

## **BTEC Brilliance: First ever national awards to recognise excellence in BTEC qualifications**

**EMBARGOED until 00.01am 7 July 2011**

Grant Ridley, an 18 year old entrepreneur from Newcastle, has today been announced as the winner of the first ever Outstanding BTEC Student of the year, in an awards ceremony in London.

Today's National BTEC Awards, will provide a much-anticipated and long-awaited platform for students, teachers, schools and colleges to celebrate their outstanding achievements in vocational learning.

Today's winners are a tribute to the commitment and hard work of the nation's best in education provision and learning, and include:

- **Outstanding BTEC Student of the Year:** Grant Ridley, National Enterprise Academy. Grant completed his GCSE's and International Baccalaureate prior to undertaking his current BTEC. He is expected to be awarded a Distinction grade in his BTEC in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. The judges were impressed that Grant has balanced this with successfully setting up a guerrilla marketing business and his ambition is to run his business at university whilst studying for his BA in International Business Management at The University of Northumbria.
- Euthan Newman, who teaches health and social care at South Thames College in London is the **Outstanding BTEC Teacher of the Year**. Judges praised Euthan's outstanding commitment to his students, often putting on extra workshops for students in his free time and helping many progress on to university. A colleague commented that "in 26 years I have never worked with a more genuine and inspiring teacher."
- **Outstanding BTEC School/College of the Year:** Newlands Girls' School. Newlands currently boast a 100% pass and retention rate on all of their courses. The quality of extra-curricular provision is described as 'exceptional' by parents and the judges were impressed by the business partnerships the college has developed to give students experience of working in industry.

- **Outstanding BTEC Adult Learner:** Keith Southern, Mid Cheshire College. Keith left school aged 15 without any formal qualifications and has now been accepted onto both a Foundation Degree in Commercial Music Technology and an Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector.

The Awards will be hosted by **Radio One DJ Scott Mills**, at the Royal Society of Arts in London and will be attended by nominated students, teachers, and leaders in education. **John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning** will also attend the ceremony.

Today's ceremony is being held in recognition of the nearly one million students around the country who are studying BTEC qualifications this year. Pearson, who own Edexcel, the awarding body for BTECs, announced that it was inviting nominations for the National BTEC Awards in April 2011. In total, over 450 nominations were received, across the award categories.

A full list of categories and winners is included in the notes below.

Rod Bristow, President, Pearson UK said,

"I am delighted to be hosting the first ever National BTEC Awards today. It's high time that vocational excellence is celebrated just as much as we celebrate academic achievement, and all the judges were impressed by the quality and number of nominations we received.

Every year, thousands of BTEC students go on to great universities and fantastic jobs. They achieve great things in a wide variety of careers; from business and engineering to ICT and healthcare. It is vital to support and celebrate the hard work and achievements of outstanding BTEC students and their teachers."

Awards host, Radio One DJ Scott Mills said, "I am very excited to be part of the first ever National BTEC Awards. I'm inspired when people achieve their ambitions and really get something out of their education, whether it's a traditional course or something more practical like a BTEC. I'm really looking forward to meeting such an impressive group of winners, people who have shown passion and commitment to putting their education to such good use."

The judging panel for the Awards, who will all be present at the ceremony, include:

- Gerard Kelly, Editor of the Times Education Supplement

- Robert Halfon, MP for Harlow
- Despina Panayi, a former Pearson Teaching Awards winner
- Nick Chambers, Direct of Education Employers Taskforce

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

#### **About the Awards**

The full list of winners of the National BTEC Awards will be formally announced at the ceremony on 7 July 2011, but please contact Depali or Alexa for more information if you wish to speak to specific winners.

The full list of categories is as follows:

1. Outstanding BTEC student of the year
2. Outstanding BTEC tutor of the year
3. Outstanding BTEC centre of the year
4. Outstanding contribution to the community by a BTEC student
5. Outstanding BTEC student in ICT
6. Outstanding BTEC student in Business and Enterprise
7. Outstanding BTEC student in Public services
8. Outstanding BTEC student in Construction and Engineering
9. Outstanding BTEC student in Creative and Media
10. Outstanding BTEC student in Healthcare and Science
11. Outstanding BTEC student in Hospitality and Beauty
12. Outstanding BTEC student on a short course