

Comparison of specifications

Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma/Extended Diploma in Dental Technology (QCF) (new qualifications)

and

The Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Award and Diploma in Dental Technology (current qualifications)

General Comments:

The two qualifications are similar. There has been no need to make numerous changes in content because the current specification continued to be acceptable to the General Dental Council as it covered GDC learning outcomes specific for dental technicians.

The new specification has an increased emphasis on ensuring that the learners (future GDC registrants) are fully aware of the need to act professionally at all times, both at work and socially. A greater awareness of the importance of communication is another area which has been strengthened in the new specification. This emphasises the importance of greater contact with the rest of the dental team and fully supports the needs of the learner by providing the opportunity for this to happen. The new qualifications also highlight the need for learners to be fully aware of the importance of maintaining standards and the need for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) throughout their career. Increased focus has been placed on quality control issues surrounding custom made dental devices that are manufactured in a dental laboratory and the learner needs to be aware of the laws and standards required and also needs to be able to comply with them.

Delivery:

Delivery follows the same model as the current specification and it is important that centres continue to use a mode of delivery that is vocational in nature. The mode of delivery utilised is left to the discretion of each individual centre, providing the chosen mode of delivery meets learner needs. It is expected that centres will make appropriate links between the theory and practical aspect of the qualifications and that learners will be given the opportunity to draw upon any previous experience. Centres are made aware that learners require access to the full range of resources necessary to complete the qualifications and that appropriate specialists should be available to teach the range of specialist subject areas, for example Unit 17: *Advanced Dental Technology Techniques and Procedures*.

Content:

In the majority of areas, the content of the new specification is very similar to that of the current specification. The exceptions to this are unit 6 and unit 7. Unit 6: *Legislation, Professionalism and Ethics in Dentistry*, has the important addition of

the need to make learners aware of their commitment to lifelong learning. This will be their responsibility once they have qualified and registered with the General Dental Council. Unit 17: *Advanced Dental Technology Techniques and Procedures*, is a new unit which is a necessary addition because dentistry (particularly digital dentistry) is advancing at a rapid pace and learners need to be aware of this growing market, which is having a major impact on the development of their profession. Any future versions of this unit will continue to include any new dental laboratory and clinical systems that come on the market.

Assessment:

Assessment is very similar to the current specification and encourages the use of a range of assessment methods. The specification document also advises on the nature and type of evidence that the learners need to produce. The new specification contains the added assistance of outline learning plans as guidance for tutors and also provides suggested activities and assignment titles to enable the learner to achieve the learning outcomes specific to the unit.