

# Esher High School

## NEA NCFE Learner Handbook

2025-26

## What are vocational qualifications?

Vocational qualifications are nationally recognized qualifications. They are different from traditional GCSEs because they are linked to a particular area of work. However, a BTEC level 1 /2 or NCFE Vcert qualification is of equivalent challenge and difficulty to a GCSE.

## What makes vocational qualifications different?

- Students develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the vocational area they are studying.
- Each vocational course is made up of a number of units, allowing students to build up their qualifications in stages.
- Students take responsibility for their own learning by planning their work, doing research and regularly reviewing their progress.

## Why do we offer vocational courses

- They prepare students for the world of work and provide a good starting point for other qualifications such as NVQs and higher level BTECs that can be studied in the workplace as part of apprenticeships.
- Employers value the qualities that vocational students bring to the workplace e.g. organization, time management, communication and research skills.
- Colleges and universities value the independent study skills that vocational students bring to their courses.

## What are vocational qualifications worth?

BTEC Grade	GCSE Equivalent
Level 2 Distinction*	8.5
Level 2 Distinction	7
Level 2 Merit	5.5
Level 2 Pass	4
Level 1 Distinction	3
Level 1 Merit	2
Level 1 Pass	1.5

## What NCFE vocational courses do we offer at EHS?

NCFE VCert :

- Health and Fitness

## About the Vocational Courses

These are made up of units/ components. Each unit will take between 30 to 60 guided learning hours to complete.

Your teacher will explain how your individual course will be structured. You will have to be well organized and remember to keep information in the right places in your folder to avoid mixing up evidence or losing evidence for your assignments.

You will be taught the background information by completing class activities and research tasks. Then you will be given an assignment to complete. The assignment will be written or practical with tasks that enable you to achieve at all grade levels. It is important to meet the deadlines so that you can get feedback from your teacher and understand how to improve your achievement in future assignments.

## What will happen in lessons?

The lessons will vary according to the subject and level example activities are:

- Discussion – one to one or in groups
- Research – group or individual using a variety of methods
- Report writing – by hand or using ICT
- Presentations – in groups or individually
- Design work
- Practical work
- Display work

## What will be expected of you?

You will be expected to do all of the following:

- Attend lessons
- Participate in lessons
- Read and research
- Keep a record of information you find and the sources (referencing your work)
- Plan your work in a logical order and keep a record of your progress
- Talk to your teachers about your ideas and how to achieve the best results
- Produce drafts and final copies of your work
- Produce good quality work with high standards of grammar and spelling
- Present your work in a suitable format according to the purpose and the audience
- Evaluate your work and make suggestions for improvement

- Meet deadlines.

## Who will be involved with the course?

A description of the roles of each person involved in the course is detailed in the table below:

<b>Subject Teachers (assessors)</b> Health and Fitness:	Responsible for the planning of lessons, planning of resources, assessing work and making sure units are completed on time.
<b>Internal Verifiers</b> Creative Media: Mrs Joyes Health and Fitness: Mr Lyle	Check the assessment of all teachers on the course; sample the work of all students on the course and provide written feedback.
<b>Quality Nominee/ Quality Assurer</b> Miss Turner	Oversees the vocational courses to make sure that standards are being met. This will be done by; checking assessment records and course paperwork; looking at students' work and assessment decisions; collecting information on student achievement; and surveying teacher/ student views.
<b>Standards Verifier/ Lead Standards Verifier</b>	Standards Verifier: Employed by the exam board. They will have knowledge of the course and subject and will request samples of the work from one unit (see below for more details) Lead Standards Verifier: Employed by the exam board. They may visit the school and work with the school to facilitate the improvement of systems if required.
<b>Exams Officer</b> Ms Davis	The examinations officer is responsible for registering students for courses, entering them for external assessments and claiming for qualifications.

## How will your work be assessed?

All students will have to produce a portfolio of evidence for each unit of work. For each unit of work you will be given an assignment brief, each with a series of tasks to complete and an assessment grid that will identify what you have to do to achieve a particular grade.

Your teacher will assess your work against the grid and make comments about the effort you have made and quality of your work.

You will be expected to meet regular deadlines. Your work may not be assessed if you have failed to make reasonable efforts to meet the deadlines as given on the assignment brief.

At least one unit of all qualifications is externally assessed. This will usually take the form of an examination, but the exact style of testing will vary, depending on the nature of the course.

**The schools NEA assessment policy is published within the NEA policy in the Exams section of our website.**

Information for candidates for 'Non Examined Assessments 2025' can be found in the Exams section of our website.

## How will standards of work be maintained?

The schools NEA assessment policy is published within the NEA policy in the Exams section of our website.

### Internal Verification

This is a quality control check to ensure all students' work is being fairly marked and standards are being maintained. When a unit of work has been assessed and graded it will be passed to another teacher who will check that all of the tasks have been completed to the appropriate standard. It may be necessary at this stage, for you to amend your work if it does not meet the required standards.

### Storage of work

You are responsible for organizing and storing your classwork and homework. All completed, graded work will be stored safely in school until the final marks have been submitted and retained by the school for a minimum of 3 months.

### Standards Verification

A Standards verifier from the exam board will contact the school to ask to look at samples of work from each subject. The samples will be chosen to show the different grades awarded. The Standards Verifier is checking the quality of the assignments and standard of assessment. They may recommend that changes be made to the assignment and to the work you have done, although this may cause you some extra work, it will make sure that you are achieving the required standard to get a good grade for the course and is therefore very worthwhile.

## Plagiarism and Malpractice

Plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own.

Plagiarism can include:

- Copying from another learner, copying from books or copying from the internet
- Paraphrasing
- Where allowed: Using AI to generate answers but not properly referencing its use
- Subcontracting work to someone else
- Submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes

**Plagiarism and Malpractice are fundamentally dishonest. Learners who commit plagiarism are seeking an unfair advantage over other learners and devalue the qualification they seek. The work you produce must be your own. The following information is very important.**

Malpractice consists of acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification. **Esher Church of England High School does not**

**tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners or staff in connection with NEA qualifications.** Examples of malpractice of learners are given below:

- If you copy the work of another student, you will risk having your work cancelled and may achieve a zero score.
- If you lend your work to others, you will also risk having all your work cancelled.
- If you steal another student's work and copy it, the exam board may disqualify you from all your qualifications.
- In order to achieve an NEA qualification, you must produce your own work. You will not be allowed to:
  - Copy word for word from textbooks, the internet or from other students (past or present).
  - If you wish to reference the ideas of others, you should not do so without appropriately acknowledging the source.
  - Work collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. You are not being discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential skill for many sectors and subject areas, but group work must be clearly labelled as such.
  - Impersonate by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another student or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/ test.
  - Introduce and/or use unauthorized material outside of the requirements of supervised assessment/ examination/ test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organizers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones, smart watches or other similar electronic devices.
  - Behave in such a way as to undermine the integrity of an assessment/ examination/ test.
  - Alter any results document, including assessment feedback sheets, Internal verification forms or certificates.
  - Cheat to gain an unfair advantage.

NEAs requires candidates in centers to declare that their work is their own. You will be asked to sign to declare this on each assignment you submit.

It is the duty of members of staff to report assessment malpractice to the Quality Nominee/ Quality Assurer if they become aware of it. If a member of staff believes that work has been

copied, then parents will be informed and the pupil must re-write the work as their own and resubmit it.

If a member of staff suspects there has been malpractice, then the member of staff should discuss the issue with their Head of Department. If the matter is still unresolved, then evidence and the issue should be discussed with the Quality Nominee/ Quality assurer. The Quality nominee/ quality assurer will then decide on the appropriate actions to be taken. These will certainly involve discussions with pupils and parents. If the malpractice is proven outcomes could include removal from the course.

**A copy of the malpractice and plagiarism policy can be found on our website.**

## Use of AI

It is important students develop the knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they are studying and do not rely on AI.

Students must make sure the work submitted for assessment is demonstrably their own. If any sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student and they must understand this will not allow them to demonstrate they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore will not be rewarded.

AI misuse constitutes malpractice. AI misuse is where a student has used one or more AI tools but has not appropriately acknowledged this use and has submitted work for assessment when it is not their own. Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work submitted for assessment is no longer the student's own.
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content.
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations.
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information.
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools.
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies.

## How will my progress be monitored?

You will be closely monitored throughout the course and your subject teachers will keep detailed records of your progress. This information will be used for reports and parent's evenings.

## Assessment Procedures

**The schools NEA assessment policy is published within the NEA policy in the Exams section of our website.**

### Handing in Assignments

- You will be given a deadline for each assignment
- You will be given written feedback on your work
- In certain extenuating circumstances, your teacher *may* give you another opportunity to independently resubmit your work. Your work will then be re-submitted to your teacher within an agreed time. This is subject to the teacher's discretion and the structure of each individual assignment.

### Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

- All work produced is subject to internal verification.
- This process exists so as to ensure high quality and reliability of assessment across BTEC courses.
- There is no maximum limit to the amount of assessments that will be internally verified per student.

### Failure to meet deadlines

- If you cannot hand in work by the agreed deadline you will need to provide evidence of the extenuating circumstance e.g. a doctor's certificate. However, it will not be acceptable to say to your teacher that you did not have enough time to complete the assignment. Your work may not be assessed if you have not made all reasonable efforts to meet the deadlines as given on the assignment brief. If work is submitted late, you cannot be given resubmission opportunities.

### Can you appeal against a grade?

- Internally assessed coursework will have been standardized and moderated by subject staff.
- Parents may discuss this process with appropriate subject leader, but the actual marks awarded are the professional judgement of the teacher and not usually subject to change.
- Please note that internally assessed work is internally verified and externally verified and is open to change through this process. Marks may be raised or lowered prior to the submission by the board in July of the year of course completion.

### Appeals process for internally assessed component

Please note that once an external Standards Verifier has agreed with internally assessed marks there can be no alteration made without resorting to the external appeals process.

**Full details of our procedure for internally assessed components can be found on our website.**

In the first instance, the learner or learner's parent/ carer should complete the appeals form from the Exams Policy (found on our website) giving clear reasons as to the appeal and referring specifically to the unit and assessment criteria with which they take issue and submit the form to the head of department. A re-mark of the assessment evidence will be undertaken by the lead internal verifier or internal verifier if the LIV was the original assessor. Decisions regarding the outcome of such appeals will be notified to parents and students in writing.

### Appeals process for externally assessed components

**Full details of our procedure for externally assessed components can be found on our website.**

The centre can only appeal to the exam board (Pearson) in the following circumstances:

- If the school disagrees with the outcome(s) from Pearson's external quality assurance activities or the assessment of an externally assessed unit.
- If the school questions an approval (centre or qualification approval) or a qualification decision (e.g. malpractice) made by Pearson.

In the event of the need for an external appeal, learners must complete the school's standard appeal release form, available from the Exams officer or the school website. The Exams Officer will discuss the request with SLT and submit an appeal to the exam board. Decisions made by the exam board will be final.