

**Embargoed for 11.30 Thursday 7 July 2011**

**Pearson publish annual BTEC Results data for first time**

- **Girls ahead in practical learning as Applied Science proves more popular with girls**
- **Boys are outperformed by girls in Business courses**

Pearson, the world's largest learning company, today publishes data for the first time detailing the results attained in BTEC qualifications taken in schools and colleges. Pearson is the first awarding body to open up the achievements of students in schools and colleges studying a major vocational qualification, and has committed to the annual publication of these statistics.

BTEC students receive their grades on a rolling basis throughout the academic year and will continue to receive their results in this way. Today's data relates to calendar year results gained at level 2 and level 3 from 1 June 2010 to 31 May 2011. The data shows that:

- **Over half a million BTECs at Level 2 (Firsts) and Level 3 (Nationals) were awarded**
- Over 200,000 BTEC qualifications are studied in schools
- BTECs are rising in popularity: 364,229 BTEC Firsts were awarded, up from 265,480 the previous year

The perceived wisdom that boys outperform girls in traditionally practical subjects is not backed up by the evidence. Analysis by Pearson shows that:

- Applied Science is the most popular BTEC First studied, with nearly 70,000 students opting for this more practical approach to scientific learning.
- **52% of students achieving a BTEC First in Applied Science were girls. This picture is repeated at Level 3, where 54% of students achieving a BTEC National in Applied Science were girls.**
- While more boys achieved a BTEC National in Business, making up 55% of students, they are being outperformed by their female classmates.
- **43% of girls awarded a BTEC National Diploma in Business achieved the highest possible grade (DDD – triple distinction) as opposed to 33% of boys.**
- Overall, more BTECs are awarded to boys, with 52% of BTEC Firsts and 55% of BTEC Nationals

Alongside the achievement data, Pearson have also published completion rates for BTEC for the first time, showing what percentage of students successfully complete their BTEC qualifications. Unlike A-Levels and GCSEs, students complete BTECs when ready, so a completion rate is calculated in place of a pass rate.

- 79.6% of BTEC First students beginning their courses in 2007/08 successfully completed their qualifications. A small increase is shown for those starting in 2008/09, of whom **81.5%** of students completed their BTEC First.
- 72.7% of BTEC National students starting BTEC courses in 2007/08 successfully completed their qualification, rising to **75.6%** for students registering in 2008/09.

Completion rates are calculated over an academic year (1<sup>st</sup> September – 31<sup>st</sup> August), rather than over a calendar year as with the achievement statistics. As a BTEC typically takes 2 years to complete, the rate is calculated through collecting registration data from 2 years before and factoring in any anomalies (within a margin of error).

Rod Bristow, President Pearson UK said:

"Today's publication of BTEC results data will arm young people and their future employers with the evidence and information they need to make the right decisions for their future. It is incredibly important that students and parents have the facts about the courses offered in schools and colleges.

"The Government has called for greater transparency around vocational qualifications. We are confident that BTECs are high quality and robust qualifications and believe that it is important to provide as much evidence as possible in as open a way as possible. All vocational courses should be measured by publicly available evidence about students' achievements and the progress they are able to make following their studies.

"My congratulations go to all students who have successfully completed a BTEC this year. Their hard work and achievements should be celebrated and recognised. I look forward to meeting the highest achieving learners at the National BTEC Awards 2011."

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### **About Pearson**

Pearson is the world's leading learning company. In the UK, Pearson comprises educational names including Edexcel, BTEC, Longman and Heinemann, as well as internationally known businesses such as Penguin, Dorling Kindersley, and the *Financial Times*. Pearson's education work combines 150 years of experience with assessment services and online support for learners in more than 70 countries.

Every day our work helps learning flourish, and wherever learning flourishes, so do people.