

# NEWTech Academics Syllabus

2021-2022

## Instructor Information

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## General Information

### Description

NEWTech Academics provides online courses you can complete on your own pace that help keep you on track to graduate while taking advantage of the amazing Career and Technical Education training opportunities here at NEWTech.

### Expectations and Goals

NEWTech Academics is an Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) that is different from regular in-person learning that you would get from a traditional high school and is also different from home schooling. Instead of coming into a classroom every day with a group of other students to learn the same things at the same time, you will be able to log in on your own time and complete the coursework at your own pace. The increased flexibility allows you to work around other commitments while still making on-time progress toward graduation. Using the online learning platform Apex, you will be able to access your courses anywhere, anytime. As you complete assignments, quizzes, tests, and activities, your instructor will monitor progress, provide feedback, answer questions, and update the grade book. You will meet with your instructor once per week to discuss progress, receive feedback, and ask any questions before planning the upcoming week. You will also have a variety of options for additional communication with your instructor including email, phone calls, Remind Messaging, or in-person meetings as needed.

While you may set your own schedule for completing the course, your instructor will be there to make sure you are moving through the course at an acceptable rate. These courses are designed to take a full semester with an average time spent of five hours per week, per course. Some students may finish early or require less time than others, so we will closely monitor your progress and remain in close contact each week. Apex will also send automatic progress report emails to all interested parties to help keep everyone informed and up-to-date. If you would like to receive these reports, please make sure the course instructor has your email address on file. As always, if you have any questions about your or your student's progress, please reach out to the instructor at any time.

In the event that a student has not made adequate progress, instructors will begin to implement intervention strategies that may include increased contact with the student or guardian, counselor, and other instructors, in-person meetings, or even removal of courses. Our goal is to make sure that any issues are dealt with early enough that no interruptions in the student's progress toward graduation occur.

On the other hand, it is entirely possible to complete your course(s) early, leaving you with more free time and less stress at the end of the semester/year!

## Course Materials

### Required Materials

Students will need access to a computer and internet and sufficient time beyond the school day to dedicate to work in Apex. Resources are available for those who lack access. Please contact your instructor immediately if you need any assistance.

### Optional Materials

Students may wish to keep a notebook or online document that they can use for taking notes. All tests and quizzes are open note, but closed book. That means you cannot go back into Apex to look up the answer to a question, but any notes you generated yourself are fair to use. Apex includes printable study or reading guides that you may choose to use. If you have trouble taking good notes, contact your instructor and we can help you with that.

## Quizzes and Tests

### Competency-Based Progress

Apex uses a competency-based model for student progress. As you work through the course, you will encounter computer-scored quizzes and end-of-unit tests. You will have a limited number of attempts to pass these in order to continue in the course. If you are unable to pass the quiz or test after two tries, the test will be locked from further attempts until you contact your instructor. The goal is for you to spend the time prior to taking a quiz or test learning and preparing notes. If you do not pass on the first attempt DO NOT immediately retake the quiz or test! Apex automatically randomizes the questions each time to take it. Instead, go back into the text and review further, and try to take some more notes. If you encounter any challenges, contact your instructor to help you. Locking quizzes and tests slows you down and can delay your progress. If this happens too often, you can expect a conference with your instructor.

## Monitoring Progress

### Progress Bar

When you log into Apex, you will see your Dashboard. There, you will find helpful information about your progress in your course(s). The first is a color-coded progress bar. A green progress bar indicates you have completed 80% or more of the assignments due at that point. Yellow indicates between 60-80% of assignments have been completed on time, and Red indicates that fewer than 60% of assignments have been completed by that time. Please note that if you are in the green today, you can fall to yellow or red if you do not continue to complete activities as they come due.

### Quality of Work

Beneath the heading “Quality of Work,” your teacher will see a percentage (e.g. 84.3%, equal to a B). This is the average percentage you have earned on all completed assignments. This does not take into account missing work, which would lower your average grade. This is useful for checking your ability with the materials to make sure you understand the work as you have done it. This is not, however, your current grade.

### Grade to Date

“Grade to Date” is exactly as it sounds. It is the percentage of points you have earned to that point including any missing work. This would be your actual grade in the grade book. (e.g. 75.2%, equal to a C). If you have all assignments completed by their due dates, this number will match the Quality or Work number. If you are missing any assignments, this number will be lower until you catch back up.

## Grading

### Grade Scale and Updating

All courses follow the grading scale seen below:

A	93
A-	90
B+	87
B	83
B-	80
C+	77
C	73
C-	70
D+	67
D	60
F	<60

Grades will be entered into PowerSchool once per week, given the varying times at which students complete their work. Your instructor will contact you following each grade update. It is then that you should check-in with any questions or concerns for the upcoming week.

#### Late Work

Due dates listed in Apex are used for determining on-time progress. Due to the varying timelines of student work habits, the due dates are useful mileposts, not hard deadlines. There is no penalty for late work, except for the time lost. All assignments can be completed for full credit at any time. The catch, however, is that too much time without progress will trigger an intervention plan, so make sure to keep making consistent progress to avoid a time crunch or other consequences.

## Tips and Strategies for Success

### Watch this Tutorial

Review this instructional video any time for a walkthrough navigating the Apex system:

[https://support.apexlearning.com/help/gs-student/courses/sgs\\_courses](https://support.apexlearning.com/help/gs-student/courses/sgs_courses)

### Create a Habit

Setting a routine to follow everyday increases your productivity and reduces the chances of getting distracted or “forgetting to do it.” You can set alarms or reminders on your phone to keep you honest.

### Spread it Out

It’s far more effective and less stressful to distribute your work time throughout the week rather than waiting and cramming at the last minute. Try breaking your work time into 20-30 minute chunks and allow for short breaks in between. You may be surprised at how much more you can get done in small chunks compared to one big marathon session.

### Stay in Touch

Remember that you can contact your instructor with questions or concerns. Keep in mind that you may enjoy working into the wee hours, but your instructor probably doesn’t, so use email or schedule video or phone calls during office hours.

### Plan Ahead

Going out of town for a few days? Is there a unit test coming up soon? Have to work all weekend? Use your calendar app on your phone to keep track of your time commitments and then make sure to work around them so you don’t fall behind.

### Use the Force

Or at least Google. Sometimes, if the textbook doesn’t quite make sense, getting a second opinion can do wonders. Try searching for additional information to help clarify any murky concepts or information. Just make sure you don’t copy someone else’s work! That’s cheating and can get you removed from the Academics program.