

English & Maths
Strategy
2025-26

Introduction and Context

The increasing emphasis that is placed on the continuous development of English and maths skills both by the government and employers is influencing the development of a post-16 curriculum.

As highlighted in the White Paper Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth January 2021:

“Most occupations require competence in English, maths, and digital skills. (31) However, 49% of adults have numeracy skills no better than the level expected of an 11-year-old; for literacy, it is 15% (32). We need to address this so that employers get the competent staff they need and people without these skills can develop them in order to find a good job or progress their careers.”

At Macclesfield College we deliver maths and English as qualifications that offer vital skills to support progression to higher level courses, apprenticeships, employment and lifelong skills.

We are passionate about giving our learners the support they need to improve their confidence in maths and English, enabling them to function independently in all aspects of their life and work. These skills are essential for both progressing within further study and progressing to and within employment.

From the 2025/26 academic year, the DfE has introduced a new requirement for students to receive a minimum of 100 planned teaching hours per year in maths and 100 in English, with part-time learners receiving pro-rated hours. These hours must be delivered as stand-alone, whole-class, in-person sessions, with any additional support, such as small-group tuition, embedded learning or online resources, provided on top of this entitlement. At Macclesfield College, we will meet and exceed these expectations through a structured three hours of maths or English study each week, sustained throughout a learner’s programme.

This strategy aims to drive forward the development of all learners’ maths and English skills, both through the delivery of high-quality GCSE and Functional Skills maths and English qualifications and through rigorously embedding into study programme qualifications.

We also seek to develop these skills through enrichment activities throughout the year. Our ambition is to further develop English and maths skills in all our learners, across all provision types, regardless of whether they have GCSE or Functional Skills qualifications on entry.



Target Approach to Capturing Learners Starting Points

All learners will complete BKS Functional Skills assessment on induction as part of a whole college approach, to determine starting level and key strengths and weaknesses. Maths and English staff will support vocational staff during these induction sessions to further highlight the importance of maths and English within their programme of study. Study programme learners will then undertake a baseline assessment in maths and English over the first few weeks to determine skills and gaps in knowledge, and to ensure that all learners are enrolled at the correct level.

Enrolment Level

Study programme learners who have got a Grade U, 1 or have not sat GCSE before will undertake Functional Skills Entry Level qualifications at an appropriate level. Learners with a Grade 2 or above, or a Level 1 Functional Skills will undertake the GCSE programme of study.

Pathways learners will follow the plan outlined above, with Entry Level learners being taught as a Pathways maths or English group, and GCSE learners joining main study programme maths and English groups. Any learner that is working below Entry Level will join the RARPA course to be delivered by Pathways or learning support staff.

November Resit

All learners with a Grade 3 to be automatically offered the opportunity to sit the November resit. Both BKS results and initial assessment data can be used to determine any exceptions to this.

Both maths and English schemes of learning have been designed to support those who are sitting the resits, with the first half term being delivered as a short fast track course. This will still support the learners who are not sitting, as it will act as a robust introduction to the course as a whole.

Assessment

Assessments in maths will take the form of a half-termly diagnostic assessment, with a pre topic test taken before the block of learning each half term, and a post topic test to be taken at the end of the half term block of learning.

This will allow teachers to plan for the learners on an individual basis based on their strengths and weaknesses, highlighted by the pre-test. It will support the tracking of progress during that period of learning and enable interventions if progress is not as expected. Results of these assessments will be tracked via Markbook, and tracking sheets in learners' books.

Assessments in English will be split up: learners are tested on both components throughout the year, rather than focussing on Paper 1 during the first half or the year, and paper 2 during the second half of the year.

This has been implemented following feedback from learners and teachers which indicated teaching the same component for a large number of consecutive weeks became repetitive, and the learners lost focus and motivation. .

The results of these assessments will be tracked via Markbook, and by tracking sheets in learners' books.

Assessments plans and scheme of learning will be shared with vocational teams, as well as learners and parents on enrolment. This will allow them to align their curriculum to support the maths and English curriculum, through the use of contextualisation in their areas, and also to support attendance to lessons and key assessments through the year. Vocational areas will continue to use workbooks which will include a spelling and grammar marking guidance sheet.

Embedding Maths & English

Maths and English will be embedded throughout the vocational curriculum. Posters and displays will be updated in the maths and English corridor with the curriculum wheels, and real-life examples of where maths and English occur across different subjects and in a real life context. These same posters will be displayed in the relevant vocational areas and classrooms.

Vocational staff will complete a mandatory CPD unit on 'Preparing to teach maths and English'. This is to support staff with the embedding of maths and English into their curriculum areas – both for those who are working towards a GCSE resit as well as those with a Grade 4. This will take the form of activities around finance and budgeting for maths skills, and CV writing for English skills, This will be designed and supported by the maths and English teaching staff, which will help to build a working relationship across college.

Communication and Attendance

Maths and English are the responsibility of all teachers in the college, and a robust communication strategy is needed to ensure that this happens. A member of the maths teaching team and a member of the English teaching team will be given a designated Centre Principal and will attend their meetings to raise maths and English on the agenda each week.

Attendance will be monitored via a report showing last 3-4 weeks of attendance and will be discussed at these meetings. Maths and English staff are to call home if a learner has missed two consecutive lessons of maths/English lessons. This is to be recorded on ProMonitor and will be raised in the Centre Principal meetings as highlighted by the attendance report.

Adult Courses

Both maths and English for adults will have a Functional Skills and GCSE offer. Functional Skills will be taught at Entry 3 and Level 1, which offers a progression route onto GCSE. Adult learners wishing to enrol on maths or English will attend an IAG session at the end of June or end of August.

The IAG session will consist of an introduction to the courses available, an initial assessment to be conducted using BKSB, and an opportunity to complete online enrolment within the session. This process will ensure every learner is enrolled on a course that matches their ability and level of commitment.

The interview will be followed by a paper based initial assessment indicating the learner's current ability. In the event of a learner already having achieved at the level they assess at, we will consider enrolling on the level above on a case-by-case basis. This ensures learners are not studying courses that are above their capabilities.

Apprenticeships

To achieve the full competency standard of an apprenticeship, learners must attain the required achievement of the Maths and English as outlined in the Standard that they are studying. Maths and English skill levels are identified through the BKSB diagnostic tool prior to enrolment and evidence of prior attainment presented during the enrolment process.

The coach/mentor for the apprentice will discuss the maths and English requirements for the standard with the apprentice and their employer to ensure they are fully aware of the functional skill requirements prior to commencing the apprenticeship programme.

Maths and English skills are critical for underpinning the apprentices learning and must therefore be delivered during the first six months of the apprenticeship programme. Where a learner already holds the relevant Maths and English qualifications the diagnostic results from BKSB will be discussed with apprentice and they are encouraged to continue to improve on the identified weaknesses.

Although the guidance for math's and English has recently been relaxed for apprentices aged 19+, Macclesfield College continue to promote these skills with learners and their employers. A strong foundation in math's and English not only supports the apprentices' employability and long-term career progression but the benefits are also positive for the employer and their business.

Delivery will be a combination of planned lessons, online learning and one-to-one support. It is the responsibility of the apprenticeship coach/mentor for each individual to ensure that their apprentice demonstrates and achieves the required level in functional skills (Maths and English) within the planned timeframe.

The achievement of the Maths and English element of the apprenticeship will be monitored by the Sector Leads during the one-to-one process. Regular reports are produced for monitoring purposes and any 'at risk' learners are identified with corrective action plans swiftly implemented.

K. Roberts. Centre Principal

English, Mathematics and lifelong learning

