



# BTEC Esports is an ideal entry point to the esports industry

College:		Barnsley College	College students:		9,421
Location:		Barnsley	16-18 students:		5,195
Area type:		Town	BTEC students:		660

**You must be doing something right** when you have a student who is willing to travel over 30 miles to get to college.

That's what Oliver Dawson, 26, has done since being made redundant during the first nationwide lockdown in 2020.

Since losing his job, Oliver chose to pursue his passion for esports by taking out the Advanced Learner Loan to pay for his course and chase his dream of going to University, and then getting a career in a booming esports industry. "I always wanted to go into the industry but never really knew how," he says.

Step forward Barnsley College and their delivery of



Oliver Dawson

BTEC Esports, facilitated by Kalam Neale. "I have been teaching Pearson qualifications since 2011," he says, "BTECs provide a unique opportunity for students to be able to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are required in their preferred vocational area so that they are fully prepared for their progression to University or into employment.

Being assessed through a variety of assessment methods over the lifetime of the programme, instead of end of year exams, provides students with ongoing assessment and feedback that supports academic development alongside holistic individual development."

***“BTECs provide students with ongoing assessment and feedback that supports academic development alongside holistic individual development.”***

"The BTEC Esports qualification is unique in that it is the first of its kind globally and is a blend of previously standalone vocations such as sport, business, media, games and esports. This not only provides students with a wider range of knowledge and skills but also, the combination of specialist units that are studied further supports progression into a wider range of careers than would be traditionally seen by studying a single vocation."



Kalam Neale

“This course is giving me the means to be able to pursue my career goals,” says Oliver, “and get that foot in the door and into a career in an industry which I am passionate about and which until now, I was unsure how to get into.”

The coronavirus pandemic has put paid to how Oliver would usually have completed his course, like some work experience or industry placements, but Barnsley College have adapted and provided other means of learning. “We had guest speakers from an esports team (Barrage Esports) who gave us very useful information and an insight regarding the different roles in the industry.

“There are also other activities we have been able to participate in, for example, some of the students on the course are a part of the college esports team, the Barnsley Griffins, allowing them to play in tournaments run by the British Esports Association. This has opened an opportunity for another student and me to live-stream matches which gives us experience using streaming platforms and shoutcasting (esports commentating).”

“Personally, I love seeing the transformation of students from the start of the programme to the end,” says Kalam, “The range and variety of content and assessment really brings them out of their shell and develops young people into adults.

“In an esports classroom, students are able to learn in an environment that they are comfortable in using state of the art technology in a professional environment that replicates industry standards.

BTECs also provide students with the opportunity to study something that they love and that they are passionate about as it is their choice to study that subject.”

“We have worked hard with employers to provide a range of exit routes for our students and to provide a variety of work-related experience and employment opportunities.

**“We’ve highlighted the associated skills developed through competitive esports with companies interested in digital transformation”**

“We have also worked alongside employers (such as Game Academy and the RAF) to link the skills of gamers to potential careers. We’ve highlighted the associated skills developed through competitive esports to companies interested in digital transformation, neuro-diversity and a prospective new supply chain of nursery slope engineers and tech-agile individuals.”

The esports industry is booming, and with qualifications like the BTECs in Esports, the next generation of professionals will be well equipped to thrive.



**Want to find out more about BTEC Esports?**

Explore the qualifications at [btec.co.uk/esports](https://www.btec.co.uk/esports).