

BTEC 2010 FAQs

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1. Q. Will all units, other than those stated as modified, be exactly the same as they were before the 2010 changes?
 - A. All units have changed in some ways as a result of the move from NQF to QCF. However, changes will be stated on the specification and are minimal. Units that appear to have the same content may be slightly different in their structure. It is important not to assume that the units are the same as there may be subtle but important differences. This is not to say, however, that you have to forget all the work on assignments etc you have prepared for the pre 2010 BTECs as this may still be relevant, but may just need a little updating to ensure it meets the criteria for the new QCF units.

2. Q. How will BTECs and Diplomas sit alongside each other?
 - A. The BTEC qualifications have been re-developed to act as Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL) for Diplomas wherever appropriate.

3. Q. Will there be links to other qualifications within the new 2010 BTECs?
 - A. Yes, the links are identified within each unit.

4. Q. Will it be possible for centres to have different classes doing different units?
 - A. Yes, this will be possible, provided the learners are registered for and undertake qualifications using the rules of combination which apply.

5. Q. Will it be possible for learners to receive a distinction if they have not taken Level 4 units?
 - A. Yes. Learners do not necessarily have to take Level 4 units in order to receive a distinction.

6. Q. If Level 4 units are taken and the learner fails, will they still be awarded the highest Level 3 grade?
 - A. No, they will receive the grade they achieve for the Level 4 unit.

7. Q. Will the final specifications cover all units on each course?
 - A. Yes, all units will be covered in the specification.

8. Q. Will the NSS be conducted in house?
 - A. There will be no NSS. Any required sampling is most likely to be postal.

9. Q. **When will the processes associated with the delivery and assessment of the new BTECs need to change?**
- A. The delivery and assessment of the new BTECs should be very similar to how they are now as changes have been minimal wherever possible. Any changes that are required, however, should be with effect from the 1st registrations on the new BTECs in September 2010.
10. Q. **Will the BTEC National Award (1 A Level equivalent) take one or two years to complete?**
- A. This is up to centres to decide. However, it would normally be a two year course.
11. Q. **Will the new 2010 BTECs be as flexible as the previous BTECs?**
- A. Yes. If anything the new BTECs will offer more flexibility than the previous ones as in many subjects the choice of units has increased.
12. Q. **Will centres be required to provide space for learners to work outside of guided learning hours (GLH) in order to make up the total learning hours?**
- A. No, students will be expected to carry out work in their own time at home or in a library etc. Centres will not be expected to provide a class room for this.
13. Q. **What does Edexcel think might change in the 2013 government review of qualifications with regards to the new 2010 BTECs?**
- A. Given that we now have 1.1 million registrations on BTEC Firsts and Nationals we expect that BTEC qualification will go from strength to strength. If any individual qualification is threatened through the review process centres will normally receive three years notice.
14. Q. **Will learners be able to study both a Diploma and a BTEC?**
- A. Yes, this will be possible. The smaller sized BTECs are accredited as Additional and Specialist Learning to be alongside Principal learning and the other component parts of Diploma.
15. Q. **In the new BTEC specifications, when a list starts with 'e.g.', how much of the list actually needs covering in lessons?**
- A. These lists are examples and do not all need covering. Teachers can also use examples of their own, especially if they meet local vocational contexts.
16. Q. **What will be the minimum age a learner can be entered for BTEC Nationals?**
- A. 16 years
17. Q. **Can units within BTEC Nationals be taught before the learner is 16 and then be approved/ certificated after the turn 16?**
- A. Yes, if the head of the centre is aware of this.

18. Q. Will it be possible to import units from other BTECs to increase the choice of optional units?
- A. Yes, provided the rules for meeting local needs are applied. These will be confirmed in Spring 2010.
19. Q. Will each assignment set need to cover pass, merit and distinction levels?
- A. Yes it should do. An assignment can be set at pass assessment criteria only but this is considered poor practise. The 'suggested programme of assignments' table gives teachers an idea of the natural criteria themes that relates to the assessment and grading grid. Edexcel has always advised centres to build in assessment opportunities where possible.
20. Q. Will centres have to document how learners achieve each credit?
- A. No. All the pass criteria need to be achieved to gain the credits for each unit.
21. Q. Is funding guaranteed for the new 2010 BTECs?
- A. Yes, we have received formal confirmation that the BTEC qualifications will receive LSC funding.
22. Q. Where can example work for the new 2010 BTECs be found?
- A. This will not be available until after the programmes have commenced. There are standardisation activities available via BOSCA.
23. Q. Will centres need to provide different paperwork to assess years 12 and 13?
- A. Assessment is within the control of the centre and is monitored primarily via the designated internal verifier. The centre determines the administration and assessment required at centre level.
24. Q. Will Meeting Local Needs (MLN) credits count as specialised credits?
- A. They will count as optional credits. Mandatory units must be left intact.
25. Q. What will centres be able to count as MLN credit?
- A. This is to be determined within the rules of combination and the rules for MLN which will be published in Spring 2010.
26. Q. What will be the main differences and similarities between Diplomas and BTECs? How should centres select which qualification is best for their learners?
- A. Diplomas are broad-based general qualifications comprising a number of integrated parts, focusing on a spectrum of knowledge within a particular sector. Most learners would probably seek progression from Level 3 to university programmes.

BTEC courses have a more specialised focus for both learners seeking HE progression or work within a specific sector.

27. Q. Where can I find more information on Functional Skills?

A. More information on functional skills can be found by following this link:
<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/func-skills/Pages/default.aspx>.

28. Q. Where can I find information about plans for new resources?

A. Information about plans for new resources can be found by following this link:
<http://www.btec.co.uk/resources>.

29. Q. When will information about resources be available to centres?

A. Information is available now about the learning and teaching resources either online at <http://www.btec.co.uk/resources>, or there are individual leaflets on each sector which have been mailed to centres. More marketing collateral will be sent to centres in the spring term such as Resource Guides and Evaluation pack and the BTEC specification pack also includes free materials and this will be with centres in the Spring 2010.

30. Q. Where can I find e-versions of the presentations shown at recent BTEC 2010 events?

A. If you email the BTEC team on btec@edexcel.com and request the PowerPoint presentation, stating which subject you require, we will provide you with this ASAP.

31. Q. In FE colleges, will funding be available for the new BTEC Level 2 Certificate and the new BTEC Level 3 Certificate?

A. For 14-19 learners the BTEC Level 2 Certificate and the BTEC Level 3 Certificate will be funded according to Guided Learning Hours (GLH).

32. Q. Will it be possible for centres to deliver Level 1 and Level 2 BTECs in the same classroom?

A. It is possible but not always advisable as the content for teaching is different. Assessment requirements will also be different.

33. Q. Can you provide a list of centres that deliver BTECs at Level 3 as examples of set up and work?

A. Please email the BTEC team on btec@edexcel.com stating your centre number, centre name and name of Local Authority and we can arrange for this information to be provided. However, if you have already requested this information at an event then we will be in touch.

34. Q. Will there be separate training events for centres who will be delivering BTEC for the first time?

- A. Yes there will be training events to support centres who will be introducing BTEC for the first time in September 2010. These will be held in the spring/ summer terms. The subject specific training already available and advertised in our training catalogue, entitled 'Preparing to deliver the new QCF BTEC in...' will also be relevant to for new centres and will provide additional depth in subject specific training.
- 35. Q. As the unit grids appear to be much bigger, will Edexcel provide them for centres to download?**
- A. Yes. They are included in the 'At a Glance Guide' on the CD-ROM in the specification pack which will be provided to centres in spring 2010.
- 36. Q. Will centres be able to use as many assignments as they wish to assess the units?**
- A. Yes. Edexcel allows centres to create assignments and use assessment methods which are appropriate, suitably vocational and varied.
- 37. Q. Will it be possible to combine mandatory and optional units?**
- A. Yes, based on the defined Rules of Combination within the relevant specification.
- 38. Q. Will centres need to write a complete assessment for each mandatory unit?**
- A. No. Assignments and related tasks should encompass the assessment of grading criteria within the grid, to provide learners with the opportunity to achieve not only pass, but also merit and distinction criteria. The number of assignments and their focus are for assessors to determine.
- 39. Q. If students are registered on Level 2, will they be able to take Level 3 units?**
- A. Yes, if within the Rules of Combination.
- 40. Q. Will it be possible to follow specific pathways even though learners must take optional and mandatory units?**
- A. Yes. There are pathways and more general routes and options available, especially at BTEC National level.
- 41. Q. If conducting a specialist course, how many credits will need to be specific to that specialism?**
- A. This will depend upon the mandatory units and the specialist optional unit choice. Please refer to the Rules of Combination within the relevant specification.
- 42. Q. If learners are registered on the new one year BTEC Level 3 Certificate (AS equivalent), will they be able to carry over the credits they gain if they later decide to continue and do the BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma?**
- A. Yes, this is possible.

43. Q. Should learners be registered on to the highest level course they are thinking of studying or should they be registered at each level separately? For example, is it best to register a learner on the BTEC Level 3 Diploma from the beginning, or is it better to register them on the BTEC Level 3 Certificate, followed by the BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma if they pass the Certificate, and then the BTEC Level 3 Diploma if they pass the Subsidiary Diploma?
- A. Either way is acceptable. Most centres build from the smaller to the larger sized qualifications as this rewards achievement and is motivational. It also the preferred method for funding reasons and helping to raise attainment for many centres. In any case, learners should be recruited with integrity, agreeing appropriate learning aims which they are capable of achieving.
44. Q. Once a learner has achieved a qualification, are they able to take a longer qualification and improve the grade achieved on their original qualification?
- A. Yes. Only up to the point when the grades are reported to Edexcel, and subject to centre policies.
45. Q. Will new evidence need to be provided to satisfy new quality assurances?
- A. The new quality assurance model is a development of the present one. Much of the evidence will be the same, but the process aims to be more supportive to centres.
46. Q. Are there any centres of excellence that currently carry out BTECs that could be used as examples of how best to run BTEC qualifications ?
- A. If you provide your email address to the BTEC team on btec@edexcel.com stating your name, centre number, centre name and name of local authority, we can arrange for information about local centres who are currently successfully carrying out BTECs to be provided. Alternatively our 'Ask the Expert' specialists, who can be contacted through the subject specific pages of the BTEC website, should be able to help identify such centres.
47. Q. When do the BTEC Introductory Diplomas expire and what will replace them?
- A. The BTEC Introductory Diplomas will expire on 31 August 2010 with last certification in August 2010. These will be replaced by Foundation Learning within which the new BTEC Level 1 Diplomas are now available.
48. Q. Where can we find information on importing units?
- A. For the current MLN system, information about importing units can be found by following this link: <http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/I%20want%20to%20%20Tasks/MLN1%20Guidance.pdf> which will take you to the MLN guidance document. For the new QCF, once the qualification is approved and accredited, information about importing units will be available within the final specification. The amount of credit that can be imported into the optional bank will vary according the level and size of the qualification, and will follow in process roughly as now (but in terms of credit rather than units). A process will be in place for centres from April/May 2010. We will notify centres about gaining approval etc. in Spring 2010, and will also publicise this in the BTEC Bulletin.