



St Paul's Catholic School

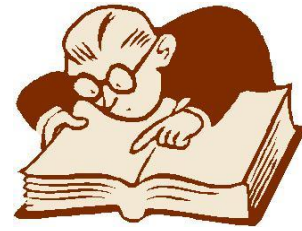
BTEC HANDBOOK

Information for Students

2019-20

What are Vocational Qualifications?

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



What makes vocational Qualifications different?

Students develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the vocational area they are studying.

Each vocational course is made up of a number of units, allowing students to build up their qualification in stages.

Students are assessed through coursework.

Students produce evidence for their key skills qualification through their vocational course

Students take responsibility for their own learning by planning their work, doing research and regularly reviewing their progress.

Why do we offer BTEC courses?

They prepare students for the world of work and provide a good starting point for other qualifications such as NVQs that can be studied in the workplace.

Employers value the qualities that vocational students bring to the workplace e.g. organisation, time management, communication and research skills.

Universities value the independent study skills that vocational students bring to their courses.

The courses are flexible so that they meet the needs of a wide range of students. They are available at different levels in a variety of formats. They can be taken alongside other qualifications such as traditional GCSEs, A levels.

They give students the opportunity to try a range of activities such as designing products, organising events, investigating how professionals work and working in teams.

What are BTEC qualifications worth?

How do the BTEC Tech Awards match up to the 2019 Performance table points?

Level	Qualification Grade	2019 Performance table points (based on 2018)
Level 2	Distinction*	8.5
	Distinction	7
	Merit	5.5
	Pass	4
Level 1	Distinction	3
	Merit	2
	Pass	1.25

BTEC Programmes at St Paul's Catholic School

BTEC First diploma Level 1 / 2 Creative Digital media Production
BTEC level 2 First Diploma
BTEC First award Level 1 / 2 in Animal care
BTEC First award Level 1 / 2 in Applied science
BETC Tech award Level 1 / 2 in Performing arts
BETC Tech award Level 1 / 2 in Health and social care

BTEC at Key stage 4:

This course is made up of units; each unit will take 30 or 60 hours to complete depending on your course.

You may be taught by more than one teacher, each teacher will be responsible for teaching different units (or parts of a unit), so that means that you may be working on two or even three different units at the same time. You will have to be well organised and remember to keep information in the right places in your folder.

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

What will happen in lessons?

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

Discussion - one to one or in groups

Research – group or individual using a variety of methods

Report writing – manually or using ICT

Presentations – in groups or individually

Practical work

Display work

Visits to organisations/companies

Work with visitors

Preparation for external examinations for the newer BTEC courses



Which styles of teaching will be used?

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

☐ **Teacher input**

At the start of a unit there will be a lot of teacher input; question and answer sessions, discussions, note taking and handouts. This may all happen at the beginning of a unit or at different points throughout the unit. It is important for you to note any information you are given, as it may be required at a later stage in the unit.

☐ **Student investigation**

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

☐ **Group work**

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

☐ **Practical Work**

☐ **Learning by experience**

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

☐ **Developing skills**

During your course you will be taught many skills:

- communication skills
- research skills using a variety of methods

- I.C.T. skills using a variety of programs

- practical skills using different techniques and equipment

- presentation skills using a variety of formats

organisational skills

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

What will be expected of you?

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

Read and research

Keep a record of the information you find and the sources

Plan your work in a logical order and keep a record of your progress

Talk to your teachers about your ideas and how to achieve the best results

Produce drafts and final copies of your work

Produce good quality work with high standards of grammar and spelling

Present your work in a suitable format according to the purpose and the audience

Evaluate your work and make suggestions for improvement

Meet deadlines as outlined in the assessment calendars which your teachers will provide

Keep a record of the work you have completed, including the grades and points you have been awarded

Who will be involved with the course?

Subject teachers (assessors)

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

Internal Verifier

This is the teacher in charge of the course. They must make sure that the units are being taught correctly and that sufficient resources are available. They will check (IV) the assessment of all teachers on the course; they sample the work of all students on the course and provide written feedback. The IV works with the external verifier.

Quality Nominee (Mrs Pocceschi)

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

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

🔍 Surveying teacher/student views

External Verifier

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

Exam Officer (Mrs Bamford)

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

How will your work be assessed?

All students will have to produce a portfolio of evidence. For each unit of work you will be given a series of tasks to complete and an assessment grid that will identify what you have to do to achieve a particular grade. Your teacher will check your work against the grid and make comments about the effort you have made and the quality of your work. Suggestions will be made to help you to achieve first, the minimum pass standard and then, the merit and distinction grades. Points will be awarded and added to your overall score with every unit that you complete. You will be expected to meet regular deadlines and a referral procedure will operate for students who fail to do this. If you are studying one of the newer BTEC programmes your teacher will guide you and help to prepare you for an external examination which may be a paper exam or an onscreen exam. This will be taken under formal exam conditions.

How to achieve the grades

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

BTEC language

Obtaining a Pass Grade

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

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

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

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

A formal report

A power point presentation

A leaflet

A handout or information sheet

A web page

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

Examples:

- ☐ *List the main features on your mobile phone.*
- ☐ *Describe the best way to greet a customer*
- ☐ *Outline the procedures you follow to keep your computer system secure.*

Obtaining a Merit grade

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

To achieve this grade you will have to work independently and find information using different methods (see research methods page 17). You will have to write in detail and give examples to show that you have understood the information well. You will have to explain in details using your own words and give reasons for the points that you make. You will have to review what you have done and give reasons for the choices you made.

Obtaining a Merit

Examples

- ☐ *Explain why mobile phones are so popular.*
- ☐ *Describe the needs of four different types of customers.*
- ☐ *Suggest the type of procedures a business would need to introduce to keep its IT system secure.*

Obtaining a Distinction grade

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

Obtaining a Distinction

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

Examples:

- ☒ *Evaluate the features and performance of your mobile phone.*
- ☒ *Analyse the role of customer service in contributing to an organisation's success.*
- ☒ *Justify the main features on the website of a large successful organisation of your choice.*

How will standards of work be maintained?

☒ **Internal Verification**

This is a quality control check to ensure that all students' work is being fairly marked and standards are being maintained. When a unit of work has been assessed and graded it will be passed to another teacher in the department who will check that all of the tasks have been completed to the appropriate standard. It may be necessary at this stage, for you, to amend your work, if it does not meet the standards set by other students, who have been awarded the same grade.

☒ **Storage of work**

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

You may be required to store some of your work electronically on the academy systems or a memory stick. It is your responsibility to look after and secure any electronic work. You might do this by taking electronic copies of your work.

☒ **Plagiarism and Malpractice**

In order to achieve a BTEC qualification, you must produce your own work. You will not be allowed to:

Copy word for word from textbooks

Copy and paste from the Internet

Copy from other students (past or present)

The examination board has a clear policy on how to deal with students who cheat. If you copy the work of another student you will risk having your work cancelled and may achieve nothing. If you lend your work to others, you will also risk having your work cancelled. If you steal another student's work and copy it, the exam board may cancel all of your courses. Do not cheat, remember your teachers are very good at detecting work that has been copied!

How will student progress be monitored?

BTEC Assessment Policy and Academic Appeals Procedure - Student Guidance

INTRODUCTION

Courses are assessed through tutor-marked assignments (as well as external exams in the case of new courses.) You need to be aware of the volume of work that needs to be generated on an on-going basis to complete these assignments and the importance of getting that work handed in for assessment by the given deadline.

You will be closely monitored throughout the course and your subject teachers will keep detailed records of your progress. This information will be used for reports and parents evenings.

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

- ☐ Work handed in for assessment
- ☐ Unit grades achieved

If you keep your record sheets up to date you will be aware of your current achievement the grade that you are working towards and what you have to do to improve. Your teachers will make you aware and your half termly reports will detail your minimum target grades for your subjects. For example your minimum target might be to obtain a merit level.

ASSESSMENT ENTITLEMENT

As a student of St Paul's, you are entitled to:

- ☐ Fair and open assessment practices.
- ☐ An assignment indicating the criteria against which you will be assessed.
- ☐ Regular advice, counselling and guidance through tutors.
- ☐ Access to an open and fair appeals procedure
- ☐ Assessments being carried out regularly and outcomes reported with written and/or verbal feedback

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Handing in Assignments

- ☐ You will be given a deadline for each assignment
- ☐ You will be given oral/written feedback on your work.
- ☐ You must submit your assignment to your teacher by the agreed deadline.

Failure to meet deadlines

- ☐ If you fail to hand in work by the agreed deadline you will need to provide evidence of special circumstance e.g. a Doctor's Certificate. It will not be acceptable to say to your teacher that you did not have time to complete the assignment
- ☐ A failure on your part may result in you not having the opportunity to upgrade your work for a merit or distinction level

Can you appeal against a grade?

Once your work has been assessed and a grade recorded, that grade will stand, unless the internal verifier requires that the grade be changed. Students can appeal against a grading decision made by the assessor. Details of the appeals procedure are available from the Examinations Officer and are also outlined in the next pages.

BTEC Appeals Policy

Aim:

- To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision.
- To attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the assessor at the earliest opportunity
- To standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness.
- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the awarding body, where appropriate
- To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification

In order to do this, the centre will ensure that:

- Internal assessments are conducted by members of the teaching staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills in this area.
- Assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the Awarding Body for the subject concerned.
- The consistency of internal assessment will be maintained by internal verification and standardisation.
- All student work being assessed by teaching staff for external qualifications is carried out fairly, consistently and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the specification relating to the qualification.

BTEC Appeals Procedure

1. BTEC Lead Internal Verifiers will manage all appeals. Should the appeal be against the Lead Internal Verifier then another Lead Internal Verifier will be brought into review the original decision.
2. Appeal should be made in writing stating the details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal within 7 working days of receiving the feedback and grade of work in question.
3. The teacher who made the assessment decision will be given a copy of the appeal and will respond in writing to this to the Lead Internal Verifier within 5 working days.
4. The Lead Internal Verifier will then make a decision on the grading and give written feedback to both the student and the teacher involved within a further 3 working days.
5. The student raising the appeal will have an opportunity to a personal hearing if they are not happy with the written response received. The student will be given reasonable notice of the hearing date and should have sight of all relevant documents to the case in advance of the hearing. The teacher(s) and student will have the opportunity to hear each other's submission to the panel at the hearing.
6. The panel will comprise of a Lead Internal Verifier from another subject area, the Quality Nominee and the Exams officer.
7. A written record of the appeal and hearing will be taken including the outcome of an appeal and reason for that outcome. This will be kept on file for 18 months and the student will also receive a hard copy.
8. The school will inform the awarding body if there is any change to an internally assessed grade as a result of an appeal.

BTEC Assessment Malpractice

Principles

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

As an examination centre, St Paul's Catholic School is vigilant regarding assessment malpractice and where malpractice occurs it will be dealt with in an open and fair manner.

Aims

- To define malpractice in the context of assessment and certification of BTEC qualifications.
- To set out the rights and responsibilities, with regard to malpractice, of the student, the awarding body and the School as an examination centre.

Practice

1. This policy requires staff to ask pupils to declare that their work is their own through written declaration by the pupils and that the work was undertaken in line with the agreed assessment arrangements.
2. Pupils should be informed of the School's policy on assessment malpractice and the consequences for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
3. Pupils should be shown the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites as they should not be discouraged from conducting research.
4. All submitted work must show evidence that the pupil has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used in it.
5. All staff should have procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice which may include:
 - Periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments is produced..
 - Altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
 - Staff assessing work for a single assignment in a single session for the complete cohort of pupils.
 - Using oral questions with pupils to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc within their work.
 - Staff getting to know their pupils' styles and abilities, etc.
 - Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent pupils from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.
6. Although not exhaustive, for the purposes of this policy pupil malpractice is deemed to be:
 - Attempting to or actually carrying out any malpractice activity which is not permitted by the examination board.
 - Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the pupils own, the whole or part of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source.

- Collusion by working collaboratively with other pupils to produce work that is submitted as individual pupils' work. Pupils should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many sectors and subject areas,
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment or examination or test.
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence.
- Failing to abide by the instructions or advice given by a member of staff or an invigilator in relation to the assessment/examination/test rules, regulations and security.
- Misuse of assessment or examination material.
- Introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contra to the requirements of supervised assessment/examination, for example: notes, study guides, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), mobile phones or other similar electronic devices.
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/examination (or attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessment/examination.
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment or examination or test.
- The alteration of any results document, including certificates.
- Cheating to gain an unfair advantage.

7. Although not exhaustive, for the purposes of this policy Staff malpractice is deemed to be:

- Failing to keep any examination board mark schemes secure.
- Alteration of any examination board mark schemes.
- Alteration of examination boards assessment and grading criteria.
- Assisting pupils in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for access arrangement requirements, for example where pupils are permitted support, such as an amanuensis.
- Failing to keep learner computer files secure.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.
- Failing to keep assessment/examination/test papers secure prior to the assessment/examination.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment/examination/test material prior to an assessment/examination.

8. The Head teacher or the Head teacher's nominee will carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice.

9. Any person identified through this policy as being involved in any such malpractice or suspected of malpractice will be notified in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
10. If School is alleging an individual may have been involved in act of malpractice, the School will give the individual the opportunity to respond (preferably in writing) to the allegations made. School will also inform such individuals of the avenues for appealing should a judgment be made against them.
11. Any malpractice that attempts to influence the assessment outcomes discovered by School will be reported to the examination body using the appropriate documentation and protocols.
12. Proven malpractice could result in the School withdrawing certification for part or whole assessment areas of courses.
13. Where incidents of malpractice are sufficiently serious that the School's reputation as an examination centre is brought into question, the incident will be reported to the Governing body.