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**FUNCTIONAL SKILLS**

English Level 1



**Area: Writing**

Criterion:19. Use a range of punctuation correctly (e.g. full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, possessive apostrophes)

**Capital letters**

**Capital letter should be used:**

* at the start of a sentence - ‘This shows that it is a new sentence.’
* for proper nouns, such as ‘Birmingham’, ‘Luke’ or ‘Morrisons’.
* for the personal pronoun, I - ‘When I grow up, I can eat dessert before my tea.’
* for emphasis - ‘This is when you want a word or phrase to STAND OUT.’

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 1**

Rewrite these sentences with the correct capital letters.

*Hint: one answer will also require capital letters to emphasise a word.*

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| 1. i think i would like to go to wales for a holiday. 2. when steve went to the zoo, he saw two lions. 3. phil, john and ben work at the highfield museum. 4. i cannot believe this! |

**Full stops and commas**

**Full stops** are placed at the **end** of a sentence to show that the sentence is finished.

For example, ‘I have finished my sentence.’

**Commas** are used to:

* **join clauses** - ‘Mike was tired, so he didn’t go to the gym.’

You will likely need a comma if you use a conjunction, such as ‘if’, ‘for’, ‘so’, ‘yet’ and ‘but’.

* or in a **list** - ‘You can list items, people, places, qualities and many more.’

You do not need to put a comma before or after the conjunction that links the last two items.

**Remember**: commas are **not** used to join 2 sentences or independent clauses without a conjunction.

This is known as comma splicing. You can lose marks for this in your assessment.

Here is an example of a comma splice:

My friends told me to meet them at the shopping centre, they weren’t there when I arrived.

This is **incorrect**.

For this to be correct, a conjunction needs adding to the sentence to link them together.

My friends told me to meet them at the shopping centre, **but** they weren’t there when I arrived.

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 2**

Using what you’ve learned so far, try writing a few sentences.

This can be on any topic you want.

You should include capital letters, full stops and commas.

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**Question marks and exclamation marks**

A **question mark** is used to show that you are asking a **question**.

For example, ‘What is your name?’

Question marks can also be used to ask rhetorical questions. These are questions that do not require an answer.

For example, ‘Can you hurry up?’

**An exclamation mark** is used to show a **strong emotion**, such as anger, surprise or excitement.

For example, ‘I’m really looking forward to the concert!’

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 3**

Look at the sentences below.

For each sentence, decide whether a question mark or an exclamation mark should be used.

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| 1. What are you doing on Friday 2. Watch out 3. Have you seen Mark lately 4. I love ice cream 5. Where shall we meet 6. We’re going to a theme park |

**Possessive apostrophe**

Possessive apostrophes shows possession or belonging.

An apostrophe is used at the end of a noun to show that the next word, which is also a noun, belongs to the first noun.

For example, ‘Bill’s bag.’

In this example, an apostrophe has been added before the ‘s’.

This is because the first noun (Bill) is singular.

If the first noun is singular, then an apostrophe is added before the ‘s’.

For example, ‘The horse’s paddock.’

Here, we can see that there is only 1 horse.

Most nouns will be singular, so you should add an ‘s’ after the apostrophe.

However, if the first noun is plural and ends in an ‘s’, we need to use the apostrophe after the ‘s’.

For example, ‘The horses’ paddock.’

Here, we can see the apostrophe is after the ‘s’.

This tells the reader the paddock belongs to more than one horse.

**Examples**

‘The coat that belongs to Sam’ can be written with a possessive apostrophe.

For example, ‘Sam’s coat’.

‘The football team belonging to the girls’ can be written with a possessive apostrophe.

There is more than 1 girl.

For example, ‘The girls’ football team’.

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 4**

Rewrite the sentences below to include a possessive apostrophe.

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| 1. The cat has a bed. 2. The house belongs to Mauve. 3. The bike belongs to Richard. 4. The shoes belong to the boys. 5. The toys belong to the children. 6. The car belongs to Dad. 7. The nest belongs to the birds. 8. The shop belongs to the sisters. |

**Exam practice**

You recently attended a fitness class and were very happy with the experience.

The organisers have asked people to provide feedback to promote the sessions.

They have asked people to send letters to Sarah Smith at 10 Fitness Lane, Springtown SP2 4GY.

Write a **letter** recommending the class that includes:

* what you liked about the fitness class
* how the class benefitted you
* why you would recommend it to others

You should take approximately **30 minutes** to complete this task.

**Suggested word count 150-200 words.**

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**Answers**

**Capital letters**

**Question 1**

1. I think I would like to go to Wales for a holiday.
2. When Steve went to the zoo, he saw two lions.
3. Phil, John and Ben work at The Highfield Museum.
4. I cannot BELIEVE this!

*Please note that capitals used for emphasis in the above answer is based on personal choice. Learners may choose a different word to emphasise.*

**Full stops and commas**

**Question 2**

*Please note that the below is an example of a learner’s response.*

I enjoy skateboarding because it is exciting and fun. It helps me stay active, spend time with my friends and get outdoors. When I learn a new trick, I always feel really proud of myself.

**Question marks and exclamation marks**

**Question 3**

1. What are you doing on Friday?
2. Watch out!
3. Have you seen Mark lately?
4. I love ice cream!
5. Where shall we meet?
6. We’re going to a theme park!

**Possessive apostrophes**

**Question 4**

1. The cat’s bed.
2. Mauve’s house.
3. Richard’s bike.
4. The boys’ shoes.
5. The children’s toys.
6. Dad’s car.
7. The birds’ nest.
8. The sisters’ shop.

**Exam practice**

*Please note, this is an example of a learner response. Other answers may be correct.*

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| --- |
| Joe Runner  103 Main Road  Springtown  SP6 9PL  Sarah Smith  10 Fitness Lane  Springtown  SP2 4GY  10th October 2026  Dear Sarah,  I am writing to thank you for the amazing fitness class I attended last week! It was my first time joining and I was so impressed with how welcoming and friendly everyone was. The instructor’s energy made the session fun and engaging.  What I liked most was how the class catered to all fitness levels. I have always been nervous about group workouts, but this class changed my mind. The warmup exercises were easy to follow and the workout was challenging, but enjoyable.  The class clearly benefitted me, as I feel fitter, stronger and more confident. I am already looking forward to next week. Who knew getting fit could be so fun?  I would definitely recommend the class, as it is perfect for anyone who wants to get healthier but struggles by themselves. Meeting new people, having fun and being inspired by the instructors makes it a whole lot easier!  Many thanks,  Joe Runner |

**Your functional skills exam**

Your functional skills exams will consist of 2 papers.  
These papers will take place over the following time periods:

* Reading – 60 minutes
* Writing – 60 minutes

Further information on the format that your test will take can be obtained from your training provider.

**Hints and tips**

* Find out what format your exam will be in. It may be paper-based   
  or on-screen.
* Plan what you are going to revise in advance. Don’t leave it until the last minute.
* Do as many past papers as you can so you are prepared for the day. If possible, try to complete the past papers following the same format as the actual exam.
* Find a quiet place to study and revise. It helps to sit at a table or a desk, don’t revise in bed.
* Don’t stay up all night revising the night before your exam. It’s important to have a good rest so you feel refreshed and ready to go.
* Read the question 3 times. The first time to ensure you understand what is being asked, the second time to get an understanding of what you need to do, and a third time to figure out exactly what techniques you should be applying.
* If you are struggling with a question, skip it and come back to it later. Try not to sit getting worked up about a difficult question, it will only waste exam time. Move on and come back to it after you have answered the other questions.
* Take note of the number of marks available. This will give you an indication of how much working out you must show. For example, 1 mark will need an answer only and more marks will need you to show your working out.
* When you’ve finished the exam, go back and check your responses.