

# Blended learning and distance assessment

## Vocational qualifications 2025/26

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In the event that it is not possible to deliver vocational qualifications face to face (e.g. school closure or periods of self-isolation for pupils) the school has processes in place to provide for continuity of education; blended learning and distance assessment.

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidelines specified by the relevant awarding organisation
  - To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learners
- To ensure we comply with the requirements as set out in the Pearson policy for [Distance learning & assessment](#).

The school's primary platform for blended learning and distance assessment is **Google Classroom**. All pupils are inducted into this platform at the start of their studies at Whickham School. It is used extensively for homework and other uses during regular school opening and is therefore familiar and easily accessible to pupils. This platform may be supplemented by additional platforms when required.

Where there is potential or actual national disruption to teaching & learning the vocational awarding bodies may publish amendments or adaptations to specifications and/or assessments. This is most likely to occur in some practical programmes where certain units may not lend themselves well to distance assessment. Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring these are understood (by assessors and students) and implemented.

Where blended/distance learning is occurring we will endeavour to ensure that assignments are set in face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are made clear.

Where enrolment takes place remotely students will receive a 1:1 meeting with an appropriate member of staff as well as an opportunity to receive additional advice & guidance (for example through our Careers officer). An induction to each course will also be provided.

Prior to any move to blended or distance learning we will:

- Apply for distance learning approval, prior to any recruitment, enrolment, or delivery / assessment of any intended permanent distance learning provision
- Accurately register learners on Edexcel Online, indicating the 'study mode' of delivery, if distance learning

**When some individual pupils are absent but teaching carries on at school:**

- Work will be set for each lesson on Google Classroom that, as far as possible, replicates work students will complete in class.
- Pupils will be required to submit this work for teacher review and feedback (ensuring such feedback is within the rules and regulations for the vocational qualification).
- Pupils will be able to ask questions and receive constructive and timely feedback from teaching staff via e-mail or through the google classroom platform.

- Assessors will be required to judge that pupil work is their own. Assessors would expect work to be of similar quality/style to work completed in school. Assessors can also use google classroom's originality report to aid their judgement.

**When whole classes are absent and teaching occurs remotely:**

- Work will be set for each lesson on Google Classroom. This work will be tailored to ensuring pupils can access the knowledge and understanding they need through online learning.
- Whilst it is anticipated that in most cases assignments will have been set in face-to-face teaching if schools are closed for an extended period of time and it becomes necessary to start new assignments then considerable care must be taken to ensure assignments are set as clearly as possible, that pupils understand what is required of them, and that deadlines are clear.
- Pupils will be required to submit this work for teacher review and feedback (ensuring such feedback is within the rules and regulations for the vocational qualification).
- Pupils will be able to ask questions and receive constructive and timely feedback from teaching staff via e-mail or through the google classroom platform.
- Assessors will be required to judge that pupil work is their own. Assessors would expect work to be of similar quality/style to work completed in school. Assessors can also use google classroom's originality report to aid their judgement.
- Where substantial elements of assignments are completed under unsupervised conditions the Lead IV must arrange for additional sampling to check the originality of work.

**Potential impact on examinations, PSAs or other external assessments:**

- If the disruption is significant or likely to interrupt with a scheduled external examination or PSA window (or similar), then the school will liaise with Pearson to determine a course of action.

Programme Leaders remain accountable for maintaining and storing securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Pearson Centre Agreement.

There are a number of risks and issues that the school will put arrangements in place to mitigate during remote learning:

Risk	Mitigation
No/limited access to IT	The school's achievement team maintains a register of students with no or limited access to IT & Wifi. Equipment is loaned (or provided) to students when required. Disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils are given priority.
Plagiarism (work is completed under unsupervised conditions)	Additional sampling / use of google originality reports / staff training. In most cases assessors will have examples of the usual quality of work for each pupil.
Limited SEND support	Each SEND pupil has a key worker who will maintain daily contact (e.g. by phone) so that the pupil can be supported. The SEND team will conduct a risk assessment for each pupil with individual actions.
Limited/no work submitted	The school's achievement team will initiate contact and plan how the pupil can be best supported. Disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils are given priority. In the event of a school closure vulnerable pupils can be admitted to a bubble within school.

Philip Wheatley, Quality Nominee  
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