Your notes

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition: revision notes

NEA: food investigation and food preparation assessment

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The NEA at a glance (AQA)

- The written exam (1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks) is worth 50% of the GCSE. The two NEA tasks are worth the other 50%.
- NEA 1, the **food investigation** (15%): a scientific investigation into the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. It takes about 10 hours and is written up in about 1,500 to 2,000 words.
- NEA 2, the **food preparation assessment** (35%): you research and plan, then prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than 3 hours. It takes about 20 hours in total.
- AQA releases the task titles each year, and you choose one for each task.

Doing well in NEA 1

- Research the science behind the task, such as how different flours affect bread.
- Write a **hypothesis** or prediction, then plan fair tests, changing only one **variable**.
- Record results with photos, sensory testing and measurements; analyse them and link them to the science.
- Evaluate the investigation and explain how the findings could be used.

Doing well in NEA 2

- Research the task and trial a range of dishes that show complex skills.
- Choose a final menu of three dishes that shows a range of technical skills (such as filleting, making pastry or sauces).
- Write a detailed **time plan** with food safety points and contingencies.
- Present the dishes attractively, then evaluate them, including cost, sensory qualities and nutritional analysis.

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Key terms

NEA	Non-exam assessment: the food investigation and food preparation tasks.
Food investigation	NEA 1: a scientific investigation into ingredients.
Food preparation assessment	NEA 2: planning, cooking and presenting three dishes.
Hypothesis	A prediction that can be tested.
Time plan	A plan of when each step will be done, including safety points.
Variable	A factor that can change in an investigation.
Contingency	A backup plan if something goes wrong.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. How much of the AQA GCSE is NEA 2, the food preparation assessment?
2. How long do you have to cook your three final dishes in NEA 2?
3. What is NEA 1 about?
4. What makes a test fair in NEA 1?
5. What should a good time plan include?
6. How many dishes are in the final NEA 2 menu?
7. What is a hypothesis?
8. How should results be recorded in NEA 1?

Answers

1. 35%
2. No more than 3 hours
3. A scientific investigation into ingredients
4. Changing only one variable at a time
5. Food safety points and contingencies
6. Three
7. A prediction that can be tested
8. With photos, sensory testing and measurements

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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