Federation of Awarding Bodies

Functional Skills

Quality and Assessment

11 July 2012

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Where we have come from

- Portfolio internal assessment with external moderation/verification
- Key Skills mastery test
- Embedded delivery
- Assessment of skills in context

- Functional skills presents new challenges but many issues are the same

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What we are dealing with now

- At Entry level assessment and quality assurance much the same as before
- At Levels 1and 2 external assessment is new
- Needs to be seen within the general Government focus on Level 2 achievement
- Open response questions pose a particular challenge
- The assessment needs to be context-free
- External assessment is a new development for a number of vocational qualification awarding bodies

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Lessons from the past

- Management support is often the critical success factor
- Conveying the importance of functional skills at induction
- Matching this in the learning programme
- Initial assessment of learners is crucial
- Contextualisation/embedding is key to learner engagement
- Do not put learners in for the test too early
- Vocational lecturers/trainers may not be good English and maths teachers
- English and maths teachers may not be able to embed

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The new challenges

- Learners need to have the underpinning skills
- Functional skills assesses the application of these skills
- The assessment is context free
- Preparing assessments that are suitable across the range of learners
- Developing on-line assessments for Level 1 and 2
- The logistics of paper-based tests
- The need for specialist teacher qualifications

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Any Questions?

www.awarding.org.uk

Jill.lanning@awarding.org.uk