

NQF BTEC Firsts in Performing Arts Frequently Asked Questions

Can we import units through Meeting Local Needs?

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

Can we offer learners the opportunity to complete more than one BTEC First Award in Performing Arts, for example, in Acting and Dance endorsed pathways?

Yes, however we would recommend you consider registering them on one of the larger sizes of the qualification instead.

All the endorsed pathways in the BTEC Firsts in Performing Arts have the same discount code apart from Dance; if you have any students wanting to take the First Award in Performing Arts (Dance) and another pathway, both qualifications will count towards headline measures.

Please note that learners will have to complete the core units once for each pathway, submitting separate and discrete evidence appropriate to each of the pathways they are working in. For the externally assessed unit, learners must submit work for different Progression Opportunities in the test paper. Learners cannot submit the same evidence for units which are taken in more than one pathway.

Can learners complete the Award in year 9?

Yes they can, however this qualification is designed for level 2 learners. Centres should consider whether learners in Year 9 will have the physical and mental maturity to cope with this Level 2 qualification at the age of 13 or 14.

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 L2 award end up with a L1 qualification?

The fall-back level 1 pass was built in to the new Level 2 BTECs so that learners who don't 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 and Extended Certificate) still count as 2 / 3 GCSEs?

In terms of DfE 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 and extended certificate is equivalent to 2 and 3 GCSEs respectively.

Can we 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 wishes.

Is there a general Performing Arts pathway?

In the BTEC First Award, there are five endorsed pathways: Acting, Dance, Musical Theatre, Music Performance and Production Skills for Performance.

In the BTEC First Certificate, there are four endorsed pathways: Acting, Dance, Musical Theatre and Production Skills for Performance.

In the BTEC First Extended Certificate and Diploma, there is a general Performing Arts pathway, plus three endorsed pathways: Acting, Dance and Production Skills for Performance.

What is endorsement? What is an endorsed pathway?

Endorsement means that the certificate received on passing the course will include the name of the pathway in brackets.

The endorsed pathways ensure that the majority, if not all, the units offered in the pathway are in a particular discipline or area of study. The endorsed pathway will indicate to the learner, future education establishments, training providers and employers which discipline or area of study is the focus for the course.

How long does an assessed performance need to be?

For the 60 GLH 'skills' units it is envisaged that learners will undertake a single performance project towards the end of the unit to demonstrate the skills they have developed. 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.

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.

For unit 4 "Dance Skills", I read in the specification that learners must study two dance styles. Do they also have to perform two dance styles?
The specification states in Learning Aim A that learners must "study at least two dance styles" however content for Learning Aim B makes no reference to two dance styles.

In assignments and assessments, centres must therefore ensure learners cover two styles in relation to Learning Aim A, however, the work relating to Learning Aim B could focus on only one style if the centre wishes.

That would mean learners could develop skills in Jazz and Contemporary for LA: A but then rehearse and perform a Jazz piece for LA: B.