

## GL348 Practical D&T activities for pupils at home

It is **not** appropriate to set *standard* practical work for pupils to undertake at home.

Schools should not be setting practical work that would require specialist control measures, as a consequence of an appropriate risk assessment, if it were to be carried out in school.

Before setting work for pupils to carry out at home, the following should be considered:

- The environment, facilities and available materials and equipment will be limited and varied
- There may be younger, or other vulnerable members of the household present
- There is no access to expert supervision
- There will be limited (if any) PPE
- Access to first aid or immediate remedial measures might be limited.

No school-based risk assessment can adequately cover an activity carried out in a home situation. The person developing the activity would need to know the competence of the supervisor, what equipment is available in the home, lighting, hygiene, cleanliness, and so on. Teachers would know all this in their own classroom, but to predict this across numerous individual homes is not feasible.

However, this does not mean that teachers should not try to set engaging practical activities, but it is essential that a parent/carer is also involved. Where an activity may pose a risk of harm (e.g. cutting using a saw or sharp knife, contacting parents/carers would be required, and considered reasonable.

The written instructions for an activity must incorporate all relevant safety measures, and it is essential that the parent/carer reads it and agrees to provide the appropriate supervision before the pupil begins. If the teacher cannot be sure that the required level of supervision can be provided then the activity should not take place

There are many resources, such as Internet videos, available to help teachers develop useful learning opportunities for pupils. However, it is important that teachers consider carefully whether the resource is suitable for their pupils when it is administered by a parent, other adult, or with no supervision.

Unstructured suggestions to pupils to undertake an Internet search, may lead to ideas which could be either impractical or unsafe.

Most of the online D&T resources CLEAPSS has seen are designed for KS3 pupils (or below) and are limited to theory activities such as research or fact accumulation. Some have elements of creativity and may invite pupils to develop ideas linked to problems, but practical activities are usually limited to card or paper modelling. There are, however, many resources encouraging pupils to get involved in cooking food. Before teachers encourage such activities, they should consider the points above.

At KS4, when pupils are following a GCSE programme, there are few generic resources available for remote use. At GCSE pupils need specific, focussed, support, which is usually developed in-house.

In the summer of each year, the NEA (Non-examined assessment) contexts are set by the Awarding Bodies. These are the themes of the practical assessment for the GCSE in both Food and D&T.

Pupils following the GCSE programme will be expected to design a practical solution to a problem conceived within the context. This will lead, in the majority of cases, to pupils wishing to manufacture some sort of prototype solution, using food ingredients, woods, metals, plastics, textiles or other components. Under the present social distancing rules, this will prove difficult to manage, as schools will need to work within the guidance described in **GL344** *Guide to doing practical work during the COVID-19 pandemic; D&T, food and art*. However, the D&T NEA consists of two main elements: 1. the design portfolio, which is iterative and undertaken by the student, which does not require direct, expert, supervision, and 2. the prototype which requires manufacture under supervision of the teacher/assessor. The food NEA has two discrete tasks; a scientific investigation, and a design and make activity, the practical elements of both should take place in school, under supervision.

Schools are encouraged by the Awarding Bodies to set the NEA tasks as soon as they are able, to allow the pupils the maximum time, and the school sufficient time to carry out internal assessment and moderation, for submission in May of Year 11. This may mean that the tasks are set whilst pupils are still away from school for periods of time, or out of normal lessons. Such pupils may be able to carry out the investigation and design aspects of the task remotely. When these pupils return to school, possibly part-time, they will need to work in a practical room to make their prototype. It is likely that schools will have developed procedures and timetables to enable this to take place.

If schools and colleges which are members of CLEAPSS have further questions about this please make use of our Helpline <https://dt.cleapss.org.uk/helpline/helpline.aspx>