

**The BTEC  
Customised  
Framework**

a tailor-made solution

# Handbook **2004**

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Prepared by Samina Khan  
Authorised by Steve Besley

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# 1. BTEC Customised Framework

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## 1.1 Introduction

The BTEC Customised Framework provides a vehicle for accrediting, through Edexcel, qualifications or professional development programmes that are centre-devised. The BTEC Customised Framework has numerous practical applications. Employers can, for example, use the Framework to enhance the status of in-house training programmes or use it to devise industry-specific or job-specific blocks of training. Also, learning providers may develop specialist qualifications linked to a particular organisation or industry or accredit training.

This Handbook is for all customers wishing to devise qualifications from the BTEC Customised Framework. Essential information on qualification design and development is contained in this Handbook. It is advisable to use the Handbook with the *BTEC Customised Framework Guide* and assistance from Edexcel.

Edexcel offers a range of qualifications, some of which are included in *Table 1: Qualification frameworks from Edexcel*. The table shows qualifications within two broad frameworks:

- The BTEC Customised Framework
- The National Qualifications Framework (shaded section of *Table 1*).

The BTEC Customised Framework consists of:

- the BTEC Short Course qualifications
- the BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications.

Further details on the different BTEC Customised qualifications are found in *Sections 2* and *3* of this Handbook.

Examples of the NQF BTEC qualifications are listed in *Appendix 1: Examples of National Qualification Framework BTEC titles*. The latest information on all Edexcel qualifications can be found on the Edexcel website [www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications). A qualification on the NQF cannot be resubmitted for approval, as a customised qualification, on to the BTEC Customised Framework.

Before you embark on detailed qualification development you are advised to:

- discuss your education and/or training needs with Edexcel – *Appendix 2: Support from Edexcel*
- prepare a qualification rationale – *Section 1.6: Qualification rationale*
- identify a possible funding source (if required) – *Section 1.8: Funding*
- ensure you have discussed centre approval with Edexcel (if you are a customer new to Edexcel) – *Section 5: Approval to offer BTEC customised qualifications*

Edexcel offers support on the design and development of your qualification; for information on how to access this support see *Appendix 2: Support from Edexcel* or contact Edexcel's central Customer Services (tel. 0870 240 9800) for assistance.

Table 1: Qualification Frameworks from Edexcel

	<b>BTEC Customised Framework</b> (Centre-devised qualifications approved by Edexcel)		<b>National Qualification Framework</b> (Regulator approved qualifications)		
<b>Qualification Level</b>	<b>BTEC Short Course Qualifications</b>	<b>BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory Qualifications</b>	<b>NQF BTEC Short Course Qualifications</b>	<b>NQF BTEC Qualifications</b>	<b>Other NQF Qualifications</b>
<b>5</b>	BTEC Advanced Professional Award/ Certificate/ Diploma		Edexcel Level 5 BTEC Professional Award/ Certificate/ Diploma		Edexcel NVQ Level 5 Key Skills Level 5
<b>4</b>	BTEC Professional Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	BTEC Higher National Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 4 BTEC Professional Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 4 BTEC Higher National Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel NVQ Level 4 Key Skills Level 4
<b>3</b>	BTEC Advanced Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	BTEC National Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 3 BTEC Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Award/ Certificate/ Diploma  BTEC Diploma Foundation Studies (Art & Design)	Edexcel NVQ Level 3 Key Skills Level 3  GCE / GCE in Applied Subjects/ AEA
<b>2</b>	BTEC Intermediate Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	BTEC First Diploma	Edexcel Level 2 BTEC Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 2 BTEC First Diploma	Edexcel NVQ Level 2 Key Skills Level 2  GCSE <sup>1</sup> GCSE <sup>1</sup> in Vocational Subjects GNVQ Intermediate  Adult Literacy/ Numeracy Level 2
<b>1</b>	BTEC Foundation Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	BTEC Introductory Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 1 BTEC Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Level 1 BTEC Introductory Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel NVQ Level 1 Key Skills Level 1  GCSE <sup>2</sup> GCSE <sup>2</sup> in Vocational Subjects GNVQ Foundation  Adult Literacy/ Numeracy Level 1
<b>Entry</b>	BTEC Entry Award/ Certificate/ Diploma		Edexcel Entry BTEC Award/ Certificate/ Diploma	Edexcel Entry Level Certificates in Life Skills/Skills for Working Life E1, E2, E3	Edexcel Entry Level Certificates E1, E2, E3  Adult Literacy/ Numeracy E1, E2, E3

<sup>1</sup> (A\* to C grade)

<sup>2</sup> (D to G grade)

## 1.2 Transition arrangements

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003 all new centre-devised qualifications must be developed using the BTEC Customised Framework. This Framework replaces the BTEC Short Course Framework, details of which were made available to centres previously.

Qualifications approved previously as part of the BTEC Short Course Framework can continue to be offered until the end of their validity (as indicated on the relevant Programme Definition). After the expiry of the validation period, those qualifications on the BTEC Short Course Framework will not be granted an extension but will have to be amended and re-approved on to the BTEC Customised Framework. Centre-devised BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals and First qualifications, prior to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003, can also continue until the end of their validation period, after which they will have to be amended and re-approved on to the BTEC Customised Framework.

To develop customised qualifications you must adhere to the policy in this Handbook and follow the information on the design, development and implementation of your centre-devised qualification. Your Edexcel contact is able to advise on and support you with the development of your qualification (see *Appendix 2* for contact details). Also you will need to follow Edexcel's centre and qualification approval processes, which are detailed in *Section 5* of this Handbook. Your Edexcel contact can also guide you through the relevant approval stages.

## 1.3 Designing a qualification

You can use the BTEC Customised Framework to develop qualifications/training that fulfils your specific requirements. Your customised qualification must be developed using the guidance in this Handbook. Support at all stages of qualification design and development is available from Edexcel, see *Appendix 2: Support from Edexcel*. A possible starting point for qualification design is to define your qualification aims.

## 1.4 Qualification aims

Each qualification will have an unique set of aims, which usually include:

- the purpose of the qualification
- target learning and assessment outcomes for your qualification
- the target learners and how your qualification will meet their requirements
- the progression routes of prospective learners.

These aims can be used in your qualification rationale (*Section 1.6: Qualification rationale*).

You may wish to consult with the intended users of the qualification in drawing up the aims, for example employers, higher education, professional bodies and learners. Broadly, these aims may include:

- a customised qualification to satisfy a specific employer's need or to attract new learners into a particular employment sector
- a qualification to provide appropriate skills and personal qualities essential for performance in social and employment situations through small blocks of learning
- the tailoring of knowledge, skills and understanding into a qualification as a basis for future development in Further or Higher Education or entry into employment. The knowledge, skills and understanding may be linked to National Occupational Standards and hence offer subsequent progression on to related NVQs
- addressing local and regional skills requirements and the working patterns of particular sectors through specific coherent blocks of learning.

Evidence of consultation and support can be included in your qualification rationale (see *Section 1.6* and *Appendix 3*).

## 1.5 Selecting a qualification

Sections 2 and 3 of this Handbook describe the key aspects of the customised BTEC Short Course qualifications and the customised BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications respectively. From these two sections you will gain information on the structure and merits of each qualification and the parameters within which the qualifications can be developed.

BTEC Short Course qualifications offer flexibility. These qualifications can be designed from a choice of unit sizes and qualification sizes. They are available from Entry level to level 5.

The customised BTEC Introductory, BTEC First, BTEC National and BTEC Higher National qualifications are available from levels 1 to 4 respectively and have stipulated qualification sizes. These pre-defined qualification sizes allow you to develop a qualification that relates to the nationally recognised, standardised BTEC qualifications on the NQF.

## 1.6 Qualification rationale

Establishing the rationale for your qualification is a useful diagnostic exercise, which will help you determine a clear purpose for your qualification. To help you establish your qualification rationale you should use form BTEC CQF1 from the Edexcel website; a sample of this is shown in *Appendix 3: Qualification rationale*. If you are new to qualification development, you can involve your Edexcel contact to address the issues in your qualification rationale. More experienced centres will be familiar with the issues in form BTEC CQF1.

The benefit of working through form BTEC CQF1 will enable you to establish early on:

- the viability of your qualification
- the aims of your qualification, which can be used to develop the qualification's outcomes
- your target learners, their specific needs and how they can be met
- the end users of your qualification, eg employers, higher education
- the possible delivery and assessment modes. This will highlight a number of issues, for example specific resource requirements
- any partnerships with employers, training or learning providers.

By considering the issues in form BTEC CQF1, in the initial stages of the qualification design, you will strengthen the case for your qualification to be accredited by Edexcel. It is advisable you consult with your Edexcel contact in the preparation of your rationale, as he/she will be able to offer expert advice. Once Edexcel has looked at your qualification rationale you will be contacted, and given feedback on the acceptability of your proposal.

You should not start detailed qualification development until your qualification rationale has been accepted by Edexcel. You can use *Appendix 4: Example of a qualification rationale* as a guide on how to complete your qualification rationale.

If you can show you have consulted with key groups on the qualification rationale and can include relevant supporting evidence, this will help consolidate your case with Edexcel. If you are new to qualification development you may wish to follow all/some of the ideas outlined below, which may help you address the issues in form BTEC CQF1. Possible ideas to consider:

- discuss your qualification rationale with your Edexcel contact
- establish the qualification aims (Why is the qualification being developed, what market needs are being addressed? Has market research been conducted?)
- identify target learner (Who are the learners? Estimated registrations? What can the learners progress on to?)
- design the qualification and qualification title (Which qualification type will best meet the qualification aims? Consider a qualification size? Consider your qualification title, unit titles and size of units? Are there links to other qualifications to be considered? How will your qualification meet the identified market needs?)
- meet with key groups to consult on your proposed qualification
- develop your qualification development plan and consider your costs (time scale, unit writing, qualification development, implementation and maintenance costs, learner registration cost, etc.). You are not required to disclose your costs to Edexcel but you may wish to consider them in the initial stages to establish the feasibility of your qualification
- if required, funding
- if you are not an Edexcel approved centre for the BTEC Customised Framework qualifications, you must apply for centre approval – see *Section 5*. Your Edexcel contact can help you with applying for centre approval.

## 1.7 Draft unit

If you wish to write your own qualification units, you may need to send to Edexcel a draft unit for comment – check with your Edexcel contact if you need to submit a draft unit. Edexcel will provide feedback on the unit. This initial feedback is valuable as any potential problems/requirements are isolated and can be addressed before you invest resources in further unit writing.

If you are proposing a qualification which consists only of units from existing Edexcel qualifications, eg NVQ units, you will still need to send a qualification rationale but not a draft unit.

Should you require units to be written for you, Edexcel's *Providing Solutions* service will be able to arrange this (email: [providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk), tel. 020 7758 6863, or see the Edexcel website: [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)). Your Edexcel contact can provide a quotation for this service.

Once you have developed your qualification, you will be asked to send the complete qualification and qualification application forms BTEC CQF2 to Edexcel. At all stages of this process you will be supported by your Edexcel contact and further information on qualification approval can be found in *Section 5.3* and on the Edexcel website.

## 1.8 Funding

Qualifications on the BTEC Customised Framework do not appear on the NQF and hence do not fall under the auspices of sections 96 and 97 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. You will need to consider how your qualification will be funded. Funding options that are available include:

- at full cost to the learners or their sponsoring employers
- as accredited courses within funded education development projects eg New Technology Institutes (NTI), Higher Education Reach Out Business and the Community (HEROBAC)
- European funding in Northern Ireland, for Colleges and Institutes of Further and Higher Education, the Department for Employment and Learning provides funding for customised programmes via the normal funding arrangements in line with Departmental policy ([www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)) funding via the Learning and Skills Council, ie where local sector skills shortages are met through the qualification you are developing ([www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk))
- in Wales, funding via ELWA ([www.elwa.org.uk](http://www.elwa.org.uk)) normally available for post-19 learners. Other funding sources for Wales include the Welsh Funding Council European Funding ([www.wfc.ac.uk/efund](http://www.wfc.ac.uk/efund)) and the Welsh European Funding Office ([www.wefo.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk)).

If your qualification requires funding, it is advisable you research potential funding sources before starting detailed qualification development.

## 1.9 Qualification development process

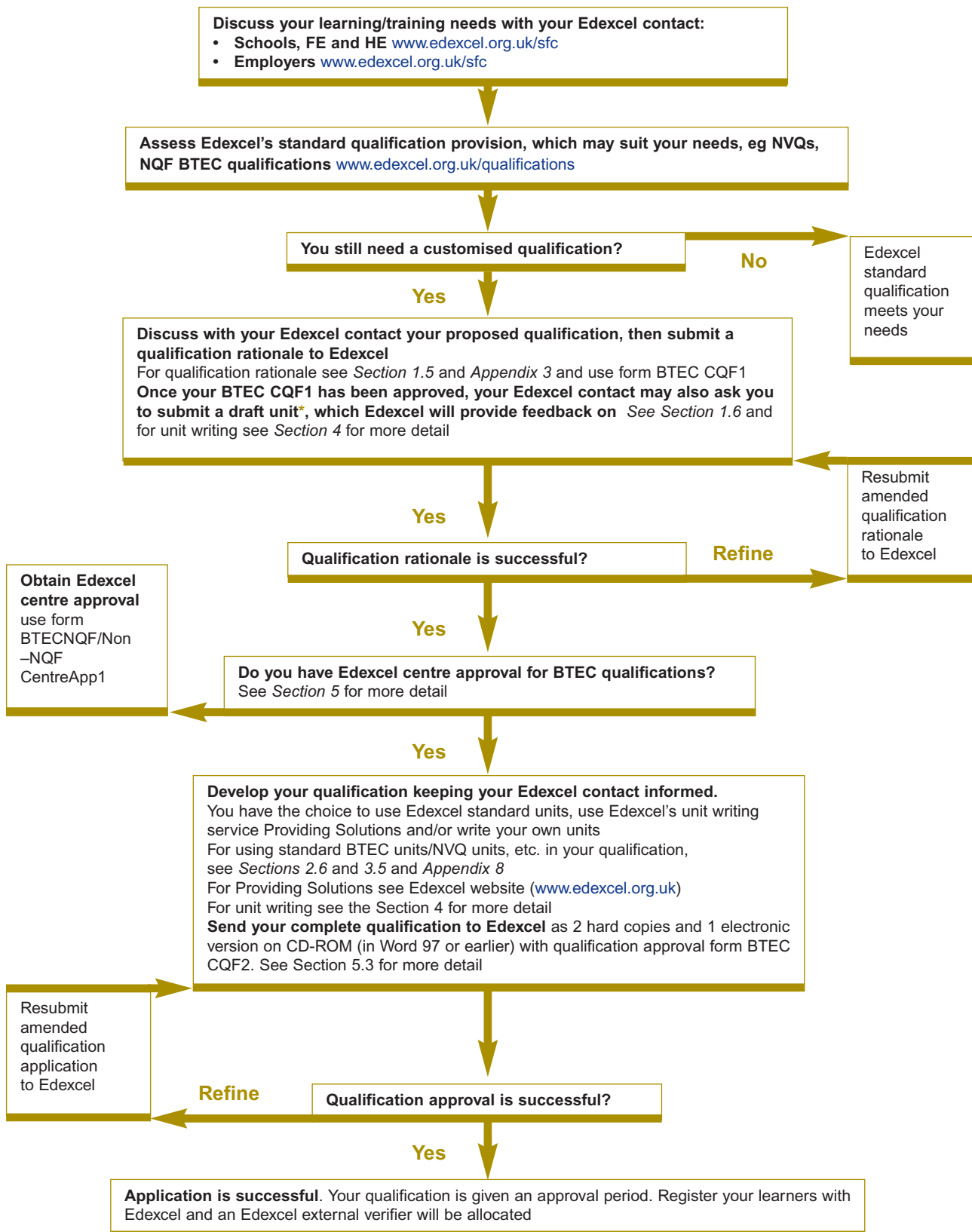
You are ready to start qualification development once your qualification rationale and, if required, draft unit have been approved (see *Section 1.6* and *Section 1.7*). If you are a centre new to Edexcel, you will also have to gain centre approval in order to deliver your customised qualification (for more information see *Section 5: Approval to offer BTEC customised qualifications*). Your Edexcel contact can offer you expert advice on qualification development and can also provide information on centre approval.

Your customised qualification must be composed of units and these can be:

- written by you and/or
- standard Edexcel units and/or
- written by Edexcel Providing Solutions service (email: [providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk)), tel. 020 7758 6863, or see the Edexcel website: [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk).

*Diagram 1* is a summary of the qualification development process. The diagram represents a sequential approach to obtaining qualification approval. This approach may suit a centre new to qualification development. More experienced centres can take a more holistic approach to developing their qualifications.

Diagram 1: Summary of the customised qualification development process



\* If your qualification is composed of existing Edexcel standard units or Providing Solutions is writing your units you will not need to submit a draft unit.

## **2. BTEC Customised Framework – Short Courses**

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## 2.1 BTEC Short Courses: introduction

BTEC Short Course qualifications are flexible, centre-devised qualifications that offer a choice of levels and qualification sizes and can be packaged to provide blocks of learning at the same level or at different levels.

After establishing the aims for your qualification you will need to ascertain the qualification level and overall qualification size. When considering level, the BTEC Short Course Qualifications have the advantage that they can be developed from Entry level to level 5, as illustrated in *Table 2: BTEC Customised Framework - Short Courses*.<sup>3</sup> The other key feature of the BTEC Short Course Qualifications is that they offer a range of qualification sizes. These are called:

- Award
- Certificate
- Diploma.

*Table 2: BTEC Customised Framework - Short Courses*

Qualification level & associated titles	BTEC Customised Framework - Short Courses		
	Award 30 – 100 hours	Certificate 120– 200 hours	Diploma 220– 300 hours for Entry to Level 3 No upper limit for Levels 4 & 5
<b>Level 5</b> BTEC Advanced Professional	BTEC Advanced Professional Award	BTEC Advanced Professional Certificate	BTEC Advanced Professional Diploma
<b>Level 4</b> BTEC Professional	BTEC Professional Award	BTEC Professional Certificate	BTEC Professional Diploma
<b>Level 3</b> BTEC Advanced	BTEC Advanced Award	BTEC Advanced Certificate	BTEC Advanced Diploma
<b>Level 2</b> BTEC Intermediate	BTEC Intermediate Award	BTEC Intermediate Certificate	BTEC Intermediate Diploma
<b>Level 1</b> BTEC Foundation	BTEC Foundation Award	BTEC Foundation Certificate	BTEC Foundation Diploma
<b>Entry Level</b> BTEC Entry	BTEC Entry Award	BTEC Entry Certificate	BTEC Entry Diploma

Edexcel Higher Education centres can follow the policy on qualification development detailed in the Edexcel Licence Agreement. They are also required to follow higher education validation and quality assurance processes. Hence those centres do not have to follow this Handbook.

<sup>3</sup> These levels are the same as the levels shown in Table 1.

## 2.2 BTEC Short Courses: qualification levels

Each qualification must have a designated level, from Entry level to level 5.

At least 75% of the total qualification hours must be at one overall qualification level. This allows 25% of the total qualification hours to be made up of units at different levels to the overall qualification level.

The selected level of the short course qualification will define the generic title of BTEC Entry, Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced, Professional or Advanced Professional as shown in the first column in *Table 2: BTEC Customised Framework - Short Courses*.

It is essential that your proposed qualification is at the correct level. To determine the level it may be useful to consider:

- job roles and how these relate to the levels in *Table 2*
- National Occupational Standards (NOS); these are developed and revised by the Sector Skills Council for different employment sectors. NVQs are National Vocational Qualifications, which are developed from NOS (see *Table 1: Qualification frameworks from Edexcel* column *National Qualification Framework*). Where NOS occur in your area, they can be used to determine/compare the level of your qualification.

For example, in summary, from the Care sector:

- levels 2 and 3 cover those who are involved in the direct delivery of care under the supervision, direction or guidance of qualified professional staff such as nurses, midwives, health visitors, physiotherapists,...
- level 4 is designed to cover a wide range of qualified professionals in childcare and adult services.

For example, in summary, from the Management NOS:

- level 2 covers team leadership
- level 3 covers supervision of staff
- level 4 covers the middle management function
- level 5 covers senior operational and strategic management.

For example, in summary, from the Training NOS:

- level 1 covers a range of activities that are largely routine and predictable
- level 2 covers a broader range of work activities that are less routine and predictable. Their job role will need to have some autonomy and responsibility and may require them to work as part of a team.
- level 3 covers applying their knowledge and skills while carrying out a broad range of varied work activities, most of which are complex and non-routine. Their job role will have considerable autonomy or responsibility, and often require them to manage others.
- level 4 covers complex work activities that require technical knowledge. Their job role requires substantial personal autonomy and often requires them to take responsibility for the work of others and for allocating resources.
- level 5 covers carrying out activities in a wide range of situations, which are often unpredictable. Substantial responsibility and autonomy is involved in the job role, which requires deciding on the allocation of resources and the work of others. It requires the use of complex skills such as analysis, design and evaluation.
- for levels 4 and 5 the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) criteria, to help define the breadth, depth and demand at these two levels (see *Appendix 5: QAA criteria on Level 4 and 5 qualifications*)
- qualifications offered by Edexcel, eg GCE, GCSE, Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma (see the shaded part of *Table 1: Qualification frameworks from Edexcel*), to compare the level of knowledge, skills and understanding required by learners for these qualifications.

Establishing the level of a qualification can be a complex task, so seek guidance on level from your Edexcel contact. Examples of standard NQF qualifications at different levels can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications)). In Wales centres can use the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales (CQFW) levels to help identify a suitable level.

The depth, breadth and complexity of knowledge, skills and understanding can differentiate qualification levels. The level descriptors in *Appendix 6* are a general guide that may help you define the level of your qualification.

If you are developing a qualification at Entry level, you can use the Entry level descriptors in *Appendix 7: Level descriptors for Entry level qualifications* (see *Section 2.7* for more detail). NQF vocational Entry qualifications are divided into three sub-levels: Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3, as shown in *Appendix 7*.

At least 75% of the total qualification hours must be composed of units at the same level. This permits 25% of the total qualification size to be composed of units at different levels to the overall qualification level. For example, a level 3 qualification composed of a total of 120 hours must have at least 90 hours of the qualification at level 3. The use of different level units may be useful when practical or theoretical skills, for example IT skills or mathematical knowledge and understanding, are required at a different level from the vocational skills. You will need to provide a rationale explaining why units at different levels are required in your customised qualification.

## 2.3 BTEC Short Courses: qualification size

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**The BTEC Short Courses offer the choice to develop an Award, Certificate or Diploma qualification (see *Table 2* for qualification sizes).**

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The size of your qualification will determine if the qualification is an Award, a Certificate or a Diploma; for instance if the qualification totals 90 hours then it will be classified as an Award. The following factors may help you when considering qualification size:

- the needs of your learners
- delivery time
- guided study time
- assessment and feedback time.

## 2.4 BTEC Short Courses: unit size

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**The smallest unit size consists of 10 guided learning hours. Other unit sizes can be any multiple of 10 to a maximum unit size of 120 guided learning hours.**

**The definition of guided learning hours is ‘a notional measure of the substance of a qualification’. 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 learner-initiated private study.**

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All of the qualifications within the BTEC Customised Framework must be made up of units. The size of a unit is measured in guided learning hours. A single unit qualification is permitted where this best meets your requirements.

The unit size will be defined by the amount of coherent learning appropriate within a single unit. Units in a single qualification can all be of the same size or different sizes. Introducing units of different size may be essential for the design of a coherent and meaningful qualification; for example short introductory units that are the foundations for longer skills based units.

The number of units will be determined by the required learning outcomes of your qualification. For example, if you wished to write a training qualification for technicians working in a laboratory and the desired achievements from the training were for the technicians to understand health and safety, resource management and laboratory management, you may consider three units, one for each identified area of knowledge and understanding.

## 2.5 BTEC Short Courses: core and option units

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**All units must be expressed in outcomes and each unit can be defined as a core or an option unit.**

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The units in the qualification can consist of core units that are mandatory only or the qualification can be composed of mandatory core units and a group of option units. A short course qualification can consist of only one unit if this fits your particular requirements. If you are offering any choice in your qualification then you must make clear:

- the units that are core
- the units that are option
- how many option units must be completed to be awarded the full qualification.

Some of the features of core units can be:

- a broad based introduction to the qualification
- the essential components of the qualification
- the underpinning learning for the subject area
- the springboard for further specialised study
- a consolidation of previous learning.

Some of the features of option units can:

- be more focused around an area of specialisation
- build on the fundamentals introduced in the core
- permit greater breadth of learning
- permit greater depth of learning
- provide a choice for the learners.

In general the Short Course qualification will comprise units all at the same level, however there may be certain core or option units that need to be at a different level, for example certain skills units or introductory units. At least 75% of the total qualification hours must be composed of units at the same level. This allows 25% of the total qualification hours to be composed of units at different levels from the overall qualification level. Also, see *Section 2.2: BTEC Short Courses: qualification levels*.

## 2.6 BTEC Short Courses: imported units

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**Units from standard Edexcel qualifications can be incorporated into a customised BTEC Short Course qualification, provided this supports the coherence of your qualification and is subject to the rules set out in Appendix 8: The use of units from standard Edexcel qualifications and Appendix 9: Significant overlap.**

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If you plan to use standard Edexcel units in your customised BTEC Short Courses, please note that:

- the adopted unit's learning outcomes and assessment requirements must not be altered
- a customised BTEC Short Course qualification can be composed entirely of standard Edexcel units provided the resultant qualification is meaningful, fulfils your aims and does not duplicate or significantly overlap any standard qualification
- standard Edexcel externally assessed units cannot be used in a customised BTEC Short Course qualification.

Further qualification specific rules are listed in *Appendices 8 and 9*. For the successful approval of your qualification it is important that you follow these rules. Your Edexcel contact can offer you guidance on the standard Edexcel units, which you can import into your customised qualification.

Where BTEC Short Course qualifications are composed of NVQ units and units written by you, the latter must be written in the BTEC unit format (see *Section 4: Unit writing*).

## 2.7 BTEC Short Courses: assessment and grading

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**The BTEC Short Course qualifications are internally assessed by you. Edexcel provides quality assurance through external verification.**

**The assessment of the BTEC Short Course qualifications is at unit level. The Notification of Performance, which is issued with the qualification certificate, will record all the successful units achieved by the learner and if the units are graded will include the unit grade. There is no overall qualification grade.**

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For all the units you write, you can select to assess and grade BTEC Short Course qualification units as pass, merit or distinction. Alternatively you can choose not to grade your units but assess each unit as pass or not achieved. It is your decision to grade or not to grade your units.

The simple approach is unit assessment at pass or not achieved. A pass is awarded for the achievement of all learning outcomes against the specified pass assessment criteria. Learners need to achieve all the pass assessment criteria to pass the unit. All learners, regardless of how well they achieve the pass assessment criteria, will only have pass recorded on their Notification of Performance. Some units are best assessed using this approach, for example a qualification:

- containing units that are competence based
- containing units that are based on personal skills development (confidence, assertiveness, etc.)
- at Entry level where pass/not achieved is the most suitable method to assess and grade the learner's achievement.

The second approach is to assess and grade each unit at pass, merit or distinction, thus differentiating the learner's performance. A pass is awarded for a unit, based on the achievement of all the pass assessment criteria for that unit. Merit and distinction grades are awarded for higher level achievement. The assessment and grading of evidence at merit and distinction level is based on the application of generic grade descriptors. Merit and distinction generic grade descriptors for levels 1 to 4 are defined by Edexcel and are on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)) For level 5 qualifications, because of the specific requirements of this level, you can devise your own grading criteria for merit and distinction grades that are relevant to your sector/area.

The merit and distinction grade descriptors are for grading the total evidence for each unit. To do this the descriptors should be contextualised into the design of the assessment activities for each unit. It is not necessary to incorporate all the merit and distinction descriptors for every individual assessment activity.

If you are importing units from other qualifications, you must use the learning outcomes and assessment and grading requirements of the adopted unit (see *Section 2.6* and *Appendix 8*).

A single qualification may have more than one approach to unit assessment and grading and this is allowed, as long as each unit's assessment and grading method:

- is appropriate to the unit
- is appropriate to the overall qualification aims
- does not undermine the coherence of the qualification.

Your Edexcel contact can offer guidance on assessment.

It is your decision which assessment activities you use with your learners, to allow them to gather evidence for each unit. The assessment activities can be diverse and will depend on the nature and level of the unit and also on the needs of your learners. Your assessment activities may be based on, for example, assignments, projects, case studies, practical activities, performance observations, presentations, time-constrained assessments and work-based activities. It is important that your assessment activities must be based on the unit's assessment criteria.

## 2.8 BTEC Short Courses: qualification titles

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The qualification title must:

- reflect the content of your qualification
- be distinctive
- not duplicate or emulate (eg e-Business and e-Businesses) standard Edexcel qualification titles.

**Edexcel will own the BTEC qualification title but you will own the intellectual property rights for all the units you write.**

---

Within certain parameters Higher Education centres can create their own qualification titles, if they have a Licence Agreement with Edexcel. If your centre does not have such an Agreement with Edexcel, please follow the information in *Appendix 10* on the construction of qualification titles. Your Edexcel contact will also be able to guide you on qualification title construction.

For a series of related qualifications specific aspects can be written in brackets, for example:

- BTEC Advanced Certificate in Waste Recycling (Plastics)
- BTEC Advanced Certificate in Waste Recycling (Paper).

For a single unit qualification, the qualification title and the unit title must be the same.

For all the units you write you will own the intellectual property rights but Edexcel will own the BTEC title. If you prefer, Edexcel can write the units for your qualification. Edexcel's unit writing service is Providing Solutions (email: [providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk)) or see the Edexcel website: [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk). Your Edexcel contact can provide a quotation for this service.

Edexcel will not permit another centre to deliver your customised qualification or individual units without your written consent except in the following situation; in the event that a centre is not able to fulfil its commitments to its registered learners, Edexcel will ensure that suitable provision for the learners is found and this may require another centre to register the learners and deliver the customised qualification.

## 2.9 BTEC Short Courses: development check list

It is important before you start detailed unit writing to have selected at least:

- the type of qualification
- the level of your qualification
- the size of your qualification
- the number and size of units
- the level of the units
- how the units will be assessed
- the core units and, if required, option units.

It is essential that your qualification design meets your qualification aims.

To help with the design and development of your BTEC Short Course qualifications use the checklist in *Appendix 11: Development check list for a customised BTEC Short Course qualification*.

### **3. BTEC Customised Framework – BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications**

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### 3.1 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: introduction

The NQF BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications have been devised in collaboration with interested parties, for example Sector Skills Councils, employers and professional bodies. These qualifications are developed to national standards, have clear progression routes and are recognised by further education, higher education, employers and industry. However, there are instances when these NQF qualifications do not meet specific training and learning needs, for example a local training demand. To allow for this, the BTEC Customised Framework enables qualifications to be designed from centre-devised units or Edexcel units or a unique mix of both.

The customised BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications have the same design principles, with the exception of external assessment, as the corresponding standard NQF qualifications. For clarity, centre-devised BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications in this Handbook will be known collectively as the customised BTEC HNNFI.

As previously identified, when designing any qualification it is imperative to have established aims. The aims provide a focal point from which the qualification can be developed. The aims may change but should be referred to, to ensure the end product is fit for purpose. If your qualification aims require a longer course of study for your learners, then you may need to consider a customised BTEC HNNFI from the BTEC Customised Framework.

Edexcel Higher Education centres can follow the policy on qualification development detailed in the Edexcel Licence Agreement. They are also required to follow higher education validation and quality assurance processes. Hence those centres do not have to follow this Handbook.

Public funding is not automatically available to centres to deliver these customised qualifications, so centres must seek and secure funding for these qualifications themselves. Higher Education centres are automatically funded by HEFCE under the Edexcel Licence Agreement arrangements.

### 3.2 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: qualification levels and sizes

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**The qualification levels and sizes of BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications are summarised in Table 3.**

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The customised BTEC HNNFI differ from the BTEC Short Course qualifications in a number of ways. For instance, the customised BTEC HNNFI are available only at four different levels and have defined qualification sizes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Edexcel centres with a Licence Agreement should also refer to the Licence Agreement regarding qualification design

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Table 3: Qualification structures of the BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications

Qualification level & associated BTEC titles	Standard qualification size <sup>5</sup>		
	Award	Certificate	Diploma
<b>Level 4</b> BTEC Higher National (HE Intermediate Level)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 600 hours</li> <li>10 units of 60 hrs each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 960 hours</li> <li>16 units of 60 hours each</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b> BTEC National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 360 hours</li> <li>6 units of 60 hours each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 720 hours</li> <li>12 units of 60 hours each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 1080 hours</li> <li>18 units of 60 hours each</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b> BTEC First			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 360 hours</li> <li>6 units of 60 hours each</li> </ul>
<b>Level 1</b> BTEC Introductory		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 180 hours</li> <li>2 units 30 hours, 2 units 60 hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification size 360 hours</li> <li>4 units 30 hours, 4 units 60 hours</li> </ul>

Establishing the level of a qualification can be done in a number of ways, for example by comparing with National Occupational Standards and/or standard Edexcel NQF BTEC qualifications. Edexcel NQF qualifications at different levels can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications)).

The depth, breadth and complexity of knowledge, skills and understanding can differentiate qualification levels; the level descriptors in *Appendix 6* are a general guide that may help to define the level of your qualification.

The available qualification sizes are shown in *Table 3*. Selecting the size of your qualification will depend on:

- the needs of your learners
- delivery time
- guided study time
- assessment and feedback time.

<sup>5</sup> The definition of guided learning hours is 'a notional measure of the substance of a qualification'. 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 learner-initiated private study.

### 3.3 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: level, size and number of units

The size and number of units that comprise the customised BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications are summarised in *Table 3*.

The pre-defined qualification size of the BTEC HNNFI is to allow you to develop a qualification that is in line with nationally recognised standardised courses of study. If you are designing a BTEC Higher National (Certificate/Diploma), a BTEC National (Award/Certificate/Diploma) or a BTEC Introductory (Certificate/Diploma), then you will need to consider the number of units that determine each of the qualifications. You will need to select the correct number of units to fulfil the aims of your qualification.

For customised BTEC HNNFI qualifications all the units must be at the level of the qualification.

The BTEC First Diploma has a fixed qualification size of 360 hours and is composed of six 60 hour units.

The units in the customised BTEC Higher Nationals must be designated at H1 and H2. This is to support the learner to progress on to other level 4 qualifications. The customised BTEC Higher National Certificate must have a minimum of 5 units at H2 and the customised BTEC Higher National Diploma must have a minimum of 8 units at H2. Each unit is assigned a notional level indicator of H1 or H2, indicating the relative intellectual demand, complexity and depth of study, and learner autonomy.

At H1 level the emphasis is on the application of knowledge, skills and understanding, use of conventions in the field of study, use of analytical skills and selection and organisation of information.

At H2 level the emphasis is on application and evaluation of contrasting ideas, principles, theories and practices, greater specialisation in the field of study, and an increasing independence in systematic enquiry and analysis.

To develop a customised BTEC Introductory qualification you must keep to the conditions in *Table 4*.

*Table 4: Prerequisite to developing a BTEC Introductory qualification*

Customised BTEC Introductory	
Certificate	Diploma
The core must comprise one 30 hour unit and one 60 hour unit	The core must comprise two 30 hour units and one 60 hour unit
Must contain one 30 hour personal skills unit	Must contain two 30 hour personal skills units
Must contain one 60 hour option unit	Must contain three 60 hour option units

For customised BTEC Introductory qualifications the core units must not duplicate the core units of the standard, NQF BTEC Introductory qualifications. See *Appendix 9* for rules on significant overlap with standard, NQF qualifications. You may make use of the standard, NQF personal skills units and the option units, if these units are relevant to your learners.

### 3.4 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: core and option units

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**All units must be outcome based and each unit can be defined as a core or an option unit.**

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The units in your BTEC HNNFI qualification can all be mandatory core units if this fulfils your qualification's aims or you may have a number of core units and then a bank of option units. The ratio of core units to option units will depend on the aims of your qualification and the requirements of your target audience. If you are offering a degree of choice in your qualification, then you must state in the qualification:

- the units that are mandatory core units
- the units that are option units
- how many option units must be completed to be awarded the full qualification.

Some of the features of core units can be:

- a broad based introduction to the qualification
- the essential components of the qualification
- the underpinning learning for the subject area
- the springboard for further specialised study
- a consolidation of previous learning.

Some of the features of option units can:

- be more focused around an area of specialisation
- build on the fundamentals introduced in the core
- permit greater breadth of learning
- permit greater depth of learning
- provide a choice for the learners.

Customised BTEC Higher Nationals do **not** contain BTEC Common Skills units.

For all the units you write you will own the intellectual property rights but Edexcel will own the BTEC title. If you prefer, Edexcel can write the units for your qualification. Edexcel's unit writing service is Providing Solutions (email: [providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:providingsolutions@edexcel.org.uk)) or see the Edexcel website: [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk). Your Edexcel contact can provide a quotation for this service.

Edexcel will not permit another centre to deliver your customised qualification or individual units without your written consent except in the following situation; in the event that a centre is not able to fulfil its commitments to its registered learners, Edexcel will ensure that suitable provision for the learners is found and this may require another centre to register the learners and deliver the customised qualification.

### 3.5 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: imported units

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**Units from standard BTEC qualifications can be incorporated into customised BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications, provided this does not undermine your qualification's coherence and is subject to the policy set out in *Appendix 8: The use of units from standard Edexcel qualifications* and *Appendix 9: Significant overlap*.**

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If you are interested in using standard units in your customised BTEC HNNFI you will need to be mindful of the following requirements:

- the adopted unit's learning outcomes and assessment requirements must not be altered a customised BTEC HNNFI
- can be composed entirely of standard BTEC units, provided that the resultant qualification is meaningful, fulfils your aims and does not duplicate or significantly overlap any standard qualification

- standard BTEC externally assessed units cannot be included in a customised BTEC HNNFI
- NVQ units cannot be included in customised BTEC HNNFI.

Further qualification specific rules are listed in *Appendix 8: The use of units from standard Edexcel qualifications* and *Appendix 9: Significant overlap*. For the successful approval of your qualification, it is important that these rules are adhered to.

Your Edexcel contact can offer support if you are in any doubt as to which units you can successfully add to your qualification.

### 3.6 BTEC Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: assessment and grading

The customised BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications are internally assessed by you. Edexcel provides quality assurance through external verification.

The assessment of these qualifications is at unit level. Each unit (except for the personal skills units in the BTEC Introductory qualifications) is awarded a grade of pass, merit or distinction. Contextualised grading grids define the pass, merit and distinction criteria. The personal skills units in the BTEC Introductory qualifications are assessed as pass or not achieved.

The Notification of Performance, which is issued with the qualification certificate<sup>6</sup>, records all the successful unit grades achieved by the learner. There is no overall qualification grade.

Units from the customised BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications (apart from the personal skills units) are assessed and graded at pass, merit and distinction. The assessment and grading criteria for pass, merit and distinction are contextualised for each unit; as with the grading grids for the standard BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and the BTEC Introductory qualifications on the NQF. Examples of these contextualised grading grids can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications)). The personal skills units in the BTEC Introductory qualifications are assessed as pass or not achieved only; examples of these can be found on the Edexcel website.

Each unit contains the assessment and grading criteria for the unit. To demonstrate achievement, your learners must meet the requirements of the criteria in the grading grid and assessors must use these criteria to assess the learners' work.

Diagram 2: Contextualised grading grid that shows the assessment requirements for pass, merit and distinction grades

Grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:
P1. List the function of the each job P2. Describe the position of each job in its organisation P3. .... P4. ....	M1. Explain the contribution the jobs make to their organisations M2. .... M3. ....	D1. Analyse the contribution the jobs make to the success of their organisations D2. ....

<sup>6</sup> Higher Education Centres produce their own certificates when offering these programmes under licence; the Edexcel logo will also appear on these certificate.

The assessment and grading criteria are based on the learning outcomes of the unit and define the standard of response to each learning outcome. Thus the grading grid contains the criteria to indicate the standard that is required to achieve pass, merit and distinction grades. It is essential that the assessment criteria are based on the quality, eg depth and breadth of response and it is this that differentiates between the grades. The higher grades are dependent on quality not quantity. Each learner's work is judged against the requirements of the pass, merit and distinction criteria for each unit. So when writing grading criteria for each unit, the criteria should reflect a qualitative improvement rather than a quantitative increase in the evidence presented by the learners (see *Section 4.11*).

### 3.7 BTEC Higher Nationals: assessment and grading

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**The BTEC Higher Nationals qualifications are internally assessed by you. Edexcel provides an external examiner (EE) for quality assurance purposes.**

**The assessment of these qualifications is at unit level. Each unit is awarded a pass, merit or distinction grade. Generic grade descriptors define the achievement of merit and distinction.**

**The Notification of Performance, which is issued with the qualification certificate<sup>6</sup>, will record all the successful unit grades achieved by the learner. There is no overall qualification grade.**

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For the customised **BTEC Higher Nationals**, each unit is graded at pass, merit and distinction. A pass is awarded, for each unit, on the achievement of all the pass assessment criteria for that unit. Merit and distinction grades are awarded for higher level achievement. The assessment and grading of evidence at merit and distinction level is based on the application of generic grade descriptors. Edexcel has defined the level 4 merit and distinction generic grade descriptors and these can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)).

All the pass assessment criteria and merit grade descriptors need to be completed for a unit to achieve a merit grade. To achieve a distinction grade all the pass assessment criteria, merit and distinction grade descriptors must be completed for the unit. The merit and distinction grade descriptors are for grading the total evidence for each unit. To do this the descriptors should be contextualised into the design of the assessment activities for each unit. This can be achieved in a way that reflects the nature of your sector, for example in a sequential or holistic manner. It is not necessary to incorporate all the merit and distinction descriptors for each individual assessment activity.

For further information on writing assessment criteria see *Section 4.10*.

### 3.8 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: qualification titles

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**The qualification title must:**

- **reflect the content of your qualification**
- **be distinct**
- **not duplicate or emulate (eg e-Business and e-Businesses) standard Edexcel qualification titles.**

**Edexcel will own the BTEC qualification title but you will own the intellectual property rights for all the units you write.**

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A qualification title can be defined once the qualification level and size has been decided. The title must reflect the content of your qualification. You should submit your proposed qualification title for approval in your qualification rationale, alternatively you can obtain final title approval when you submit your completed qualification to Edexcel. Check with your Edexcel contact before you produce marketing material that uses an unapproved qualification title. Your Edexcel contact will be able to offer guidance on your selected qualification title.

Edexcel will own the BTEC title but for all the units you write you will own the intellectual property rights.

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<sup>6</sup> Higher Education Centres produce their own certificates when offering these programmes under licence; the Edexcel logo will also appear on these certificate.

Within certain parameters, Higher Education centres can create their own qualification titles, if they have a Licence Agreement with Edexcel. If your centre does not have such an Agreement with Edexcel, you must follow the information in *Appendix 10* on the construction of qualification titles. Your Edexcel contact will also be able to guide you on qualification title construction.

The process of constructing the titles of the BTEC HNNFI is straightforward. In the case of the BTEC Higher Nationals the qualification title starts with:

- BTEC Higher National Certificate ....
- or
- BTEC Higher National Diploma ....

A word or phrase describing your qualification follows the initial stem of the qualification title. For example, BTEC Higher National Diploma in Environmental Sciences.

For the BTEC Nationals the qualification title starts with:

- BTEC National Award ....
- or
- BTEC National Certificate ....
- or
- BTEC National Diploma ....

A word or phrase describing your qualification follows the initial stem of the qualification title. For example, BTEC National Award in Portrait Photography.

The BTEC First Diploma qualification titles start with:

- BTEC First Diploma ....

A word or phrase describing your qualification follows the initial stem of the qualification title. For example, BTEC First Diploma in Cake Decoration.

The BTEC Introductory qualification titles start with:

- BTEC Introductory Certificate....
- BTEC Introductory Diploma....

A word or phrase describing your qualification follows the initial stem of the qualification title. For example, BTEC Introductory Diploma in Carpentry.

See *Appendix 10* for full details on qualification title construction.

More specialised aspects for a series of related qualifications can be written in brackets, for example:

- BTEC First Diploma in Food Technology (Baking)
- BTEC First Diploma in Food Technology (Preserves)

### **3.9 BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications: development check list**

It is important before you start detailed unit writing, to have selected at least the:

- type of qualification
- level of your qualification
- size of your qualification
- number and size of units
- level of the units
- core units and, if required, option units.

It is essential that your qualification design meets your qualification aims.

To help you with the overall design of your customised BTEC HNNFI, use the checklist in *Appendix 12: Development check list for a customised BTEC Higher National, National, First and Introductory qualification*.

## 4. Unit writing

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## 4.1 Introduction to unit writing

All units must be written in the BTEC unit structure. The BTEC unit structure is illustrated in *Appendix 13: Unit structure*. An electronic template of the unit structure can be obtained from your Edexcel contact. If you are new to BTEC units, examples of units from BTEC qualifications can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications)).

The following key questions will help towards developing a unit that is coherent and fit for purpose:

- What are the knowledge, skills and understanding the learner must possess on completing this unit?
- How will the knowledge, skills and understanding of the unit be assessed?
- Does the unit contribute to the overall qualification aims?
- Does the unit title and the unit description reflect the learning and assessment outcomes of the unit?

You may find the unit writing tools in *Appendix 14* and *Appendix 15* useful for recording initial ideas on the unit. *Appendix 14* is for units that do not contain contextualised grading grids, that is units for the BTEC Short Course qualifications and the BTEC Higher Nationals. *Appendix 15* is for units that have contextualised grading grids, that is units from the BTEC Nationals, BTEC First Diploma and the BTEC Introductory qualifications.

## 4.2 Language

The units must be written in clear unambiguous English.

You should try to keep sentences as short as possible and try to use technical and specialist terms only where:

- understanding the technical or specialist term is fundamental to the subject area
- attempting to explain a term in simple terms will confuse rather than clarify the issue.

If possible avoid the use of acronyms or abbreviations in the units. If the acronym or abbreviation is essential to your sector or subject area (eg LASER, NHS, DNA), in the first instance please write out the phrase in full and then follow it by the acronym or abbreviation in brackets.

For your units, please use the term which best describes the individuals for whom the qualification is designed, eg employee, trainee, apprentice, candidate, student, learner, etc.

## 4.3 Unit structure

All the units you write must include parts 1 to 7 (see *Appendix 13: Unit structure*). Part 8 Guidance on delivery and assessment is good practice and allows the unit writer to include examples on delivery and assessment, etc. Although Part 8 is not compulsory you must list for each unit the **essential** resources required to deliver the unit.

1. unit title
2. unit size
3. unit level
4. unit description
5. summary of learning outcomes
6. content
7. assessment
8. guidance on delivery and assessment.

You will find each of the parts discussed in more detail below.

## 4.4 Unit titles

The unit title should be an accurate summary of the learning outcomes of the unit. The unit titles will appear with the certificate and hence should be a precise reflection of the learner's achievement.

There are certain Edexcel protocols that you will need to follow on the construction of unit titles.

The guidance below clarifies how titles should be written in the correct style:

1. any unit title must not repeat the qualification title, except in the special case of a single unit qualification where the qualification title and the unit title must be the same
2. the title must be no more than 80 characters including spaces and punctuation
3. the use of 'and' is the norm, however '&' may be used where there is a need to reserve character space within a unit title
4. avoid using brackets, eg not *Electronics (Principles)* but *Electronic Principles*
5. avoid using 'of' in titles, eg not *Principles of Management* but *Management Principles*
6. avoid beginning a title with the word 'the', eg not *The Changing Business Environment* but *Business – the Changing Environment*
7. if unit titles are used which contain a gerund (a verb ending in '-ing', eg *Investigating Human Behaviour*) this style should normally be used consistently throughout the qualification.

## 4.5 Unit size

Before you start to write you will need to decide on the size of each unit and the size of the whole qualification. All the qualifications in the BTEC Customised Framework are composed of a number of units with ascribed guided learning hours. Learning hours should include time allocated to direct teaching, instruction and assessment, together with other structured learning time such as directed assignments or supporting individual learning. It excludes learner-initiated private study.

## 4.6 Unit levels

As part of your qualification design, you will have allocated each unit a level. The level must reflect the levels, from Entry to level 5, as shown in *Table 1: Qualification Frameworks from Edexcel*. For qualifications at levels 4 and 5 the QAA levels may also be considered. Each unit in your qualification must have the level clearly stated under the unit title.

In your qualification the knowledge, skills and understanding expressed in each unit should be appropriate to the overall level of your qualification. The level of your qualification will be further determined by how the knowledge, skills and understanding are expressed in the learning and assessment outcomes of each unit.

Well-constructed learning outcomes, assessment outcomes and the content of a unit can help to define the distinction between levels, for example:

- 'identify' and 'understand' may be more appropriate for level 1 qualifications, while 'explain', 'analyse' and 'evaluate' are more suitable for higher levels
- the nature, breadth and depth of the unit content will also determine the level.

For customised BTEC Short Course qualifications 75% of the qualification must be at one level, thus allowing 25% of the total qualification size to be at a different level from the overall qualification size. Where a unit(s) at a different level is used, a clear rationale must be presented on how the target learner will benefit from the unit(s) at the different level.

## 4.7 Unit description

The unit description should be sufficient to describe the unit concisely; it is unlikely to exceed 500 words. It is an opportunity for the unit writer to describe how the unit will contribute to the overall aims of the qualification. The unit description must contain a summary, suitable for the learner/lecturer/trainer, of the aim(s) of the unit and how this will be achieved through the knowledge, skills and understanding developed while studying the unit.

If appropriate, the unit description can also be used to highlight links to other units within the qualification and/or links with other relevant qualifications, eg underpinning the knowledge and understanding of NVQ units.

*Diagram 3: An example of a unit description taken from a unit in a BTEC National*

### Unit description

This unit outlines the fundamental way in which a computer works, starting with simple logic and progressing to a simple model of a microprocessor. This is followed by an overview of computer hardware and peripherals to enable learners to understand the way in which computer systems are constructed and how they work. The unit also covers a basic knowledge of the purpose of operating systems, some elementary operating processes and elementary low-level programming.

The unit is intended as an introduction to a broad range of important computing concepts. Other units, *Unit 19: Multimedia Technology* and *Unit 23: Computer Hardware*, explore some of these topics in greater depth.

This unit presents opportunities to demonstrate key skills in application of number and communication.

## 4.8 Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes for the unit are summarised at the start of the unit. An example of how a set of learning outcomes should be written is shown below. This set of learning outcomes is taken from a 60 hour unit from a BTEC National Diploma. Each learning outcome starts with a verb and ends with subject statement that contains key words in bold. The words in bold are used to write the content that relates to the learning outcomes (see *Section 4.9: Content*).

*Diagram 4: Learning outcomes taken from a 60 hour unit from a BTEC National Diploma*

### Summary of learning outcomes

#### To achieve this unit a learner must:

1. Explore the main elements in a **data communications** system
2. Describe **hardware and software** used in data communications
3. Investigate **computer networks** and their development
4. Explain the importance of the **internet and World Wide Web**.

Unit writers should think of learning outcomes as statements of what a learner should 'know, understand or be able to do' as a result of completing the unit, eg record/produce/design/carry out/recognise. All learning outcomes must be achieved in order for the learner to pass the unit.

A learning outcome must be:

- achievable
- measurable
- precise.

The number of learning outcomes in a unit must be realistic and must be appropriate for the size of the unit.

All learning outcome statements should start with an active verb appropriate to the unit level and a subject statement as shown in *Table 5*.

Table 5: Examples of learning outcome verbs

Verb	Subject Statement
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Key words are in bold in the learning outcome</b>
Identify	different types of <b>business</b>
Demonstrate	safe <b>knife skills</b>
<b>Level 2</b>	
Process	sport and exercise data using <b>spreadsheets and databases</b>
Determine	the efficiency of a <b>mechanical system</b>
<b>Level 3</b>	
Use	drawing to <b>communicate</b> specific <b>information</b> appropriate to a specialist pathway
Review	<b>marketing information</b> to identify opportunities and potential strategies
<b>Level 4</b>	
Evaluate	the importance of <b>strategy</b> in an organisation
Analyse	visitor <b>trends</b> , visitor <b>types</b> and their <b>motivation</b>
<b>Level 5</b>	
Manage	<b>work activities</b> to achieve organisational objectives
Design and monitor	appropriate systems to ensure quality of <b>products and services</b>

More than one active verb may be used if this is the most accurate way of expressing the outcome, eg 'prepare and present a marketing plan'. The list of verbs in *Appendix 16: Learning outcome verbs* can be used for writing learning outcomes. This is not an exhaustive list; some verbs are not suitable for all sectors and some are not suitable for all levels but the list may provide a starting point for finding a suitable learning outcome verb.

The learning outcome should clearly state whether the learner is required to know about something, demonstrate an understanding of something or perform something. *Appendix 17: Verbs for targeting different activities* provides a list of verbs for targeting different activities.

To write a set of learning outcomes the following sequence of activities may be useful:

- list all the major things/tasks that a learner will be expected to be able to do/know/understand upon completing the unit
- order the above list logically
- check that there are no omissions
- identify levels of outcomes
- write first draft of learning outcomes using appropriate verbs and key words in bold. The bold word(s) in the learning outcome will indicate the content relating to that learning outcome.
- redraft the learning outcomes by asking the following questions:
  - are appropriate verbs used for the level of the qualification?
  - are the outcomes achievable by the learner?
  - are the outcomes measurable?
  - is the context accurate and specific?
  - overall, do the learning outcomes describe accurately what the learner should be capable of knowing/understanding/doing?
  - are the requirements of the learning outcomes appropriate to the level of the unit?
  - are the key words in bold?
- check the number of learning outcomes is realistic in relation to the size of the unit. If you are unsure of the number of learning outcomes for a particular unit size, you may find the following guide useful:
  - 10-30 hours: 2 learning outcomes
  - 30-60 hours: 2-4 learning outcomes
  - 60-90 hours: 4-6 learning outcomes
  - 90-120 hours: 6-8 learning outcomes.

Your final learning outcomes can be checked against the following points.

The learning outcomes:

1. motivate the learner
2. are achievable by the learner
3. are measurable
4. are appropriate to the level of the unit
5. are of a total number appropriate to the size of the unit
6. contain appropriate verbs
7. contain a suitable word or phrase in bold
8. are written in language which is concise and clear
9. are presented in a logical sequence
10. form a coherent package which provides an appropriate balance of knowledge and skills.

## 4.9 Content

The content of the unit should amplify the depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding needed to deliver the learning outcomes.

It is important the content is written precisely, so that the person delivering the unit is clear regarding the detail of coverage. The content can be made precise by including examples or using lists to reveal the depth and breadth of the unit content. Examples of units with content relating to different qualification levels can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications)) or from your Edexcel contact.

Each learning outcome will have a section of content that states clearly the knowledge, skills and understanding to support the learning outcome. The key word(s) in bold in the learning outcomes are used as subheadings in the content section of the unit. Hence, if you have four learning outcomes your content will be divided under four subheadings.

An example of how the content section should be written for the following four learning outcomes is outlined in *Diagram 5*.

### Summary of learning outcomes

To achieve this unit a learner must:

1. Explore the main elements in a **data communications** system
2. Describe **hardware and software** used in data communications
3. Investigate **computer networks** and their development
4. Explain the importance of the **internet and World Wide Web**.

*Diagram 5: Content section from a 60 hour unit from a BTEC National Diploma*

### Content

#### 1. Data Communications

*Signal theory:* digital signalling methods, representing data electronically (bits, bytes, packet structures), synchronous and asynchronous transmission, error correction and .....

*Methods of communication:* simplex, duplex and half duplex communication, parallel, short distance serial (eg RS-232, USB, Firewire, IrDa, Bluetooth).....

*Communication standards authorities:*.....

*Transmission media:*.....

#### 2. Hardware and software

*Communications software:* purpose, type and functions of software, protocols (basic functions of flow control, error control and data compression with examples),.....

*Communications devices:* modems, multiplexors,....

## Content

### 3. Computer networks

*Concept of networking:* the effect of the PC on Local Area Network (LAN) development, types of network and their uses, LAN, wide area networks, network topologies, value added networks (VAN),.....

*LAN components:*.....

*Interconnection devices and media and protocols:* hubs, switches, repeaters, bridges, routers and gateways, access methodologies.....

*Open system Interconnection (OSI) model:* levels and relationship with connection devices.....

*Network software:*.....

*Network development:*.....

### 4. Internet and world wide web

*Concepts of internet communication:* hypertext (HTTP),.....

*Systems requirements:* hardware, communication services (email, FTP), software, configuration, communications set-up.

The example does not show the complete content of the unit but it includes key features of how the content must be written, for example:

- each bold subheading is further divided into sections, each of these starts with a key phrase(s) in italics which is then amplified in plain text, for example '*Signal theory:* digital signalling methods, representing data electronically....'
- the use of brackets to amplify the content provides the range that is compulsory and needs to be covered to achieve the learning outcome, for example 'representing data electronically (bits, bytes, packet structures)'
- the use of 'eg' to indicate that it is a range of examples that can be taught but that the range is neither exhaustive nor compulsory '(eg RS-232, USB, Firewire, IrDa, Bluetooth)'
- when first used in the qualification acronyms or abbreviations are written in full followed by the acronym or abbreviation in brackets, for example Local Area Network (LAN).

The content should specify the likely skills, knowledge and understanding required for achievement. Care must be taken to be precise but also detailed enough so that the learner and deliverer are clear about the nature, depth and breadth of learning/teaching required.

## 4.10 Assessment - BTEC Short Courses and BTEC Higher Nationals

For the customised BTEC Short Courses and BTEC Higher Nationals each unit contains assessment criteria that defines the pass grade. Unit writers will need to follow the layout in *Appendix 18: Assessment criteria for BTEC Short Courses and BTEC Higher Nationals* to write the assessment sections for these qualifications. Writers may find the list of pass criteria words and phrases in *Appendix 19: Assessment outcome words and phrases* useful. You will need to select the words and phrases in *Appendix 19* that are relevant to your qualification level and are appropriate for your sector.

When writing pass assessment criteria:

#### think about:

- evidence that brings together the knowledge, skills and understanding required to meet the learning outcomes
- the level of your qualification
- your assessment tools when writing the assessment criteria
- evidence that is vocationally relevant to your sector.

**do:**

- use as few assessment criteria as possible for each learning outcome
- ensure the criteria are clear and coherent to allow reliable assessment decisions
- take advantage of local opportunities, where relevant.

**do not:**

- use quantity criteria unless essential
- repeat the learning outcome verb in the assessment criteria
- prescribe the form and type of evidence unless essential
- include assessment methodology in assessment criteria, eg complete case study.

Generic grade descriptors for merit and distinction grades, for the customised BTEC Short Course qualifications at Entry level to level 4, can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)). The generic grade descriptors for level 4 can also be used for the customised BTEC Higher Nationals.

## 4.11 Assessment - BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications

The assessment and grading outcomes for the BTEC Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications are contextualised and laid out in a three-column grid. Generic grading criteria are **not** used in these qualifications. Unit writers can use *Appendix 20* as an example of how to construct a grading grid template for level 2 qualifications. The vertical columns are headed:

- 'To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to',
- 'To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to',
- 'To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to'.

The pass assessment criteria must describe the standard of work the learners must produce to show baseline achievement of the learning outcomes. The criteria must identify broad judgements about key aspects of achievement rather than atomised details, which only encourage a tick box approach to assessment. Also, the criteria must be clear and coherent to ensure the reliability of assessment decisions.

Unit writers can develop generic stems as shown in *Appendix 20* and add contextualised phrases to create assessment and grading criteria appropriate for the nature and level of the unit. These contextualised criteria define the standard of response to each of the learning outcomes required to achieve a grade at pass, merit or distinction. It is the quality, eg depth and breadth, of response that determines and differentiates between all grades. If you develop a template with generic stems you do not have to include every generic stem in each grading grid.

The criteria for merit and distinction must tell learners 'how well' they must do to achieve a higher grade. The criteria for merit build directly on those for pass and likewise the distinction criteria extend the merit criteria. Avoid writing merit and distinction that just introduce extra work (eg 10 of the same experiments for distinction in place of only 5 for merit and 2 for pass). The merit and distinction criteria can convey originality, independence, creativity of thought, etc. by the learner.

When writing contextualised assessment and grading criteria:

**think about:**

- evidence that brings together the knowledge, skills and understanding required in the learning outcomes
- the level of your qualification
- your assessment tools when writing the assessment criteria
- evidence that is vocationally relevant to your sector.

**do:**

- ensure that merit and distinction criteria are based on quality indicators
- use as few criteria as possible
- write criteria that bring together the knowledge, skills and understanding of, for example, two learning outcomes
- ensure the criteria are clear and coherent to allow reliable assessment decisions.

**do not:**

- use quantity criteria unless essential
- prescribe the form and type of evidence unless essential
- add new knowledge or skills criteria to the merit and distinction columns
- write a list of tasks
- rely on just 'good, better, best' to express the difference between pass, merit and distinction. Be specific about the difference in quality
- repeat the learning outcome verb in the assessment criteria.

You may find useful the lists of words and phrases in *Appendix 19: Assessment outcome words and phrases* to help differentiate between the grades pass, merit and distinction. You will need to select the words and phrases in *Appendix 19* that are relevant to your qualification level and are appropriate for your sector.

## 4.12 Guidance on delivery and assessment

The 'Guidance on delivery and assessment' section is primarily aimed at the lecturer/trainer/teacher. It is an opportunity for the unit writer to expand and explain any aspect of the unit further and to include innovative ideas on how the unit can be delivered and assessed. This section covers these main areas:

- Delivery – suggestions for realistic, appropriate and motivating activities in which the unit can be delivered should be given. If any of the outcomes require a particular approach to delivery, eg practical work, this should be included. Where possible suggestions for covering a number of outcomes via one assignment/activity should be proposed. It may be appropriate to indicate from the content what needs to be covered in depth and what in breadth in this section.
- Assessment – ideas on how suggested forms of evidence can match the learning outcomes, assessment and grading criteria. For example, if the assessment requirements say 'perform...' the learner's evidence should not be a report. Thought should be given to suggesting sources of evidence that motivate learners and encourage them to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Links – detail on links to other units in the qualification and links to other relevant qualifications or National Occupational Standards, eg NVQ units, NQF BTEC units, etc.
- Resources – a list of essential resources such as equipment, information or support from external organisations necessary to enable the learner to meet the requirements of the unit. These resources should be realistic and appropriate for the unit level and learners. There may be resources that are not essential but are desirable; these can be included but should be clearly identified as such.
- Suggested reading – a list of books, journals, videos, websites, etc. should be included. When listing the books make sure that the following format is used: Surname, initial, book title (in italics), edition (eg 2<sup>nd</sup> edition), publisher and date (in brackets), ISBN number.

## **5. Approval to offer BTEC customised qualifications**

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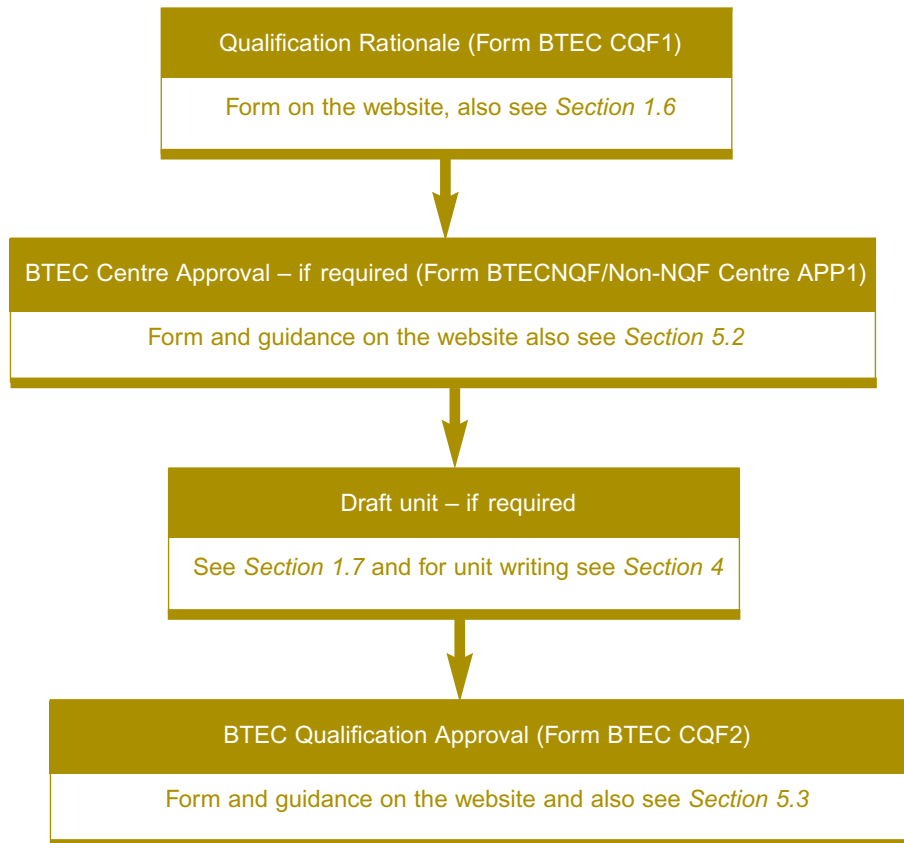
## 5.1 Summary of the approval process

There are two distinct approval processes, that of BTEC centre approval and BTEC qualification approval. You may already be approved to deliver BTEC vocational qualifications; in this case you only need to submit a qualification approval.

More experienced centres can take a holistic approach to the approval process rather than going sequentially through the steps below. If you do not have any or have limited experience of developing vocational qualifications use your Edexcel contact's support (*Appendix 2*).

The first stage of the qualification approval process for the BTEC Customised Framework is to submit your qualification rationale (BTEC CQF1) to Edexcel. If your qualification rationale is acceptable, you will be given notification to commence the development of your qualification. Edexcel will provide feedback if the qualification rationale is unacceptable.

*Diagram 6: The approvals process*



## 5.2 BTEC centre approval

You will need to submit a centre approval application if your organisation falls into one of the categories below:

- you have never been approved to deliver any BTEC/Edexcel qualifications
- you deliver Edexcel general qualifications, eg GCSE, AVCE, Key Skills; BTEC Entry level Vocational Certificates and/or BTEC Introductory qualifications but have not delivered BTEC qualifications, such as BTEC First, Nationals or Higher Nationals, or NVQs.

In both these cases you will need to submit a full centre approval application using BTECNQF/Non-NQF Centre APP1 forms (which are available from the Edexcel website [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk), with the associated guidance document for completing the form).

### 5.3 BTEC qualification approval

If you are new to unit writing your Edexcel contact may ask you to write a draft unit. This will enable Edexcel to provide feedback on the structure, level, etc. of your qualification. The feedback you receive is a useful service that will help you in the development of your full qualification.

After your draft unit has been accepted, you will be asked to develop your qualification and submit it using form BTEC CQF2. The BTEC CQF2 form, along with the guidance for its completion, is obtainable from the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)). Please send to Edexcel your final qualification and your BTEC CQF2 form (two hard copies and one electronic copy, on CD-ROM, in Word 97 or earlier).

Once Edexcel has considered your final application, your qualification will either be approved or you will be asked for additional information before an approval decision can be made.

## **6. Quality assurance within the BTEC Customised Framework**

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## 6.1 Quality assurance

Your BTEC customised qualification must clearly set out the standards to be achieved by each learner. The standards are contained within each unit's learning outcomes and the assessment requirements.

There is a BTEC quality assurance process, which is designed to ensure that all assessors, internal and external verifiers (EV), maintain these standards. This is achieved through the following activities.

## 6.2 Internal assessment

The purpose of internal assessment is to ensure that effective learning of the learning outcomes of each unit has been fulfilled. Evidence of this learning is required for each unit. Centres have flexibility in designing the assessment instrument for each internally assessed unit to take account of local factors and the extent to which centres may wish to integrate units.

Assessment instruments should be designed to cover all of the assessment criteria in the unit. It is advised that assessment and, where applicable, grading criteria be clearly indicated on each assessment instrument to provide:

- a focus for learners
- for transparency
- an aid in ensuring feedback is specific to the criteria
- assistance with internal standardisation processes
- the opportunity to allow learners to achieve, where applicable, the higher level grades.

Tasks/activities should enable learners to produce evidence that directly relates to the specified learning outcomes, assessment criteria and, where applicable, grading criteria.

Assessment instruments constructed by centres should ensure valid, reliable assessment decisions and be fit for purpose. They are more likely to meet this requirement if centres use a variety of assessment methods, including case studies, assignments, work-based (or simulated) assessments along with projects and performance observations. Centres are encouraged to place emphasis on practical application of the assessment criteria, providing a realistic scenario for learners to adopt and making maximum use of practical work experience. The creation of relevant assessment instruments that are realistic is vital to achievement by learners.

For any NVQ unit imported into a BTEC customised qualification, the NVQ assessment strategy must be followed for the NVQ unit.

## 6.3 Internal verification

Centres are required to have in place processes to ensure that each assessor is correctly interpreting and applying the standards set out in the units. The system used to do this is a matter for individual centres and qualification approval by Edexcel will normally support the use of the centre's own quality assurance system provided it ensures robust internal standardisation. As part of the qualification approval (form BTEC CQF2) you will be asked to describe this process.

## 6.4 External verification

Assessment decisions that you make will be sampled using BTEC sector-specific external verifiers (EV). This sampling process will normally be undertaken by a centre visit by the EV. The EV will undertake a range of activities in order to ensure that reliable assessment decisions are being made across all of your assessors.

This range of activities will include:

- sampling learners' completed and ongoing assessments
- talking to learners, assessors and internal verifiers
- examining the centre's tracking, assessment and verification records.

Where the outcome of external verification confirms that valid and reliable assessment decisions are being made across all assessors, then the EV will allow certification of the qualification. This decision will be recorded on the Qualification Report Form (QRF). It is important to note that the EV will **not** permit certification of the programme until work has been sampled from a range of learners that have completed the qualification in full. In addition, this work must meet the requirements of the qualification. For customised BTEC Introductory qualifications the external assessor (EA) will carry out a similar external verification process.

If your customised qualification incorporates NVQ units, the protocols associated with the specific NVQ accreditation must be met.

Higher Nationals under the BTEC Customised Framework will be subject to external examination, not external verification. The protocols are identical to those for all other Higher Nationals and you are advised to refer to *External Examination of Higher Nationals 2003-4: Guidance for Centres*, available on the website

Licensed Higher Education centres will make their own decisions regarding the number of external examiner (EE) visits per year/cohort, in accordance with their own quality assurance policy and procedures.

## 6.5 Risk assessment

There is an ongoing monitoring process, which creates a quality profile of each qualification within the centre as a whole. This profile contributes to the determination of the nature of external verification activity for each qualification and will also be used to initiate other quality control measures.

## 7. Appendices

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## Appendix 1: Examples of National Qualification Framework BTEC titles

Examples of BTEC qualification titles accredited to the NQF.

This is not a complete listing; for a complete list of current accredited titles and any titles awaiting accreditation, see the Edexcel website [www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications)

### Level 2:

Edexcel Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Design  
Edexcel Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Vehicle Service and Technology (Body and Paint)  
Edexcel Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Sport (Outdoor Education)  
Edexcel Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Public Services

### Level 3:

Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Graphic Design  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Building Services Engineering  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Electrical/Electronic Engineering  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Animal Management (Science)  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Airline and Airport Operations (Airline/Handling Agents)  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Media (Moving Image Production)  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Certificate in Early Years  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Certificate in Hospitality Supervision  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Certificate in Applied Science (Laboratory and Industrial Science)  
Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Award in Performing Arts (Acting)

### Level 4:

Edexcel Level 4 BTEC Higher National Diploma in Applied Biology  
Edexcel Level 4 BTEC Higher National Diploma in Business (IT)  
Edexcel Level 4 BTEC Higher National Certificate in Computing (General)

## Appendix 2: Support from Edexcel

In developing a BTEC Customised Framework qualification, centres have the full support of their Regional Development Manager (RDM). These local contacts provide a comprehensive and effective service, which includes:

- initial advice on the BTEC Customised Framework
- curriculum development advice relating to your proposals
- support relating to the qualification rationale, approval documentation and guidance
- assistance with the development of your BTEC customised qualification
- liaison between the centre and teams in London.

### Employers/Training providers please contact: rest Edexcel office:

The Sales Support Team  
Employers Unit  
Edexcel  
Stewart House  
32 Russell Square  
London  
WC1B 5DN

Telephone: 0870 240 9800 (General Enquiries)  
Fax: 020 7758 6960 (General Enquiries)  
Email: [salessupport@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:salessupport@edexcel.org.uk)

### Further Education/Higher Education please contact your nearest Edexcel office:

#### **Birmingham** Office

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Block B  
3 Broadway  
Broad Street  
Birmingham  
B15 1BQ  
Telephone: 0121 616 2585  
Fax: 0121 616 2576  
E-mail: [birmingham@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:birmingham@edexcel.org.uk)

#### **Bristol** Office (includes Northern Ireland)

Cribbs Business Centre  
Hollywood Lane  
Cribbs Causeway  
Bristol  
BS10 7TW  
Telephone: 01179 501908  
Fax: 01179 501115  
E-mail: [bristol@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:bristol@edexcel.org.uk)

#### **Cardiff** Office

Unit C, Fairway House  
Links Business Park  
St Mellons  
Cardiff  
CF3 0LT  
Telephone: 02920 794 865  
Fax: 02920 362830  
E-mail: [cardiff@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:cardiff@edexcel.org.uk)

#### **Leeds** Office

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Alpha House  
Lawnswood Business Park  
Redvers Close  
Leeds  
LS16 6QY  
Telephone: 0113 224 2255  
Fax: 0113 224 2277  
E-mail: [leeds@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:leeds@edexcel.org.uk)

#### **London** Regional Office

Stewart House  
32 Russell Square  
London  
WC1B 5DN  
Telephone: 020 7758 5493  
Fax: 020 7758 5692  
E-mail: [london@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:london@edexcel.org.uk)

#### **Manchester** Office

Ground Floor, Spinnaker Court  
Chandlers' Point  
Broadway  
Salford Quays  
Manchester  
M5 2UW  
Telephone: 0161 877 0801  
Fax: 0161 877 0858  
E-mail: [manchester@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:manchester@edexcel.org.uk)

If you are unsure which department to contact, call Edexcel's central **Customer Services**

Telephone: 0870 240 9800

Fax: 020 7758 6960

Email: [enquiries@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@edexcel.org.uk)

## Appendix 3: Qualification rationale

This is a sample Qualification rationale form (BTEC CQF1). Actual forms may be obtained from the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)).

### BTEC CUSTOMISED QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK Qualification Rationale Form

Please read carefully the **exemplar** form BEFORE completing this form.

**PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR BTECCQF2 FORM UNTIL THIS FORM HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND YOU HAVE AUTHORITY TO PROCEED**

**PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS OF THIS FORM**

#### SECTION 1: CENTRE DETAILS

Centre Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Centre Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Programme Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_  
E Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION 2: YOUR DETAILS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Role: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_  
E Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION 3: DECLARATION

**DECLARATION by PRINCIPAL or CHIEF EXECUTIVE or HEAD OF THE ORGANISATION/INSTITUTION**

I the undersigned affirm that all the information submitted in this application is valid and genuine for the development, delivery and assessment of the qualification(s) applied for. The application is fully supported by evidence for market need and by a realistic estimate of learner registrations.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION 4: QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE

PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH OF THIS STRUCTURE AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN

### QUALIFICATION DETAILS

Qualification Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Qualification Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Units: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_

### QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE

Unit Size	Unit Level	Unit Code*	Unit Title	Core or Option	Is the unit to be graded?

\* Where you are using a standard BTEC or NVQ approved unit, please supply the Unit Code.

4a Where a qualification comprises core and option units, please specify how many option units the learner has to achieve in order to gain the qualification.

4b Please describe any rules of combination that will apply to the qualification.

## SECTION 5: QUALIFICATION AIMS

Please include the main focus/topic of the qualification

## SECTION 6: MARKET NEED

Please outline your research/consultation to demonstrate a market need for the qualification

## SECTION 7: TARGET LEARNERS

7a) Who are the target learners for this qualification?

7b) How many learner registrations do you estimate in the first 3 years of operation?

YR 1

YR 2

YR 3

## SECTION 8: DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT

Please outline the qualifications' delivery and assessment methodology eg workshops, distance assessment, work based delivery, etc.

## SECTION 9: OTHER CENTRES

Do you plan to make the qualification available to other assessment centres - if so how many do you think will wish to offer the qualification? Please include an indication of learner figures.

## SECTION 10: LINKS WITH OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Please outline any similarities/links between your qualification and:

10a) existing BTEC or NVQ qualifications

10b) other qualifications.

## SECTION 11: FUNDING

If funding is required, please indicate your probable funding source

PLEASE GIVE THE NAME OF YOUR EDEXCEL CONTACT:

ONCE COMPLETED PLEASE RETURN TWO FULL COPIES OF THIS QUALIFICATION RATIONALE TO:

**The Approval Team**

Room 122,

Edexcel,

Stewart House,

32 Russell Square,

London,

WC1B 5DN

For further clarification on the requirements of this form please

E Mail: [approvals@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:approvals@edexcel.org.uk)

### FOR EDEXCEL USE ONLY

**AT acknowledge receipt:**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**QDD check:**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**RDM authority to proceed:**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

## Appendix 4: Example of a qualification rationale

This exemplar qualification rationale is an indication of the information that is required, from a centre, to help Edexcel to decide on the viability of a new qualification.

### BTEC CUSTOMISED QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK Qualification Rationale Form

Please read carefully the **exemplar** form BEFORE completing this form.

**PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR BTECCQF2 FORM UNTIL THIS FORM HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND YOU HAVE AUTHORITY TO PROCEED**

**PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS OF THIS FORM**

#### SECTION 1: CENTRE DETAILS

Centre Number: 99999 Centre Name: Whitstable Training  
Programme Leader: Sandra Richards Tel No: 01227 776620  
E Mail: info@wct.co.uk

#### SECTION 2: YOUR DETAILS

Name: Sandra Richards  
Role: Training Executive Tel No: 01227 776620  
E Mail: richardss@wct.co.uk

#### SECTION 3: DECLARATION

##### DECLARATION by PRINCIPAL or CHIEF EXECUTIVE or HEAD OF THE ORGANISATION/INSTITUTION

I the undersigned affirm that all the information submitted in this application is valid and genuine for the development, delivery and assessment of the qualification(s) applied for. The application is fully supported by evidence for market need and by a realistic estimate of learner registrations.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 30/09/03

Please Print Name: JOHN RICHMOND

Position: MANAGING DIRECTOR

## SECTION 4: QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE

PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH OF THIS STRUCTURE AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN

### QUALIFICATION DETAILS

Qualification Title: BTEC Intermediate Award in Selling DIY Products

Qualification Type: BTEC Short Course Number of Units: 5

Total Hours: 50 hours Level: 2

### QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE

Unit Size	Unit Level	Unit Code*	Unit Title	Core or Option	Is the unit to be graded?
10 hr	2		Personal Presentation	C	Y
10 hr	2		Customer Communication	C	Y
10 hr	2		Health and Safety for DIY Products	C	N
10 hr	2		DIY Techniques	C	Y
10 hr	2		Product Demonstration	O	Y
10 hr	2		Selling the Dream	O	Y

\*Where you are using a standard BTEC or NVQ approved unit, please supply the Unit Code.

4a Where a qualification comprises core and option units, please specify how many option units the learner has to achieve in order to gain the qualification.

One

4b Please describe any rules of combination that will apply to the qualification.

- All core units must be completed
- One option (select from the choice of two) must be completed

## SECTION 5: QUALIFICATION AIMS

### Please include the main focus/topic of the qualification

The qualification aims to raise the current level of customer service, product knowledge and ability to cross-sell in the DIY Superstore market to meet future customer expectations. Customers' expectations of the shopping experience in superstores has changed in the past two years and current training has not yet caught up. This qualification will fill the training gap in this area and will encourage learners to develop their careers in retail and customer service.

## SECTION 6: MARKET NEED

### Please outline your research/consultation to demonstrate a market need for the qualification

Home & Garden Care DIY, a UK-wide DIY chain, initially contacted Whitstable Training. Home & Garden Care were finding that customer complaints had risen as their staff, who were very polite, were not familiar with new DIY products, DIY techniques, current gardening trends, etc. Home & Garden Care realised that their current customer service training was insufficient and asked me to carry out some research to see where their training could be improved and design a training course to meet this need.

With the growth in DIY reality television programmes, I decided to widen my brief beyond Home & Garden Care and include the other major DIY chains. Home & Garden Care agreed to this, as they were interested in raising the profile of the industry.

I initially sent a questionnaire to a number of customer service Directors (list attached) to ask about their customer service training, suggesting at the end of the questionnaire that they may like to be involved in my project to redefine customer service for DIY superstores. (The questionnaire, a list of the respondents and a summary of the findings are attached).

Five Directors agreed to take part in an initial meeting to explore what skills and knowledge their customer-facing staff would need in the future (attendees and the brief outcomes from the first meeting attached). As a result of this meeting I drafted five units, which I presented at a subsequent meeting. The draft units, methods of delivery and assessment were agreed. Also, at this second meeting, the Directors decided to opt for national accreditation through Edexcel (attendees and the brief outcomes from the second meeting attached).

I have also attached letters of support from the five DIY superstores that have decided to invest in this qualification.

## SECTION 7: TARGET LEARNERS

### 7a) Who are the target learners for this qualification?

Customer-facing staff in DIY superstores.

### 7b) How many learner registrations do you estimate in the first 3 years of operation?

YR 1	YR 2	YR 3
350	350	350

## SECTION 8: DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT

### Please outline the qualifications' delivery and assessment methodology eg workshops, distance assessment, work based delivery, etc.

The qualification will be workshop based, one workshop per unit, delivered from the DIY company's own in-house training centres. There will also be distance learning packs to support each unit, which learners can work through in between workshops.

A mix of assessment methods will be used depending on the learning outcomes and the assessment and grading criteria of the units. Use will be made of observation, role-play, line manager feedback for actual work-based assessment, question and answer and assignments. There will also be a project and presentation to the company on a customer service/product topic selected by the learner and sponsoring company.

## SECTION 9: OTHER CENTRES

### Do you plan to make the qualification available to other assessment centres - if so how many do you think will wish to offer the qualification? Please include an indication of learner figures.

I am not planning at this stage to offer this qualification to other assessment centres, but I would like to discuss this option with my Edexcel contact person once the qualification is implemented.

## SECTION 10: LINKS WITH OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

### Please outline any similarities/links between your qualification and:

#### 10a) existing BTEC or NVQ qualifications

The companies already use NVQs very successfully, but this is a training course, which meets a different need from the NVQ.

#### 10b) other qualifications.

The qualifications already in the market place are very generic and the customer wanted a qualification totally focused on the requirements of the DIY sector.

## SECTION 11: FUNDING

### If funding is required, please indicate your probable funding source

At this stage the companies are funding the training themselves. I have arranged a meeting with the Learning and Skills Council to discuss potential funding, as this is a nation-wide initiative.

### PLEASE GIVE THE NAME OF YOUR EDEXCEL CONTACT:

Michael Davies

### ONCE COMPLETED PLEASE RETURN TWO FULL COPIES OF THIS QUALIFICATION RATIONALE TO:

#### The Approval Team

Room 122,  
Edexcel,  
Stewart House,  
32 Russell Square,  
London,  
WC1B 5DN

For further clarification on the requirements of this form please

E Mail: [approvals@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:approvals@edexcel.org.uk)

## FOR EDEXCEL USE ONLY

### AT acknowledge receipt:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

### QDD check:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

### RDM authority to proceed:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

## Appendix 5: QAA criteria on level 4 and level 5 qualifications

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) provides information on positioning qualifications within the framework for higher education qualifications.

Guidance includes:

- An explanation of the **higher education qualification framework**
- **Qualification Descriptors** – generic statements of the main outcomes of the main qualification at each level, demonstrating the nature of change between levels
- **Subject benchmark statements** – attributes, skills and capabilities for Honours degrees in specific subjects
- Guidelines on **Programme Specifications** – to be developed by institutions of higher education for single programmes of study, outlining the knowledge, skills and understanding to be acquired by a student on a particular programme (in addition to the teaching and assessment methods required).

Further details and current information (including a full publication list) may be found on the QAA website ([www.qaa.ac.uk/public/publications](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/public/publications)).

## Appendix 6: Level descriptors

Level	Description
<b>Level 1</b>	Competence that involves the application of knowledge in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable.
<b>Level 2</b>	Competence that involves the application of knowledge in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Some of the activities are complex or non-routine and there is some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, may often be a requirement.
<b>Level 3</b>	Competence that involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of varied work activities, performed in a wide variety of contexts, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy and control or guidance of others is often required.
<b>Level 4</b>	Competence that involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.
<b>Level 5</b>	Competence that involves the application of a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountabilities for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation.

## Appendix 7: Level descriptors for Entry level qualifications

The table illustrates national level descriptors for Entry level produced by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority ([www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)).

	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3
Student abilities/skills	<p>If learners are working towards this level they may have issues around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Severe learning difficulty/disabilities (SLD/D)</li> <li>limited literacy/numeracy</li> <li>limited understanding</li> <li>limited motor skills</li> </ul>	<p>If learners are working towards this level they may have issues around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate learning difficulty/disabilities (MLD/D)</li> <li>limits to their literacy/numeracy skills</li> <li>ESOL</li> <li>limited motor skills</li> </ul>	<p>If learners are working towards this level they may have issues around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>literacy/numeracy skills</li> <li>ESOL</li> <li>being a low achiever</li> <li>being disaffected</li> <li>lacking confidence or having been out of education for some time</li> </ul>
Contexts	Learner's own world and experiences; local events and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social situations and interaction with others</li> <li>Introduce world of work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local community, employment and wider world</li> <li>Some specific work-related skills and knowledge</li> <li>Consider progression to vocational or key skills requirements at level 1</li> </ul>
Stage tasks	Small, discrete, self-contained tasks	Tasks may be based on activities forming part of a sequence	Activities can be multi-stepped and over a period of time
Teacher guidance	Frequent directive prompts	Guidance used to monitor, encourage and suggest improvements	Guidance is supervisory; assistance is requested and/or learner understanding prompted
Talking to people	<p>Focus around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>known</li> <li>1:1</li> <li>familiar and everyday</li> <li>listening</li> <li>giving and getting information</li> </ul>	<p>Focus around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>groups and 1:1</li> <li>everyday situations</li> <li>listening</li> <li>giving and receiving information</li> <li>expressing opinions and needs</li> <li>taking part in discussions</li> </ul>	<p>Focus around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>face-to-face situations</li> <li>using information equipment (telephone)</li> <li>give, receive and find out information</li> <li>1:1 and in groups</li> <li>planning and evaluating work</li> </ul>
Feedback to students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>given during and at the end of each task</li> <li>related to action needed to improve work</li> <li>builds confidence/ independence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>given during and at the end of each task</li> <li>suggests action for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>given at the end of discrete stages, encouraging autonomy</li> <li>identifies achievement</li> <li>encourages learner to evaluate and suggest improvements</li> </ul>
NC level equivalencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>roughly equates with NC level 1 – what a <i>child could</i> be expected to do between 5-7 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>roughly equates with NC level 2 – what a <i>child could</i> be expected to do between 5-8 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>roughly equates with NC level 3 – what a <i>child could</i> be expected to do between 7-11 years</li> </ul>
Literacy and numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Numeracy and Literacy (for post-16 learners) have been written with NC criteria in mind:</li> <li>Little or no reading and writing required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Numeracy and Literacy (for post-16 learners) have been written with NC criteria in mind</li> <li>Require basic communication skills and some reading and writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Numeracy and Literacy (for post-16 learners) have been written with NC criteria in mind</li> </ul>

## Appendix 8: The use of units from standard Edexcel qualifications

Standard qualifications	Requirement
<p><b>General rules which apply to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NVQ</li> <li>• NQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First, Introductory and Short Course qualifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The adopted unit must not be altered</li> <li>• A customised qualification can be composed entirely of standard units, provided the resultant qualification is meaningful, fulfils your aims and does not duplicate or significantly overlap (see <i>Appendix 9</i>) any standard Edexcel qualification</li> <li>• Any unit that is externally assessed cannot be inserted into a BTEC Customised Framework qualification</li> <li>• NVQ units cannot be included in customised BTEC Higher Nationals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BTEC qualifications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals and First and Introductory qualifications</li> <li>• NQF BTEC Short Course qualifications</li> <li>• BTEC Customised Framework qualifications</li> <li>• BTEC language units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Units from any NQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Nationals, First and Introductory qualifications can be included, provided the units are not externally assessed</li> <li>• Units from any NQF BTEC Short Course qualifications can be included provided they are not externally assessed</li> <li>• BTEC customised qualifications must not significantly overlap standard, NQF BTEC qualifications, see <i>Appendix 9</i> for significant overlap</li> <li>• Units from the BTEC Customised Framework qualifications can be included, provided authorisation has been granted by the units' owners</li> <li>• BTEC language units can be included</li> <li>• The accreditation period of the customised qualification will be dependent on the accreditation of the oldest transferred BTEC unit.</li> </ul>
<p><b>NVQ</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only NVQ units for which Edexcel has been accredited can be used</li> <li>• Units from NVQs can be considered provided they do not require external assessment. If the assessment strategy for a NVQ requires additional independent assessment for certain units, these units cannot be used in customised qualifications</li> <li>• Normally, there should not be units from more than two different NVQs within one customised qualification</li> <li>• The accreditation period of the customised qualification will be dependent on the accreditation of the oldest NVQ unit</li> <li>• Normally, a qualification cannot be composed entirely of NVQ units from a single NVQ qualification, as this would constitute duplication.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other NQF qualifications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Units from general qualifications, VCE, GNVQ, Adult Literacy, Adult Numeracy or Key Skills cannot be used in a BTEC Customised Framework qualification.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 9: Significant overlap

BTEC customised qualifications must not significantly overlap standard, NQF BTEC qualifications. Significant overlap relates to the number of mandatory units from the standard, NQF BTEC qualification that can be used in the BTEC customised qualification. The grid below defines the number of mandatory units that can be imported from a single standard, NQF BTEC qualification. If a NQF BTEC qualification has only two mandatory units, these units cannot be included in a customised qualification.

Number of mandatory units (including externally assessed units) in the standard, NQF BTEC qualification*	Number of mandatory, NQF BTEC units that can be used in a BTEC customised qualification
3	2
4	2
5	3
6	3
7	4
8	4
Above 8	If you are developing a qualification in an area that has a standard, NQF BTEC qualification with more than 8 mandatory units, you must discuss this with your Edexcel contact.

\*For customised BTEC Introductory qualifications, you must follow the structure of the standard NQF qualification **but** you cannot use any of the core units. You may make use of the personal skills units and the option units, if they are relevant to your learners.

## Appendix 10: Qualification title construction

1. Identify the **area of study or occupational competence** that is contained in your proposed qualification and use this as a **starting point** to devise your title. Ensure your title is distinct from other related qualifications and it does not duplicate or emulate Edexcel designated titles within the same type of qualification, see *Appendix 1: Examples of National Qualification Framework BTEC titles* for examples and the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications))
2. Ensure your title accurately **reflects the content** of the qualification - this relates to the knowledge and skills being developed. Your title should not include a specific job role or job title.
3. Check that your title has **meaning and currency** with the end user (such as the learner, employment, higher education, etc.), for example it will represent to employers the skills and knowledge the successful learner will have achieved
4. Your title must be **ethically** acceptable to Edexcel; this can be checked with your Edexcel contact
5. The specialist part of the title can have a **maximum of 80 characters**, including spaces and punctuation
6. You should use **'and'** in your title, however **'&'** may be used where there is a need to reserve character space within a qualification title
7. Normally the **name** of a centre may **not** appear as part of the title – see point 2 above for an exception. However, qualifications for use exclusively by employers/employer groups may include the employer's name in the title, eg BTEC Advanced Professional Certificate for Robert & Chilles Customer Service.

## Appendix 11: Development check list for a customised BTEC Short Course qualification

The table provides a summary of the main milestones involved in developing a customised BTEC Short Course qualification. The table can be used to ensure the main milestones have been considered. You do not have to follow the milestones in the order below.

1	Qualification aims	Rationale		
		Target Learner		
	Modes of delivery	Delivery/assessment modes		
2	Qualification level	Entry	Entry	
		1	Foundation	
		2	Intermediate	
		3	Advanced	
		4	Professional	
3	Qualification size	Award	30-100 hours	
		Certificate	120-200 hours	
		Diploma	220-300 hours (Entry-Level 3)	
			220 hours – no Upper Limit (Levels 4-5)	
<p>You may need to adjust between 3 and 4 to ensure your qualification is coherent, meaningful and can be implemented in your centre</p>				
4	Unit titles	Follow the steps in section 4.4		
	Unit size	Minimum unit size of 10 hours and multiples of 10 to a maximum unit size of 120 hours		
	Unit level	At least 75% of the qualification hours must be composed of units at the same level as the overall qualification level. This permits 25% of the total qualification hours to be composed of units at a level above and/or below the overall qualification level.		
	Units from other qualifications	To import units from standard Edexcel qualifications see <i>Section 2.6</i> and <i>Appendix 8: The use of units from standard Edexcel qualifications</i> and <i>Appendix 9: Significant overlap rule</i>		
	Units – Core/Option	All core units	or	Core and option units
	Unit writing	See Section 4		
5	Qualification title	Follow the steps in <i>Section 2.8</i>		
6	Unit assessment and grading	All units are graded and there is no overall qualification grade		
		Units graded as pass or fail	or	Units graded as pass, merit or distinction

## Appendix 12: Development check list for a customised BTEC Higher National, BTEC National, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualification

The table provides a summary of the main milestones involved in developing customised BTEC Higher National, BTEC National, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications. The table can be used to ensure the main milestones have been considered. You do not have to consider the milestones in the order below.

1	Qualification aims	Rationale		
	Modes of delivery	Target Learner		
		Delivery/assessment modes		
2	Qualification level	1	BTEC Introductory	
		2	BTEC First Diploma	
		3	BTEC National Award/Certificate/Diploma	
		4	BTEC Higher National Certificate/Diploma	
3	Qualification size	BTEC Introductory Certificate	4 units (2x30 hr + 2x60 hr)	180 hours
		Diploma	8 units (4x30 hr + 4x60 hr)	360 hours
		BTEC First Diploma	6 units (each 60 hrs)	360 hours
		BTEC National Award	6 units (each 60 hrs)	360 hours
		Certificate	12 units (each 60 hrs)	720 hours
		Diploma	18 units (each 60 hrs)	1080 hours
BTEC Higher National Certificate	10 units (each 60 hrs)	600 hours		
Diploma	16 units (each 60 hrs)	960 hours		
4	Unit titles	Follow the steps in <i>section 4.4</i>		
	Unit size	60 hours only (for the BTEC Introductory 30 and 60 hours)		
	Unit level	All units at the same level as the qualification		
	Units from other qualifications	To import units from standard Edexcel qualifications see <i>Section 3.5</i> and <i>Appendix 8: The use of units from standard Edexcel qualifications</i> and <i>Appendix 9: Significant overlap rule</i>		
	Units – Core/Option	All core units	or	Core and option units
	Unit writing	See <i>Section 4</i>		
5	Qualification title	Follow the steps in <i>Section 3.8</i>		
6	Unit assessment and grading	All units are graded and there is no overall qualification grade		
		Nationals/First/Introductory qualifications: contextualised grading grid containing the pass, merit and distinction criteria, except for the personal skills units of the BTEC Introductory qualifications, which contain pass criteria only		
		Higher Nationals: pass criteria and generic grade descriptors for merit and distinction		

## Appendix 13: Unit structure

Below is an outline of a BTEC unit template, showing the order of the sections and the associated headings. You need to write your units to this structure. An electronic template can be obtained from your Edexcel contact.

### Unit x: Unit title

Unit number and title. The title should accurately reflect the content of the unit and be no more than 80 characters including spaces.

### Learning hours: x hours

The number of learning hours must be indicated.

### Unit Level: x

This will be, for example, L2 or L3.

### Unit description

A concise statement describing the aim(s) of the unit and the knowledge, skills and understanding to be developed by the learner. The links to other units in the qualification and links to other relevant qualifications, eg NVQs, Key Skills, may also be included. The type of unit (ie core or option) and the mode of assessment can also be stated.

### Summary of learning outcomes

To achieve this unit a learner must:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Learning outcomes state exactly what a learner should 'know, understand or be able to do' when s/he has completed the unit. Learning outcomes are key to assessment and care should be taken to write them clearly in a way that is unambiguous about what is expected of the learner. Key word(s) that will need amplification in the content section must be in bold.

### Content

For each learning outcome the knowledge, skills or understanding required in order to achieve the outcome is identified in the content. This is arranged in sections that relate back to each of the learning outcomes. Each section begins with the word(s) in bold from the learning outcome. Within each section, there are likely to be more areas of learning. Each area of learning should begin with a key term or short phrase written in italics and then amplified in plain text.

### Assessment

The assessment and grading criteria address each learning outcome, defining the standard of response required from the learner to achieve the unit.

### Guidance on delivery and assessment

Advice, ideas and guidance on delivery and assessment of the unit are expanded. Also, links to other units, resources and suggested reading are included. You must list for each unit the essential resources required to deliver the unit.

Delivery

Assessment

Links

Resources

Suggested reading

## Appendix 14: Unit writer's outline for customised BTEC Short Course and BTEC Higher National units

This is not the unit template but just a tool to write units. You can modify this form to suit your units, eg the number of learning outcomes listed is only an example. When writing assessment criteria think also about the nature of your assessment instrument/activity/task/assignment.

<b>Unit title:</b>		
<b>Unit value:</b> <i>ie unit size in hours</i>		
<b>Unit description:</b>		
<b>Summary of learning outcomes</b> To achieve this unit a learner must:  <i>Key word(s) in bold</i>	<b>Summary of the content for each learning outcome</b> Make it clear if a section of the content applies to more than one learning outcome	<b>Assessment criteria for each learning outcome</b> Make it clear when an assessment criterion applies to more than one learning outcome
1		
2		
3		
4		

## Appendix 15: Unit writer's outline for customised BTEC National, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory units (excluding personal skills units)

This is not the unit template but just a tool to write units. You can modify this form to suit your units, eg the number of learning outcomes listed is only an example. When writing assessment criteria think also about the nature of your assessment instrument/activity/task/assignment.

<b>Unit title:</b>		
<b>Unit value:</b> <i>ie unit size in hours</i>		
<b>Unit description:</b>		
<b>Summary of learning outcomes</b> To achieve this unit a learner must: <i>Key word(s) in bold</i>	<b>Summary of the content for each learning outcome</b> Make it clear if a section of the content applies to more than one learning outcome	<b>Assessment criteria for each learning outcome</b> Try to write assessment criterion (particularly at merit and distinction) that apply to more than one learning outcome
1		P1
		M1
		D1
2		P2
		M2
		D2
3		P3
		M3
		D3
4		P4
		M4
		D4

## Appendix 16: Learning outcome verbs

This is not an exhaustive list; some verbs are not suitable for all sectors and some are not suitable for all levels but the list may provide a starting point for finding a suitable learning outcome verb.

Analyse	Develop	Manage	Realise
Apply	Differentiate	Maintain	Record
Assemble	Display	Make	Rectify
Assist	Draft	Manufacture	Repair
Calculate	Edit	Measure	Retrieve
Carry out	Establish	Modify	Review
Collect	Evaluate	Monitor	Search
Conduct	Examine	Obtain	Select
Connect	Explain	Organise	Serve
Construct	Explore	Originate	Set up
Control	Extract	Perform	Set out
Cook	File	Plan	Store
Create	Gather	Practise	Survey
Customise	Generate	Prepare	Take part
Deal with	Grow	Present	Test
Define	Handle	Print	Transfer
Demonstrate	Identify	Process	Undertake
Describe	Install	Produce	Use
Design	Interpret	Propose	Work
Determine	Investigate	Provide	

## Appendix 17: Verbs for targeting different activities

### Verbs giving evidence of KNOWLEDGE:

Define, describe, identify, label, name, outline, reproduce, recall, select, state, present, be aware of, extract, organise, recount, write, recognise, measure, underline, repeat, relate, know, match

### Verbs giving evidence of COMPREHENSION:

Interpret, translate, estimate, justify, comprehend, clarify, defend, distinguish, estimate, explain, extend, generalise, exemplify, give examples of, infer, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarise, discuss, perform, report, present, restate, identify, illustrate, indicate, find, select, understand, represent, name, formulate, judge, contrast, translate, classify, express, compare

### Verbs giving evidence of APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE/UNDERSTANDING:

Apply, solve, construct, demonstrate, change, compute, discover, manipulate, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, relate, show, use, give examples of, exemplify, draw (up), select, explain how, find, choose, assess, practise, operate, illustrate, verify

### Verbs giving evidence of ANALYSIS:

Recognise, distinguish between, evaluate, analyse, break down, differentiate, identify, illustrate how, infer, point out, relate, select, separate, divide/subdivide, compare, contrast, justify, resolve, conclude, criticise, question, diagnose, identify, categorise, point out, elucidate

### Verbs giving evidence of SYNTHESIS:

Propose, present, structure, integrate, formulate, teach, develop, combine, compile, compose, create, devise, design, explain, generate, modify, organise, plan, re-arrange, reconstruct, relate, re-organise, revise, write, summarise, tell, account for, restate, report, alter, argue, order, select, manage, generalise, derive, conclude, build up, engender, synthesise, put together, suggest, enlarge

### Verbs giving evidence of EVALUATION:

Judge, appraise, assess, conclude, compare, contrast, describe how, criticise, discriminate, justify, defend, evaluate, rate, determine, choose, value, question

## Appendix 18: Assessment criteria for BTEC Short Courses and BTEC Higher Nationals

The following extract is an example taken from a level 3 qualification.

### Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria for pass To achieve each outcome the learner must demonstrate the ability to:
1. Follow good <b>dispensing procedures and practices</b>  <i>The learning outcomes are repeated here</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe a procedure for the dispensing of medicines</li> <li>• Monitor and provide examples of the types of prescription forms</li> <li>• Use text to find information on.....</li> <li>• Perform....</li> </ul> <p><i>A pass grade is awarded for a unit, based on the achievement of all the pass assessment criteria for that unit. Merit and distinction grades are awarded for higher level achievement. The assessment and grading of evidence at merit and distinction level is based on the application of generic grade descriptors.</i></p>
2. Perform accurate <b>weighing, measurements and calculations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate weighing and.....</li> <li>• Explain the accuracy and limits of.....</li> <li>• Show the use and care of.....</li> <li>• Describe the safety.....</li> </ul>
3. Prepare <b>pharmaceutical products (medicines) for dispensing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare pharmaceutical products that illustrate the use of.....</li> <li>• Generate labels for.....</li> <li>• Review.....</li> </ul>
4. ....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Generic grade descriptors for merit and distinction grades, for the customised BTEC Short Course qualifications from level 1 to level 4, can be found on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)). The generic grade descriptors for level 4 can also be used for the customised BTEC Higher Nationals.

## Appendix 19: Assessment outcome words and phrases

This is not an exhaustive list; some phrases are not suitable for all sectors and some are not suitable for all levels but the list may provide a starting point for writing assessment and grading criteria.

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show some</li> <li>• a basic understanding</li> <li>• basic</li> <li>• simple</li> <li>• limited</li> <li>• some</li> <li>• plain</li> <li>• primary</li> <li>• participate correctly</li> <li>• relevant issues</li> <li>• viable</li> <li>• explain in detail</li> <li>• explain using appropriate examples</li> <li>• describe fully</li> <li>• describe clearly</li> <li>• explain clearly</li> <li>• accurate calculation</li> <li>• suitable ways of presenting through review</li> <li>• examples of good practice</li> <li>• reasonably accurate</li> <li>• comprehensive records</li> <li>• easily understood</li> <li>• identify and respond appropriately</li> <li>• creativity</li> <li>• development of new ideas</li> <li>• skilful controlled work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• main</li> <li>• identify</li> <li>• use a range</li> <li>• define some</li> <li>• medium</li> <li>• realistic</li> <li>• most</li> <li>• select appropriate format to cover all aspects</li> <li>• justification of</li> <li>• appropriate timescales</li> <li>• using initiative</li> <li>• detail data</li> <li>• logically and well structured</li> <li>• appropriately</li> <li>• show depth</li> <li>• original work</li> <li>• accurately/accuracy</li> <li>• suitable format</li> <li>• suitable to the role of</li> <li>• independent approach</li> <li>• alternative ideas</li> <li>• managing effectively</li> <li>• well furnished</li> <li>• creative</li> <li>• effectively presented</li> <li>• effective use</li> <li>• coherent approach</li> <li>• significant contribution</li> <li>• effectively use</li> <li>• respond to new information</li> <li>• complete procedures within given time scale</li> <li>• create</li> <li>• competently and safely</li> <li>• clear and coherent</li> <li>• considered comments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify clearly</li> <li>• thoroughly</li> <li>• comprehensive</li> <li>• compare</li> <li>• define in detail</li> <li>• appropriate</li> <li>• relevant</li> <li>• evidence to show</li> <li>• justify</li> <li>• detailed evaluation</li> <li>• detailed records</li> <li>• wide range</li> <li>• appropriate examples of own ideas/original approach</li> <li>• suggest appropriate action</li> <li>• suggest improvement</li> <li>• individual evidence of</li> <li>• justify the recommendations</li> <li>• carry out independently</li> <li>• produce a thorough survey</li> <li>• summarise effectively</li> <li>• drawing conclusions</li> <li>• effective plan</li> <li>• independence in investigations</li> <li>• critical analysis</li> <li>• high level of understanding supported by a comprehensive explanation of</li> <li>• show independence in managing</li> <li>• take responsibility for</li> <li>• anticipate problems</li> <li>• innovative presentation</li> <li>• thorough understanding</li> <li>• well structured and effective</li> <li>• confidently</li> <li>• data which is accurate, precise, reliable and sufficient</li> <li>• justify changes in direction</li> <li>• express a range of personal solutions creatively</li> <li>• understand the potentials and limitations of</li> </ul>

## Appendix 20: Contextualised grading grid template for level 2

This is an example of a grading grid template. This template can be used to write contextualised assessment and grading. For each unit include **only** the relevant grading criteria. Each grading grid does **not** have to contain 5 pass criteria, 5 merit criteria and 5 distinction criteria. Select the pass grading criteria that are **relevant** to your learning outcomes, for merit where possible reduce the grading criteria to 3-4 by coherently linking the criteria and repeat the process to further reduce the distinction grading criteria to 3-2.

Grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:
P1. Understand and use information by.....	M1. Analyse information by.....	
P2. Communicate ideas and information on....by using.....	M2. Communicate information on....., with evidence of independent ideas by.....	D2. Communicate ideas on.... and information on ....., with evidence of originality by.....
P3. Use given skills to.....	M3. Select skills to.....	D3. Identify and explain skills that are useful to.....
P4. Use skills in planning/scheduling to achieve.....	M4. Respond to changes in circumstances by.....	D4. Anticipate and plan how to overcome changes in circumstances by.....
P5. List ways of improving work by.....	M4. Independently identify potential problems with..... Combine information to.....	D5. Independently evaluate methods and/or outcomes of..... by.....

For more information on Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications please contact:  
Customer Services on 0870 240 9800  
Alternatively email: [enquiries@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@edexcel.org.uk)  
Or visit our website: [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)

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