



# Recruiter briefing paper 1

## The National Tests

These tests in literacy and numeracy are part of the National Qualifications Framework, and are recognised throughout the country. The tests mirror the external Key Skills tests for Communication and Application of number at Levels 1 and 2. However, unlike the Key Skills tests, the adult literacy and numeracy qualifications do not require candidates to supply portfolios.

### The format of the tests

The tests consist of 40 multiple-choice questions worth one mark each - a similar format to those used in the driving theory test. The tests assess only those aspects of the adult literacy and numeracy core curricula that can reasonably be tested using this type of questioning. Multiple-choice questions are used because:

- they are objective
- answers can easily be checked by learners
- they can be machine-marked speedily.

### What the tests cover

The literacy tests last for 1 hour and focus on:

- reading and understanding texts (such as forms, newspaper articles, letters, prose)
- skills such as spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The numeracy tests last for 1 hour and 15 minutes and focus on:

- interpreting information
- calculating
- measuring
- presenting information.

The tests assess just a small sample of the adult core curricula: the literacy tests do not, for example, assess speaking, listening or extended writing, and the numeracy tests do not assess problem-solving.

The tests follow a standard (generic) format, avoid cultural bias, and questions are based on everyday matters such as shopping, work, leisure and the home. A learner needs to score between 22 and 30 marks out of 40 to pass the tests (the exact pass mark will vary from test to test).

### Test levels

The tests are available at two levels, which correspond with other national qualifications.



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## National Qualifications Framework

National Curriculum	Skills for Life	Key Skills	NVQs
Postgraduate		Level 5	Level 5
Graduate		Level 4	Level 4
A levels		Level 3	Level 3
GCSE A*–C	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2
GCSE D–G	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
NC Level 3	Entry 3		Entry
NC Level 2	Entry 2		
NC Level 1	Entry 1		

### How useful is a Level 2 literacy or numeracy qualification to employers?

The new qualifications at both levels indicate that an adult is competent to carry out a variety of tasks. Employers should regard a Level 2 qualification as showing that an adult has the underpinning skills to use in many different situations. For example, an adult with a Level 2 qualification in literacy will be able to show that he or she can accurately and independently:

- read and understand texts of varying complexity
- read and obtain information from different sources
- communicate information and ideas clearly and effectively in writing.

An adult with a Level 2 qualification in numeracy will be able to show that he or she can:

- read and understand mathematical information
- specify and describe a practical activity, problem or task using mathematical information and language
- generate results to an appropriate level of accuracy
- present and explain results clearly and accurately.

### Recent developments and next steps

Tests are now available:

- on demand
- on screen (using the Internet to download tests and upload results)
  - registration can take place on the day the test is taken
  - results are usually available within ten minutes of finishing the test.

Development work is being done to improve the tests so that they can be used to assess a greater range of skills (for example form-filling and letter-writing).

Practice versions of the tests at Levels 1 and 2 are available on the Move On web site.



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