

News Release

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Edexcel launches new e-learning Initiative

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At a time when e-learning is at the forefront of the Government's education plans awarding body Edexcel has launched an innovative online service that revolutionises the way qualifications are provided and points to the "virtual college" of the future.

Called BTEC Academy it delivers high quality e-learning content electronically, enabling a college to support an entire course onscreen from content to assessment and support material.

Course material is divided into small units and modules providing colleges and training providers with the flexibility to deliver the content in a manner to suit the needs of their learners. It also allows training providers to combine the material to form short courses or support other programmes. For the college it also creates the opportunity to support more students through a blended approach of remote electronic and face-to-face teaching.

BTEC Academy can be used in a variety of ways to meet the needs of different learning situations and students. The material, which is downloaded from the Academy and run from a computer, takes the format of a ready-made lecture, with audio and visual aides to guide students through the unit or module. It also provides activities and assessments that can be taken on and off screen.

Paul Humphries, Edexcel's General Manager of e-Business, said: "The immediate benefits to teachers and students are wide-ranging. But even more exciting are the future implications. With the developments Edexcel is making with onscreen testing and marking we are moving towards the virtual college or university where everything from learning to assessment and marking may be carried out electronically and remotely.

"This has very positive implications for attracting and supporting learners who previously would not have had the opportunity to work towards a recognised qualification," he added.

Teachers can use the programme as a tool and tailor the material to suit their requirements and can incorporate their own notes. It can be delivered in a traditional lecture format at the front of the classroom or students can access the facilitated study materials from their computer, allowing teachers to have one to one interaction with learners.

John Green, Director for the Centre of Excellence, Blackburn College, already using the service in a pilot, said: "The Academy was just what we were looking for to allow us to further develop our portfolio and extend our market.

"The programme team is particularly interested in the E-Business HND as it forms a good match with a large part of our market.

"The initial feedback from students and staff is very good. The materials have been well received."

By downloading the material onto individual PCs or CDs students can catch up on missed work or revisit areas at their own pace and away from the classroom – making distance learning more accessible.

Initially BTEC Academy will support BTEC Management and IT qualifications, with the range growing over time to incorporate more BTEC qualifications.

Ends.

Edexcel is the leading provider of academic and vocational qualifications and is part of the Pearson group. Qualifications include GNVQs, NVQs, GCSE, A/S and A levels, and the Higher Nationals and other BTEC qualifications.

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