
GCSE FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

(8585)

Specification

For teaching from September 2016 onwards
For exams in 2018 onwards

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Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Why choose AQA for GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition	5
1.2	Support and resources to help you teach	5
2	Specification at a glance	8
2.1	Subject content	8
2.2	Assessments	9
3	Subject content	10
3.1	Food preparation skills	10
3.2	Food, nutrition and health	14
3.3	Food science	18
3.4	Food safety	22
3.5	Food choice	26
3.6	Food provenance	29
3.7	Food preparation and cooking techniques	31
4	Scheme of assessment	32
4.1	Aims and learning outcomes	32
4.2	Assessment objectives	32
4.3	Non-exam assessment	33
5	Non-exam assessment administration	48
5.1	Supervising and authenticating	48
5.2	Avoiding malpractice	48
5.3	Teacher standardisation	49
5.4	Internal standardisation	49
5.5	Commenting	49
5.6	Submitting marks	49
5.7	Factors affecting individual students	50
5.8	Keeping students' work	50
5.9	Moderation	50
5.10	After moderation	51
6	General administration	52
6.1	Entries and codes	52
6.2	Overlaps with other qualifications	52
6.3	Awarding grades and reporting results	52
6.4	Re-sits and shelf life	52
6.5	Previous learning and prerequisites	53
6.6	Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion	53
6.7	Working with AQA for the first time	53
6.8	Private candidates	53

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- We will write to you if there are significant changes to this specification.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why choose AQA for GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

This new GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance.

Upon completion of this course, students will be qualified to go on to further study, or embark on an apprenticeship or full time career in the catering or food industries.

As part of our commitment to providing excellent support, we've created fantastic free teaching resources and can offer great value professional development courses. We're also collaborating with publishers to ensure you have engaging and easy-to-use textbooks.

You can find out about all our Food Preparation and Nutrition qualifications at [aqa.org.uk/food-preparation-and-nutrition](https://www.aqa.org.uk/food-preparation-and-nutrition)

1.2 Support and resources to help you teach

We've worked with experienced teachers to provide you with a range of resources that will help you confidently plan, teach and prepare for exams.

Teaching resources

Visit [aqa.org.uk/8585](https://www.aqa.org.uk/8585) to see all our teaching resources. They include:

- teaching guidance including lesson plans, video resources and suggested teaching strategies to provide you with practical guidance to help deliver this specification
- non-exam assessment exemplar materials and a dedicated subject adviser for every school or college to help you understand our expectations for this part of the assessment
- sample schemes of work to help you plan your course with confidence
- two textbooks tailored to our specification and approved by AQA
- training courses to help you deliver AQA Food preparation and nutrition qualifications
- subject expertise courses for all teachers, from newly qualified teachers who are just getting started to experienced teachers looking for fresh inspiration.

Preparing for exams

Visit aqa.org.uk/8585 for everything you need to prepare for our exams, including:

- past papers, mark schemes and examiners' reports
- specimen papers and mark schemes for new courses
- exemplar student answers with examiner commentaries.

Analyse your students' results with Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA)

Find out which questions were the most challenging, how the results compare to previous years and where your students need to improve. ERA, our free online results analysis tool, will help you see where to focus your teaching. Register at aqa.org.uk/era

For information about results, including maintaining standards over time, grade boundaries and our post-results services, visit aqa.org.uk/results

Keep your skills up-to-date with professional development

Wherever you are in your career, there's always something new to learn. As well as subject-specific training, we offer a range of courses to help boost your skills.

- Improve your teaching skills in areas including differentiation, teaching literacy and meeting Ofsted requirements.
- Prepare for a new role with our leadership and management courses.

You can attend a course at venues around the country, in your school or online – whatever suits your needs and availability. Find out more at coursesandevents.aqa.org.uk

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at [aqa.org.uk/8585](https://www.aqa.org.uk/8585)

You can talk directly to the food preparation and nutrition subject team

E: foodprep@aqa.org.uk

T: 0161 957 3334

2 Specification at a glance

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit their exam and submit all their non-exam assessment at the end of the course.

2.1 Subject content

Food preparation skills – these are intended to be integrated into the five sections:

- 1 [Food, nutrition and health](#) (page 14)
- 2 [Food science](#) (page 18)
- 3 [Food safety](#) (page 22)
- 4 [Food choice](#) (page 26)
- 5 [Food provenance](#) (page 29)

2.2 Assessments

Paper 1: Food preparation and nutrition	+ Non-exam assessment (NEA)
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from Sections 1 to 5.</p>	<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Task 1: Food investigation (30 marks)</p> <p>Students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients.</p> <p>Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this NEA task.</p> <p>Task 2: Food preparation assessment (70 marks)</p> <p>Students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task.</p> <p>Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than 3 hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved.</p>
<p>How it's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 100 marks • 50 % of GCSE 	<p>How it's assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Written or electronic report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation. • Task 2: Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice questions (20 marks) • Five questions, each with a number of sub questions (80 marks) 	

3 Subject content

Our GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition specification sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating.

The majority of the specification should be delivered through preparation and making activities. Students must be able to make the connections between theory and practice to apply their understanding of food and nutrition to practical preparation.

Topics and themes have been grouped to help you teach the specification, but these are not intended as a route through the specification, you can teach the content in any order. The topics are:

- 1 Food, nutrition and health
- 2 Food science
- 3 Food safety
- 4 Food choice
- 5 Food provenance.

The range of food and ingredients studied should reflect the recommended guidelines for a healthy diet based on the main food commodity groups. Food groups include:

- bread, cereals, flour, oats, rice, potatoes and pasta
- fruit and vegetables (fresh, frozen, dried, canned and juiced)
- milk, cheese and yoghurt
- meat, fish, eggs, soya, tofu, beans, nuts and seeds
- butter, oil, margarine, sugar and syrup.

3.1 Food preparation skills

Twelve skill groups have been integrated throughout the specification to show how the content can be taught through practical activities. These skills are not intended to be taught separately from the main content, but integrated into schemes of work. The skill groups are indicated in the subject content, using the references S1 (Skill 1), S2 (Skill 2) etc.

Students must know how and when these food preparation skills can be applied and combined to achieve specific outcomes. The choice of recipes to exemplify the skills will be at the discretion of the school or college, although some recipe suggestions have been included as suitable examples.

Skill 1: General practical skills

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Weigh and measure	Accurate measurement of liquids and solids.
Prepare ingredients and equipment	Grease/oil, line, flour, evenly and with attention to finished product.
Select and adjust cooking times	Select and adjust the cooking process and length of time to suit the ingredient, for example to match the cut of meat, fish and alternatives.
Test for readiness	Use a temperature probe, knife, skewer, finger or poke test, bite, visual colour check or sound to establish whether an ingredient or recipe is ready.
Judge and modify sensory properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to taste and season during the cooking process. • Change the taste and aroma through the use of infusions, herbs and spices, paste, jus, reduction. • How to change texture and flavour, use browning (dextrinisation, caramelisation) and glazing, add crust, crisp and crumbs. • Presentation and food styling. Use garnishes and decorative techniques to improve the aesthetic qualities, demonstrate portioning, presenting and finishing.

Skill 2: Knife skills

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Fruit and vegetables	Bridge hold, claw grip, peel, slice, dice and cut into even size pieces (ie batons, julienne).
Meat, fish or alternatives	Fillet a chicken breast, portion a chicken, remove fat and rind, fillet fish, slice evenly and accurately: raw and cooked meat and fish or alternatives (such as tofu and halloumi cheese).

Skill 3: Preparing fruit and vegetables

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Preparing fruit and vegetables	Mash, shred, scissor snip, scoop, crush, grate, peel, segment, de-skin, de-seed, blanch, shape, pipe, blend, juice and prepare garnishes whilst demonstrating the technical skills of controlling enzymic browning, spoilage and preventing food poisoning (wash and dry where appropriate).

Skill 4: Use of the cooker

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Using the grill	Use a range of foods, such as vegetables, meat, fish or alternatives such as halloumi, seeds and nuts; char/grill or toast.
Using the oven	Baking, roasting, casseroles and/or tagines, braising.

Skill 5: Use of equipment

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Using equipment	Use of blender, food processor, mixer, pasta machine, microwave oven.

Skill 6: Cooking methods

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Water based methods using the hob	Steaming, boiling and simmering; blanching; poaching.
Dry heat and fat based methods using the hob	Dry frying, shallow frying, stir frying.

Skill 7: Prepare, combine and shape

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Prepare, combine and shape	Roll, wrap, skewer, mix, coat, layer meat, fish and alternatives. Shape and bind wet mixtures (such as falafels, burgers, fish cakes or meatballs) whilst demonstrating the technical skill of preventing cross contamination and handling high risk foods correctly.

Skill 8: Sauce making

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Starch based	Sauce demonstrating starch gelatinisation such as: roux, all in one, blended, infused velouté or béchamel. How starch/liquid ratios affect viscosity.
Reduction	Reduction sauce to show how evaporation concentrates flavour. Eg tomato pasta sauce, curry sauce, gravy, meat sauce (including meat alternatives such as mycoprotein and textured vegetable protein) to show how evaporation concentrates flavour and changes the viscosity of the sauce.
Emulsion	Make an emulsion sauce such as a salad dressing, demonstrating an understanding of how to stabilise an emulsion.

Skill 9: Tenderise and marinate

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Tenderise and marinate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How acids denature protein. • Marinades add flavour and moisture when preparing vegetables, meat, fish and alternatives.

Skill 10: Dough

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Making a dough (bread, pastry, pasta)	Use technical skills of shortening, gluten formation, fermentation (proving) for bread, pastry, pasta.
Shaping and finishing	Roll out pastry, use a pasta machine, line a flan ring, create layers (palmiers) proving and resting, glazing and finishing, such as pipe choux pastry, bread rolls, pasta, flat breads, pinwheels, pizza and calzone.

Skill 11: Raising agents

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Eggs as a raising agent	Create a gas-in-liquid foam, whisking egg whites, whisked sponge.
Chemical raising agents	The use of self raising flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda.
Steam as a raising agent	Use of steam in a mixture (choux pastry, batter).
Biological raising agent	Use of yeast in breadmaking.

Skill 12: Setting mixtures

Food preparation skills	Techniques
Removal of heat	Gelation: use a starch to set a mixture on chilling for layered desserts such as custard.
Use protein	Set a mixture on heating such as denatured and/or coagulated protein in eggs.

3.2 Food, nutrition and health

This section requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the following subject content:

3.2.1 Macronutrients

3.2.1.1 Protein

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• low and high biological value proteins• protein complementation• protein alternatives eg textured vegetable protein (TVP), soya, mycoprotein and tofu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the functions• main sources• effects of deficiency and excess• related dietary reference values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modify recipes for vegetarian diets.• Knife skills – meat, fish or their alternatives (S2).• How acids denature and coagulate protein (S9).• Make a bolognese sauce using meat or a meat alternative such as soya (S8).

3.2.1.2 Fats

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• saturated fats• unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the functions• main sources• effects of deficiency and excess• related dietary reference values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a pastry, shape and finish a pastry (S10).• Use food processor to make pastry (S5).• Adapt methods of cooking to reduce fat, eg grilling instead of frying, baking instead of roasting (S4).• Modify a recipe to reduce total fat.

3.2.1.3 Carbohydrates

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• starch (polysaccharides)• sugars (monosaccharides/ disaccharides)• dietary fibre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the functions• main sources• effects of deficiency and excess• related dietary reference values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use starch to set a mixture (S12).• Demonstrate proving to make bread rolls using high fibre flour (S10).• Modify a recipe to increase fibre.

3.2.2 Micronutrients

3.2.2.1 Vitamins

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
Fat soluble <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vitamin A vitamin D vitamin E vitamin K. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the functions main sources effects of deficiency and excess related dietary reference values. 	Knife skills – fillet and slice fish and/or fruits and vegetables (S2).
Water soluble <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B group – B1 (thiamin), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), folic acid, B12 vitamin C (ascorbic acid) loss of water soluble vitamins when cooking (B group and Vitamin C). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the functions main sources effects of deficiency and excess related dietary reference values how preparation and cooking affects the nutritional properties of food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooking methods – water based using the hob – steaming, boiling, simmering and poaching (S6). Knife skills – cut fruit and vegetables into even size pieces (ie batons, julienne) (S2).
Antioxidant functions of vitamins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vitamin A vitamin C vitamin E. 	The role of antioxidants in protecting body cells from damage.	Preparing fruit and vegetables eg making different salads inclusive of vegetables, nuts or eggs which contain antioxidant vitamins (S2/S3).

3.2.2.2 Minerals

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calcium iron sodium (salt) fluoride iodine phosphorus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the functions main sources effects of deficiency and excess related dietary reference values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing vegetables, meats or alternatives which are high in iron (S2). Preparing dairy foods, which are high in calcium, for example when making a white sauce (S8). Reducing the salt in recipes eg when tasting and seasoning, replace salt with herbs and spices.

3.2.2.3 Water

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
The importance of hydration and the functions of water in the diet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• functions of water to eliminate waste from the body, cooling and for digestion• how water is lost from the body• how much water/fluid is needed each day• occasions when extra fluids are needed.	Preparing fruit and vegetables, for example in soup making – scissor snip, crush, grate, peel. Make juices and smoothies (S3).

3.2.3 Nutritional needs and health

3.2.3.1 Making informed choices for a varied and balanced diet

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the current guidelines for a healthy diet• portion size and costing when meal planning• how peoples' nutritional needs change and how to plan a balanced diet for different life stages• how to plan a balanced meal for specific dietary groups• how to maintain a healthy body weight throughout life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the current guidelines for a healthy diet eg eatwell plate• nutritional needs for the following life stages: young children, teenagers, adults and the elderly• how to plan a balanced meal for specific dietary groups: vegetarian and vegan, coeliac, lactose intolerant and high fibre diets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration of the nutritional needs and food choices when selecting recipes, including when making decisions about the ingredients, processes, cooking methods and portion sizes.• To plan, prepare, cook, modify, and create recipes to meet different dietary groups and life stages.

3.2.3.2 Energy needs

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the basal metabolic rate (BMR) and physical activity level (PAL) and their importance in determining energy requirements the recommended percentage of energy intake provided by protein, fat and carbohydrates (starch and sugar). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> factors which affect the BMR, such as age, gender and PAL. Their importance in achieving energy balance the percentage of recommended energy sources from nutrients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protein 15 % fat 35 % or less carbohydrate 50 % (of which 45 % from starches, lactose in milk and fruit sugars and a maximum of 5 % from free sugars). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General practical skills (S1). Demonstrate portion sizes according to life stage/PAL level.

3.2.3.3 How to carry out nutritional analysis

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
How to plan and modify recipes, meals and diets to reflect the nutritional guidelines for a healthy diet.	how to use current nutritional information and data eg food tables, nutritional analysis software to calculate energy and nutritional value.	Plan, make and modify dishes calculating energy and nutritional values.

3.2.3.4 Diet, nutrition and health

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the relationship between diet, nutrition and health the major diet related health risks. 	<p>how diet can affect health and how nutritional needs change in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> obesity cardiovascular health (coronary heart disease (CHD) and high blood pressure) bone health (rickets and osteoporosis) dental health iron deficiency anaemia Type 2 diabetes. 	Select and adjust cooking process to match the recipe and take account of dietary group eg grill meat rather than fry to reduce the fat content as a high saturated fat intake is a risk factor for CHD (S1).

3.3 Food science

This section requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the following subject content:

3.3.1 Cooking of food and heat transfer

3.3.1.1 Why food is cooked and how heat is transferred to food

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the reasons why food is cookedthe different methods of heat transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">food is cooked to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">make food safe to eatdevelop flavoursimprove textureimprove shelf lifegive variety in the diethow preparation and cooking affect the appearance, colour, flavour, texture, smell and overall palatability of foodhow heat is transferred to food through:<ul style="list-style-type: none">conductionconvectionradiation.	<p>For sauce making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">how conduction and convection work to cook a sauce and the need for agitation (S6)how radiation works using the grill for a range of foods such as vegetables, meat, fish or alternatives such as halloumi, seeds and nuts, to char, toast and grill (S4).

3.3.1.2 Selecting appropriate cooking methods

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<p>Selection of appropriate preparation, cooking methods and times to achieve desired characteristics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the selection of appropriate preparation and cooking methods can conserve or modify nutritive value or improve palatability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water based: steaming, boiling, simmering, blanching, poaching, braising • dry methods: baking, roasting, grilling, dry frying • fat based: shallow frying, stir fry • how preparation and cooking affect the appearance, colour, flavour, texture, smell and overall palatability of food eg the use of marinades to denature protein. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the oven for baking, roasting, braising, casseroles and/or tagines (S4). • Dry heat and fat based methods using the hob; dry frying, shallow frying and stir frying (S6). • Use of the microwave oven (S5). • Water, dry heat and fat based cooking methods using the hob – to conserve nutritive value eg steaming, stir frying (S6). • General practical skills – judge and modify sensory properties – awareness of the effect of preparation and cooking on the sensory characteristics of food – appearance, colour, flavour, texture, taste and season adding herbs, spices etc. Use browning and glazing to change texture and flavour. Improve aesthetic qualities of foods by garnishing and decorating (S1). • The use of marinades to tenderise and flavour meats and alternatives (S9). • The boiling of vegetables to alter texture (S6).

3.3.2 Functional and chemical properties of food

3.3.2.1 Proteins

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protein denaturation protein coagulation gluten formation foam formation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the scientific principles underlying these processes when preparing and cooking food the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of proteins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate how acids denature protein and marinades add flavour and moisture when preparing vegetables, meat, fish and alternatives (S9). Setting of egg mixtures eg in quiche (S12). Gluten formation – pasta making using a pasta machine, bread making using a bread machine (S5 and S10). The use of marinades to tenderise and flavour meats and alternatives (S9). Whisking eggs to produce a gas-in-liquid foam eg whisked sponge.

3.3.2.2 Carbohydrates

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gelatinisation dextrinisation caramelisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the scientific principles underlying these processes when preparing and cooking food the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of carbohydrates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a blended white sauce showing starch gelatinisation such as either a roux or all-in-one blended sauce, infused sauce, velouté or béchamel to demonstrate how liquid/starch ratios affect viscosity (S8). Demonstrate how conduction and convection work to cook the sauce and the need for agitation. Caramelisation of vegetables (S6). Dextrinisation eg browning of bread when baking (S4).

3.3.2.3 Fats and oils

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shortening aeration plasticity emulsification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the scientific principles underlying these processes when preparing and cooking food the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of fats and oils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of fats/oils to demonstrate these processes. Shortening and plasticity, eg pastry making (S10). Aeration eg using the creaming method with a food mixer for a cake (S1, S4, S5 and S11). Make an emulsion sauce such as a salad dressing, mayonnaise or hollandaise (S8).

3.3.2.4 Fruit and Vegetables

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enzymic browning oxidation. 	<p>the scientific principles underlying these processes when preparing and cooking food.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When preparing fresh fruits such as apples and pears, preventing enzymic browning by using lemon juice (S2) and (S3). Oxidation eg preventing water soluble vitamin loss when preparing and cooking vegetables (S3) and (S6).

3.3.2.5 Raising agents

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> chemical (baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, self-raising flours which produce carbon dioxide) mechanical (whisking, beating, folding, sieving, creaming and rubbing in – all incorporate air into the mixture) steam is produced when the water in any moist mixture reaches boiling point biological (yeast). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the scientific principles underlying these processes when preparing and cooking food the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of raising agents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using chemical raising agents such as self-raising flour and baking powder (S11). Use steam in a mixture to raise choux pastry or batter. Use egg as a raising agent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a gas-in-liquid foam whisk egg whites whisking savoury roulade. Yeast in bread making.

3.4 Food safety

This section requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the following subject content:

3.4.1 Food spoilage and contamination

3.4.1.1 Microorganisms and enzymes

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the growth conditions for microorganisms and enzymes and the control of food spoilage bacteria, yeasts and moulds are microorganisms high risk foods enzymes are biological catalysts usually made from protein. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> growth conditions for microorganisms: role of temperature, moisture, food and time control of microorganism growth: temperature control, pH, water availability high risk foods: ready to eat moist foods, usually high in protein that easily support the growth of pathogenic bacteria and do not require any further heat treatment or cooking control of enzymic action: blanching of vegetables before freezing, use of acids to prevent enzymic browning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread making (S4 and S10). Water based methods using the hob – blanching of vegetables to demonstrate the destruction of enzymes in foods (S6). Oxidation – eg preventing water soluble vitamin loss when preparing and cooking vegetables (S3, S6 and S2).

3.4.1.2 The signs of food spoilage

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enzymic action mould growth yeast action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enzymic action: ripening of bananas, browning of some fruits mould growth: eg on bread and cheese. Recognise the signs of mould growth on foods yeast action on fruits eg grapes, strawberries and tomatoes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing fruit and vegetables – mash, shred, scoop, segment, juice and blanch fruits and vegetables to control enzymic browning (S3). Preparing fruit and vegetables which sustain yeast and mould growth, wash and chill to prevent their growth. Demonstrate the following techniques: de-seed, de-skin (for example, tomatoes).

3.4.1.3 Microorganisms in food production

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
The use of microorganisms in food production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moulds in the production of blue cheese • yeasts to raise bread • bacteria in yoghurt and cheese production. 	Make a bread dough, finish and shape a bread dough for use in flat breads, pizza or calzone (S4 and S10).

3.4.1.4 Bacterial contamination

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the different sources of bacterial contamination • the main types of bacteria which cause food poisoning • the main sources and methods of control of different food poisoning bacteria types • the general symptoms of food poisoning. 	Contamination from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other contaminated foods including the following raw foods: meat, poultry, eggs, seafood and vegetables • work surfaces and equipment • the people cooking • pests • waste food and rubbish • campylobacter • e-coli • salmonella • listeria • staphylococcus aureus. 	

3.4.2 Principles of food safety

Note: All temperatures and guidance in accordance with current Food Standards Agency (FSA) guidelines.

3.4.2.1 Buying and storing food

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
The food safety principles when buying and storing food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• temperature control:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• freezing: -18°C• chilling: 0 to below 5°C• danger zone: 5 to 63°C• cooking: 75°C• reheating: 75°C• ambient storage• temperature danger zone• correct use of domestic fridges and freezers• date marks• 'best before' and 'use by' dates• covering foods.	To apply food safety considerations when preparing, storing and cooking.

3.4.2.2 Preparing, cooking and serving food

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<p>The food safety principles when preparing, cooking and serving food.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal hygiene • clean work surfaces • separate raw and cooked foods and use of separate utensils • correct cooking times • appropriate temperature control including: defrosting and reheating • appropriate care with high risk foods • correct use of food temperature probes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knife skills: preventing cross-contamination (S2). • Washing and drying vegetables during preparation to prevent food poisoning (S3). • Using a blender to make fruit coulis as a decoration, focusing on good hygienic practice, washing and drying fruit and ensuring cleanliness of equipment (S5). • Preparing, combining and shaping, for example wet mixtures (such as falafels, fish cakes or meatballs) whilst demonstrating technical skills of preventing cross contamination and handling high risk foods correctly (S7). • General practical skills – test for readiness. Use a temperature probe, knife/skewer, finger or ‘poke’ test, ‘bite’, visual colour check or sound to establish whether an ingredient or recipe is ready, to ensure the food is safe to eat (S1).

3.5 Food choice

This section requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the following subject content:

3.5.1 Factors affecting food choice

3.5.1.1 Factors which influence food choice

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
To know and understand factors which may influence food choice.	<p>the following factors in relation to food choice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• physical activity level (PAL)• celebration/occasion• cost of food• preferences• enjoyment• food availability• healthy eating• income• lifestyles• seasonality• time of day• time available to prepare/ cook. <p>Students must be able to cost recipes and make modifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When selecting recipes students could explain and justify their reasons for choice.• When preparing recipes and meals consider lifestyle, consumer choice etc.• When planning recipes and dishes carry out costing of the dishes.

3.5.1.2 Food choices

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
Food choice related to religion, culture, ethical and moral beliefs and medical conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food choice linked to the following religions and cultures: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Rastafarianism and Sikhism • food choice linked to the following ethical and moral beliefs: animal welfare, fairtrade, local produce, organic, Genetically Modified (GM) foods • food choice linked to food intolerances (gluten and lactose) and the following allergies: nuts, egg, milk, wheat, fish and shellfish. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When selecting some recipes students should explain and justify their reasons for choice. • Select, modify and make recipes for different religions, cultures and dietary groups.

3.5.1.3 Food labelling and marketing influences

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
How information about food available to the consumer, including labelling and marketing, influences food choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mandatory information included on food packaging in accordance with current European Union and Food Standards Agency (FSA) legislation • non-mandatory information: provenance, serving suggestions • how to interpret nutritional labelling • how food marketing can influence food choice eg buy one get one free, special offers, meal deals, media influences, advertising, point of sales marketing. 	

3.5.2 British and international cuisines

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food products from British tradition and two different cuisines • schools or colleges/students can select different cuisines to study. <p>Cuisine is defined as: ‘a style characteristic of a particular country or region where the cuisine has developed historically using distinctive ingredients, specific preparation and cooking methods or equipment, and presentation or serving techniques’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distinctive features and characteristics of cooking • equipment and cooking methods used • eating patterns • presentation styles • traditional and modern variations of recipes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should have the opportunity to prepare and cook recipes from a range of countries and cuisines, using different equipment and cooking methods. • Skills demonstrated will be relevant to the task selected and demonstrate food preparation and cooking skills across groups (S1 to S12).

3.5.3 Sensory evaluation

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sensory testing methods • how taste receptors and olfactory systems work when tasting food. 	<p>importance of senses when making food choices: sight, taste, touch and aroma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preference tests: paired preference, hedonic • discrimination tests: triangle • grading tests: ranking, rating and profiling • how to set up a taste panel • controlled conditions required for sensory testing • evaluating how senses guide • evaluating a wide range of ingredients and food from Britain and other countries • how to test sensory qualities of a wide range of foods and combinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General practical skills – judge and manipulate sensory properties. How to taste and season during the cooking process. Change the taste and aroma through the use of infusions, herbs and spices, paste, jus and reduction (S1). • Test sensory qualities of a wide range of foods. • Evaluate and apply the results of sensory testing.

3.6 Food provenance

This section requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the following subject content:

3.6.1 Environmental impact and sustainability of food

3.6.1.1 Food Sources

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
Where and how ingredients are grown, reared and caught.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grown ingredients: fruits, vegetables and cereals reared ingredients: meat and poultry caught ingredients: fish an understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> organic and conventional farming free range production intensive farming sustainable fishing advantages and disadvantages of local produced foods, seasonal foods and Genetically Modified (GM) foods. 	

3.6.1.2 Food and the environment

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
Environmental issues associated with food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seasonal foods sustainability eg fish farming transportation organic foods the reasons for buying locally produced food food waste in the home/food production/retailers environment issues related to packaging carbon footprint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the seasons when selecting ingredients for recipes using fruits and vegetables (S2 and S3). Using left over food to avoid wastage, whilst considering food waste.

3.6.1.3 Sustainability of food

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
The impact of food and food security on local and global markets and communities.	<p>the challenges to provide the world's growing population with a sustainable, secure, supply of safe, nutritious and affordable high-quality food.</p> <p>Students must have an awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climate change • global warming • sustainability of food sources • insufficient land for growing food • availability of food • fairtrade • problems of drought and flooding • Genetically Modified (GM) foods • food waste. 	

3.6.2 Food processing and production

3.6.2.1 Food production

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • primary and secondary stages of processing and production • how processing affects the sensory and nutritional properties of ingredients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • primary processing related to the: rearing, fishing, growing, harvesting and cleaning of the raw food material (milling of wheat to flour, heat treatment of milk, pasteurised, UHT, sterilised and micro-filtered milk) • secondary processing related to: how the raw primary processed ingredients are processed to produce a food product (flour into bread and/ or pasta, milk into cheese and yoghurt, fruit into jams) • loss of vitamins through heating and drying • the effect of heating and drying on the sensory characteristics of milk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make dough for pasta, shape and finish dough using a pasta machine, shape and finish pasta (S5 and S10). • Water based cooking methods using the hob to boil the pasta (S6).

3.6.2.2 Technological developments associated with better health and food production

Content	Students must know and understand	Suggested application and food preparation skills
Technological developments to support better health and food production including fortification and modified foods with health benefits and the efficacy of these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cholesterol lowering spreads health benefits of fortification fortified foods: thiamin, niacin, calcium and iron added to white flour folic acid and iron added to breakfast cereals vitamins A and D added to fats and low fat spreads the positive and negative aspects of the use of additives: colourings, emulsifiers and stabilisers, flavourings, and preservatives the positive and negative aspects of Genetically Modified (GM) foods. 	To examine, carry out sensory analysis and evaluate existing products that have been modified and fortified.

3.7 Food preparation and cooking techniques

Food preparation and cooking techniques will be assessed through the non-exam assessment (NEA) element of the specification.

Students should be taught to:

- consider the influence of lifestyle and consumer choice when developing meals and recipes
- consider nutritional needs and food choices when selecting recipes, including when making decisions about the ingredients, processes, cooking methods and portion sizes
- develop the ability to review and make improvements to recipes by amending them to include the most appropriate ingredients, processes, cooking methods and portion sizes
- manage the time and cost of recipes effectively
- use their testing and sensory evaluation skills, adjusting where needed, to improve the recipe during the preparation and cooking process
- explain, justify and present their ideas about their chosen cooking methods to others
- make decisions about which techniques are appropriate based on their understanding of nutrition, food, different culinary traditions and cooking and food preparation content in order to achieve their intended outcome. They should be able to carry out these techniques safely and combine them into appealing meals whilst evaluating the results.

4 Scheme of assessment

Find past papers and mark schemes, and specimen papers for new courses, on our website at aqa.org.uk/pastpapers

This specification is designed to be taken over two years.

This is a linear qualification. In order to achieve the award, students must complete all assessments at the end of the course and in the same series.

GCSE exams and certification for this specification are available for the first time in May/June 2018 and then every May/June for the life of the specification.

All materials are available in English only.

Our GCSE exams in Food Preparation and Nutrition include questions that allow students to demonstrate their ability to:

- recall information
- draw together information from different areas of the specification
- apply their knowledge and understanding in practical and theoretical contexts.

4.1 Aims and learning outcomes

Courses based on this specification should enable students to:

- demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking using a variety of food commodities, cooking techniques and equipment
- develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical processes as well as the nutritional content of food and drinks
- understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- understand the economic, environmental, ethical, and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, and diet and health choices
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food
- understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international), to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

4.2 Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition specifications and all exam boards.

The exam and non-exam assessment (NEA) will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.
- AO3: Plan, prepare, cook and present dishes, combining appropriate techniques.
- AO4: Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation including food made by themselves and others.

4.2.1 Assessment objective weightings for GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)		Designed AO weightings (approx %)	Required AO weightings as specified in criteria (approx %)
	Paper 1	NEA		
AO1	20	0	20	20
AO2	20	10	30	30
AO3	0	30	30	30
AO4	10	10	20	20
Overall weighting of components	50	50	100	100

4.3 Non-exam assessment

4.3.1 Setting the tasks

We will set the task for each of the non-examination assessments (NEA).

For the Food investigation (Task 1), one task is to be selected from the three tasks set by AQA issued on 1 September of the academic year in which it is to be submitted.

For the Food preparation assessment, (Task 2), one task is to be selected from the three tasks set by AQA issued on 1 November of the academic year in which it is to be submitted.

New tasks will be issued for each new cohort of students. The tasks will be made available via our secure website, eAQA.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that the correct tasks are used when preparing their students.

Teachers will be able to access the assessments any time after the release date, and schedule the assessment at a time appropriate to the school or college.

4.3.2 Taking the tasks

In order for students to be fully prepared for the NEA, the school or college must ensure that they have delivered the content needed for students to be able to access all of the marks available for the assessments.

Students must be provided with the opportunity to establish investigative skills, and be guided towards appropriate research areas in preparation for Task 1. For Task 2, students must possess an understanding of how and when all of the skills and techniques in [Food Preparation Skills](#) can be applied and combined to achieve specific outcomes.

We recommend 10 assessment hours for Task 1. For Task 2 we recommend a maximum of 20 hours which must include a single 3 hour session for candidates to produce their final three dishes. This allows 17 hours for the completion of the research, planning, trialling and evaluation of the final menu, to be completed in sessions timetabled at the discretion of the school or college. The single 3 hour session should not be undertaken more than once by each student.

For Task 1, students are expected to produce a report of between 1,500 and 2,000 words.

For Task 2, students must produce a concise portfolio (not exceeding 20 A4 sides or A3 equivalent).

Students who do not follow these advisory guidelines will penalise themselves by not meeting the expectations of the assessment appropriately. For those students that exceed the recommended length, they will self-penalise by not being appropriately focused on the demands of the task. Any students that produce work that is shorter than the advised word and page counts, will be penalising themselves by not allowing appropriate coverage of the assessment objectives.

Students must acknowledge where they have made use of secondary information. This can be through an appendix containing a bibliography, or through foot notes.

4.3.3 Authentication of tasks

Practical investigations are a compulsory element of Task 1 and Task 2.

In Task 1, photographs must be included to authenticate the work as the student's own.

In Task 2, the photographs are needed to provide evidence of the dishes produced.

The photographs in Task 1 must be present in order to authenticate the work. If annotated, they can additionally be used as evidence to communicate findings.

For all photographic evidence, the candidate number and name must be clearly visible in the photograph.

4.3.4 Marking the tasks

When marking the tasks, teachers must use the marking criteria in this specification.

Marking support

Teacher standardising will be available each year to give support in both the taking of the task and the application of the marking criteria. If you have any queries about the task, you are encouraged to contact us at foodprep@aqa.org.uk

Exemplar material and generic guidance will be available at teacher standardisation to help schools and colleges understand the quality of work associated with the different mark bands and how to apply the assessment criteria.

Exemplar material won't relate to the specific tasks that students can select from that year, but clearly show how the individual assessment criteria has been applied to previous work.

Your school or college will be assigned an AQA appointed subject adviser who will be available to assist you in matters relating to the NEA. Contact details of the adviser appointed to you will be provided when you inform us that you are using this specification.

When marking the task a level of response mark scheme should be used. A level of response mark scheme allows you to assess the performance of your students holistically.

Using a level of response mark scheme

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for each level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer, read through the answer and annotate it to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1: Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material, it would be placed in level 3 but awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2: Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the lead examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and to assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

4.3.5 Marking criteria: Task 1 Food investigation

The food investigation is assessed in three sections as shown below:

Section	Criteria	Maximum marks
A	Research	6
B	Investigation	15
C	Analysis and evaluation	9
Total		30

4.3.5.1 Food investigation assessment

Students will investigate the working characteristics and the functional and chemical properties of a particular ingredient through practical investigation. They will produce a report which will include research into 'how ingredients work and why'.

Outcome: Written or electronic report including photographic evidence.

The inclusion of photographic evidence is to mitigate against plagiarism and is for authentication purposes.

Assessment: Students produce a report of between 1,500–2,000 words (approx. 6–8 sides of A4 or A3 equivalent). Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this non-exam assessment.

Time: Not to exceed 10 hours.

Content: Students will individually record their practical investigation and draw conclusions. The report could include a range of communication methods including: charts, graphs and diagrams. Specialist terminology will be used to clearly communicate the research and investigation findings. The report must include photographic evidence authenticating the practical investigation.

Section A: Research (6 marks)

Students carry out research into the ingredients to be investigated. The research will demonstrate how ingredients work and why. The outcome of the research should clearly inform the nature of the practical investigation and be used to establish a hypothesis or prediction for the food investigation task.

Students should:

- analyse the task, explaining the background research
- carry out secondary research, using different sources, focusing on the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of the ingredients
- analyse the research and use the findings to plan the practical investigation
- establish a hypothesis/predict an outcome as a result of the research findings. The hypothesis should be a statement which may be proved or disproved.

Mark	Description
5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant, detailed and concise research into how ingredients work and the reasons why.• Detailed explanation shows a high level of understanding of how the research has been used to inform the practical investigation.• Planned and justified a detailed investigation, related to the research with a clear and focused hypothesis or prediction.
3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant research into how ingredients work and the reasons why.• Explanation of how the research is used to inform the investigation.• Planned an investigation which relates to the research, some justification given. A hypothesis or prediction has been stated.
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited research into how ingredients work and the reasons why.• Limited explanation of how the research may be used to inform the investigation.• Limited evidence of planning, with a basic approach to the investigation. A basic hypothesis or prediction has been stated.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Section B: Investigation (15 marks)

Students carry out practical investigations, related to the hypothesis or prediction, which demonstrate understanding of how ingredients work and why. Students will record the results of the practical investigation.

Students should investigate and evaluate how ingredients work and why through practical experimentation. Each investigation should be related to the research and have a clear aim which can then be concluded.

The number of investigations will be determined by the complexity of the investigations. A range of appropriate testing methods should be identified and carried out to record the results eg annotated photographs, labelled diagrams, tables, charts, sensory testing methods, viscosity tests.

Mark	Description
11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical investigations show detailed and high level knowledge and understanding of how ingredients work and why with a clear link to the hypothesis or prediction. A wide range of testing has been carried out to formulate the results. Practical investigations are recorded and meticulously explained using methods such as: graphs, tables, charts, sensory analysis methods, labelled diagrams, annotated photographic evidence.
6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical investigations/experiments show very good knowledge and understanding of how ingredients work and why with a link to the hypothesis or prediction. A range of testing has been carried out to formulate the results. Practical investigations are recorded with very good explanation using methods such as: graphs, tables, charts, sensory analysis methods, labelled diagrams, annotated photographic evidence.
1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical investigations/experiments show some knowledge and understanding of how ingredients work with some links to the hypothesis or prediction. Some testing has been carried out to formulate the results. Practical investigations are recorded with limited explanation.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Section C: Analysis and evaluation (9 marks)

Students will analyse and evaluate the results of the investigation and reflect upon their findings. Explanations will demonstrate how the results can be applied in practical food preparation and cooking.

Students should:

- analyse and interpret the results of the investigative work. The results will be linked to the research and data explaining the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of the ingredient(s)
- evaluate the hypothesis/prediction with justification
- explain how the results/findings can be applied in practical food preparation and cooking.

Mark	Description
7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed, accurate interpretation and analysis of the results with justified conclusions for all aspects of the hypothesis/investigation.• The report demonstrates an in-depth and specialist understanding of how ingredients work and why.• Detailed explanation/reflection of how the results can be applied when preparing and cooking food.• The report is communicated in a structured and coherent manner with accurate use of technical language.
4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant interpretation and analysis of the results with conclusions of the hypothesis/investigation with some justification.• The report demonstrates good understanding of how ingredients work and why.• Explanation and review of how the results can be applied when preparing and cooking food.• The report is communicated with clarity and with use of technical language.
1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some analysis of the results from the hypothesis/investigation and an attempt at drawing conclusions.• The report demonstrates some understanding of how ingredients work and why.• Limited explanation of how the results can be applied when preparing and cooking food.• The report is communicated at a simplistic level with a limited use of technical vocabulary.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

4.3.6 Marking criteria: Task 2 Food preparation assessment

The 'Food preparation assessment' is assessed in five sections as shown below:

Section	Criteria	Maximum mark
A	Researching the task	6
B	Demonstrating technical skills	18
C	Planning for the final menu	8
D	Making the final dishes	30
E	Analyse and evaluate	8
Total		70

4.3.6.1 Food preparation assessment

In this task, students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes to meet the needs of a specific context. Students must select appropriate technical skills and processes and create 3–4 dishes to showcase their skills. They will then produce their final menu within a single period of no more than 3 hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved.

Students must work independently eg making their own judgements about cooking methods and making changes to recipes to improve palatability.

Students must work safely and hygienically. It is compulsory that students will adhere to food safety principles at all times throughout this assessment.

Students apply their knowledge of food safety principles within the planning for the 3 hour assessment (Section C). The application of food safety principles will be credited and assessed when making the final dishes (Section D). If a teacher has to intervene to prevent unsafe or unhygienic practices, this should be reflected in the final mark awarded to the student as they will not be demonstrating technical skills or use of equipment competently.

Outcome: Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence authenticating the practical outcomes. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.

Assessment: Students will produce a concise portfolio. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than 3 hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. On completion of the making of the final dishes, students will analyse and evaluate the outcomes through sensory testing, nutritional analysis, costing and identify improvements to their dishes. The portfolio is not to exceed 20 sides of A4 or A3 equivalent. A menu is a selection of three dishes that are produced to meet the demands of the chosen task.

Time: Not to exceed 20 hours (including up to 3 hour final assessment within a single block period).

Students create practical outcomes and demonstrate the technical skills listed in [Food preparation skills](#). Students create, plan, prepare, cook and present a three dish menu to meet the needs of their chosen task and allow them to showcase their food preparation skills. Two assessment criteria give students the opportunity to gain marks for demonstrating their food preparation skills – 'demonstrating technical skills' and 'making the final dishes'.

Excellent performance is characterised by demonstrating a complex skill to an excellent standard. In many instances, what constitutes a 'complex' skill will be determined in part by the ingredients used, processes and techniques carried out, and the dish selected by the student. The complexity and challenge of the dishes is linked to the skills involved in producing the dishes. The more complex the skills, the higher the level of demand. To provide greater clarification, the table below provides dishes

that could be considered complex, medium demand and basic skill level in the context of three of the skill groups in this specification.

Skill 10: Making a dough	
Complex (highest mark band)	Make pasta dough, roll to the required thickness, add a filling, shape the pasta accurately eg tortellini/ravioli and cook accurately. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to an excellent standard.
Medium demand	Make pasta dough, roll to the required thickness and make pasta sheets for a pasta dish. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to a good standard.
Basic (lowest mark band)	Use ready-made pasta in the making of a dish but demonstrate other processes in the dish eg slicing meat. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills/processes to a basic standard.

Skill 11: Raising agent – Steam as a raising agent	
Complex (highest mark band)	Make choux pastry, correct consistency and piped accurately. Take out of the oven at the correct time with well risen and crisp pastry. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to an excellent standard.
Medium demand	Make choux pastry, correct consistency but piping not uniform. Take out of the oven at the correct time with well risen and crisp pastry. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to a good standard.
Basic (lowest mark band)	Make a simple batter eg Yorkshire pudding. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to a basic standard.

Skill 2: Knife skills: Meat, fish or alternatives	
Complex (highest mark band)	Fillet a fish, removing the bone with no excess waste. Cook fish correctly and make into a fish dish. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to an excellent standard.
Medium demand	Remove the skin from a filleted fish and there is some waste. The fish is cooked well and made into a fish dish. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills and processes to a good standard.
Basic (lowest mark band)	Use pre-filleted fish to make a fish dish. This demonstrates the execution of technical skills/processes to a basic standard.

Section A: Researching the task (6 marks)

Students will research and analyse the: life stage/dietary group or culinary tradition related to the task.

Students should:

- analyse the task by explaining the research requirements
- carry out relevant research and analysis related to the: life stage, dietary group or culinary tradition
- identify a range of dishes eg by mind-mapping, or using annotated images
- select and justify a range of technical skills to be used in the making of different dishes.

Mark	Description
5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant, concise and accurate research that shows discrimination when selecting and acquiring information to answer the task. • Detailed understanding and analysis of the dietary group, life stage or culinary tradition. • Selected a varied range of relevant dishes closely reflecting the research and chosen task.
3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant research carried out related to the task. • Includes analysis of the dietary group, life stage or culinary tradition. • Selected a range of relevant dishes reflecting the research and chosen task.
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited research carried out. • Limited analysis of the dietary group, life stage or culinary tradition. • Selected some trial dishes reflecting the research and chosen task.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Section B: Demonstrating technical skills (18 marks)

Students will make 3–4 dishes to showcase their technical skills.

Students should:

- demonstrate technical skills in the preparation and cooking of three to four dishes. Refer to the [Food preparation skills](#) section of the specification
- select and use equipment for different technical skills in the preparation and cooking of selected dishes. Food safety principles should be demonstrated when storing, preparing and cooking
- identify the technical skills within each dish. Photographic evidence will be needed to authenticate the technical skills.

Students will select three dishes to make which allow them to showcase their technical skills to make for their final menu. The final dishes will relate to the task and research and be dishes that have not been made previously.

For example, a student could make the following initial dishes to demonstrate technical skills:

- 1 Fish pie (**technical skills shown:** filleting fish, making a sauce, vegetable preparation, piping potato).
- 2 Beef lasagne (**technical skills shown:** pasta making, sauce making, vegetable preparation).
- 3 Traditional quiche (**technical skills shown:** shortcrust pastry, lining a flan ring).
- 4 Flavoured bread rolls (**technical skills shown:** bread making: kneading, shaping).

For the final menu, they could choose to produce:

- 1 Fish cakes with parsley sauce.
- 2 Cannelloni with homemade pasta and tomato ragu sauce.
- 3 Roasted vegetable flan with reduced fat ingredients to improve the nutritional properties.

Students will be rewarded for the use of a range of technical skills and the quality of outcomes achieved. The complexity and challenge of the dishes produced is linked to the complexity of the skills involved in producing the dish. To achieve the top bands, students must attempt complex skills. Selecting unchallenging skills prevents candidates from reaching the top mark band. As a guide, please see the examples in [Food preparation assessment](#).

Mark	Description
15–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competently executes a wide range of complex technical skills/processes(eg filleting fish or cutting vegetables with precision and accuracy eg julienne) to produce excellent quality dishes. • Selects and uses appropriate equipment confidently and accurately. • Extensive review of technical skills that leads to appropriate and justified final dishes.
10–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executes technical skills/processes with accuracy, including some complex technical skills (eg filleting fish or cutting vegetables with precision and accuracy eg julienne) to produce very good quality dishes. • Selects and uses appropriate equipment accurately. • Very good review of technical skills leads to appropriate final dishes.
5–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates technical skills/processes with some accuracy to produce good quality dishes. • Selects and uses equipment with some accuracy. • Good review of technical skills leads to appropriate final dishes.
1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic technical skills/processes (eg slicing raw meat, peeling fruits and vegetables) used to produce adequate quality dishes. • Difficulty in using some equipment. • Some review of the technical skills leads to the final dishes.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Section C: Planning for the final menu (8 marks)

As a result of demonstrating technical skills, students will provide explanation for the final three dishes related to eg ingredients, processes, technical skills, nutrition, food provenance, cooking methods and portion size. A time plan will be produced for the final three dishes demonstrating dovetailing of different processes.

Students should:

- justify the appropriateness of the **final** dishes in terms of eg technical skills, nutrition, ingredients, cooking methods, food provenance, sensory properties and portion size
- produce a detailed time plan for the production of the final three dishes including appropriate techniques. Within the plan, food safety principles will be demonstrated when storing, preparing, cooking and presenting the final dishes
- demonstrate appropriate use of the 3 hours to dovetail tasks to prepare, cook and present the final three dishes
- not repeat any dishes from the 'demonstrating technical skills' stage when making their final menu.

Mark	Description
7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed review and full justification of the choice and appropriateness of the final three dishes related to the task and research eg nutrition, ingredients, cooking methods.• Detailed, realistic, logical and accurate plan including selecting appropriate techniques for the making of the final dishes.• The time plan will include accurate timings, reference to food safety, relevant and accurate dovetailing.
5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviews and explains the choice and appropriateness of the final dishes related to the task and research eg nutrition, ingredients, cooking methods.• Produced a clear, logical and accurate plan including selecting appropriate techniques for the making of the final dishes with some dovetailing. The time plan will include appropriate timings, reference to food safety, with appropriate dovetailing.
3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited reasons for choice of the final dishes eg nutrition, ingredients, cooking methods.• Produced a plan for the making of the final dishes. The time plan will include some appropriate timings, reference to food safety and limited dovetailing.
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The justification for the choice of the final dishes is not clear.• Simplistic plan for making the final dishes, reference to food safety with several inaccuracies.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Section D: Making the final dishes (30 marks)

Students will prepare, cook and present a menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than 3 hours.

Students should prepare, cook and present the final dishes, demonstrating:

- selection and use of equipment for different technical skills in the preparation and cooking of the final three dishes
- knowledge and application of food safety principles (including temperature control) when storing, preparing, cooking and presenting the final three dishes
- selection, knowledge and use of ingredients when producing different dishes
- appropriate use of the 3 hours to demonstrate: technical skills, processes and the use of equipment
- execution of a range of technical skills with accuracy
- good judgement with regard to cooking times and methods and the sensory properties of each dish
- organisation and good planning using the time plan and linking tasks within the 3 hours
- a range of finishing techniques to produce a high standard of presentation of the final dishes.

Students must include photographic evidence of the final dishes.

Students will be rewarded for the use of a range of technical skills and the quality of outcomes achieved. The complexity and challenge of the dishes produced is linked to the complexity of the skills involved in producing the dish. To achieve the top bands students must attempt complex skills. Selecting unchallenging skills would prevent students reaching the top mark band. Please see section [Food preparation assessment](#) for more guidance.

Mark	Description
25–30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competently executes a wide range of complex technical skills and processes to an excellent standard (such as filleting fish or cutting vegetables with precision and accuracy eg julienne) in the making of the three final dishes. • Selects and uses appropriate equipment with precision and accuracy. • The three final dishes show a high level of demand, complexity and challenge. • Final three dishes include a wide range of finishing techniques such as garnishing and decoration eg piping. All dishes are accurately presented with attention to detail and finished to an excellent standard. • Excellent evidence of time management. All three dishes produced very successfully within the 3 hour period. The student followed the time plan closely using the correct sequence with excellent linking and application of food safety principles.
19–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competently executes a range of technical skills, including some complex skills (such as filleting fish or cutting vegetables with precision and accuracy eg julienne) to a very good standard in the making of the three final dishes. • Selects and uses appropriate equipment accurately. • The three final dishes show complexity and challenge. • The three final dishes show a range of appropriate finishing techniques and are presented to a very good standard. • Very good evidence of time management. All three dishes were produced successfully within the 3 hour period. The student followed the time plan using the correct sequence with very good linking and application of food safety principles.

Mark	Description
13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executes technical skills and processes to a good standard (such as cutting vegetables accurately eg baton) in the making of at least two final dishes. • Selects and uses appropriate equipment with some accuracy. • At least two of the final dishes show some demand and challenge. • The final three dishes show some appropriate finishing techniques such as garnishing and decoration and are presented to a good standard. • Good evidence of time management. All three dishes were produced within the 3 hour period. The student followed the time plan in a logical sequence with good linking and application of food safety principles.
7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executes technical skills and processes with some inaccuracies in the making of the final dishes. • For the majority of the processes appropriate equipment selected and used with some accuracy. • Final dishes show some demand but limited level of skill. • Final three dishes include some finishing techniques but lack of consideration related to some of the presentation. • Satisfactory attempt to follow the time plan with adequate application of food safety principles.
1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited/basic technical skills (eg slicing raw meat, peeling fruits and vegetables) and processes used with inaccurate outcomes in the making of the final dishes. • Some attempt to select appropriate equipment. • Final dishes lack demand and include mainly basic skills. • Final three dishes are of a basic standard with a lack of appropriate finish and presentation. • Time plan not used for most or all of the making of the final dishes.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Section E: Analyse and evaluate (8 marks)

Students will carry out sensory evaluation and record the results for all of their practical dishes. For the final dishes, students will carry out and record nutritional analysis, costing and identify improvements to their dishes.

Students should:

- record and analyse the sensory properties (taste, texture, aroma and appearance) of the three final practical dishes
- carry out nutritional analysis of the three final dishes
- analyse the cost of the three final dishes.

Clear links should be evident from analysing the data and information when reviewing the completed work. This leads to qualified suggestions for improvements/further modifications to the final dishes. This could include: nutrition, skills, sensory characteristics, presentation of the dishes.

Mark	Description
7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate nutritional analysis data for the three final dishes which is fully explained with conclusions and recommendations. Accurate and excellent knowledge of nutrition is demonstrated. • Detailed and appropriate sensory testing with detailed analysis and evaluation. • Final dishes are costed with the results of this costing analysed and explained. • Detailed, relevant and creative improvements suggested for the final dishes.
5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional analysis for the three final dishes is explained with conclusions and some recommendations suggested. Very good knowledge of nutrition is demonstrated. • Sensory testing with very good analysis and evaluation. • Final dishes are costed with some analysis. • Relevant improvements suggested for the final dishes.
3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional analysis for the three final dishes includes some conclusions. Good knowledge of nutrition is demonstrated. • Sensory testing with some analysis. • Some costing of the final dishes with limited analysis. • Some suggested improvements of the final dishes.
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited or no nutritional analysis is carried out for the final dishes. • Evidence of sensory testing with little or no analysis. • Little or no evidence of costing of the final dishes. • Limited or no improvements are suggested for the final dishes.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.

5 Non-exam assessment administration

The non-exam assessment (NEA) for this specification is made up of two tasks.

Visit aqa.org.uk/8585 for detailed information about all aspects of NEA administration.

The head of the school or college is responsible for making sure that NEA is conducted in line with our instructions and Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) instructions.

5.1 Supervising and authenticating

To meet Ofqual's qualification and subject criteria:

- **students** must sign the *Candidate record form* (CRF) to confirm that the work submitted is their own
- all **teachers** who have marked a student's work must sign the declaration of authentication on the CRF. This is to confirm that the work is solely that of the student concerned and was conducted under the conditions laid down by this specification
- teachers must ensure that a CRF is provided with each student's work.

Students must have some direct supervision to ensure that the work submitted can be confidently authenticated as their own. If a student receives additional assistance and this is acceptable within the guidelines for this specification, you should award a mark that represents the student's unaided achievement. Please make a note of the support the student received on the CRF and sign the authentication statement. If the statement is not signed, we cannot accept the student's work for assessment.

5.2 Avoiding malpractice

Please inform your students of the AQA regulations concerning malpractice. They must not:

- submit work that is not their own
- lend work to other students
- allow other students access to, or use of, their own independently-sourced source material
- include work copied directly from books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement
- submit work that is word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement
- include inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

These actions constitute malpractice and a penalty will be given (for example, disqualification).

If you identify malpractice **before** the student signs the declaration of authentication, you don't need to report it to us. Please deal with it in accordance with your school or college's internal procedures. We expect schools and colleges to treat such cases very seriously.

If you identify malpractice **after** the student has signed the declaration of authentication, the head of your school or college must submit full details of the case to us at the earliest opportunity. Please complete the form *JCQ/M1*, available from the JCQ website at jcq.org.uk

We have agreed with Ofqual a date when the externally set assignment papers may be given to teachers and students. This can be found at aqa.org.uk/timetables

If the papers are released before Ofqual's agreed date we will treat this as malpractice.

You must record details of any work which is not the student's own on the front of the assessment booklet or other appropriate place.

You should consult your exams officer about these procedures.

5.3 Teacher standardisation

We will provide support for using the marking criteria and developing appropriate tasks through teacher standardisation.

For further information about teacher standardisation visit our website at aqa.org.uk/8585

In the following situations teacher standardisation is essential. We will send you an invitation to complete teacher standardisation if:

- moderation from the previous year indicates a serious misinterpretation of the requirements
- a significant adjustment was made to the marks in the previous year
- your school or college is new to this specification.

For further support and advice please speak to your adviser. Email your subject team at foodprep@aqa.org.uk for details of your adviser.

5.4 Internal standardisation

You must ensure that you have consistent marking standards for all students. One person must manage this process and they must sign the *Centre declaration sheet* to confirm that internal standardisation has taken place.

Internal standardisation may involve:

- all teachers marking some sample pieces of work to identify differences in marking standards
- discussing any differences in marking at a training meeting for all teachers involved
- referring to reference and archive material, such as previous work or examples from our teacher standardisation.

5.5 Commenting

To meet Ofqual's qualification and subject criteria, you must show clearly how marks have been awarded against the assessment criteria in this specification.

Your comments will help the moderator see, as precisely as possible, where you think the students have met the assessment criteria.

You must record your comments on the *Candidate record form*.

5.6 Submitting marks

You must check that the correct marks are written on the *Candidate record form* and that the total is correct.

The deadline for submitting the total mark for each student is given at aqa.org.uk/keydates

5.7 Factors affecting individual students

For advice and guidance about arrangements for any of your students, please email us as early as possible at eos@aqa.org.uk

Occasional absence: you should be able to accept the occasional absence of students by making sure they have the chance to make up what they have missed. You may organise an alternative supervised session for students who were absent at the time you originally arranged.

Lost work: if work is lost you must tell us how and when it was lost and who was responsible, using our special consideration online service at aqa.org.uk/eaqa

Special help: where students need special help which goes beyond normal learning support, please use the CRF to tell us so that this help can be taken into account during moderation.

Students who move schools: students who move from one school or college to another during the course sometimes need additional help to meet the requirements. How you deal with this depends on when the move takes place. If it happens early in the course, the new school or college should be responsible for the work. If it happens late in the course, it may be possible to arrange for the moderator to assess the work as a student who was 'Educated Elsewhere'.

5.8 Keeping students' work

Students' work must be kept under secure conditions from the time that it is marked, with completed CRF. After the moderation period and the deadline for Enquiries about Results (or once any enquiry is resolved) you may return the work to students.

5.9 Moderation

You must send all your students' marks to AQA for moderation by the specified date given at aqa.org.uk/deadlines. You will be asked to send a sample of your students' NEA evidence to your moderator.

You must show clearly how marks have been awarded against the assessment criteria in this specification. Your comments will help the moderator see, as precisely as possible, where you think the students have met the assessment criteria. You must:

- record your comments on the CRF
- check that the correct marks are written on the CRF and that the total is correct.

The moderator re-marks a sample of the evidence and compares this with the marks you have provided to check whether any changes are needed to bring the marking in line with our agreed standards. Any changes to marks will normally keep your rank order but, where major inconsistencies are found, we reserve the right to change the rank order.

School and college consortia

If you are in a consortium of schools or colleges with joint teaching arrangements (where students from different schools and colleges have been taught together but entered through the school or college at which they are on roll), you must let us know by:

- filling in the *Application for Centre Consortium Arrangements for centre-assessed work*, which is available from the JCQ website jqc.org.uk
- appointing a consortium co-ordinator who can speak to us on behalf of all schools and colleges in the consortium. If there are different co-ordinators for different specifications, a copy of the form must be sent in for each specification.

We will allocate the same moderator to all schools and colleges in the consortium and treat the students as a single group for moderation.

All the work must be available at the lead school or college.

5.10 After moderation

We will return your students' work to you after the exams. You will also receive a report when the results are issued, which will give feedback on the appropriateness of the tasks set, interpretation of the marking criteria and how students performed in general.

We will give you the final marks when the results are issued.

To meet Ofqual requirements, as well as for awarding, archiving or standardisation purposes, we may need to keep some of your students' work. We will let you know if we need to do this.

6 General administration

You can find information about all aspects of administration, as well as all the forms you need, at aqa.org.uk/examsadmin

6.1 Entries and codes

You only need to make one entry for each qualification – this will cover all the question papers, non-exam assessment and certification.

Every specification is given a national discount (classification) code by the Department for Education (DfE), which indicates its subject area.

If a student takes two specifications with the same discount code:

- further and higher education providers are likely to take the view that they have only achieved one of the two qualifications
- only one of them will be counted for the purpose of the *School and College Performance tables* – the DfE's rules on 'early entry' will determine which one.

Please check this before your students start their course.

Qualification title	AQA entry code	DfE discount code
AQA GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition	8585	NH6

This specification complies with:

- Ofqual *General conditions of recognition* that apply to all regulated qualifications
- Ofqual GCSE qualification level conditions that apply to all GCSEs
- Ofqual GCSE subject level conditions that apply to all GCSEs in this subject
- all other relevant regulatory documents.

The Ofqual qualification accreditation number (QAN) is 601/8421/8.

6.2 Overlaps with other qualifications

There are no overlaps with any other AQA qualifications at this level.

6.3 Awarding grades and reporting results

The qualification will be graded on a nine-point scale: 1 to 9 – where 9 is the best grade.

Students who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade 1 will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

6.4 Re-sits and shelf life

Students can re-sit the qualification as many times as they wish, within the shelf life of the qualification.

6.5 Previous learning and prerequisites

There are no previous learning requirements. Any requirements for entry to a course based on this specification are at the discretion of schools and colleges.

6.6 Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

General qualifications are designed to prepare students for a wide range of occupations and further study. Therefore our qualifications must assess a wide range of competences.

The subject criteria have been assessed to see if any of the skills or knowledge required present any possible difficulty to any students, whatever their ethnic background, religion, sex, age, disability or sexuality. If any difficulties were encountered, the criteria were reviewed again to make sure that tests of specific competences were only included if they were important to the subject.

As members of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) we participate in the production of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: General and Vocational qualifications*. We follow these guidelines when assessing the needs of individual students who may require an access arrangement or reasonable adjustment. This document is published on the JCQ website at jcq.org.uk

6.6.1 Students with disabilities and special needs

We can make arrangements for disabled students and students with special needs to help them access the assessments, as long as the competences being tested are not changed. Access arrangements must be agreed **before** the assessment. For example, a Braille paper would be a reasonable adjustment for a Braille reader but not for a student who does not read Braille.

We are required by the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to remove or lessen any disadvantage that affects a disabled student.

If you have students who need access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, you can apply using the Access arrangements online service at aqa.org.uk/eaqa

6.6.2 Special consideration

We can give special consideration to students who have been disadvantaged at the time of the assessment through no fault of their own – for example a temporary illness, injury or serious problem such as the death of a relative. We can only do this **after** the assessment.

Your exams officer should apply online for special consideration at aqa.org.uk/eaqa

For more information and advice about access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration please see aqa.org.uk/access or email accessarrangementsqueries@aqa.org.uk

6.7 Working with AQA for the first time

If your school or college has not previously offered any AQA specification, you need to register as an AQA centre to offer our specifications to your students. Find out how at aqa.org.uk/becomeacentre

6.8 Private candidates

This specification is not available to private candidates.

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at aqa.org.uk/8585

You can talk directly to the food preparation and nutrition subject team

E: foodprep@aqa.org.uk

T: 0161 957 3334