

Guidelines for using Meeting Local Needs units in your BTEC course

BTEC Firsts – BTEC Nationals

Introduction

If you are building a course for any BTEC First or BTEC National qualification which is accredited on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), there may be rules in the specification which allow you to include units from other qualifications in the same suite at the same level.

This process is called **Meeting Local Needs (MLN)**.

These guidelines explain:

- **what MLN is** and **how it works**
- **how to apply** to Pearson to use MLN units
- where you can find **more help and support** from our customer and teaching services teams.

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About MLN

1. What is Meeting Local Needs (MLN)?

Meeting Local Needs allows centres to build courses which import units from another BTEC qualification in the same suite, at the same level, into the one being delivered.

We have developed a wide range of optional units for each BTEC qualification which support topic specialisation and progression within the sector. The option to import units from other qualifications under MLN guidelines is designed to help centres who have learners with very specific, exceptional needs, usually – but not restricted to – meeting a local employer's requirements.

2. Is MLN available for every BTEC qualification?

No.

MLN can only **apply to BTEC Firsts and BTEC Nationals accredited on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)**.

MLN is not automatically available in every accredited BTEC specification, so you need to check for the specific MLN rules in each individual specification. **If there are no MLN rules laid down in the specification, you cannot apply MLN to your selection of course units.**

3. Is MLN available for next generation BTEC (NQF) qualifications?

No.

MLN is not available for any next generation BTEC Firsts or for the next generation BTEC Nationals in Children's Play, Learning and Development, as they are all accredited on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF restricts unit selection to those defined within an individual specification and does not therefore allow MLN unit combinations.

Guidelines for using MLN units

4. When can we use MLN units in a BTEC (QCF) course?

MLN can be used when the rules of combination, defined in each individual specification, allow it. The MLN rules vary from specification to specification, and there is no guarantee that every specification will make allowance for importing MLN units.

5. Are there any restrictions on which MLN units we can choose?

Yes.

We've outlined below the areas you need to think about – and look for in the specification – when choosing MLN units and the rules governing (and restricting) the choice of MLN unit in each case.

When choosing MLN units:

Think about ...	The rule is:
Are there MLN rules in the specification?	You cannot use MLN where there is no allowance for it in the qualification specification.
Do you want to replace a mandatory unit?	You cannot use MLN to replace a mandatory unit.
Are the MLN units at the same level?	There may be restrictions on importing units at a different level (higher or lower) into the course you are creating. You need to check each individual specification to confirm the rules of combination.
Is there any overlap in content with another unit in the specification?	You cannot use MLN to import a unit which has overlapping content with another unit in the qualification.
Does it comply with the rules of combination for this specification?	You cannot include a unit using MLN if this results in an invalid rule of combination for your course.

6. Is there a limit to the number of MLN units we can apply for?

There is a maximum number of MLN credits any individual learner may take – this is defined in the specification.

Regardless of the number of MLN credits approved for your programme, the number of MLN credits any individual learner can take is still limited by the rules outlined in the specification.

Applying to use MLN units

7. Do we need permission to use MLN units in a BTEC course?

Yes.

If you are creating a course for any size of BTEC qualification using imported MLN units, **you must obtain approval from Pearson before you start to deliver the units** (see **How to apply for the inclusion of MLN units** below).

8. How can we apply for the inclusion of MLN units?

There are two ways to apply for MLN.

1. Via Edexcel Online (www.edexcelonline.com)

You can submit your MLN requests via Edexcel Online:

- Log in to Edexcel Online (www.edexcelonline.com)
- Select the BTEC dropdown, then Approvals School and FE > Meeting Local Needs
- Follow the instructions on the screen (you will need to have "Online Approvals" ticked on your Edexcel Online account in order to access this screen).

MLN approval requests are normally carried out by the Examinations Officer or Edexcel Online administrator in your centre.

Your request may be automatically approved in Edexcel Online.

2. Submit an MLN request form

If your request is not approved via Edexcel Online, you need to:

- complete the MLN request form, which is [available on our website](#), and
- email it to examsofficers@pearson.com.

You must include in your application a clear rationale on the progression benefits to learners of taking the unit(s) you are applying for. Pearson will then review your application and confirm or deny your request.

9. When can we apply for MLN?

You must apply for MLN units – and receive confirmation of your request – **before** delivering the unit or units as part of a BTEC programme.

If you have delivered MLN units which have not been through the official Pearson approval process, this could be a barrier to claiming certification at the end of the academic year.

The deadline for MLN requests will be **31st January in the year of certification**. This means that if you want to claim certification from September 2016 onwards for any BTEC course which includes MLN units, **you must submit your application to Pearson no later than 31st January in the calendar year in which you will make your claim**.

We will respond to all MLN applications submitted by this deadline within 15 working days.

Academic year	MLN request submission deadline <i>(you must submit your MLN request by this date in the year in which you want to claim certification+)</i>	We will respond to your request within:
2015-16	31 st January 2016	15 working days
2016-17 onwards	31 st January 2017	15 working days

+ Whenever you claim certification, if you are creating a course using imported MLN units, **you must obtain approval from Pearson before you start to deliver the units**

Support for MLN

10. Where can I find more support with MLN units?

You can find further guidance and information on how to apply for approval for Meeting Local Needs units on our [website](#).

If you need any further advice or support on the approval process for MLN units, please do contact us at www.edexcel.com/contactus.