



# **BTEC STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2016-2017**

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## What are Vocational Qualifications?

Vocational qualifications are nationally recognised qualifications. They are different from traditional GCSE and A Levels because they are linked to a particular area of work.

## 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 qualification in stages.
- Students are assessed through coursework and an exam (making up 25% of their final grade).
- Students produce evidence for their key skills qualification through their vocational course.
- Students take responsibility for their own learning by planning their work, doing research and regularly reviewing their progress.

## What is a BTEC Qualification?

- BTEC qualifications are suitable for a wide range of students. They encourage and recognise achievement in students, some of whom may not be getting the most out of 'traditional' academic study. They will enhance skills you already have and encourage you to think about relating your learning to real-life situations.

## Why do we offer BTEC courses?

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

- The courses are flexible so that they meet the needs of a wide range of students. They are available at different levels in a variety of formats. They can be taken alongside other qualifications such as traditional GCSEs, A levels.
- They give students the opportunity to try a range of activities such as designing products, organising events, investigating how professionals work and working in teams.

## What are BTEC qualifications worth?

Award	Level	Year	Duration	Units	Equivalent
Edexcel BTEC Level 2 First Awards	2	9/10 or 10/11	2 yrs	3	1x GCSE grades A*-C (or new levels 5-9)
BTEC National Extended Certificate	3	12/13	2 yr	n/a	1 x A level

## Which BTEC courses do we offer?

At Outwood Academy Valley we offer the following BTEC courses:

### In Key Stage 4:

#### **BTEC First Certificate and extended certificate:**

BTEC Level 2 First Award in Performing Arts (Dance)  
 BTEC Level 2 First Award in Performing Arts (Acting)\*  
 BTEC Level 2 First Award in Music  
 BTEC Level 2 First Award in Construction  
 BTEC Level 2 First Award in Health and Social Care  
 BTEC Level 2 First Award in SPORT

### About the BTEC Courses

#### **BTEC First (Key stage 4):**

This course is made up of units; each unit will take between 30-60 hours to complete.

You will may be taught by more than one teacher, each teacher will be responsible for teaching different units (or parts of a unit), so that means that you

may be working on two or even three different units at the same time. You will have to be well organised and remember to keep information in the right places in your folder.

You will be taught the background information by doing class activities and research tasks. Then you will be given an assignment to complete. The assignment will be written or practical with simple tasks first to give you the opportunity to achieve the basic pass level, then the more complex tasks that require more research and independence will allow you to achieve merit and distinction grades. It is important to meet the deadlines so that you can get feedback from your teacher and understand how to reach the higher grades.

## A straightforward structure

- Each BTEC is made up of a number of units. The number of units is dependent on the level and size of the BTEC being studied.
- For example, a BTEC First Award in Music is made up of 4 units.
- Other qualifications have more units, some are mandatory (you have to do them) whilst others are optional.
- In order to achieve each unit, your work has to show achievement against a set of outcomes.
- BTECs now include a mandatory exam unit that makes up 25% of the final grade. This is externally assessed.
- The majority of BTEC work will be assignment based. You will hand the assignment in and then get ONE chance to try and improve it.

## Grading that's easy to understand

- BTEC units are graded individually; each unit is graded Pass, Merit or Distinction, according to how you perform against a set of criteria.
- Once you have completed all units, Edexcel calculates an overall Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction\* grade. Based on how well you have achieved at each unit.
- A Distinction\* is equivalent to an A\* grade GCSE (new Level 9) a Distinction to an A (new level 7-8), a Merit is a B (new level 5-6) and a Pass is equivalent to a C grade GCSE (new level 4).

# Edexcel BTEC Level 2 First Award in?

## What is a “BTEC”?

BTEC's are courses that develop a broad range of skills in job related areas. They are practical programmes and highly valued by employers and colleges.

## Will there be coursework?

The BTEC is around 80% coursework based and around 20% will be examination. You will be assessed in a variety of ways. This will include practical, written work presentations and report writing.

## What will happen in lessons?

The lessons will vary according to the subject and level but all students should experience most of these activities:

- Discussion - one to one or in groups
- Research – group or individual using a variety of methods
- Report writing – manually or using ICT
- Presentations – in groups or individually
- Practical work
- Display work
- Visits to organisations/companies
- Work with visitors

## Which styles of teaching will be used?

Different styles of teaching will be required throughout the course. This will depend on the unit being taught, the stage of delivery and the type of assessment required for that unit.

### □ **Teacher input**

At the start of a unit there will be a lot of teacher input; question and answer sessions, discussions, note taking and handouts. This may all happen at the beginning of a unit or at different points throughout the unit. It is important to

note any information you are given, as it may be required at a later stage in the unit.

#### □ **Student investigation**

Once the assignment has been explained and the tasks have been set, you will have to work on your own to find the information you need and then you will have to produce the information in a particular format to meet the requirements of the task. The work you produce must be your own; word for word copying from a textbook, or copying and pasting from the Internet **will not** be accepted nor will you be allowed to copy the work of other students. You will have to check regularly with your teacher to make sure that your work is correct and to discuss any ideas that you want to develop.

#### □ **Group work**

For some tasks you may have to work in a group, either to find information or to produce evidence. This is quite acceptable providing that all students take an equal share of the work and that individual contributions are identified.

#### □ **Practical Work.**

Practical activities which may include;

#### □ **Learning by experience**

Learning by experience and is usually done in the work place (e.g. work experience or work placement) or by setting up work situations in the classroom (e.g. a role play of a business interview or a health care worker communicating with a client). Whether real or pretend, a lot can be learned from this type of situation and it is important to make the most of it by preparing thoroughly beforehand and recording any information you find. Inviting visitors into school from the vocational area is another good way of linking your work with what really happens in the workplace.

#### □ **Developing skills**

During your course you will be taught many skills:

- communication skills
- research skills using a variety of methods
- I.C.T. skills using a variety of programs
- practical skills using different techniques and equipment
- presentation skills using a variety of formats
- organisational skills

You will be expected to practise these skills and apply them where appropriate throughout the course.

## What will be expected of you?

You will be expected to do all of the following as part of your day-to-day work

- Read and research
- Keep a record of the information you find and the sources
- 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
- Keep a record of the work you have completed, including the grades and points you have been awarded

## Assignment Briefs

You will follow assignment briefs for each of your units. These will be issued by your teacher at the start of each unit. They are your point of reference and should always be at hand, especially when writing your assignments.

Each assignment brief is internally verified before distribution and will tell you:

- Assignment number and title
- Which unit(s) the assignment relates to
- What the assignment is about
- What tasks you have to complete with a relevant scenario for you which informs you how to set out the assignment
- The grading criteria and learning outcomes the assignment will help you to achieve



- Suggestions and ideas on how to achieve the grading criteria
- Assignment start date
- Assignment completion date
- Assessors name

## Who will be involved with the course?

### Subject teachers (assessors)

They are responsible for planning lessons, preparing resources, assessing work and making sure that the units are completed on time.

### Programme manager

This is the teacher in charge of the course. S/he must make sure that the units are being taught correctly and that sufficient resources are available.

### Internal Verifier

S/he will check (IV) the assessment of all teachers on the course, they sample the work of all students on the course and provides written feedback. The IV works with the external verifier.

## Quality Nominee

This person oversees all of the vocational courses to make sure that standards are being met. This will be done by:

- Visiting lessons
- Looking at students' work
- Collecting information on student achievement

## External Verifier

This person has knowledge of the subject and the course and will visit to sample the work from one unit (see below for more details).

## Exam Officer

The examinations officer is responsible for registering students for the course and for claiming qualifications.

## How will your work be assessed?

- 1) **Portfolio of Evidence** - All students will have to produce a portfolio of evidence. For each unit of work you will be given 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 check your work against the grid and make comments about the effort you have made and the quality of your work. Suggestions will be made to help you to achieve first, the minimum pass standard and then, the merit and distinction grades. Points will be awarded and added to your overall score with every unit that you

complete. You will be expected to meet regular deadlines and a referral procedure will operate for students who fail to do this.

- 2) **Externally set component** - All BTECs started from 2012 at Outwood Academy Valley will be the new generation of BTEC which involves around 20% external assessment. These will be marked by people not from the school and may take the form of an onscreen computer test, a performance or a written test depending on your subject. Please look at your subject student guides for specific information regarding the externally set components.

## How to achieve the grades

The tasks at each level are graded according to how difficult they are to achieve. The key words used in the tasks will help you to understand what you have to do.

### BTEC First

#### Obtaining a Pass Grade

KEY WORDS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Complete...</b>	Complete a form, diagram or drawing.
<b>Demonstrate...</b>	Show that you can do a particular activity.
<b>Describe...</b>	Give a clear, straightforward description which includes all the main points
<b>Identify...</b>	Give all the basic facts which relate to a certain topic.
<b>List...</b>	Write a list of the main items (not sentences).
<b>Name...</b>	State the proper terms related to a drawing or diagram.
<b>Outline...</b>	Give all the main points, but without going into too much detail.
<b>State...</b>	Point out or list the main features.

In order to achieve a pass grade you will have to identify information. You can do this in different ways:

- Make a list
- Produce a mind map
- Produce a poster
- Produce a table
- Produce a labelled diagram or drawing
- Design a game or puzzle
- Produce a plan
- Produce a flow chart

For pass grade you will also be expected to describe in your own words the information you have found. This can be done in the following formats:

- A formal report
- A power point presentation
- A leaflet
- A handout or information sheet
- A web page

You may be able to include images to illustrate your work.

Examples:

*List the main features on your mobile phone.*

*Describe the best way to greet a customer*

*Outline the procedures you follow to keep your computer system secure*

### Obtaining a Merit grade

KEY WORDS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Analyse...</b>	Identify the factors that apply, and state how these are linked and how each of them relates to the topic.
<b>Comment on...</b>	Give your own opinions or views
<b>Compare... Contrast...</b>	Identify the main factors relating to two or more items and point out the similarities and differences.
<b>Competently use...</b>	Take full account of information and feedback you have obtained to review or improve an activity.
<b>Demonstrate...</b>	Prove you can carry out a more complex activity.
<b>Describe...</b>	Give a full description including details of all the relevant features
<b>Explain...</b>	Give logical reasons to support your views.
<b>Justify...</b>	Give reasons for the points you are making so that the reader knows what you are thinking.
<b>Suggest...</b>	Give you own ideas or thoughts.

To achieve this grade you will have to work independently and find information using different methods. You will have to write in detail and give examples to show that you have understood the information well. You will have to explain in details using your own words and give reasons for the points that you make. You will have to review what you have done and give reasons for the choices you made.

### **Obtaining a Merit**

#### *Examples*

*Explain why mobile phones are so popular.*

*Describe the needs of four different types of customers.*

*Suggest the type of procedures a business would need to introduce to keep its IT system secure.*

## Obtaining a Distinction grade

To achieve this grade you will have to be completely independent, using your own ideas, giving your opinion and justifying the points that you make. You will be expected to link ideas together and evaluate your work by identifying the strengths and weaknesses and giving ideas for improvement. You will use your teachers mainly for support and guidance, as the ideas will be yours.

### Obtaining a Distinction

KEYWORD	DESCRIPTION
<b>Analyse...</b>	Identify several factors, show how they are linked, and explain the importance of each.
<b>Compare... Contrast...</b>	Identify the main factors in two or more situations, then explain the similarities and differences, and in some cases adapt your original ideas.
<b>Demonstrate...</b>	Prove that you can carry out a complex activity taking into account information you have obtained or received to adapt your original ideas.
<b>Describe...</b>	Give a comprehensive description which tells a story to the reader and shows that you can apply your knowledge and information correctly.
<b>Evaluate...</b>	Bring together all your information and make a judgement on the importance or success of something.
<b>Explain...</b>	Provide full details and reasons to support the arguments you are making
<b>Justify...</b>	Give full reasons or evidence to support your opinion.
<b>Recommend...</b>	Weigh up all the evidence to come to a conclusion, with reasons, about what would be best.

*Examples:*

*Evaluate the features and performance of your mobile phone.*

*Analyse the role of customer service in contributing to an organisation's success.*

*Justify the main features on the website of a large successful organisation of your choice.*

## How will standards of work be maintained?

### □ Internal Verification

This is a quality control check to ensure that 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 in the department 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 standards set by other students, who have been awarded the same grade.

### □ Storage of work

You will be provided with a ring binder/ folder in which to keep your ongoing class work and homework. You will be responsible for this folder and must bring it to all lessons. All completed, graded work will be put into presentation folders and stored in a locked filing cabinet until external verification takes place and the final marks have been submitted.

### □ External Verification

An external verifier from Edexcel will visit school between January and March to look at samples of work covering one unit. The samples will be chosen to show the different grades awarded. The external verifier is checking the quality of the assignments and the standard of assessment. S/he 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

### Definition of Malpractice by Centre Staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- Improper assistance to candidates.
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.

- Fraudulent claims for certificates.
- Inappropriate retention of certificates.
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of the assessment.

### **Definition of Malpractice by Learners**

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- Plagiarism of any nature.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying).
- Deliberate destruction of another's work.
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.



- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for

### **The Centre will:**

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources.
- Ask learners to declare that their work is their own.
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used.
- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by a member of SLT and all personnel linked to the allegation. The individual will be made fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
- Document all stages of any investigation.

## **How will student progress be monitored?**

### **BTEC Assessment Policy and Academic Appeals Procedure**

#### **Student Guidance**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Outwood Academy Valley, takes its responsibility for ensuring the quality and reliability of assessment very seriously. It recognises that high quality assessment practices are an important element of the student experience and that the outcomes of assessment influence students' future lives.

Courses are assessed through tutor-marked assignments rather than end-of-module exams. You need to be aware of the volume of work that needs to be

generated on an on-going basis to complete these assignments and the importance of getting that work handed in for assessment by the given deadline.

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 parents evenings and regular updates will be sent to form teachers, year co-ordinators and key stage managers to follow up where necessary.

You will be required to keep a record of your own achievement as follows:

- Work handed in for assessment
- Unit grades achieved

If you keep your record sheets up to date you will be aware of your current achievement the grade that you are working towards and what you have to do to improve

## **ASSESSMENT ENTITLEMENT**

If you are a student of Outwood Academy Valley, you are entitled to:

Fair and open assessment practices.

An assignment indicating the criteria against which you will be assessed, assessment plan, unit specification, and a scheme of work.

Regular advice, counselling and guidance through tutors.

Access to an open and fair appeals procedure

Assessments being carried out regularly and outcomes reported with written and/or verbal feedback

## **ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

**Since June 2014 new internal assessment procedures have come into operation for all learners who began their course from September 2014 onwards.**

The new guidance for BTEC teachers is available in a 'Guide to Internal Assessment for BTEC Firsts and Nationals (Version 4: June 2014)

Essentially the changes are to do with feedback during the assessment process and they fall into 3 stages;

1. Teaching and learning feedback could include, for example:
  - a. Teachers identifying areas for learner progression including further challenge
  - b. Teachers explain how BTEC assessment works and what students need to do in order to achieve a Pass, Merit or Distinction

- c. Teachers could complete a mock assessment to learn the procedures and help prepare for the final assessment
2. During assessment feedback could include for example:
  - a. Guidance on how to approach the knowledge and skills requirements
  - b. Guidance on appropriate behaviour and approach including confirmation of deadlines etc.
  - c. Confirmation of which criteria the assessor is targeting and clarification of what the assignment brief requires
3. Following assessment feedback on the assessment record should include;
  - a. The criteria the learner achieved (with explanation of the assessor's decisions)
  - b. The criteria not achieved and why (although not a list of instructions on how to get a higher grade)
  - c. General comment on approach, conduct and grammar etc.

## **Resubmission of Evidence**

### **Opportunities for resubmission of evidence**

Because every assignment contributes to the final qualification grade, it may be appropriate for the Lead Internal Verifier to authorise one opportunity for a learner to resubmit evidence to meet assessment criteria targeted by an assignment.

Because every assignment contributes towards the final qualification grade, the new rules framework allows for one resubmission of evidence for each assignment. There are now clear guidelines around when and how your Lead Internal Verifier can authorise a resubmission which ensure any resubmissions are fairly and consistently implemented for all learners.

### **When can a Lead Internal Verifier authorise a resubmission?**

The Lead Internal Verifier can only authorise a resubmission if all of the following conditions are met:

the learner has met initial deadlines set in the assignment, or has met an agreed deadline extension

the tutor judges that the learner will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance

the assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment and the evidence is accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner.

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## GLOSSARY OF BTEC TERMINOLOGY

**Unit Credits:** The number of credits allocated to each unit, normally based on guided learning hours.

**QCA:** Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

**QCF: Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF):** Which means each Student, has a unique id number and has the potential to share units across awarding organisations.

**NQF: National Qualifications Framework:** The old framework for which the BTEC courses and titles were on. They have been moved over to the QCF since 2010 (see above). The new BTEC Firsts for 2013 have been moved back onto the NQF.

**GLH: Guided Learning Hours:** Is a notional measure of the substance of a unit. It includes an estimate of time that might be allocated to direct teaching, instruction and assessment, together with other structured learning time such as directed assignments or supported individual study. It excludes Student initiated private study. Centres are advised to consider this definition when planning the programme of study associated with this specification.

**IV: Internal Verification:** This is an Academy/team based responsibility to verify the quality of assignments before delivery to Students and verifies the quality of the assessor assessment decisions to meet national standards. The internal verifier carries out the internal verification process, which should be led by the Lead Internal Verifier.

**LIV: A Lead Internal Verifier:** (Lead IV) is the person designated by an Academy to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area.

**Quality Review and Development (QRD): Now replaced by QMR (see below)**

**Quality Management Review (QMR):** All Centres delivering BTECs from Entry Level to Level 3 will receive an annual quality visit from a Quality Management Reviewer. Contact is made directly with the QN and a meeting is organised for all Programme Leaders to attend. The focus is on the Academy systems and procedures for managing quality.

**QN: Quality Nominee:** This is the person nominated by the Academy who acts as the BTEC conduit of information into the Academy (Lucy Cooper).

**Edexcel Online:** This is a multifunctional system for Centre's. Access is password protected and covers areas for examination officers. Screens show programmes and Students within a Academy, allow for new registrations or withdrawals, show SV allocations, Lead Internal Verification and Accreditation take place through OCSA2 and Q,R & D feedback and reporting. It is recommended this is also used for submission of certification applications.

**Standards Verification (SV)**

The standards verifier is a subject assessment specialist appointed by the awarding body who verifies that Academy assessment decisions meet national standards. Standards verifier activities can be conducted electronically or by post as agreed by the Academy and Standards Verifier.

Standards Verification is an annual process for NQF BTECs.

For **QCF BTECs only**, it is linked to Lead Internal Verifier accreditation:

### **Confirmation sampling**

Principal Subject Areas can expect to be sampled at least once during their Lead Internal Verifier accreditation period to confirm that national standards are being maintained.

### **Accreditation sampling**

If a Academy Lead Internal Verifier for a Principal Subject Area was unsuccessful in achieving accredited Lead Internal Verifier status for a Principal Subject Area, they may achieve this via Accreditation Sampling, provided the sample is successful at the first submission.

### **Self-Assessment not attempted (SANA)**

If an Academy has not registered an individual as a Lead Internal Verifier to complete online standardisation via OSCA for their Principal Subject Area then they will automatically be selected for sampling. A positive outcome will not confer accredited Lead Internal Verifier status however, and the Academy will be required to complete the accreditation process at the next opportunity.

**What support is available to help me?**

Help	Link/Contact	Information
Edexcel Online	<a href="http://www.edexcelonline.co.uk">www.edexcelonline.co.uk</a>	Log in and view information relating to the courses being run and links for OSCA2 for Lead Internal Verifiers (QCF) and standardisation material (NQF)
BTEC Specification	<a href="http://www.btec.co.uk">www.btec.co.uk</a>	A page for BTEC specifications, set out in subject areas. Includes assessment material, mandatory units, delivery guidance and information relating to external assessment.
BTEC Guidance	<a href="http://www.edexcel.com/btec/delivering-BTEC/quality/Pages/Key-documents.aspx">http://www.edexcel.com/btec/delivering-BTEC/quality/Pages/Key-documents.aspx</a>	Key documents and guidance on the delivery of BTEC qualifications.
Edexcel	<a href="http://www.edexcel.com/Pages/Home.aspx">http://www.edexcel.com/Pages/Home.aspx</a>	One stop shop for information on all courses and roles within BTEC courses.
Quality Nominee	<a href="#">Mrs Lucy Cooper Assistant Principal (Outwood Academy Valley)</a>	Information regarding the running of courses and quality assurance information. Any questions you may have relating to BTEC. Student progress and support for all your BTEC groups and delivery.
Exams Officer	<a href="#">Mrs Sally Reynolds</a>	Student registration numbers, results and course registration. External assessment guidance.
Subject pages via website	<a href="http://www.valley.outwood.com/">http://www.valley.outwood.com/</a>	Information from subject teams relating to the courses