

BTEC Customised Framework – Unit assessment and Unit grading

The following guidance is a summary of the forms of unit assessment and unit grading that may be used in BTEC Customised Qualifications.

The generic grading descriptors are included for those qualifications for which these descriptors may be used.

- *Further guidance on unit assessment and grading may be found in the BTEC Customised Guide and BTEC Customised Handbook.*

SECTION	Customised BTEC qualification	Assessment and Grading	Verification and Quality Assurance	PAGE
1	Customised BTEC Short Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internally assessed • at unit level • optional grading. Centre to choose either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no grading (pass/not achieved) - grading as Pass/Merit/Distinction using generic grade descriptors at L1-4, centre-devised descriptors at L5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external verification by Edexcel 	3
2	Customised BTEC Nationals and BTEC First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internally assessed • at unit level • Pass/Merit/Distinction using contextualised grading grids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external verification by Edexcel 	5
2	Customised BTEC Introductory Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internally assessed • at unit level • Core and Optional units: Pass/Merit/Distinction using contextualised grading grids • Personal Skills units: Pass/Not Achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external verification by Edexcel 	5
3	Customised BTEC Higher Nationals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internally assessed • at unit level • Pass/Merit/Distinction using generic grade descriptors for revised NQF Higher Nationals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external examiner appointed by Edexcel 	5

Overview

- All BTEC Customised Framework qualifications are internally assessed at unit level. No overall qualification grade is awarded for any BTEC customised qualification.
- Unit achievement and, where used, unit grading, is recorded in the Notification of Performance, issued with the qualification certificate.
- The following rules apply to the assessment and grading of units that have been imported from Edexcel standard qualifications into any BTEC customised qualification:
 - the learning outcomes and assessment requirements of the imported unit must not be altered
 - neither standard Edexcel externally assessed units nor NVQ units may be imported into BTEC customised qualifications.
- *Full guidance on importing units may be found in the BTEC Customised Guide and BTEC Customised Handbook*

Section 1 Customised BTEC Short Courses

Units may be assessed and graded as pass, merit or distinction or they may be assessed without unit grading as pass or not achieved. Centres may choose whether to grade or not to grade units.

A single qualification may have more than one approach to unit assessment and unit grading provided each unit's assessment and grading is appropriate to the unit and appropriate to the overall qualification.

- **Pass/Not Achieved**

A pass is awarded for the unit on the achievement of all the pass assessment requirements.

- **Grading units**

If grading units, merit and distinction grades can be awarded for higher level achievement. The following generic grading descriptors must be applied if grading units at Levels 1-4. For Level 5 qualifications, centres may devise their own grading criteria.

➤ *Full guidance may be found in the BTEC Customised Framework Guide and the BTEC Customised Framework Handbook.*

Table 1: Generic grade descriptors for levels 1 and 2

To achieve a merit the learner must:	To achieve a distinction the learner must:
1. demonstrate the ability to complete work to given deadlines	1. demonstrate the ability to review your planned working procedures ¹
2. select and use relevant information	2. collect, select and use relevant information from a variety of sources
3. show understanding and be able to apply knowledge and/or skills	3. demonstrate knowledge, skill and/or understanding by analysing, drawing conclusions and/or applying knowledge
4. choose an appropriate format to present work, using vocational language accurately.	4. present and structure work coherently, using vocational language fluently.

Table 2: Generic grade descriptors for level 3

To achieve a merit the learner must:	To achieve a distinction the learner must:
1. demonstrate the ability to plan and complete work to given deadlines	1. demonstrate the ability to review and improve your planned working procedures ¹
2. collect and use information that is relevant and valid ²	2. show clear reworking and application of relevant and valid information gathered
3. demonstrate understanding and be able to apply knowledge and/or skills	3. demonstrate application and evaluation of knowledge, skills and/or understanding
4. produce work in a coherent and appropriate format using vocational language correctly	4. produce work in a coherent format and which shows an individual approach using vocational language fluently

1. working procedures - this does not imply the learner should be concentrating solely on an action plan but should be reflecting and assessing the manner in which the assignment was achieved, and explaining how encountered problems were solved.

2. valid - information that is current, reliable and for practical work within acceptable errors.

Table 3: Merit generic grade descriptors for Level 4

Merit descriptors	Indicative characteristics¹
In order to achieve a merit the learner must:	The learner's evidence shows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and apply strategies to find appropriate solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective judgements have been made complex problems with more than one variable have been explored an effective approach to study and research has been applied
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> select/design and apply appropriate methods/ techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant theories and techniques have been applied a range of methods and techniques have been applied a range of sources of information has been used the selection of methods and techniques/sources has been justified the design of methods/techniques has been justified complex information/data has been synthesised and processed appropriate learning methods/techniques have been applied
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present and communicate appropriate findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the appropriate structure and approach has been used coherent, logical development of principles/concepts for the intended audience a range of methods of presentation have been used and technical language has been accurately used communication has taken place in familiar and unfamiliar contexts the communication is appropriate for familiar and unfamiliar audiences and appropriate media have been used

Table 4: Distinction generic grade descriptors for Level 4

Distinction descriptors	Indicative characteristics¹
In order to achieve a distinction the learner must:	The learner's evidence shows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use critical reflection to evaluate own work and justify valid conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conclusions have been arrived at through synthesis of ideas and have been justified the validity of results has been evaluated using defined criteria self-criticism of approach has taken place realistic improvements have been proposed against defined characteristics for success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take responsibility for managing and organising activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> autonomy/independence has been demonstrated substantial activities, projects or investigations have been planned, managed and organised activities have been managed the unforeseen has been accommodated the importance of interdependence has been recognised and achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate convergent/lateral/ creative thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ideas have been generated and decisions taken self-evaluation has taken place convergent and lateral thinking have been applied problems have been solved innovation and creative thought have been applied receptiveness to new ideas is evident effective thinking has taken place in unfamiliar contexts

¹ For further information on indicative characteristics see section 3

Section 2 Customised BTEC National, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory Qualifications

Customised BTEC National, First and Introductory qualifications are all graded at unit level as pass, merit or distinction, using contextualised grading grids (NB. with the exception of the Personal Skills units in the BTEC Introductory qualifications, assessed at Pass/Not Achieved).

This is similar to the standard, NQF BTEC National, BTEC First and BTEC Introductory qualifications. Examples of contextualised grading grids can be found on the Edexcel website (www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications).

- *Full guidance may be found in the BTEC Customised Guide and BTEC Customised Handbook*

Section 3 Customised BTEC Higher Nationals

Customised BTEC Higher National qualifications are assessed and graded at unit level as pass/merit/distinction. Achievement at merit and distinction are defined by the generic grade descriptors from the standard NQF BTEC Higher Nationals.

Each of the generic merit and distinction grade descriptors can be amplified by use of **indicative characteristics**. These give a guide to the expected learner performance, and support the generic grade descriptors. The indicative characteristics should reflect the nature of a unit and the context of the sector programme.

The indicative characteristics shown in the table for each of the generic grade descriptors are not exhaustive. Consequently, centres should select from the list or may construct other appropriate indicative characteristics for their sector programme, which may be drawn from the appropriate higher-level skills. It is important to note that each assessment activity does not need to incorporate all the merit and/or distinction grade descriptors.

Contextualising the generic grade descriptors

The generic merit and distinction grade descriptors need to be viewed as a qualitative extension of the assessment criteria for pass within each individual unit. The relevant generic grade descriptors must be identified and specified within an assignment and the relevant indicative characteristics should be used to place the required evidence in context.

Pass grade is achieved by meeting all the requirements defined in the assessment criteria for pass for each unit.

Table 3: Merit generic grade descriptors for Level 4

Merit descriptors	Indicative characteristics
In order to achieve a merit the learner must:	The learner's evidence shows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and apply strategies to find appropriate solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective judgements have been made complex problems with more than one variable have been explored an effective approach to study and research has been applied
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> select/design and apply appropriate methods/ techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant theories and techniques have been applied a range of methods and techniques have been applied a range of sources of information has been used the selection of methods and techniques/sources has been justified the design of methods/techniques has been justified complex information/data has been synthesised and processed appropriate learning methods/techniques have been applied
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> present and communicate appropriate findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the appropriate structure and approach has been used coherent, logical development of principles/concepts for the intended audience a range of methods of presentation have been used and technical language has been accurately used communication has taken place in familiar and unfamiliar contexts the communication is appropriate for familiar and unfamiliar audiences and appropriate media have been used

Table 4: Distinction generic grade descriptors for Level 4

Distinction descriptors	Indicative characteristics
In order to achieve a distinction the learner must:	The learner's evidence shows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use critical reflection to evaluate own work and justify valid conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conclusions have been arrived at through synthesis of ideas and have been justified the validity of results has been evaluated using defined criteria self-criticism of approach has taken place realistic improvements have been proposed against defined characteristics for success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take responsibility for managing and organising activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> autonomy/independence has been demonstrated substantial activities, projects or investigations have been planned, managed and organised activities have been managed the unforeseen has been accommodated the importance of interdependence has been recognised and achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate convergent/lateral/ creative thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ideas have been generated and decisions taken self-evaluation has taken place convergent and lateral thinking have been applied problems have been solved innovation and creative thought have been applied receptiveness to new ideas is evident effective thinking has taken place in unfamiliar contexts