



# Centre Guide To Assignment Writing

2025-2026

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# Assignment writing made easy

Use this guide to make writing your BTEC assignment briefs a little easier. We're here to support you from the get-go with everything you need to make sure you feel confident with your Pearson BTEC Level 1-3 qualifications.

## We're here to help.

If you need any help with quality assurance, contact us via the [Pearson support portal](#) and we'll be on hand to help.

Need to have a quick chat or want some dedicated time for one-to-one support? Book a 15min appointment with your [Vocational Quality Assurance Manager \(VQAM\)](#) on our website.

## Version Control

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# UK qualifications covered by this guide

- BTEC Level 1/2 Firsts
- BTEC Level 2 and 3 Technicals
- BTEC Level 3 Nationals
- BTEC QCF Specialists, Level 1, and Entry Level (not covered by WBL QA)

# Introduction

This guide provides essential information for *BTEC programme teams* when developing assignments for internal assessment of BTEC qualifications. As the majority of BTEC units/components are internally assessed you can tailor the assessment strategies to suit your students and/or local employers.

Internal assessment should be fair and consistent as defined by the requirements for national standards.

*If you are new to teaching BTEC*, this should provide you with a handy guide to the basics and where to find more help and support, so you can devise creative assessments with confidence.

*If you are an experienced BTEC practitioner*, you should also find this guide useful as a quick reference, or as a starting point for coaching colleagues new to your BTEC teaching team.

If you have any questions, or want to discuss your individual needs and requirements with a BTEC expert, please contact us via the [Pearson Contact Portal](#).



**Remember** authorised assignment briefs (AABs) can be adapted for use but Pearson set assignment briefs (PSABs) – for the Level 3 AAQ Nationals – cannot and must be used as they stand.

# Assessment

BTEC qualifications are made up of individual units (or components) which cover specific topics and contain:

- learning aims which define what the student needs to know, understand and do
- assessment criteria which detail the level at which the student can achieve each learning aim.

Students studying internally assessed units/components need to generate evidence to demonstrate that they have met the learning aims and assessment criteria specified for each unit or component.

## ***Unit/component – definition***

Units or components are the building blocks of BTEC qualifications. The content of a unit/component gives the basis for the teaching, learning and assessment for each learning aim and covers:

- *knowledge*, including definition of breadth and depth
- *skills*, including definition of qualities or contexts
- *applications* or activities, through which a student provides evidence of knowledge and/or skills.

## ***Learning aim – definition***

The learning aims are statements indicating the scope of learning for the unit/component. They provide a holistic overview of the unit/component when considered alongside the unit content.

## **How can students generate their evidence?**

Students can show their evidence through a variety of activities set in vocational, work-related contexts. For example, you might ask them to complete written projects, work on case studies, create a product or even record a podcast. Assessments can also include workplace observations, role-plays, interviews, and presentations—there's plenty of room for creativity here.

- written and project work
- case studies
- creating a product
- creating a podcast
- workplace assessment

- role play
- interviews
- presentations.

The assessment guidance included in each unit offers helpful advice and practical examples. As an assessor, it's important to use these resources to make sure your assessment activities and decisions are meeting national standards.

## What does a high-quality assignment look like?

Whenever you set an assignment, it's a good idea to start with a vocational scenario. Every assessment task and activity should make sure your students can show evidence for their learning that is:

*Valid:* the evidence really does meet the assessment criteria

*Sufficient:* there's enough evidence to prove the student has the right knowledge, skills, and understanding

*Authentic:* the work is genuinely the student's own

*Appropriate:* the evidence matches the level they're studying and is relevant for a student at that stage

*Relevant:* the tasks connect directly with the topic or subject area, and are set in a realistic, work-related context.

## How can I ensure I'm creating high quality BTEC assignments?

If you're aiming to create a high-quality assignment that's really fit for purpose—and that you, as the Assessor, can confidently manage—there are a few things to keep in mind:

*Evidence:* the tasks should give students a clear opportunity to show evidence that matches the learning aim, and can be easily assessed using the criteria.

*Clarity:* make sure you include straightforward instructions about what students need to do and what kind of evidence they should provide.

*Timing:* it's important to set out how much time students have for the assessment, and double-check that it's enough for them to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

*Resources:* be sure to offer all the necessary resources, so everyone can complete the assignment fairly and thoroughly.

### Learning aims

When you design an assignment brief for a BTEC assessment:

- it must cover *all assessment criteria* listed within the *whole learning aim*.
- you *cannot cover just part of the assessment criteria* listed within a learning aim.
- you *can cover the assessment criteria of more than one* learning aim within your assignment.
- you *cannot split the achievement of learning aims* across different assignments.



# Designing your assignment brief

Remember, not being able to split a learning aim doesn't mean you're stuck with only one per assignment brief. Actually, you can combine learning aims, and sometimes that's the best approach—especially when it suits your students or the context. BTEC is designed with this kind of flexibility in mind, letting you create engaging, meaningful assignments. Just be thoughtful about how you design your assessments, and make the most of what BTEC quality assurance allows.

Let's talk about **scenarios**. These set the stage for students' work by providing real-world background and context. It's best to keep things as realistic as possible—so, for example, it's more credible to start out as a recruit than as a manager. And if you can, tie the scenario to your local area or a real organisation. For instance, you might have someone be a new hire at a local business.

Then come the **tasks**. Here's where you spell out exactly what you want students to do or produce, so they can show off the skills, knowledge, and understanding for that unit or component. Make your instructions clear and direct—don't just repeat the assessment criteria.

Tasks should be holistic, aiming for the highest available criteria, with the other outcomes naturally following from there. It's better not to have separate tasks for each criterion—keeping them together makes for a smoother assessment experience.

Next up is the **evidence**. Be specific about what you expect: maybe a leaflet, a presentation, a handout, an artefact, or even a performance. The clearer you are, the easier it is for students to hit the mark.

And don't forget the **assessment criteria**. Make sure all the criteria you're targeting are listed on the assignment brief. All tasks should cover the full range of relevant criteria, rather than separating them into P, M, or D tasks.

Just as a reminder, the assessment criteria define the minimum standards students need to meet to earn a grade. So, make sure they know what counts as sufficient and valid evidence for their work.

## Assessment guidance in the specification

When you look at the assessment guidance for each unit or component, you'll find examples showing the standard of work needed to meet different assessment criteria. You'll also come across handy suggestions for creative ways students can put together suitable evidence to match those criteria.

So, it's always a good idea to check out the guidance in the specification as well as the assessment criteria whenever you're writing assignments.



# What are authorised assignment briefs

We have produced a range of authorised assignment briefs which you can:

- use ‘off the shelf’
- edit and adapt to suit your individual programme and local needs.

Authorised assignment briefs are available for most units/components. They can be found under the course materials section on the qualification’s specification page on the Pearson website.

## Using authorised assignment briefs

If you do not use the authorised briefs for your assessments, we strongly recommend that you read them before you write your own to familiarise yourself with the format and with what constitutes best practice for writing assignment briefs.

### Authorised assignment briefs and internal verification

If you use an authorised assignment brief “off the shelf” with no editing, you will be setting your own deadline dates and therefore you must send it to your internal verifier to confirm that the dates are suitable, and that the assignment is appropriate for your students.

### BTEC Nationals from 2025 (AAQs)

The BTEC Nationals from 2025 are assessed via Pearson set assignment briefs (PSABs). These are produced by Pearson with no adaptations allowed, except for hand out and hand in dates. As such there is no IV of the briefs. For further guidance please see the [Centre Guide to Quality Assurance for BTEC Nationals from 2025 \(AAQs\)](#).

# More resources to help you

## BTEC qualification specification

Programme leaders and teams should use each BTEC qualification's specification as the first point of reference for all planning and assessment. The specifications include assessment and delivery guidance, with instructions and advice for each unit. You can find your BTEC specifications on our qualification's website under their respective subject pages.

## Forms and templates

Having clear and consistent records makes it easier to monitor your centre's quality assurance, so we've created a range of useful forms and templates for you to use. You're welcome to use them as they are, or you can use them as a starting point to create your own.

They include:

- Assessment plan template
- Internal verification plan template
- Assessment record template
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Record of activity and guidance

Explore our forms and [templates](#).

We also produce a range of centre guides and guidance on policies. Find everything you need in the useful documents section of our [BTEC quality assurance page](#).

