

# CASE STUDY

## Retaining and recruiting Sixth Form students

*The number of pupils in the Sixth Form at Milton Abbey recently grew by one third, with the vast majority of these new pupils joining the school to take a BTEC Level 3 National qualification, either as part of their overall KS5 portfolio, or as a full-time course.*



Centre name:  
**Milton Abbey**



Number of students:  
**225**



Region:  
**Blandford Forum, Dorset**



School type:  
**Independent**



Area type:  
**Rural**

Milton Abbey is a deliberately small school, offering an exceptionally wide ranging BTEC course selection in the independent sector. The school specialises in creating a programme of study that is tailored to each student's skills and aspirations, helping them to achieve the best possible outcomes for their future. They offer BTECs at both KS4 and KS5 delivering a broad curriculum which allows students to choose a subject and a learning style that develops their interests, and supports their future ambitions.



*We're finding that the pupils who take BTEC courses are arriving at university more prepared to deal with their degree.*



**Josh Bradbury**, Head of Sixth Form  
at Milton Abbey

Students often progress to university from Milton Abbey, studying a wide variety of degrees, such as Film, Photography and Media at Leeds University and Countryside Management at the Harper Adams. They find that students who have taken a BTEC and are going on to technical or applied courses at university are a step ahead in terms of practical skills and knowledge. In 2018 for instance, other leavers went on to study Computer Games Design degrees at Staffordshire University, a growth industry in the UK. Having completed their BTECs in Creative Media Production, and with a Games Production BTEC now available at Level 3, they had the combination of knowledge and practical skills required to follow this career path.

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**NAME: ABIGAIL\***

**BTEC(s) studied:** *BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Hospitality*

"I studied GCSEs at a different school, but found the exam process incredibly stressful and didn't achieve the grades I expected. My parents and I decided I should move schools to Milton Abbey to study a BTEC National Extended Diploma in Hospitality, and it was definitely the right decision.

Now I can see my progress in the course as I'm going along, instead of waiting for one exam at the end. I'm hoping to go on to work in Events Management, and my BTEC National is giving me the skills and knowledge I need to do that."

### NEXT STEPS FOR BTEC-QUALIFIED STUDENTS

*(2018 results)*

- Film & TV Production at Concordia University, Quebec, Canada
- Sport Development at Northumbria University
- Environment & Sustainability at Keele University
- Fashion Photography at the London College of Fashion

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**NAME: JEMMA\***

**BTEC(s) studied:** *BTEC First Award in Countryside and Environment, BTEC National Extended Diploma in Countryside Management*

"I come from a family of farmers, and I knew I wanted to go into the countryside management industry too. To help with this, I studied a BTEC First in Countryside and Environment alongside my GCSEs. I really enjoyed the practical, nature of the course, and because of this I also achieved a much better grade than in my GCSEs, so I chose to take a BTEC National Extended Diploma in Countryside Management instead of A levels.

The BTEC has massively improved my confidence and self-belief, as well as helping me develop leadership skills for my future.

My BTEC grades were much better than my GCSEs, and I really enjoyed the practical hands-on nature of the course."

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*We place a high priority on employability. Our BTEC courses ensure our graduates are ready for the worlds of work and higher education, prepared to take on whatever challenges lie ahead. Now in our twelfth year of offering BTECs, we love the initiative, communication skills, teamwork and problem-solving aspects promoted by the courses. Our students develop great confidence as well as expertise.*

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**Judith Fremont-Barnes, Head**

*\*Name changed for confidentiality*

