



GCSE Food
Qualifications
What can you expect?
2025 - 2027



Course Structure

50% Written exam paper – sat in the final exam season of year 11.

50% Written and practical non examined assessment which is completed in the autumn and spring terms of year 11.

The non examined assessment includes practical tasks. (The cooking)

This practical cooking element forms approximately 25% of your final grade.

Yes you will get to cook in this subject but you will be expected to write and learn facts as well. It is not just cooking every week sadly.



What will my lessons be like if I choose to study a GCSE Food Course?

Year 10 – 2 hours per week

On average you will cook one hour per week and complete written theory tasks in the second lesson per week.

Practical tasks in early year 10 will focus on revisiting key skills.

Late year 10 will focus on learning higher level cooking skills in preparation for your controlled assessment tasks in year 11.

PRACTICAL WORK IS NECESSARY.

You will be asked to purchase and provide your own ingredients, unlike Key Stage Three, but support can be given.

Year 11 – 3 hours per week.

On average you will continue to cook one hour per week, but this will vary some weeks you may not cook at all and others you may cook in all your lessons.

This will be dependent on what stage of the controlled assessment task you are working on.

Cooking at home as part of your home learning will be strongly encouraged.

You will be given regular written home learning tasks to complete.

This is when students will tell you there is a lot of writing. There is, it is a GCSE and so writing is expected. However, you are writing about food, recipes you have cooked so it is very manageable.

What will I study in year 10?



Practical work will include;

Making simple bread dough / enriched doughs/ pastries including flaky and choux.

Higher level knife skills with fruits and vegetables.

Deboning and butchery skills with raw meat and fish.

Cakes and biscuits including decoration piping skills.



Written topics will include;

How food is processed/grown.

Nutrition and foods rich in which nutrient.

Food safety and how to prevent food poisoning.

Food storage and minimising cross contamination.

Consumer food choices.

Diet related health conditions.

What will I study in Year 11?

September – October – NEA 1

This is 15% of your final grade.

It is a science investigation into the chemical properties of a certain ingredient in a recipe.

The ingredient and recipe changes every year.

The assessment will include a practical task of over 3 hours.



October – February – NEA 2

This 35% of your final grade.

This is a design, prepare, cook and serve 3 dishes to meet a brief set by the exam board.

This will include a 5-hour practical exam, and a supporting written folder.

This is how your practical cooking skills are assessed.

Year 11 February onwards



You will revisit all written topics studied in year 10 in preparation for the written exam paper in the June exam period.



It is often one of the last exam papers of the season.



It is a combination of shorter 2 mark knowledge questions and longer knowledge and application questions.



This can be 10 or 12 mark questions and a longer essay style response is expected.



Revision materials and revision guides are available.

Alternative option to the GCSE Food, Preparation & Nutrition course typically offered.



If you choose to study Food as an option subject Mrs Ellis may decide that you would be better suited to study an alternative option. This is a decision that Mrs Ellis would make with the agreement of Mrs Lovecy.



This course is equivalent to a GCSE and is a Level 2 Qualification in Hospitality and Catering.



You would be given a Pass/Merit/Distinction.



A level 2 Merit is the equivalent to a GCSE grade 4 and is accepted by local colleges. You would not be disadvantaged.



Mrs Ellis would teach both courses simultaneously in the same lesson as students continuing to study the GCSE.

How would this work?

01

IN YEAR TEN ALL STUDENTS WOULD STUDY THE SAME WRITTEN TOPICS OF WORK FOR THE AUTUMN AND SPRING TERMS. YOU WOULD ALL COOK THE SAME DISHES AND LEARN THE SAME SKILLS.

02

THEN IN THE SUMMER TERM OF YEAR 10 MRS ELLIS WOULD BEGIN TEACHING SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT UNITS OF WORK AND PREPARING YOU FOR THE CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT TASKS LINKED TO YOUR QUALIFICATION.

03

THIS IS NOT AN OPTION THAT IS AVAILABLE TO EVERY STUDENT.

Hospitality & Catering Course Details

Level 2 Qualification not GCSE.

60% controlled assessment task.

40% written exam paper that has to be completed in year 11.

Why could my child be better suited to this course?

The controlled assessment is worth more and the content of the controlled assessment is one task and not two. So the pressure to meet deadlines and complete work out of lessons is slightly reduced.

The practical exam requires 2 dishes are cooked not 3. This is less pressure on the student for those who may find a practical cooking exam with time constraints quite stressful.

The exam unit content relates more to the hospitality industry instead of the scientific properties of ingredients. This can be more interesting, engaging and sometimes relevant for a student and their post 16 interest.