BTEC Student Handbook
2012-2013

Use this book in conjunction with your study skills book, given to you by your teacher.

Name: _____________________________________________________________
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to BTEC. The course has been designed to be a vocational course. The course covers a wide range of units and will allow you the opportunity to develop your skills and broaden your knowledge within this subject. Some of you will have lots of experience in your chosen subject, others may not, do not worry (!), this course will allow you the opportunity to achieve and succeed.

The course will give you the opportunity to work in a professional manner and get hands-on experience and the team of teachers will be able to offer their knowledge on specialist areas. We will also arrange outside groups to come in and work with you.

The BTEC is a practical, work-related course, it is equivalent to either one GCSE (if you are studying the BTEC certificate) or two GCSEs (if you are studying the BTEC extended certificate). When you have finished the course you can use the qualification to help get a job straight away or go into further or higher education.

How does the course work?

The BTEC course you take offers you a variety of equivalent GCSE grades and qualifications. They are as follows:
- Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate offers you one equivalent GCSE at grade C or above.
- Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate offers you two equivalent GCSEs at grade C or above.
- Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma offers you the equivalent of one A Level

The BTEC course is a modular course and allows you to study particular areas of interest in more detail through specialist units. To pass a particular course (and gain the qualification), you must have completed and passed all grading criteria within each unit you study.

Are there any costs involved in the course?

You may be asked to pay towards the cost of trips. Attending visits is a really important part of the course, as it will give you a wealth of knowledge and enable you to apply what you are learning to something you have seen and visited. You will be asked to provide general stationery. There may be other costs involved, depending on opportunities that may arise.
ASSIGNMENTS

What are assignments?

Assignments are projects that are written by your teachers. During each assignment you will be given an assignment sheet, which explains everything for that project. You will find that the course is set up so that within each unit you will be given between four to six assignments to achieve the criteria needed to pass the unit. For some units you may have the opportunity in the second year of the course to achieve higher grades and catch missed criteria.

Assignment sheets will layout exactly what tasks you will need to complete to reach the criteria and within each subject area, the same basic format will be used. An assignment can last from one day to over a period of weeks. It is really important to know exactly what you are looking for when reading an assignment sheet. Your teacher will always go over the assignment, and there will always be an opportunity to ask any questions.

At the beginning of each assignment you will be given the unit description and the criteria that goes with it. You should always be aware exactly what it is you need to do to get ‘PASS’, ‘MERIT’ or ‘DISTINCTION’ level.

What are ‘PASS’, ‘MERIT’ and ‘DISTINCTION’?

Pass, merit and distinction are the three levels of grades that you can achieve on this course. These are achieved through the successful completion of assignments.

The Assignment Brief

The following few pages give you an example of an assignment brief from Applied Science. You will find in an assignment brief the grading criteria taken from the qualification specification. They relate to ‘PASS’, ‘MERIT’ and ‘DISTINCTION’. The criteria are laid out in a list, and each criterion has a number. The first criteria on the list would be referred to as ‘P1’, ‘M1’ and ‘D1’, the second on the list ‘P2’, ‘M2’ and ‘D2’ and so on.

Each unit may have a different number of criteria in order to complete that unit.

How does an ‘Assignment Sheet’ actually work?

You will be given an assignment sheet each time a new project begins. You may find that you have more than one assignment running with different teachers at the same time. It is really important that you know what the different parts of the assignment sheet mean. It is not as complicated as it looks!
Your name and the name of your teacher.

The course that you are studying and level of qualification.

Unit that the assignment refers to.

Deadline dates assignments are set, due and submitted.

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**John of Gaunt School Science**

Centre ID: 66641

Course: BTEC First Certificate/Extended Certificate in Applied Science

Name: Billy Tec
Candidate Number: 6545

Tutor Name: Mr Ray

Unit: 3 Biology and our environment

Assignment: B1.1.1
Start Date: 12.10.10
Hand in Date: 22.10.10

**Assessment Evidence:**

Your research will help the Wiltshire constabulary understand the functioning and classification of organisms. This will come from completing the tasks but you may wish to include any extra information that you find.

How you present your work is up to you, but you should discuss this with your teacher.

Remember to list any websites or books you have used in a bibliography.

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**Unit 3 Grading Criteria**

- **P1**: Describe how the functioning of organisms relates to the genes in their cells.
- **P2**: Construct simple identification keys to show how variation between species can be classified.
- **P3**: Describe the interdependence and adaptation of organisms.
- **M1**: Describe how variation within a species brings about evolutionary change.
- **M2**: Explain how organisms within an ecosystem interact over time.
- **D1**: Explain how genes control variation within a species using a simple coded message.

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**Summary Assessor’s Feedback**

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**Learners Signature**

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**Assessment criteria Criteria will be drawn from the Pass, Merit and Distinction descriptors, specific to the assignment. If all the criteria have not been met at least at Pass level, your work will be referred and you will have to resubmit within 7 days. The grades awarded are for specific criteria, they do not indicate your overall grade for the unit.**
Background information the teacher gives the assignment, in a vocational context.

Title the teacher gives the assignment, in a vocational context.

What’s in Coke?

Scenario:
Analytical chemists work in many industries such as food science, forensics and pharmaceuticals. They often have to separate and identify the ingredients in substances.

You work as a food scientist in Trading Standards. There have been reports of bottles of coke being contaminated. You have been asked to explain how you could go about checking that the ingredients in a can of coke match the label.

Things to include:
1. Coke is made of water, carbon dioxide and sugar. These substances contain atoms of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen. For each of these 3 substances you must identify whether they are an element, a mixture or a compound.
   P1 PASS
   P1 PASS

2. For the examples in part 1, try to include a symbol/formula.
3. Explain the differences between elements, compounds and mixtures using descriptions and diagrams. You should refer to the examples used in parts 1 & 2.
   M1 MERIT

4. Make a table of separating techniques. Explain how each works and the sorts of substances they can separate. Could they be used to separate the substance in coke? Explain which substances may be separated and why.
   D1 DISTINCTION

Keywords to include in the assignment

Keywords: element, compound, mixture, atom, structure, bond, filtration, evaporation, distillation, solution, periodic table, substances, properties, chemical reaction.

The ‘tasks’ will explain exactly what you will have to do. The assignment will be set up so that each task will give you the opportunity to achieve criteria (P/M/D). It also lists the evidence required to complete the task.
What happens when the assignment is over and the work has been marked?

When you have finished the assignment and handed in all the evidence (work) required the teacher will mark it and the verifier may also second mark some of the group’s work. You will then be given your work back with feedback on top of your work. This sheet is included within the ‘Assignment Brief’. This sheet will have the criteria you have been awarded noted upon it.

Providing Feedback to Students

Feedback should be given to you within two weeks of the submission date. The feedback needs to evidence the assignment as well as the feedback sheet. You will be provided with positive and encouraging comments that will promote a climate of interest in improving the quality of your written and/or practical work. All students will be given clear guidance on how improvements can be made and if necessary a time frame if the work is to be re-submitted.

Feedback on the assignment will take the form of:

- Clarification of misconceptions – in these cases comments will be designed to improve understanding. Your teacher may wish to talk directly to you. Good references or other support materials could be identified.
- Comments on spelling, punctuation and grammar. There may also be comments on composition, layout and presentation.
- You will be given concise and accurate explanations.
- You will be praised for good work especially where there is evidence of selective and applied research or balanced arguments or interesting examples.
- You will receive written statements that are readable!!!

Feedback on the assignment feedback sheet:

- Must identify how your work meets the grading criteria for that assignment.
- Should indicate strengths and weaknesses of the evidence.
- Indicate the level of research carried out by you.
- Encouraging comments should be made to motivate you in terms of improvement and success.
- Where necessary dates for resubmission and details of additional work required should be made known to you.
- To encourage you to gain the fullest benefit from the feedback you will be asked to make comments on the feedback sheet.
- Your teacher should allow sufficient time for this in their feedback sessions.

What happens if I have not met all of the work at least at a ‘pass’ level?

On our BTEC courses the teachers will make sure that an assignment explains exactly what you need to do to hit the ‘pass’ criteria. If you do not manage to meet all of the tasks with at least Pass level the work will be given back to you and you will be asked to re-submit the work normally within seven days. Each assignment and brief will go through the following procedure, before it is set and after the work is handed in. If after having re-submitted the work and the work still does not meet the criteria at pass level, your case will be discussed between your teacher and other BTEC teachers in order to make a final decision. You do have the right to appeal against assessment decisions, if you feel grades are wrong.
APPEALS

Students have the right to appeal against the grading decision for their assignments. This is in line with Edexcel policy. The appeals procedure will be outlined in the student handbook and will be fully explained to the students during their introduction using the following information.

Assignment/coursework Grades for all BTEC courses:

You have the right to appeal against the marking of assignments or coursework.

Why?

You believe that the assessor may not have taken full account of all the evidence available.
You believe that the assessor did not follow the correct procedures.

Reasons for Appeal:

1) The student feels that there has been a misinterpretation of the evidence submitted.
2) The student feels that the teacher has misinterpreted the grading criteria.

Assignments are verified before being set and the assignments will be fully explained by the teacher. This will include explanation of the tasks and how they match to the grading criteria. Support from the teacher will be available throughout the assignment period.
Disputes over grades should only arise when a student feels their work matches higher criteria. It should be stressed that with the above appeals should be very infrequent.
A copy of the Appeals Form can be found in the Appendices, entitled B-Tec Appeals Form and the table below gives you the FOUR STAGES you can go through when making an appeal.

The Four Stages of the Appeals Process for ALL BTEC Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE ONE</th>
<th>You disagree with your grading – you should discuss your work with the subject teacher so that you are clear about the marking procedure and how your final grade was established.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAGE TWO</td>
<td>If you are still unhappy about the grading – you need to make an appointment to see the internal verifier within one week of the grade being given. The verifier should then meet with you within one week of your request.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE THREE</td>
<td>If a satisfactory outcome has still not been reached you make an appointment to see the Quality Nominee (Mr Gunston). Your assessments will be assessed by a panel comprising of the exams officer (Mrs Cottle), the internal verifier, the Quality Nominee (Mr Gunston). You will then be notified of the decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE FOUR</td>
<td>If still unsatisfied by the outcome of stage three you must make an appeal to the Headteacher who will check that the appeals process has been thorough and in accordance with the exams boards guidelines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full details of any appeal will be made available to the exam board Edexcel on request.
Internal Moderation and Sampling Procedure:

This is concerned with monitoring the quality of the outcomes. Your work will be moderated to check that the criteria are being met and that standards are being applied.

Internal verification / moderation are integral parts of the course. This on-going process requires sufficient time for:

- Looking at assignment briefs
- Sampling assignments
- Monitoring assessment practice
- Standardising assessment practice.

For each unit a minimum of three students will be selected at random for sampling. The unit teacher will mark the work. The selected students work will then be passed on to the internal verifier. The work will be marked independently of the unit teacher.

There are two possible outcomes from internal verification:

1. The IV agree with the unit teachers assessment therefore grade is upheld;
2. The IV feels that the grading by the unit teacher is too low/high therefore the work is referred to a second IV. If the second IV agrees with the unit teacher then the grade is upheld. However, if they agree with the first IV then the grade will be changed accordingly.
DEADLINES

Late Submission of Assignments.

You need to be clear from the outset that meeting submission deadlines is critical. This will help you to keep up with your course, plan your research and develop good practice. Time management and organisation are good skills for the world of work and higher study. Meeting deadlines also allows your teachers to monitor your progress more readily.

The teaching team at the start of each academic year will devise an assignment calendar. This should prevent both staff and students being overburdened at any one time. The teachers will use a variety of assessment methods and this too should prevent overload. Work submitted must be marked against the grading criteria.

Extension of the submission dates should be allowed for the following reasons: illness, legitimate absence (medical, funeral, etc). These can be negotiated with the teachers of the units concerned. The extension form must be completed and copies kept by student and teacher.

If you hand in work late without an extension, the teacher of that unit will notify your form tutor or the Head of Sixth Form and you will be issued with a verbal warning.

Non-Submission of Assignment Work.

If you do not submit your work by the deadline and you have not received an extension then this will be viewed as very serious. The unit teacher will notify the form tutor and discuss the issue with the Head of Science. This will trigger the first written warning where a letter will be sent home to parents/guardians. The very nature of the course requires that you keep up to date if you are to complete the course. As a result non-submission of work will be very quickly monitored and responded to.

If you are having genuine difficulties with an assignment due to illness or other special circumstances then you should apply for an extension and extra support using the extension policy.

What do I do if I need an extension?

If you are in desperate need for some extra time on an assignment you are permitted to enquire about getting an extension.
If you wanted to enquire about an extension you would need to request from your teacher five days prior to the deadline, you will need to have a valid reason and the final decision will be at the discretion of your teacher. You will need to agree a new deadline that cannot be broken. Both student and teacher will then date and sign a copy of a form detailing this agreement.
PLAGIARISM and MALPRACTICE

Authenticity of your work.

You are encouraged to read around the units of work that you study and to use a range of resources. Assignments that are thoroughly researched are of a higher quality. You will need to quote from your sources and be able to site examples that illustrate your ideas. Teachers will explain how to quote and reference work in your units.

This will encourage you to produce balanced arguments and work that is founded on relevant and valid examples.

What will not be acceptable will be any of the following forms of plagiarism:
- Copying from texts or journals.
- Copying from other students.
- Wholesale downloading from the internet.

Assignments will be held by teachers until the unit has been completed by all students.

The teaching team will monitor the progress of assignments as they are being undertaken and will discourage plagiarism.

Assignment grades will be a true reflection of your efforts and attainment. It is important to value your academic research and efforts when producing your evidence for the grading criteria. It is also important during group work to ensure that you are able to produce your own evidence and this must be made clear in the various tasks set for an assignment.
GRADES

Level 2 BTEC Certificate:
The units lead to Distinction, Merit or Pass with 15 credits.
The whole certificate is equivalent to 1 GCSE (A, B, C)

Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate:
4 core units leading to Distinction, Merit or Pass and 30 credits.
The whole certificate is equivalent to 2 GCSEs (AA*, AA, BB, CC)

Level 2 BTEC Diploma:
8 units of work leading to Distinction, Merit or Pass and 60 credits.
The whole Diploma is equivalent to 4 GCSEs (AAAA*, AAAA, BBBB, CCCC)

Level 3 National Certificate
1 AS levels

Level 3 National Subsidiary Diploma
1 A level

Level 3 National Subsidiary Diploma: Equivalent to one A Level
- Pass – 40 UCAS points (E Grade at A Level)
- Merit – 80 UCAS points (C Grade at A Level)
- Distinction – 120 UCAS points (A Grade at A Level)
- Distinction* - 140 UCAS points (A* grade at A Level)

How are marks added up?
When you finish each internally assessed unit your teacher will be able to tell you what grade you have achieved – Pass, Merit or Distinction. To ensure that your internally assessed work has been marked fairly the exam board Edexcel checks samples of the teacher’s marking. This process usually takes place in February and the grades for your internally assessed units can change as a result.

Edexcel will confirm your final grades for the units when the re-marking has taken place. When you have completed all the units of the course you will receive overall grades for your qualification – Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*. These are the grades that will be shown on your certificate and that you should give when you apply for employment or further/higher education.
RULES

Are there any general classroom rules that I should know about?

♦ All mobile phones must be switched off and inside bags before the lesson begins
♦ No food or drink – including chewing gum
♦ No swearing
♦ No stealing
♦ No fighting – verbal or physical
♦ Show respect for the workplace
♦ Meet deadlines – complete all homework
♦ All criticism must be constructive
♦ Allow others to contribute
♦ Treat others, as you would wish to be treated yourself
♦ Keep personal issues outside the classroom
♦ Follow instructions given by teacher on the use of equipment and chemicals within lessons.
## GLOSSARY OF BTEC TERMS

This glossary lists the most common B-Tec directive terms that are used in unit assessment criteria together with indicative definitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCOUNT FOR</td>
<td>Requires more than a description. An explanation of the topic is needed, giving reasons why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYSE</td>
<td>Break down a complex topic into simpler parts, exploring patterns and explaining significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSESS</td>
<td>See evaluate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPARE</td>
<td>Identify and explain the similarities and differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRAST</td>
<td>Identify and explain the differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEMONSTRATE</td>
<td>Show awareness and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIBE</td>
<td>Give a description of the major features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSS</td>
<td>Present and examine clearly the various views on a topic or issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVALUATE</td>
<td>Examine the strengths and weaknesses and judge the merits of particular perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMINE</td>
<td>Lay out the essential elements of an issue and investigate in detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPLAIN</td>
<td>Show clearly knowledge and understanding of a topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPLORE</td>
<td>Examine or investigate a topic or issue, often in an imaginative way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDENTIFY</td>
<td>Pick out and describe the main points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLUSTRATE</td>
<td>Give examples to clarify the argument or answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERPRET</td>
<td>Clarify or explain the meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVESTIGATE</td>
<td>A careful and systematic inquiry into a topic or issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUSTIFY</td>
<td>Provide reasons why something is valid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTLINE</td>
<td>Identify the main features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH</td>
<td>Use a variety of sources to establish facts or collect information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW</td>
<td>Write a critical assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>Consequence or importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIFY</td>
<td>Identify clearly and definitely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Provide information in a brief uncomplicated form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARISE</td>
<td>Give an account of the main points.</td>
</tr>
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## STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR BTEC COURSES

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<th>Health and Social Care</th>
<th>Art &amp; Design</th>
<th>Work Skills</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Programme Leader</strong></td>
<td>James Ray</td>
<td>Jo Worrall</td>
<td>Lydia Armes</td>
<td>Mary Littleworth</td>
<td>Mark Attlesey</td>
<td>Lydia Armes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead Internal Verifier</strong></td>
<td>Jane James</td>
<td>Steve Smith</td>
<td>Mary Littleworth</td>
<td>Sarah Hill</td>
<td>Mark Attlesey</td>
<td>Lydia Armes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality Nominee  
Mary Littleworth  
Director of Vocational Learning