



## **Key Skills – rules on relaxation and proxies.**

Key Skills are essential skills which apprentices need in order to function effectively as members of a flexible, adaptable and competitive workforce.

The Key Skill qualifications consist of two parts:

1. Portfolio of evidence
2. External test.

Apprentices who have achieved a grade A\* - C GCSE in English (or Welsh) and Mathematics will be exempted from the Key Skill qualifications. This also applies to those who have achieved a GCE A/AS level at grade A-E in English Language, Literature and Mathematics. However, the Training provider will need to obtain the relevant certificates and provide photocopied evidence to Asset Skills, the Sector Skills Council, on completion of all elements of the framework.

From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2004, achievement of the GCSE or A/AS level must be no longer than five years before the date of registration on the apprenticeship framework. Apprentices achieving their qualifications in the summer are deemed to have been certified on the 31<sup>st</sup> August, while the date for those achieving during the winter months is deemed to be 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Apprentices on the Foundation/Modern Apprenticeship who have achieved D- G in English (or Welsh) and Mathematics can obtain a proxy from the test at level 1, but will need to complete the portfolio. The proxy can only be claimed within three years of the completion date of the GSCE.

Further information on Key Skill relaxations and proxies can be obtained from the QCA website [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk). Please refer to the Key Skills policy and Practice: Your Questions Answered document available from QCA.

Key Skill external tests are no longer compulsory in Wales.