Wales.

In 2010, Key and Basic Skills qualifications were superseded by Essential Skills Wales (ESW), which established a coherent suite of qualifications and standards to enable progression from Entry Level 1 to level 4. Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology qualifications were complemented by Wider Key Skills (Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance and Problem Solving) to provide a balanced and comprehensive offer supporting development of skills in learning, employment and life contexts.

In September 2015 ESW qualifications and Wider Key Skills were replaced by a new suite of Essential Skills, established in response to the recommendations of the Review of Qualifications (2012).

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/121127reviewofqualificationsen.pdf>

The Essential Skills Wales Suite (the qualifications) incorporates:

- Essential Application of Number Skills (EAoNS)
- Essential Communication Skills (ECommS)
- Essential Digital Literacy Skills (EDLS)
- Essential Employability Skills (EES)

The Review of Qualifications recommendations proposed revised and more reliable assessment for Communication and Application of Number (R27), establishing a new skill qualification (Digital Literacy to replace ICT: R28), and the incorporation of new Essential Employability Skills within the Suite. In essence, recommendations from the review have been instrumental in shaping the qualifications to ensure greater clarity, relevance and reliability within the following skills:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Digital Literacy
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Planning and Organisation
- Creativity and Innovation
- Personal Effectiveness

A further recommendation proposed that Essential Skills Wales qualifications should no longer be delivered to learners aged between 14 and 16. This was because schools reported difficulties in generating evidence for qualifications that had been designed

primarily for other learning contexts. The new GCSEs within the Welsh Baccalaureate will be used to assess literacy and numeracy in 14-16 year olds.

Exceptions to this are:

- 14-16 learners will be able to undertake ES qualifications at Entry Level
- 14-16 learners in alternative settings will be able to access ES qualifications at all levels.

Other recommendations in the Review responded to concerns surrounding the efficiency and effectiveness of portfolio-based assessment, the need for a more systematic and robust approach to marking and assessment and the need to include an element of externality in assessment.

## **The Qualifications – common features**

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The qualifications reflect several common features, reinforcing the key themes that contributed to their development. In response to the need for learners to develop and consolidate skills coherently, clear progression pathways have been established across the qualifications. All are offered from Entry 1 to Level 3, with the exception of Essential Employability Skills which is available from Entry 3 to Level 3.

All qualifications share the common aim that learners acquire relevant skills valued by employers and next-stage educators and, furthermore, that they are able to demonstrate proficiency in their application. Common aims<sup>3</sup> are to:

- structure and consolidate learning, making incidental, naturally occurring, practices explicit
- encourage articulation, analysis of and reflection on the skills and on learners' own proficiency in them, in personalised terms
- increase confidence and effectiveness in the use and application of these skills
- develop an understanding of how to transfer skills to new purposes and contexts
- provide positive and engaging opportunities to further explore, develop, practise and apply the skills, in a range of meaningful and 'real-life' contexts for real-life purposes.

In addition - common to all of the qualifications - is a more rigorous approach to achieving the standards through clear, purposeful assessment of all skills and robust quality assurance.

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<sup>3</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' 4.1

## Assessment<sup>4</sup>

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To ensure that the qualifications provide an effective learning experience, assessment will be externally set by awarding bodies and undertaken through a combination of formal **summative** methods, as applicable to each skill. These are the **Controlled Task, Confirmatory Test** and **Structured Discussion**.

In order to achieve the qualification in **Essential Application of Number Skills** and **Essential Communication Skills** at Levels 1, 2 or 3, learners must demonstrate their skills in **both a Controlled Task and a short Confirmatory Test**.

In order to achieve the qualification in **Essential Digital Literacy Skills** and **Essential Employability Skills**, learners must demonstrate their skills in **both a Controlled Task and a short Structured Discussion**.

The **Controlled Task** measures subject-specific skills and learners must demonstrate that they can use skills in a holistic manner, relevant to real-life circumstances.

Controlled Tasks<sup>5</sup> are:

- externally set (or approved) by an awarding body
- presented unseen to learners and completed under controlled conditions
- internally assessed by centres, using marking criteria provided
- internally quality assured by centres
- moderated/externally quality assured by the awarding body.

The Task must be completed under controlled conditions within a maximum of a consecutive eight-week period. Guidance on the Controlled Task environment/conditions is outlined in the Awarding Bodies 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook'.

Learners will be provided with most of the source material required to complete a Controlled Task. Any additional **supervised** research required for a particular Controlled Task may take place outside of the maximum number of allocated hours, but **must** be within the consecutive eight-week period<sup>5</sup>.

Controlled Task duration will differ in relation to level and/or skill:

- up to 6 hours at Entry Level (for EDLS and EES)
- up to 4 hours for Level 1
- up to 5 hours for Level 2
- up to 8 hours for Level 3

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<sup>4</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' 4.1

<sup>5</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' 4.3



Additional time may be allowed if extenuating circumstances apply. Organisations must refer to awarding bodies for information and agree special arrangements with the awarding body whose qualifications are being delivered. This must be undertaken prior to the learner starting the Task<sup>6</sup>.

The purpose of the **Confirmatory Test** and **Structured Discussion** is to confirm learners' underpinning knowledge and skills.

Confirmatory Tests are:

- intended as a summative assessment of a learner's knowledge
- taken after successful completion of the relevant Controlled Task
- not to be taken at the start of a course or before it has been established that a learner has all of the required skills
- externally produced by awarding bodies
- treated as confidential material by centres
- taken unseen by learners and completed unaided (other than where assistance is allowed under the Access Guidance)
- externally marked
- compliant with guidance provided by the relevant awarding body and within relevant sections of this document.

Structured Discussions are:

- one-to-one between learner and assessor
- not question and answer sessions
- carried out following successful completion of the Controlled Task in EDLS
- sometimes appropriate for use as supplementary evidence for a Controlled Task in EES
- related to a learner's response to the Controlled Task
- assessment opportunities that require learner preparation
- recorded in some way.

The Controlled Task, Confirmatory Test and Structured Discussion are **summative assessments**. Learners should undertake the assessments following teaching and learning when they have developed relevant skills at the required level. Learners may undertake a **different** Controlled Task or Confirmatory Test at another time if they do not pass.

The Test should be made accessible to those with particular assessment requirements, without compromising achievement at the required standard. Initial assessment must be used to identify any necessary individual support or adjustments

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<sup>6</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies' 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' 4.6.1

and these must be agreed with the awarding body prior to the test being started by the learner.

Further details relating to specific delivery and assessment requirements for each skill at each available level are outlined in subsequent sections of this document.

Quality assurance arrangements must be undertaken in accordance with guidance provided by relevant awarding bodies.<sup>7</sup>

Awarding body regulations must be complied with. These may relate to levels of experience for practitioner, assessor and internal quality assurance staff and expectations in terms of the currency and adequacy of their CPD.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' 5.1 / 5.2

<sup>8</sup> Please refer to the Awarding Bodies 'ESW Suite of Qualifications Handbook' 2.2

## Essential Communication Skills

### Amplification of assessment requirements

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#### Levels 1, 2 and 3

These qualifications are about demonstrating skills in:

- Speaking and listening
- Reading
- Writing

#### **Level 1:**

In familiar contexts some of which will be formal, connected with education, training, work or social roles.

#### **Level 2 and Level 3:**

In familiar and less familiar contexts some of which will be formal, connected with education, training or social roles.

#### **Notes:**

1. 1. Each level of the skill incorporates and builds on the previous levels. For example, in C3.3 at Level 1 the requirement is to 'use punctuation correctly'; at Level 1 this includes capital letters, full stops, question and exclamation marks; at Level 2 the requirement is for all of these, but also commas, apostrophes and inverted commas; whereas at Level 3 semi-colons and other punctuation to support communication of complex subject matter is expected.
2. 2. At Level 1 subject matter and materials will be straightforward; at the higher levels subject matter and materials will be increasingly more complex.

## Assessment

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Learners will be assessed via a Controlled Task and a short Confirmatory Test to confirm that their skills meet Essential Communications Skills Specifications at the required level.

## Controlled Task and Confirmatory Test Specification

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### Introduction

- The Essential Communication Skills qualification will be awarded to learners who demonstrate that their skills meet the Specification in both the Controlled Task and the externally assessed Confirmatory Test.
- The Controlled Task measures subject- specific skills that may not necessarily be assessed in the Confirmatory Test and must show learners utilising the skills in a holistic manner that requires meaningful application, relevant to real-life circumstances.
- Both the Controlled Task and the Confirmatory Test are summative. Learners should take the assessments when they have developed the skills at the required level. The pass mark is set at a level to reflect this expectation.

### Controlled Task Specification

- Controlled Tasks are externally set by awarding bodies.
- All Tasks will meet the requirements of the Controlled Task Specification and the Essential Communication Skills Specification. A marking guide will be produced to accompany each Task, explicitly referencing the assessment requirements and the specification.
- The Task is designed to support the assessment of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills in an integrated, holistic way. However, each part of the assessment may focus upon a different topic, purpose and audience.
- Practitioners/Assessors can be present and may provide learners with the opportunity to clarify task requirements during the working period however this must not extend to any form of formative assessment. For example, recommending that a learner should review spelling punctuation and grammar would be inappropriate. Appropriate clarification could be recommending the learner re-read a particular section of the task specification.

### Duration:

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

The Task will 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.

At Level 2 and 3 additional reading and research activity (for the Talk/Presentation) can take place outside of the specified maximum hours but must be within eight week period.

### **Controlled Test Specification**

- The Confirmatory Test must be completed in addition to the Controlled Task.
- All Tests will be based on a common specification. They will consist entirely of fixed-response (multiple choice) items delivered as either an onscreen or paper-based test. Each Test at:
  - Level 1 will involve a maximum of 20 items and is intended to have a maximum duration of approximately 30 minutes.
  - Level 2 will involve a maximum of 20 items and is intended to have a maximum duration of approximately 45 minutes.
  - Level 3 will involve a maximum of 30 items and is intended to have a maximum duration of approximately 60 minutes.
- Each multiple choice item will have one correct answer, with strong distractors. Each item will be worth one mark.
- Unlike the Controlled Task, the Test may not explicitly assess problem solving capabilities, although the questions will be broadly scenario-based using everyday contexts that are likely to be relevant and engaging to 16+ and adult learners across a wide range of settings.

Examples of contexts which might provide opportunities to develop suitable questions include:

- family and home
  - leisure
  - education, training and work
  - community and citizenship
  - media and communications
  - social issues.
- Learners are expected to demonstrate the resilience necessary to complete the test in one sitting.
  - Test materials provided by awarding bodies will be free of any form of bias (for example, gender, ethnicity, or age-related) that might favour or disadvantage any learner or groups of learners.
  - All Tests will be conducted under invigilated conditions (in compliance with the requirements of the JCQ ICE or similar). All responses must be generated entirely

by the learner without third party assistance with any material aspect of the assessment.

- Dictionaries (of any kind) may not be used during any of the Essential Communication Skills Tests.
- The pass mark for each test will be set by the awarding bodies following an agreed procedure.

## Controlled Task Specification Part 1

| Level 1 Reading   | Level 2 Reading   | Level 3 Reading  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>A source document will be provided which will be at least 250 words and contain an image.</p>  | <p>Two source documents about the same subject will be provided each of which will be at least 500 words.</p> <p>One will contain an image and one will contain reasoning. The two documents will be of different text and document types.</p>  | <p>At least two source documents about the same subject will be provided, one of which will be at least 1000 words.</p> <p>At least two documents will communicate complex information or reasoning and at least one will contain an image.</p>  |
| <p>The Task will require learners to independently read, understand and obtain information from the source document for a purpose.</p> <p>The purpose and audience will be clearly specified in the Task.</p> | <p>The Task will require learners to independently read, understand and summarise information from these documents for a given purpose. The explicit evidence of this summary will be required in the Writing Task. The purpose and audience will be clearly specified in the Task.</p> | <p>The Task will require learners to independently read, understand and synthesise information from these documents for a given purpose. The explicit evidence of this synthesis will be required in the Writing Task. The purpose and audience will be clearly specified in the Task.</p> |
| <p>The Task will require learners 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.</p>                   | <p>The Task will require learners 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.</p>   | <p>The Task will require learners 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.</p>  |

## Speaking and Listening Formal Discussion

| Level 1  | Level 2 | Level 3  |
|--|---------|--|
| <p>Learners should use their preparation from the Reading Task in Part 1 to inform their discussion.</p> <p>The Task will require learners to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people.</p> <p>The minimum duration of the discussion must be between 10 – 20 minutes, depending on the size of the group.</p> <p>The discussion must be of a sufficient length to give learners adequate opportunities to demonstrate their skills at the required level.</p> |         | <p>Learners should use their preparation from the Reading Task to inform their discussion.</p> <p>The Task will require learners to demonstrate these skills in groups of 3 – 6 people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 people - minimum duration 15 minutes</li> <li>● 6 people – minimum duration 25 minutes</li> </ul> <p>Centres may use their discretion for group sizes within this range; however the discussion must be of a sufficient length to give learners adequate opportunities to meet the Subject Specification at this level.</p> |



|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>The Task will require learners to understand and respond to discussion, communicating at least two from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● feelings</li> <li>● opinions</li> <li>● questions</li> </ul>   | <p>The Task will require learners to understand and respond to discussion communicating as appropriate from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● feelings</li> <li>● opinions</li> <li>● questions</li> </ul>   | <p>The Task will require learners to understand and respond to spoken language. This will involve the communication of complex information, as appropriate, from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● providing explanations</li> <li>● expressing feelings and opinions</li> <li>● asking questions</li> </ul> |
| <p>Across the Discussion and Talk/Presentation (part 1, 2 and 3), the Task will provide learners with adequate opportunities to demonstrate competence in all these skills.</p>  |   |   |
| <p><b>Writing</b></p>  |   |   |
| <p><b>Level 1</b></p>  | <p><b>Level 2</b></p>   | <p><b>Level 3</b></p>   |
| <p>The Task will require learners to write a document for a given purpose and audience.</p> <p>The document must be a minimum of 250 words long and of a sufficient length to give learners adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements of the Subject Specification at this level.</p> | <p>L The Task will require learners to summarise the information from the two documents in the Reading activity for a given purpose.</p> <p>The Task will require the written document to be a minimum of 500 words. 2</p>  | <p>The Task will require learners to synthesise the information from the documents in the Reading activity for a given purpose.</p> <p>The Task will require the written document to be a minimum of 750 words.</p>   |
| <p>For this Task, learners must use the information they have gained from the Reading assessment activity and may also include content from the Speaking &amp; Listening assessment activity.</p>  | <p>The Task will require learners to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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</li> <li>● produce a final document which is fit for purpose and audience</li> </ul> |   |

## Controlled Task Specification Part 2

| Reading   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| Level 1   | Level 2 | Level 3 |
| A source document will be provided which will be up to 250 words and contain an image. This document will be of a <b>different</b> text and document type from the one used in Part 1.  |         |         |
| The Task will require learners to independently read, understand and obtain information from this document for a purpose. The purpose and audience will be clearly specified in the Task. The Task will require learners to use the information that they have obtained to plan, draft and write a document for a given purpose and audience. |         |         |
| Writing   |         |         |
| Level 1   | Level 2 | Level 3 |
| The Task will require learners 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, learners must use the information that they have gained from the Reading assessment activities.   | The Task will require learners to write a different document type and text type from Part 1. |
| <p>The Task will require learners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● produce a plan for what they are going to write</li> <li>● draft/check their writing</li> <li>● produce a final document, which is fit for purpose and audience.</li> </ul> |  |

### Controlled Task Specification Part 3

| Talk / Presentation  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Level 1  | Level 2   | Level 3  |
| <p>There is no Part 3 to the Controlled Task for Level 1 learners. Speaking and Listening is assessed in Part 1 only.</p>                | <p>The Task will require learners to prepare for, and deliver, a talk/presentation of at least four minutes to an audience of at least three people.</p> <p>The Task will require learners to include an image or other support materials which will enhance the talk/presentation and help audience understanding.</p> | <p>The Task will require learners to prepare for, and deliver, a talk/presentation of at least eight minutes to an audience of at least three people.</p> <p>The Task will require learners to communicate complex information and include an image or other support materials which will enhance the talk/presentation and help audience understanding.</p> |
| <p>The Task provided does not need to specify the topics or themes for the talk/presentation but may offer suggestions and guidance.</p> |   |  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | The Task should not be heavily dependent on additional reading and research. The topic can be related to an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests. | There is no requirement that the Task be heavily dependent on additional reading and research. The topic can be related to an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests. |
|  | The Task should not be heavily dependent on additional reading and research. The topic can be related to an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests. | There is no requirement that the Task be heavily dependent on additional reading and research. The topic can be related to an educational setting, workplace, everyday life or personal interests. |

## Confirmatory Test

### Essential Communication Skills at Level 1

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 consists of 20 items, structured as follows:

|      | Skills being assessed<br>(the learner needs to know how to)   | Covered | Number of items/marks | Weighting    |
|------|---|---------|-----------------------|--------------|
| C1.2 | a) identify the main points and ideas in documents and images   | Always  | 2 - 3                 | 10 -12 items |
|      | b) read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit your purpose  | Always  | 2-3                   |              |
|      | c) recognise the purpose of a variety of documents  | Always  | 2-3                   |              |
|      | e) obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required | Always  | 2-3                   |              |
| C1.3 | d) construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences, using appropriate conjunctions                           | Always  | 2                     | 8-10 items   |
|      | g) use language suitable for purpose and audience   | Always  | 2                     |              |
|      | i) spell correctly  | Always  | 1-2                   |              |
|      | j) use punctuation correctly  | Always  | 1-2                   |              |
|      | k) use grammar correctly  | Always  | 1-2                   |              |
|      | <b>Total</b>  |         | <b>20</b>             |              |

## Essential Communication Skills at Level 2

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 consists of 20 items, structured as follows:

|      | Skills being assessed<br>(the learner needs to know<br>how to)                      | Covered | Number of<br>items/marks | Weighting      |
|------|---|---------|--------------------------|----------------|
| C2.2 | a) use a variety of strategies to identify:   |         |                          | 10-12<br>items |
|      | i. the main points  | Always  | 3                        |                |
|      | ii. ideas, including by inference   | Always  | 3                        |                |
|      | iii. lines of argument, and reasoning from text and images, including by inference  | Always  | 2-3                      |                |
|      | b) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit | Always  | 2-3                      |                |
| C2.3 | e) construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions          | Always  | 2                        | 8-10<br>Items  |
|      | i) use formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences        | Always  | 2                        |                |
|      | j) spell correctly  | Always  | 1-2                      |                |
|      | k) use punctuation correctly  | Always  | 1-2                      |                |
|      | l) use grammar correctly  | Always  | 1-2                      |                |
|      | <b>Total</b>  |         | <b>20</b>                |                |

### Essential Communication Skills at Level 3

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 consists of 30 items, structured as follows:

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

# Essential Communication Skills Practitioner/Assessor Guidance



## Essential Communication Skills Specification – Level 1

The table below shows the skills learners will need to have in order to achieve the Essential Communication Skills qualification. These skills should be taught before learners complete the *Controlled Task* and *Confirmatory Test*. The 'guidance' in the third column supports the requirements of the first two columns.


### C1.1 Speaking and Listening

| <b>Learning outcome</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>                | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>  | <b>Practitioner / Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>C1.1</b><br>Take part in formal discussions with two or more people. | Understand and respond to spoken language in different contexts:<br>a) prepare for discussions in order to say things and provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion<br>b) make clear and relevant contributions to discussions<br>c) respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussion<br>d) use appropriate phrases or gestures in order to join in the discussion<br>e) identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions in at least two different contexts<br>f) pay close attention and respond constructively to what others say | <b>different contexts</b><br>Can come from an educational setting, workplace or everyday life. <i>e.g. meetings, interviews.</i><br><b>discussions</b><br>Must provide opportunities for learners to respond to a range of views and beliefs with two or more people. This will be face-to-face.<br><i>e.g. mock panel interview, workplace team meeting, a meeting to plan an upcoming event, a discussion on the role of a literary character.</i><br><b>(a) prepare for discussions</b><br>effective methods of subject research<br><b>(a) planning</b> |

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|  | <p>g) clarify and confirm understanding</p>   | <p>use planning tools effectively <i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, annotated research, a bullet pointed list.</i></p> <p><b>(f) close attention</b></p> <p>practise listening for the main points and listening with obvious engagement.</p> <p><b>(f) respond constructively:</b></p> <p>Know how to respond appropriately and understand that an effective discussion involves everyone having a fair chance to make their contributions.</p> <p><i>e.g. take part in a discussion with other learners on a sensitive subject and get their own points across while not shouting others down.</i></p> |
| <p>Speak to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● feelings</li> <li>● opinions</li> <li>● questions</li> </ul> <p>on familiar topics using appropriate language and in two or more contexts</p> | <p>h) judge when to speak and how much to say</p> <p>i) clearly express statements of fact, opinion, questions, explanations and descriptions of familiar topics as appropriate</p> <p>j) use strategies to support speech</p> <p>k) present information and ideas in a logical sequence so that it is easy for listeners to follow and understand</p> <p>l) respond to questions about familiar topics</p> | <p><b>(h) strategies to show listening and understanding</b></p> <p><i>e.g. body language, brief affirmative responses, effective use of questions for clarification, reflecting back - repeating /confirming what the speaker has said.</i></p> <p><b>(j) strategies to support speech</b></p> <p><i>e.g. body language, facial expression, gestures, emphasis etc.</i></p>  |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>m) clearly convey feelings and opinions in a way that is balanced and assertive without being aggressive</li><li>n) use language appropriate to listeners and context</li></ul> |  |
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## C1.2 Reading

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>  | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>  |
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| <p><b>C1.2</b><br/>Read, understand and obtain information independently to meet purpose(s) from at least two different types of document.</p> | <p>a) identify the main points and ideas in documents and images<br/>           b) read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit purpose<br/>           c) recognise the purpose of a variety of documents<br/>           d) use organisational and structural features to locate information<br/>           e) obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required<br/>           f) find the meaning of words and phrases that have not been understood</p> | <p><b>different documents types</b><br/>           e.g. letters, articles, blogs, emails, web pages, online forum, reports, leaflets, brochures, text books.</p> <p><b>different text types</b><br/>           e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative.</p> <p><b>(a) strategies to identify main points</b><br/>           e.g. using organisational and structural features, skimming and scanning techniques.</p> <p><b>(c) purpose</b><br/>           There may be an overlap and/or difference between the text type and the purpose of the document. Teach ability to distinguish through vocabulary and structure.<br/>           e.g. structure and descriptive vocabulary <i>in a portfolio is to inform, while in an advertisement is to persuade.</i></p> <p><b>(a) (e) identify main points, specific detail and infer meaning</b><br/>  understand that some texts are structured around main points that are expanded or illustrated by specific detail</p> |

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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>understand that in some texts only main points are required, whereas others require careful reading</li><li>understand that images can be used to convey additional information to that in the text</li></ul> <p><b>(d) ability to use organisational and structural features</b><br/><i>e.g. subheadings, menus, paragraphs, contents pages, index.</i></p> <p><b>(f) finding meaning of words and phrases</b><br/>Teach ability to use glossaries, dictionaries and search engines to find meaning.</p> |
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## C1.3 Writing

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>  | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>   |
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| <p><b>C1.3</b></p> <p>Write two short documents to communicate information to familiar audiences using language that is appropriate to purpose and audience.</p> | <p>a) plan and draft writing</p> <p>b) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit purpose and audience</p> <p>c) make meaning clear</p> | <p><b>(a) planning</b></p> <p>Understand that planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● must take account of purpose, context and audience,</li> <li>● needs to be sufficiently clear to be used as the basis for drafting</li> </ul> <p>Know when planning and drafting are appropriate and when to write something straight off.</p> <p>Practise different techniques for planning <i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, bullet points.</i></p> <p><b>(b) different documents</b></p> <p><i>e.g. letters, articles, web pages, emails official notices, leaflets, brochures, essays, reports.</i></p> <p><b>(b) text types</b></p> <p><i>e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative.</i></p> <p><b>(c) (e) (f)</b> Understand that information is best presented so that the opening clearly signals the subject to the reader, points are</p> |

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|  | <p>d) construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences using appropriate conjunctions</p> <p>e) organise writing in paragraphs that demonstrate a logical sequence</p> <p>f) judge the relevance of information and the amount of detail to include for the purpose</p> <p>g) use language suitable for purpose and audience</p> <p>h) use relevant images, where appropriate, to help the reader understand main points</p> <p>i) spell correctly</p> | <p>organised in a logical order, it is clear how one point relates to another; the whole makes coherent sense.</p> <p><b>(d) sentences</b></p> <p>Understand that complete sentences should not just be strung together with commas to make longer ‘sentences’, but should be split into separate sentences or use conjunctions.</p> <p><b>(e) appropriate conjunctions</b></p> <p>Use a wide range of conjunctions to express precise meaning (not just ‘and’, ‘as’, ‘but’)<br/>e.g. <i>if, so, while, though, since, when.</i></p> <p><b>(e) paragraphs</b></p> <p>Teach paragraphs explicitly e.g. <i>WEE paragraph (What is the point? Explain what you mean, Example); Burger paragraphs (main idea at the top, meat in the middle, Wrap up sentence at the bottom).</i></p> <p>Title own paragraphs in a piece of writing to help learners establish whether their paragraphs have too many ideas or the point is not clear.</p> <p><b>(h) images</b></p> <p>understand that diagrams, sketches, drawings can be used alongside writing to make meaning clearer, e.g. <i>instructions, explanations.</i></p> <p><b>(i) spelling</b></p> <p>Correct spelling of words used most often in work, studies and daily life.</p> |
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|  | <p>j) use punctuation correctly</p> <p>k) use grammar correctly</p> <p>l) check and, where necessary, revise documents</p> | <p>Teach range of spelling methods and strategies <i>e.g. visual, phonetic, kinaesthetic, analogies and mnemonics, spelling rules, use of homophones.</i></p> <p><b>(j) punctuation:</b><br/>Correct use of capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks, apostrophes (for contractions), commas for lists.</p> <p><b>(k) grammar</b><br/>Practise writing complete sentences using correct grammar; subject-verb agreement, accuracy and consistency of tense.</p> <p><b>(l) proofreading</b><br/>Checking for meaning as well as spelling and that writing must communicate meaning clearly to the reader.<br/>Know and use techniques for proof reading to spot errors and omissions in grammar, punctuation and spelling.<br/><i>Suggested activities – use Error Analysis marking to scaffold independent proofreading.</i></p> <p><b>Legibility</b><br/>Electronically produced work should be of an appropriate font and size. Hand written work must be readable.</p> |
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## Essential Communication Skills specification - Level 2

The table below shows the skills learners will need to have in order to achieve the Essential Communication Skills qualification. These skills should be taught before learners complete the *Controlled Task* and *Confirmatory Test*. The 'guidance' in the third column supports the requirements of the first two columns.

### C2.1 Speaking and Listening

| Learning outcome:<br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>  | The learner needs to know how to:<br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>  | Practitioner/Assessor guidance<br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>   |
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| <p><b>C2.1</b></p> <p>A) Take part in formal discussions with two or more other people.</p> <p>B) Give a talk/presentation of at least four minutes to an audience of at least three people.</p> <p>C) Understand and respond to spoken language on</p> | <p>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</p> <p>b) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits purpose and situation</p> <p>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</p> | <p><b>(A) discussions face to face</b></p> <p>must provide opportunities for learners to respond to a range of views and take the lead in moving discussions forward .<br/><i>e.g. respond to and offer constructive criticism; provide evidence to support opinions and arguments; use appropriate phrases to change the direction of the discussion or refocus the purpose; develop points and open up new ideas; summarise what has been said; ensure there is an agreed/shared understanding.</i></p> <p><b>(b) images and other support materials</b></p> <p>Must be included in the presentation to aid understanding of the written or spoken words and cannot be wholly text based.</p> |

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| <p>different topics and in different contexts:</p> <p>D) Speak to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● feelings</li> <li>● opinions</li> <li>● questions</li> <li>● instructions</li> </ul> <p>on familiar and unfamiliar topics, using appropriate language and nonverbal communication</p> | <p>overassertive or aggressive or appearing to be ‘taking over’</p> <p>d) support opinions and arguments with evidence</p> <p>e) summarise information from reading and from other sources to suit purpose</p> <p>f) speak clearly in a way suitable for subject, purpose, audience and situation</p> <p>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</p> <p>h) use a variety of ways to support the main points of the talk/presentation</p> <p>i) Identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions on at least two topics and in at least two contexts</p> <p>j) respond constructively to criticism</p> | <p><b>images</b> <i>e.g. charts, diagrams, pictures, drawings, graphs</i></p> <p><b>other support material</b> <i>e.g. models, reflective jacket to demonstrate health and safety, piece of equipment to demonstrate its use, playing music to demonstrate musical style, providing food to help explain flavours.</i></p> <p><b>(C) contexts</b></p> <p>Can come from an educational setting workplace or everyday life.</p> <p><i>e.g. mock panel interview, workplace team meeting, meeting to plan an event.</i></p> <p>(d) (e) and (h)</p> <p>practise effective research and note taking skills to prepare for discussion and use factual information and knowledge to support views and arguments.</p> <p><b>(j) respond constructively</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understand that successful interaction involves people being able to deal with and offer criticism in constructive ways in order to agree the best solution.</li> <li>● Know and apply strategies for listening and speaking with care when exchanging opinions and judgements.</li> </ul> <p><b>(o) strategies to support speech</b></p> <p><i>e.g. body language, brief affirmative responses, asking questions to clarify points, repeating/confirming, facial expression, gestures, emphasis.</i></p> |
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|  | <p>k) clarify and confirm understanding</p> <p>l) identify the speaker's intentions</p> <p>m) use varied vocabulary and expressions to suit purpose</p> <p>n) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding</p> <p>o) use appropriate strategies including language and non-verbal communication to support speech</p> <p>p) confirm that listeners understand meaning</p> <p>q) use language and non-verbal communication appropriate to your listeners and the situation</p> | <p><b>strategies/skills development for talk/presentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● structuring talk/presentation to present information in a clear sequence including introduction, conclusion and cues to signal key points</li> <li>● using a style of language to suit the subject purpose of the talk</li> <li>● clear articulation</li> <li>● adapting volume, pitch and or pace to suit the situation/ number of listeners/ size of room/noise level</li> <li>● varying tone of voice to keep audience attention</li> <li>● taking account of nature/status of audience (level of formality)</li> </ul> |
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**C2.2 Reading**

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i> | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i> | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i> |
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| <b>C2.2</b><br>Read, understand and summarise information | a) use a variety of strategies to identify the main points, ideas and lines of  | <b>(a) different types</b>   |



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|  | <p>c) read and understand a wide range of vocabulary</p> <p>d) locate and understand information using organisational features</p> <p>e) find the meaning of words and phrases not understood, using reference materials</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the relevance of a text depends on the reader's purpose as well as the purpose of the text.</li> </ul> <p><b>(c) wide range of vocabulary</b></p> <p>Range includes technical vocabulary and recognising use of synonyms, similes, metaphors, idioms, clichés.</p> <p><b>Suggested activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Highlight unfamiliar words and use knowledge of word roots, word families, associated connotations and context to work out likely meanings of technical words</li> <li>● Read a formal text and recognise vocabulary associated with the subject and with the level of formality</li> </ul> <p><b>(d) organisational and structural features</b></p> <p><i>e.g. subheadings, menus, paragraphs, contents page or index.</i></p> <p>Teach skimming, scanning and reading in detail skills as strategies for locating information.</p> <p><b>(d) and (f)</b> Understand that different systems are used to organise whole texts.</p> <p><i>e.g. library systems, office filing systems, computer filing systems.</i></p> <p><b>(e) find meanings of words and phrases</b></p> <p>Practise using a range of sources <i>e.g. paper and electronic dictionaries, etymological, slang, contemporary usage dictionaries, glossaries and search engines.</i></p> |
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|  | <p>f) use different types of continuous documents to obtain relevant information</p> <p>g) read critically to evaluate information and to compare information, ideas and opinions from different sources</p> <p>h) summarise information from documents</p> | <p><b>(g) read critically</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● understand that information and presentation is rarely completely objective</li> <li>● information on the same topic from different sources may have different, even contradictory emphases</li> <li>● understand the concept of bias.</li> </ul> <p><b>(h) summarise</b></p> <p>Summarising involves expressing the essential points of something.<br/> <i>e.g. the main facts, ideas, arguments, opinions in a concise way</i></p> <p>Teach learners to summarise in order to help prepare for talk/presentation or to prepare and inform writing.</p> |
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## C2.3 Writing

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>  | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>  |
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| <p><b>C2.3</b><br/>Write documents that communicate different information to different audiences using language that is appropriate to purpose and audience.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) summarise information from reading and /or other sources to suit purpose</li> <li>b) plan and draft writing</li> <li>c) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit both purpose and audience</li> <li>d) make meaning clear</li> <li>e) construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions</li> <li>f) organise writing in paragraphs that help to make meaning clear</li> <li>g) structure writing to help readers follow and understand main points</li> <li>h) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence</li> </ul> | <p><b>(i)</b> See C2.2 Reading (h)<br/>Practise ability to distinguish what is relevant for writing purpose and present the essence of what has been read in a concise way.</p> <p><b>plan and draft writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organising information and thinking in note/diagram form.</li> <li>Identifying content and deciding optimum length</li> <li>choosing appropriate language and structure</li> </ul> <p>Practise different techniques for planning <i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, bullet points</i></p> <p><b>(b) different documents</b><br/><i>e.g. letters, articles, web pages, emails, official notices, leaflets, brochures, essays, reports.</i></p> <p><b>(b) text types</b><br/><i>e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative.</i></p> <p><b>(g) structure writing</b></p> |

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|  | <p>i) use different styles of writing including formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences</p> <p>j) spell correctly</p> <p>k) use punctuation correctly</p> <p>l) use grammar correctly</p> <p>m) check and, where necessary, revise document</p> | <p>Know how to organise written work in a logical and/or persuasive sequence using paragraphs and features such as headings and subheadings.</p> <p>Understand which format, structure and layout are best for which sort of task.</p> <p><i>e.g. table for information for reference/comparison, numbered points to separate stages in a process, paragraphs to develop an argument.</i></p> <p><b>(i) styles of writing</b></p> <p>Understand that style of writing includes choice of vocabulary, sentence length and how text is organised.</p> <p>Teach use of formal and informal language and how to judge the appropriate level of formality suitable for different types of writing tasks and contexts.</p> <p><i>e.g. letter to friend, letter of condolence, safety report for work.</i></p> <p><b>(j) spelling:</b></p> <p>Correct spelling of words used most often in work, studies and daily life including familiar technical words.</p> <p>Teach range of spelling methods and strategies <i>e.g. visual, phonetic, kinaesthetic, analogies and mnemonics, spelling rules, use of homophones, word roots, prefixes and suffixes.</i></p> <p>Segment words into parts to help learners understand that some polysyllabic words have unstressed vowel sounds <i>e.g. diff-er-ent, inter-est-ing, poison-ous.</i></p> |
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|  |  | <p><b>(k) punctuation</b> Correct use of all punctuation shown in Level 1 plus :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>commas</b> - correct use of commas for lists and clauses, apostrophes for contractions and clauses, inverted commas.</li> <li>● <b>apostrophes</b> -contractions <i>e.g. they're, we've</i> showing belonging <i>e.g. child's book</i>. Know when not to use an apostrophe <i>e.g. its and it's</i>.</li> <li>● <b>inverted commas</b> - for direct speech and to indicate quotations.</li> </ul> <p><b>(l) grammar</b> - Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● construct and effectively use simple, compound and complex sentences</li> <li>● check subject-verb agreement</li> <li>● use correct tense</li> <li>● use pronouns so that their meaning is clear. and understand how these link to the concept of first, second and third person, singular and plural and subject-verb agreement</li> </ul> <p><b>proofreading</b> - Teach proof reading skills – so that in addition to checking spelling, grammar and general meaning - proof-reading can identify unintended ambiguity, long-windedness, repetition.</p> <p><b>suggested activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● pair checking - exchange work with partner for proofreading,</li> <li>● proof read own work for different purposes e.g. spelling, then grammar, then missing words</li> </ul> |
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## Essential Communication Skills specification - Level 3

The table below shows the skills learners will need to have in order to achieve the Essential Communication Skills qualification. These skills should be taught before learners complete the *Controlled Task* and *Confirmatory Test*. The 'guidance' in the third column supports the requirements of the first two columns.

### C3.1 Listening

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>   | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>  |
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| <p><b>C3.1</b></p> <p>A) Take part in formal discussions with two or more other people.</p> <p>B) Give a talk/presentation of at least eight minutes to an audience of at least three people.</p> | <p>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</p> <p>b) take part in a group discussion to move the discussion and work towards agreement, where appropriate</p> <p>c) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits purpose and situation</p> | <p><b>(A) discussions</b></p> <p><b>face to face:</b></p> <p>Must provide opportunities for learners to respond to a range of views and sensibilities; show awareness/take account of others feelings, beliefs, opinions and take the lead in moving discussions forward encouraging others to contribute to work towards agreement<br/> <i>i.e. respond to and offer constructive criticism; provide evidence to support opinions and arguments; use appropriate phrases to change the direction of the discussion or refocus the purpose; develop points and open up new ideas; summarise what has been said; ensure there is an agreed/shared understanding, recognise when others want to speak and help them do so, contribute effectively to discussions.</i></p> |

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|  | <p>d) develop points and ideas with a sensitive awareness of others' feelings, beliefs and opinions</p> <p>e) use techniques and identify signals to contribute to the discussion and enable others to contribute</p> <p>f) summarise and synthesise complex information to suit purpose</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>i) use a variety of techniques to engage the audience, including using images and other material to support or enhance speech</p> | <p><b>(a) (f) complex information</b></p> <p><i>e.g. challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear</i></p> <p>The subject does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>(d) (e) and (h)</b></p> <p>practise effective research and note taking skills to prepare for discussion and use factual information and knowledge to support views and arguments.</p> <p><b>(f) synthesis</b></p> <p>Involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation.</p> <p><b>(i) Images and other support materials</b></p> <p>Must be included in the presentation to aid understanding of the written or spoken words and cannot be wholly text based.</p> <p>● <b>images:</b> <i>e.g. charts, diagrams, pictures, drawings, graphs.</i></p> <p>● <b>other support material</b> <i>e.g. models, reflective jacket to demonstrate health and safety, piece of equipment to demonstrate its use, playing music to demonstrate musical style, providing food to help explain flavours.</i></p> |
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|  | <p>j) identify relevant detail in complex spoken language</p> <p>k) understand and follow detailed explanations and complex instructions on a range of topics in familiar and less-familiar contexts</p> <p>l) respond appropriately to enquiries</p> <p>m) give and respond constructively to feedback, including criticism</p> <p>n) use strategies to show listening and to clarify and confirm understanding</p> <p>o) identify the speaker's intentions</p> | <p><b>(k) contexts</b><br/> Can come from an educational setting workplace or everyday life.<br/> <i>e.g. mock panel interview, workplace team meeting, meeting to plan an event</i></p> <p>Provide learners with a variety of contexts to support development of transferable skills.</p> <p><b>(k) complex instructions</b><br/> One that involves communicating a multi-stage sequential process.</p> <p><b>(m) respond constructively</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that successful co-operation involves people being able to deal with and offer criticism in constructive ways in order to agree the best solution</li> <li>• Know and apply strategies for listening and speaking with care when exchanging opinions and judgements</li> </ul> <p><b>(s) strategies to support speech</b><br/> <i>e.g. body language, brief affirmative responses, asking questions to clarify points, repeating/confirming, facial expression, gestures, emphasis</i></p> <p><b>(p)</b> Widen learner vocabulary especially technical language specific to context; encourage use in talks/presentation.</p> <p><b>(q)</b> Teach awareness of audience understanding – practise skills in explaining/ simplifying/adding detail.</p> <p><b>strategies to support understanding for talk/presentation</b></p> |
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|  | <p>p) use appropriate varied and specialist vocabulary and expressions to suit topics, purposes and situations</p> <p>q) confirm that listeners understand meaning</p> <p>r) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding</p> <p>s) use appropriate strategies, including language and non-verbal communication to support speech</p> <p>t) adapt language and speech to suit different subjects, purposes and situations</p> | <p><i>e.g. structuring talk/presentation to present information in a clear sequence including introduction, conclusion and cues to signal key points; using a style of language to suit the subject purpose of the talk</i></p> <p><i>clear articulation; adapting volume, pitch and/or pace to suit the situation (number of listeners/size of room/noise level; varying tone of voice to keep audience attention.</i></p> <p>Taking account of nature/status of audience (level of formality)</p> |
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## C3.2 Reading

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>  | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>   |
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| <p><b>C3.2</b></p> <p>Read, understand and synthesise information from different documents about the same subject.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) read and understand specialist and complex vocabulary</li> <li>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</li> <li>c) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit</li> <li>d) locate and understand information using organisational features</li> <li>e) find the meaning of words and phrases not understood using reference materials</li> <li>f) read critically to compare and evaluate accounts and recognise opinion and possible bias</li> </ul> | <p><b>documents:</b><br/>Prepare learners so that they are able to read and select information to use in talks/discussions, from documents of at least 1,000 words communicating complex information or reasoning and containing images.</p> <p><b>(b) main points</b><br/>Teach critical reading so that learners can follow a sequence of information or ideas and know how to identify points of view when reading an argument. Use a wide range of documents that give learners opportunities to practise looking for hidden/implicit meanings.</p> <p><b>(b) purpose and intentions</b><br/>Practise identifying the purpose of texts (<i>e.g. to inform, to persuade</i>) by use of vocabulary and structure in order to make judgements about its relevance.</p> <p><b>(d) organisational and structural features</b><br/><i>e.g. subheadings, menus, paragraphs, contents page or index</i><br/>Practise skimming, scanning and reading in detail skills as strategies for locating information</p> <p><b>(g) select and explore</b></p> |

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|  | <p>g) Select and explore a range of documents to obtain relevant information</p> <p>h) Explore and understand complex information and lines of reasoning in documents</p> <p>i) Synthesise information from documents</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teach strategies for efficiently identifying a range of relevant information (e.g. reference books, textbooks, manuals, newspapers web-based information)</li> <li>● Embed digital literacy skills in carrying out searches to find information (DLL 2.3 and 3.3)</li> </ul> <p><b>(h) complex information</b><br/> <i>e.g. challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language,, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear.</i></p> <p>The subject does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>(i) synthesis</b><br/> Involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation. Practise synthesizing information in order to prepare for talks/discussions or to inform writing.</p> |
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## C3.3 Writing

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>   | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>  |
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| <p><b>C3.3</b></p> <p>Write documents of different types communicating different complex information, using language and formats that are appropriate both to purpose and audience.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) plan and draft writing</li> <li>b) select and use formats, styles and techniques of writing that are appropriate to communicating purpose and the complexity of the subject matter to the audience</li> <li>c) organise material coherently to suit the length, complexity and purpose of the document</li> <li>d) use an appropriate style and tone to suit the audience, the degree of formality required and the nature of the subject</li> <li>e) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence</li> <li>f) make meaning clear</li> <li>g) spell correctly</li> <li>h) use punctuation correctly</li> <li>i) use grammar correctly</li> </ul> | <p><b>Documents</b></p> <p>Prepare learners so that they are able to write a variety of different types of documents of at least 1000 words in length.</p> <p><i>e.g. letters, articles, web pages, emails, official notices, leaflets, brochures, essays, reports.</i></p> <p><b>complex information</b></p> <p><i>e.g. challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language,, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear.</i></p> <p>The subject does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>writing techniques</b></p> <p><i>e.g. alliteration, analogy, diction, hyperbole, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification, simile</i></p> <p><b>(a) plan and draft writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organising information and thinking in note/diagram form</li> <li>identifying content and deciding optimum length</li> <li>choosing appropriate language and structure</li> </ul> |



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|  | <p>j) check and, where necessary, revise documents</p> | <p>practise different techniques for planning <i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, bullet points</i></p> <p><b>(b) select and use formats</b><br/>Provide experience of choosing appropriate format through consideration of document type, text type and purpose.</p> <p><b>(b) text types</b><br/><i>e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative.</i></p> <p><b>(d) and (e) synthesis</b><br/>Teach learners how to assess and sort facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation.<br/><br/>Practise ability to distinguish what is relevant for writing purpose linking the essence of what has been read together with own opinions in a concise way.</p> <p><b>(g) style, structure and tone of writing</b><br/>Further develop writing skills so that learners are able to use appropriate language <i>e.g. persuasive techniques, technical vocabulary and evidence to clearly articulate a sustained, reasoned argument.</i></p> <p><b>(j) spelling, punctuation and grammar</b><br/>Continue to develop spelling skills; ensure that learners are able to spell accurately and correctly use punctuation and grammar as identified in previous levels and to support the purpose of their writing.</p> |
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|  |  | <p>Develop sentence construction skills so that learners can communicate complex information effectively <i>e.g. writing in complex sentences and using subordinate clauses.</i></p> <p>Develop punctuation skills so that learner are able to support communication of complex subject matter with correct use of all punctuation shown in Level 2 and additional punctuation e.g. use of colons and semi-colons.</p> <p><b>proofreading</b><br/>Practise and develop proof reading skills - that in addition to checking spelling, grammar and general meaning, proof-reading can identify unintended ambiguity, long-windedness, repetition.</p> |
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# Essential Communication Skills

## Learner Guidance

## Essential Communication Skills – Level 1

### Learner Guidance

The table below shows the skills you will need to have in order to achieve the Essential Communication Skills qualification. You and your tutor / assessor should be confident that you can do all of these things before you complete the *Controlled Task* and *Confirmatory Test*.

#### C1.1 Speaking and Listening

| <b>Learning outcome</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>                | <b>You need to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills needed)</i>  | <b>Learner guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on the skills you need)</i>   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>C1.1</b><br>Take part in formal discussions with two or more people. | Understand and respond to spoken language in different contexts:<br>a) prepare for discussions in order to say things and provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion<br>b) make clear and relevant contributions to discussions<br>c) respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussion<br>d) use appropriate phrases or gestures in order to join in the discussion<br>e) identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions in at least two different contexts | <b>discussions</b><br>You will be asked to talk and respond to a range of views and beliefs with two or more people. This will be mostly face-to-face.<br><i>e.g. mock panel interview, workplace team meeting, a meeting to plan an upcoming event, a discussion on the role of a literary character.</i><br><br><b>planning</b><br>You need to show that you have planned and prepared for the discussion <i>e.g. brief notes, flow</i> |

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|  | <p>f) pay close attention and respond constructively to what others say</p> <p>g) clarify and confirm understanding</p>   | <p><i>charts, spider diagrams, annotated research, a bullet pointed list.</i></p> <p><b>respond constructively</b></p> <p>You do not have to accept everything that other people say but you must be able to explain why you agree or disagree respectfully.</p>  |
| <p>Speak to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● feelings</li> <li>● opinions</li> <li>● questions</li> </ul> <p>on familiar topics using appropriate language and in two or more contexts</p> | <p>h) judge when to speak and how much to say</p> <p>i) clearly express statements of fact, opinion, questions, explanations and descriptions of familiar topics as appropriate</p> <p>j) use strategies to support speech</p> <p>k) present information and ideas in a logical sequence so that it is easy for listeners to follow and understand</p> <p>l) respond to questions about familiar topics</p> <p>m) clearly convey feelings and opinions in a way that is balanced and assertive without being aggressive</p> <p>n) use language appropriate to listeners and context</p> | <p><b>strategies to show that you are listening and understanding</b> <i>e.g. body language, nodding or saying 'yes', asking questions that help you to understand, repeating/confirming what the speaker has said etc.</i></p> <p><b>strategies to support what you are saying</b> <i>e.g.: body language, smiling or frowning, gestures, using different tone and volume etc.</i></p> |

## C1.2 Reading

| <b>Learning outcome</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>  | <b>You need to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills needed)</i>  | <b>Learner guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on the skills you need)</i>  |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>C1.2</b></p> <p>Read, understand and obtain information independently to meet purpose(s) from at least two different types of document.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) identify the main points and ideas in documents and images</li> <li>b) read and understand relevant key words and phrases to suit purpose</li> <li>c) recognise the purpose of a variety of documents</li> <li>d) use organisational and structural features to locate information</li> <li>e) obtain information from text and images, including inferring meaning that is not explicit in the document, if required</li> <li>f) find the meaning of words and phrases that have not been understood</li> </ul> | <p><b>different documents:</b></p> <p>These may be different document types <i>e.g. letters articles blogs, emails, web page, online forum, report, leaflet, brochure, text book</i></p> <p>or different text types <i>e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative</i></p> <p><b>identifying the main points</b></p> <p><i>e.g. using headings and titles, using skimming skills to find out what the document is about; using scanning skills to find specific information.</i></p> <p><b>recognising the purpose of the document;</b></p> <p>Text types may be the same in documents with different purposes <i>e.g. a description in a guidebook is to inform, but a description in an advert is to persuade.</i></p> <p><b>organisational and structural features:</b> These can help you to locate information <i>e.g. subheadings, menus, paragraphs, contents page or index.</i></p> |

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|  |  | <p><b>inferring meaning:</b> You need to be able to see what a writer means, even when this is not made clear in the text.</p> <p><b>finding the meanings of words</b></p> <p>You could use a dictionary or an online search engine or a glossary.</p> |
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## C1.3 Writing

| <b>Learning outcome</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>   | <b>You need to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills needed)</i>  | <b>Learner guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on the skills you need)</i>   |
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| <p><b>C1.3</b></p> <p>Write two short documents to communicate information to familiar audiences using language that is appropriate to purpose and audience.</p> | <p>a) plan and draft writing</p> <p>b) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit purpose and audience</p> <p>c) make meaning clear</p> <p>d) construct sentences accurately, including compound sentences using appropriate conjunctions</p> <p>e) organise writing in paragraphs that demonstrate a logical sequence</p> <p>f) judge the relevance of information and the amount of detail to include for the purpose</p> <p>g) use language suitable for purpose and audience</p> | <p><b>Plan</b></p> <p><i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, a bullet pointed list or anything that shows that you have planned and prepared before writing.</i></p> <p><b>draft</b></p> <p>Your first attempts at writing after the planning stage. You might hand write this or type it. Your first version might include notes showing where changes need to be made.</p> <p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p><i>e.g. To</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● explain e.g steps needed to complete a task such as how to change a wheel or directions to get somewhere</li> <li>● instruct e.g. fire evacuation procedures, how to prepare a meal, how to make something</li> <li>● narrate e.g. giving an account of an accident or a night out</li> <li>● describe e.g. a place, a book, a person</li> <li>● persuade e.g. a friend to go to an event with you; an advert to sell something</li> <li>● inform - writing to tell someone what is happening <i>e.g. details of an event.</i></li> </ul> |



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|  | <p>h) use relevant images, where appropriate, to help the reader understand main points</p> <p>i) spell correctly</p> <p>j) use punctuation correctly</p> <p>k) use grammar correctly</p> <p>l) check and, where necessary, revise documents</p> | <p><b>(c) sentences</b><br/> You must write complete sentences and be able to use a variety of conjunctions <i>e.g. but, if, so, while, though, since, when.</i></p> <p><b>(e) paragraphs</b><br/> Your writing needs to be divided into paragraphs that help your reader to understand what you are trying to say. Each paragraph needs to start with an introductory sentence, followed by sentences giving more detail and leading into the next paragraph.</p> <p><b>(i) spelling</b><br/> You need to be able to spell the words that you use most often in your work, studies and your daily life.</p> <p><b>(j)punctuation:</b><br/> You need to use capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks correctly. You also need to know how to use apostrophes to shorten words <i>e.g. didn't, I'm, we're;</i> and to use commas in lists <i>e.g. 'with chips, carrots and peas'.</i></p> <p><b>(k) grammar</b><br/> You need to be able to write using correct grammar; including tense and subject-verb agreement, <i>e.g. 'Pete and Allie were going to town but Chris was going to the cinema'.</i></p> |
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## Essential Communication Skills - Level 2

The table below shows the skills you will need to have in order to achieve the Essential Communication Skills qualification. You and your tutor / assessor should be confident that you can do all of these things before you complete the *Controlled Task* and *Confirmatory Test*.

### C2.1 Speaking and Listening

| Learning outcome<br>(ECommS Specification)   | You need to know how to:<br>(skills needed)   | Learner guidance<br>(guidance on the skills you need)  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>C2.1</b></p> <p>A) Take part in formal discussions with two or more other people.</p> <p>B) Give a talk/presentation of at least four minutes to an audience of at least three people.</p> | <p>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</p> <p>b) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits purpose and situation</p> <p>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 overassertive or aggressive or appearing to be 'taking over'</p> <p>d) support opinions and arguments with evidence</p> | <p><b>discussions</b></p> <p>You will be asked to talk and respond to a range of views and beliefs with two or more people. This will be mostly face-to-face e.g. <i>mock panel interview, workplace team meeting, a meeting to plan an upcoming event, a discussion on the role of a literary character</i></p> <p><b>(C) contexts</b></p> <p>This might be an educational setting in the workplace or everyday life e.g. <i>mock panel interview, workplace team meeting, meeting to plan an event</i></p> |

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| <p>C) Understand and respond to spoken language on different topics and in different contexts:</p> <p>D) Speak to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● information</li> <li>● feelings</li> <li>● opinions</li> <li>● questions</li> <li>● instructions</li> </ul> <p>on familiar and unfamiliar topics, using appropriate language and nonverbal communication</p> | <p>e) summarise information from reading and from other sources to suit purpose</p> <p>f) speak clearly in a way suitable for subject, purpose, audience and situation</p> <p>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</p> <p>h) use a variety of ways to support the main points of the talk/presentation</p> <p>i) Identify relevant detail and information in explanations, instructions and discussions on at least two topics and in at least two contexts</p> <p>j) respond constructively to criticism</p> <p>k) clarify and confirm understanding</p> <p>l) identify the speaker's intentions</p> <p>m) use varied vocabulary and expressions to suit purpose</p> <p>n) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding</p> <p>o) use appropriate strategies including language and non-verbal communication to support speech</p> <p>p) confirm that listeners understand meaning</p> | <p><b>planning</b> -You need to show that you have planned and prepared for the discussion e.g. <i>brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, annotated research, a bullet pointed list.</i></p> <p><b>(b) images and other support materials</b></p> <p>You need to include these in your presentation to help your listeners to understand your message. You need to use other support material as well as images to do this.</p> <p><b>images</b> e.g. <i>charts, diagrams, pictures, drawings, graphs</i></p> <p><b>other support material;</b> e.g. <i>models, reflective jacket to demonstrate health and safety, piece of equipment to demonstrate its use, playing music to demonstrate musical style, providing food to help explain flavours</i></p> <p>(e) You need use factual information and knowledge to support views and arguments.</p> <p>Practise your research and note taking skills to prepare for discussions.</p> <p>(f) This includes choosing the right language (formal/informal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● speaking clearly</li> <li>● getting the volume, pitch and or pace right for the number of listeners/ size of room/noise level</li> </ul> |
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|  | <p>q) use language and non-verbal communication appropriate to your listeners and the situation</p> | <p>• varying your tone of voice to keep your audience interested</p> <p>(g) You need to make sure that you present information in a clear sequence including introduction, conclusion and cues to signal key points.</p> <p>(j) <b>respond constructively</b><br/> You need to be able to deal with and offer criticism in constructive ways in order to agree the best solution.</p> <p>(o) Strategies to show that you are listening and understanding <i>e.g. body language, nodding or saying 'yes', asking questions that help you to understand, repeating/confirming what the speaker has said etc.</i></p> <p>Strategies to support what you are saying <i>e.g. body language, smiling or frowning, gestures, using different tone and volume etc.</i></p> |
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|  | <p>c) read and understand a wide range of vocabulary</p> <p>d) locate and understand information using organisational features</p> <p>e) find the meaning of words and phrases not understood, using reference materials</p> <p>f) use different types of continuous documents to obtain relevant information</p> <p>g) read critically to evaluate information and to compare information, ideas and opinions from different sources</p> <p>h) summarise information from documents</p> | <p>Some texts may have more than one purpose or have hidden purposes.</p> <p><b>inferring meaning</b> You need to be able to see what a writer means, even when this is not made clear in the text.</p> <p><b>organisational and structural features</b> These can help you to locate information <i>e.g. subheadings, menus, paragraphs, contents page or index.</i></p> <p><b>finding the meanings of words</b> <i>e.g. paper and electronic dictionaries, etymological, slang, contemporary usage dictionaries, glossaries and search engines.</i></p> <p><b>read critically</b></p> <p>Most writing is written from the point of view of the writer; you may read information on the same topic but find that it says very different things. Not all information is true, you need to be able to identify whether what you are reading is biased <i>e.g. information about fox hunting from different viewpoints.</i></p> <p><b>summarising</b> involves getting the essential points of something <i>e.g. the main facts, ideas, arguments opinions, in a concise way.</i></p> <p>The purpose of your reading could be to help you to prepare for your talk/presentation or for your</p> |
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|  |  | <p>writing. Your talk, presentation or writing will show how well you can summarise.</p> <p>Practise ability to distinguish what is relevant for writing purpose and present the essence of what has been read in a concise way.</p> |
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## C2.3 Writing

| <b>Learning outcome</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>  | <b>You need to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills needed)</i>   | <b>Learner guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on the skills you need)</i>  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>C2.3</b></p> <p>Write documents that communicate different information to different audiences using language that is appropriate to purpose and audience.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) summarise information from reading and /or other sources to suit purpose</li> <li>b) plan and draft writing</li> <li>c) present relevant information, ideas and opinions in document types that suit both purpose and audience</li> <li>d) make meaning clear</li> <li>e) construct complex sentences using a variety of appropriate conjunctions</li> <li>f) organise writing in paragraphs that help to make meaning clear</li> <li>g) structure writing to help readers follow and understand main points</li> <li>h) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence</li> <li>i) use different styles of writing including formal and informal language to suit different purposes and audiences</li> <li>j) spell correctly</li> </ul> | <p><b>purpose</b></p> <p><i>e.g.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● explain <i>e.g.</i> steps needed to complete a task such as how to change a wheel or directions to get somewhere</li> <li>● instruct <i>e.g.</i> fire evacuation procedures, how to prepare a meal, how to make something</li> <li>● narrate <i>e.g.</i> giving an account of an accident or a night out</li> <li>● describe <i>e.g.</i> a place, a book, a person</li> <li>● persuade <i>e.g.</i> a friend to go to an event with you; an advert to sell something</li> <li>● inform - writing to tell someone what is happening <i>e.g.</i> details of an event.</li> </ul> <p><b>plan</b></p> <p><i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, a bullet pointed list or anything that shows that you have planned and prepared before writing.</i></p> |



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|  | <p>k) use punctuation correctly</p> <p>l) use grammar correctly</p> <p>m) check and, where necessary, revise document</p> | <p><b>draft</b></p> <p>Your first attempts at writing after the planning stage. You might hand write this or type it. Your first version might include notes showing where changes need to be made.</p> <p><b>(c) different documents</b></p> <p><i>e.g. letters, articles, web pages, emails official notices, leaflets, brochures, essays, reports.</i></p> <p><b>(c) text types</b></p> <p><i>e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative.</i></p> <p>This includes organising your written work in a logical and/or persuasive sequence, using paragraphs and features such as headings and subheading and understanding which format, structure and layout are best for which sort of task.</p> <p><i>e.g. table for information for reference/comparison, numbered points to separate stages in a process, paragraphs to develop an argument</i></p> <p><b>(i) style of writing</b></p> <p>Your style of writing includes choice of vocabulary, sentence length and how text is organised.</p> <p><b>(j) spell correctly</b></p> |
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This includes correct spelling of words used most often in work, studies and daily life including familiar technical words.

**(j) use punctuation**

You must be able to use

- capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks correctly.
- apostrophes to shorten words e.g. didn't, I'm, we're; and to show belonging e.g. child's book
- commas for lists and clauses
- inverted commas for direct speech and quotations for lists and clauses

You need to know when not to use an apostrophe  
*e.g. its and it's*

**(l) grammar**

You must be able to

- construct and effectively use simple, compound and complex sentences
- check subject-verb agreement
- use correct tense
- Use pronouns so that their meaning is clear
- Understand how these link to the concept of first, second and third person, singular and plural and subject-verb agreement

**(m) check and revise document**

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|  |  | As well as checking spelling, grammar and general meaning, proof-reading will help you to identify when your writing is not clear, too long or when you have repeated yourself. |
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## Essential Communication Skills - Level 3

The table below shows the skills you will need to have in order to achieve the Essential Communication Skills qualification. You and your tutor / assessor should be confident that you can do all of these things before you complete the *Controlled Task* and *Confirmatory Test*.

### C3.1 Speaking and Listening

| Learning outcome<br>(ECommS Specification)  | You need to know how to:<br>(skills needed)   | Learner guidance<br>(guidance on the skills you need)   |
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| <p><b>C3.1</b></p> <p>A) Take part in formal discussions with two or more other people.</p> <p>B) Give a talk/presentation of at least eight minutes to an audience of at least three people.</p> | <p>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</p> <p>b) take part in a group discussion to move the discussion and work towards agreement, where appropriate</p> <p>c) make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits purpose and situation</p> <p>d) develop points and ideas with a sensitive awareness of others' feelings, beliefs and opinions</p> <p>e) use techniques and identify signals to contribute to the discussion and enable others to contribute</p> | <p><b>A) discussions</b></p> <p>must provide opportunities for you to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● respond to a range of views and sensibilities</li> <li>● show awareness/take account of others feelings, beliefs, opinions</li> <li>● take the lead in moving discussions forward encouraging others to contribute to work towards agreement</li> </ul> <p><i>i.e. respond to and offer constructive criticism; provide evidence to support opinions and arguments; use appropriate phrases to change the direction of the discussion or refocus the purpose; develop points and open up new ideas; summarise what has been said; ensure there is an agreed/shared understanding, recognise when</i></p> |

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|  | <p>f) summarise and synthesise complex information to suit purpose</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>i) use a variety of techniques to engage the audience, including using images and other material to support or enhance speech</p> <p>j) identify relevant detail in complex spoken language</p> <p>k) understand and follow detailed explanations and complex instructions on a range of topics in familiar and less-familiar contexts</p> <p>l) respond appropriately to enquiries</p> | <p><i>others want to speak and help them do so, contribute effectively to discussions.</i></p> <p><b>complex information</b></p> <p><i>e.g. challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language,, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear.</i></p> <p>The subject does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>summarise</b> - getting the essential points of something <i>e.g the main facts, ideas, arguments opinions, in a concise way.</i></p> <p><b>synthesise</b> - assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation.</p> <p>This includes choosing the right language (formal/informal);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● speaking clearly</li> <li>● getting the volume, pitch and or pace right for the number of listeners/ size of room/noise level</li> <li>● varying your tone of voice to keep your audience interested</li> </ul> <p>You need to make sure that you present information in a clear sequence including introduction, conclusion and cues to signal key points.</p> |
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|  | <p>m) give and respond constructively to feedback, including criticism</p> <p>n) use strategies to show listening and to clarify and confirm understanding</p> <p>o) identify the speaker's intentions</p> <p>p) use appropriate varied and specialist vocabulary and expressions to suit topics, purposes and situations</p> <p>q) confirm that listeners understand meaning</p> <p>r) provide further detail and development to clarify or confirm understanding</p> <p>s) use appropriate strategies, including language and non-verbal communication to support speech</p> <p>t) adapt language and speech to suit different subjects, purposes and situations</p> | <p><b>(i) images and other support materials</b></p> <p>Must be included in the presentation to aid understanding of the written or spoken words and cannot be wholly text based.</p> <p><b>images:</b> <i>e.g. charts, diagrams, pictures, drawings, graphs</i></p> <p><b>other support material</b> <i>e.g. models, reflective jacket to demonstrate health and safety, piece of equipment to demonstrate its use, playing music to demonstrate musical style, providing food to help explain flavours.</i></p> <p><b>(k) complex instructions</b> – involves communicating a multi-stage sequential process.</p> <p><b>(m) respond constructively</b></p> <p>You do not have to accept everything other people say. However, you must be able to explain why you agree, disagree or reject a point of criticism.</p> <p><b>(n)</b> You need to know and apply strategies for listening and speaking with care when exchanging opinions and judgements.</p> <p><b>strategies to show you are listening and understanding</b> <i>e.g. body language, nodding or saying 'yes', asking questions that help you to understand, repeating/confirming what the speaker has said etc.</i></p> |
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(p) Develop your vocabulary, especially technical language specific to your vocational area. Practise using these words in preparation for your talk/presentation.

(q) Be aware of audience understanding – practise your skills in explaining/ simplifying/adding detail.

**strategies to support understanding for talk/presentation**

*e.g. structuring talk/presentation to present information in a clear sequence including introduction, conclusion and cues to signal key points*

**(s) strategies to support speech**

*e.g. body language, brief affirmative responses, asking questions to clarify points, repeating/confirming, facial expression, gestures, emphasis.*

- using a style of language to suit the subject purpose of the talk
- clear articulation
- adapting volume, pitch and/or pace to suit the situation (number of listeners/ size of room/noise level
- varying tone of voice to keep audience attention
- taking account of nature/status of audience (level of formality)

## C3.2 Reading

| <b>Learning outcome</b><br><i>(ECommS Specification)</i>  | <b>You need to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills needed)</i>   | <b>Learner guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on the skills you need)</i>  |
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| <p><b>C3.2</b><br/>Read, understand and synthesise information from different documents about the same subject.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) read and understand specialist and complex vocabulary</li> <li>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</li> <li>c) recognise the writer's purpose and intentions, including where they are implicit</li> <li>d) locate and understand information using organisational features</li> <li>e) find the meaning of words and phrases not understood using reference materials</li> <li>f) read critically to compare and evaluate accounts and recognise opinion and possible bias</li> <li>g) Select and explore a range of documents to obtain relevant information</li> <li>h) Explore and understand complex information and lines of reasoning in documents</li> </ul> | <p><b>documents:</b><br/>You need to be able to read and select information to use in talks/discussions, from documents of at least 1,000 words communicating complex information or reasoning and containing images.</p> <p>(b) <b>main points</b><br/>You must be able to read critically when you are following a sequence of information or ideas and know how to identify points of view when reading an argument.</p> <p>(c) <b>purpose and intentions</b><br/>Practise identifying the purpose of texts (<i>e.g. to inform, to persuade</i>) by use of vocabulary and structure in order to make judgements about its relevance.</p> <p><b>inference</b> You must be able to understand what a writer means, even when this is not implicit.</p> <p>(d) <b>organisational and structural features</b></p> |



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|  | <p>i) Synthesise information from documents</p> | <p><i>e.g. subheadings, menus, paragraphs, contents page or index</i></p> <p>Practise skimming, scanning and reading in detail skills as strategies for locating information.</p> <p><b>(e) finding the meanings of words:</b></p> <p><i>e.g. paper and electronic dictionaries, etymological, slang, contemporary usage dictionaries, glossaries and search engines</i></p> <p><b>(f) read critically</b></p> <p>Most writing is written from the point of view of the writer; you may read information on the same topic but find that it says very different things. You must be able to identify whether what you are reading is biased .<i>e.g. information about fox hunting from different viewpoints</i></p> <p><b>(g) and (h) select and explore</b> <i>e.g. reference books, textbooks, manuals, newspapers web-based information)</i></p> <p>Use your digital literacy skills in carrying out searches to find information (DLL 2.3 and 3.3)</p> <p><b>(h) complex information</b> - <i>e.g. challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language, deal with abstract or</i></p> |
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|  |  | <p><i>sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear</i></p> <p>The subject does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled</p> <p>(i) <b>synthesis</b><br/>Involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation. Practise synthesizing information in order to prepare for talks/discussions or to inform writing.</p> |
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## C3.3 Writing

| <b>Learning outcome:</b><br><i>(ECommS specification)</i>   | <b>The learner needs to know how to:</b><br><i>(skills to be taught in preparation for Task and Test Assessments)</i>   | <b>Practitioner/Assessor guidance</b><br><i>(guidance on skills development)</i>   |
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| <p><b>C3.3</b></p> <p>Write documents of different types communicating different complex information, using language and formats that are appropriate both to purpose and audience.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) plan and draft writing</li> <li>b) select and use formats, styles and techniques of writing that are appropriate to communicating purpose and the complexity of the subject matter to the audience</li> <li>c) organise material coherently to suit the length, complexity and purpose of the document</li> <li>d) use an appropriate style and tone to suit the audience, the degree of formality required and the nature of the subject</li> <li>e) present information and ideas in a logical or persuasive sequence</li> <li>f) make meaning clear</li> <li>g) spell correctly</li> <li>h) use punctuation correctly</li> <li>i) use grammar correctly</li> </ul> | <p><b>Documents</b></p> <p>You must be able to write a variety of different types of documents of at least 1000 words in length - <i>e.g. letters, articles, web pages, emails official notices, leaflets, brochures, essays, reports.</i></p> <p><b>complex information</b></p> <p><i>e.g. challenging in terms of the ideas it presents, have multiple strands, contain specialist language, deal with abstract or sensitive issues, or include lines of reasoning that are not immediately clear.</i></p> <p>The subject does not need to be complex; rather it is the way it is handled.</p> <p><b>writing techniques</b></p> <p><i>e.g. alliteration, analogy, diction, hyperbole, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification, simile</i></p> <p><b>(a) plan and draft writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organising information and thinking in note/diagram form</li> <li>• identifying content and deciding optimum length</li> </ul> <p><i>e.g. brief notes, flow charts, spider diagrams, bullet points</i></p> |

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|  | <p>j) check and, where necessary, revise documents</p> | <p>You must be able to decide on the appropriate format for your writing. This will involve considering document type, text type and purpose.</p> <p><b>different documents</b> <i>e.g. letters, articles, web pages, emails official notices, leaflets, brochures, essays, reports</i></p> <p><b>text types</b> <i>e.g. explanatory, instructive, narrative, descriptive, persuasive, informative</i></p> <p><b>synthesis</b> involves assessing and sorting facts, opinions and ideas from a range of sources and bringing them together to present a consistent and coherent interpretation</p> <p>(b) <b>style, structure and tone of writing</b> <i>e.g. persuasive techniques, technical vocabulary and evidence to clearly articulate a sustained, reasoned argument.</i></p> <p>(h) i) (j) <b>spelling, punctuation and grammar</b></p> <p>You need to be able to spell accurately and correctly use punctuation and grammar as identified in previous levels and to support the purpose of your writing.</p> <p>You must be able to communicate complex information effectively <i>e.g. writing in complex sentences and using subordinate clauses.</i></p> <p>You must be able to use punctuation skills to support communication of complex subject matter. This includes correct use of all punctuation shown in Level 2 and additional punctuation <i>e.g. use of colons and semi-colons .</i></p> <p><b>proofreading</b> - in addition to checking spelling, grammar and general meaning, proof-reading can identify unintended ambiguity, long-windedness, repetition</p> |
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|  |  | If needed your writing should include correct and consistent referencing of sources that you have used. |
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