

NQF BTEC Firsts in Music - Frequently Asked Questions

Can we import units through Meeting Local Needs?

There is no option to import units using Meeting Local Needs.

Can learners complete the Award in Year 9?

Whilst it is possible to register learners in Year 9 for a 1 year programme, the qualification is designed for Level 2 learners and centres must give careful consideration to whether learners at the age of 13 or 14 will have the physical and mental maturity to cope with a qualification at this level.

For Level 1 learners we also offer a market-leading range of Level 1 BTECs which are specifically designed to meet the needs of Level 1 learners and provide an excellent platform for progression to the BTEC Firsts. We believe these qualifications remain the best choice for learners at this level.

How can learners who register for the Level 2 Award end up with a Level 1 qualification?

The fall-back Level 1 Pass was built in to the new Level 2 BTECs so that learners who do not quite achieve enough for a Level 2 Pass may be able to achieve at Level 1. Details of this can be found in Chapter 10 in the Specification.

Do the larger qualifications (the Certificate, Extended Certificate and Diploma) still count as 2 / 3 / 4 GCSEs?

In terms of Department for Education Headline Measures no qualification will be 'worth' more than a single GCSE in future. For other purposes e.g. learner progression and wider performance tables the Certificate, Extended Certificate and Diploma are equivalent to 2, 3 & 4 GCSEs respectively.

Is it possible to top up to larger qualifications? If we do, can we re-do the units (and re-do the external unit)?

As with previous versions of the BTEC it will be possible for learners to study additional units that will allow them to top up a smaller qualification to a larger one. If this is done then the external unit may be re-attempted if the learner and the centre wish.

Are the suggested assignments in the specification just that? Can we still write our own?

The suggested assignment outlines have been included as examples of how a particular unit could be approached and assessed. There is no requirement to use the examples provided; it is guidance only. Teachers can design whatever kind of assignment they want to, so long as the brief meets the requirements of the unit.

There are also **Authorised Assignment Briefs** (AABs) available for many units, the use of which is not compulsory, but centres may wish to use these assignments, and/or adapt them to suit local contexts and scenarios. However it is strongly recommended that where centres decide to create their own assignment briefs, the Authorised Assignment Briefs are used for reference as they use an appropriate format and illustrate good practice.

Note: Authorised Assignment Briefs are provided in *Word* format and can be used as templates when writing your own assignments.

How many performances do learners need to do for each unit? How long do they have to be?

We have not stated a minimum performance time because much depends on the style of the piece(s) and the number of learners involved. Teachers must however ensure that each learner has an opportunity within the performance to fully demonstrate the skills being assessed. This might be best achieved through a series of short pieces performed as a showcase or a more substantial single piece at the centre/ teacher's discretion.

I have heard that there are new rules for how many times learners can attempt target criteria and the feedback that can be given by the assessor. Can I allow learners to undertake 2 separate performance projects and/or production roles in a single unit?

With 30 GLH units the opportunity for multiple performances is likely to be limited, and the performance/production element of the relevant 60 GLH units is only partial. It may be preferable therefore to include a number of informal performances as part of the teaching and delivery of a unit. Formal assessments must include one documented interim assessment where formative feedback on potential achievement is provided and actions for improvement are agreed; then one summative assessment where achievement of the target criteria is confirmed.

On the formative feedback template, used in the OSCA exercise, the learner signs to confirm the following: "I acknowledge this feedback and will now complete the final submission independently". Does that mean I cannot provide direction after this point to learners undertaking performance or production work?

It is fine to continue to provide informal coaching and direction, however, at this stage assessors should not provide formal feedback and guidance related specifically to their performance against the target criteria.