

Your Guide to BTEC Level 3 Equivalencies for Schools and Colleges in England

October 2012

To support teachers and learners in England, we've created a simple summary of how the two different "equivalence" measures affect schools, colleges and students taking BTEC Nationals at level 3.

1. BTEC Level 3 Nationals and entry to University or College

Based on: UCAS Tariff point equivalencies.

Will affect: Some BTEC learners applying to university or college for entry in 2012 or 2013.

Relate to: The value of BTEC National qualifications when applying to university.

Background: HEFCE's 'student number control' (SNC) prevents over-recruitment onto University and college HE courses in England by defining the maximum number of full-time undergraduate students that a HEFCE-funded institution may admit. However, HE providers in England are now free to recruit as many students as they wish who achieve results above a specified grade threshold without affecting their SNC.

Grading information: The specified grade threshold is based on the following UCAS Tariff Points equivalencies:

UCAS Tariff Points:	140	120	100	80	60	40
A Level	A*	A	B	C	D	E
BTEC National	D*	D	-	M	-	P

Grade threshold for 2012/13 HE entry: 340 UCAS Tariff points

What that means for A Level Students Students with AAB and above at A Level qualify for exemption from SNC, allowing universities and colleges to recruit them freely onto HE courses starting in the academic year 2012-13.

What that means for BTEC National students Students with a BTEC National Extended Diploma at DDD (360 points) and above qualify for exemption from SNC, allowing universities and colleges to recruit them freely onto HE courses starting in the academic year 2012-13.

Students on the same size of qualification with DDM or lower **do not** qualify for this exemption.

Grade threshold for 2013/14 HE entry: 320 UCAS Tariff points

What that means for A Level Students Students with ABB and above at A Level qualify for exemption from SNC when applying for HE courses starting in the academic year 2013-14.

What that means for BTEC National students Students with a BTEC National Extended Diploma at DDM (320 points) and above qualify for exemption from SNC when applying for HE courses starting in the academic year 2013-14.

Guidelines for 2012/13 HE entry

HEFCE confirmed in early August 2012 that for BTEC National learners:

- the exemption from SNC only applies to learners taking large, single BTEC qualifications (i.e. the BTEC National Diploma)
- it does not apply to students taking a mix of smaller BTEC qualifications, or a mixture of BTECs and A levels.

Guidelines for 2013/14 HE entry

HEFCE has clarified that for 2013/14:

- mixtures of smaller BTECs **will** also be eligible in addition to single BTEC qualifications
- mixtures of BTECs and A-levels still will **not** be eligible.

What does that mean for BTEC Nationals learners?

A note on equivalencies and learner attainment

HEFCE has developed their AAB equivalencies solely to support effective student number control. They are not a comprehensive or exhaustive assessment of students' prior attainment and should not be used for other purposes, such as determining the suitability for admission of individual applicants or eligibility for institutions' own scholarship, bursary or fee-waiver schemes.

2. BTEC Level 3 Nationals in School and College Performance Tables for Key Stage 5

Based on: Department for Education (DfE) Key Stage 5 **Performance Tables** equivalencies.

Will affect: School and College performance points at Key Stage 5 (KS5) in England from 2012 onwards.

Relate to: The performance of the **individual school or college**.

Background: With the introduction of the new BTEC National Distinction* grade in 2012, the DfE has changed the performance table points assigned to the Distinction and Merit grades.

Grading information: The new points and equivalencies are as follows:

KS5 Performance Table Points	A Level	BTEC National
300	A*	-
270	A	D*
240	B	-
225	-	D
210	C	-
195	-	M
180	D	-
165	-	P
150	E	-

What this means for BTEC Nationals:

- **D* grade** equivalent to A Level A grade (270 points)
- **Distinction grade** equivalent to A Level grade between B and C (225 points). Formerly equivalent to A grade – 270 points.
- **Merit grade** equivalent to A level grade between C and D (195 points). Formerly worth between a B and a C – 225 points.
- **Pass grade** equivalent to A level grade between D and E (165 points). No change.

What does that mean for BTEC Nationals learners?

The DfE explains the rationale for this in their **Performance points - A Practical guide to key stage 4 and 5 performance points** (<http://www.edexcel.com/a00198740/performance-points-at-key-stages-4-and-5>).

Pearson is currently in discussion with the DfE about the assignment of these points. The DfE has confirmed that the earliest they can review the points allocation will be when they start work on the new indicators for level 3 performance tables for 2014.

If you need more information or assistance, you can contact us at:
www.edexcel.com/contactus