



**Rt Hon Anne Milton MP**  
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3rd December 2018

Dear Sally

I last wrote to you in August 2017 about our commitment to the Functional Skills reform programme and the introduction of these improved English and mathematics qualifications for first teaching in September 2019. We have made good progress to date and I would like to thank Ofqual for your continued work in keeping the programme on track.

I am specifically writing to you now to advise you of the work policy officials, in collaboration with Ofqual colleagues, have undertaken to determine the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) appropriate for the reformed qualifications. The current Functional Skill Qualifications are assigned 45 GLH.

It is generally the role of the Awarding Organisations to set the GLH of their qualifications. The history of the reform programme, however, was such that it was acknowledged early on that the reformed qualifications were likely to attract an increase in teaching time and that this work would be guided by DfE.

Mapping exercises, comparing the subject content between the current and reformed Functional Skills Qualifications, undertaken internally by policy officials and externally by Awarding Organisations conclude that there is indeed additional content, albeit the differences vary according to subject and level. Additionally we have concluded through workshops with Ofqual, ESFA and awarding organisations that the underpinning skills required have been enhanced with the introduction of assessment without the use of a calculator in mathematics or a dictionary and spell checker in English.

As a result I have agreed that the GLH for reformed Functional Skills Qualifications should be increased to 55. I have asked officials to work with Ofqual to set the increased GLH as part of Ofqual's requirements.

Best  
Anne

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