

GEORGE ABBOT



SIXTH FORM

Student Guide to Vocational Qualifications

Course Start: September 2021

Course Finish: July 2023

“Vocational education programs have made a real difference in the lives of countless young people nationwide; they build self-confidence and leadership skills by allowing students to utilise their unique gifts and talents”
Conrad Burns

Welcome!

The Vocational Team welcomes you to the Sixth Form, and we are pleased to have you as a student in our department. Whether you are a new student, or have been with us for some time, you are going to be our most important and valued assets.

Vocational Courses at the Sixth Form at George Abbot

Vocational Team	Sport	Science	Child Development	Business	IT
SLT Lead – KTO Quality Nominee – SF	JNF	MXT	SF	JTM	JH

What are Vocational qualifications?

Vocational qualifications are nationally recognised qualifications. They are different from traditional GCSE and A Levels because they are linked to a particular area of work.

What makes vocational qualifications different?

- Students develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the vocational area they are studying
- Each vocational course is made up of a number of units, allowing students to build up their qualification in stages.
- Students are assessed through coursework and exam elements.
- Students produce evidence for their key skills qualification through their vocational course.
- Students take **responsibility** for their own learning by **planning** their work, doing **research** and regularly **reviewing their progress**.

The following guide is full of useful information regarding Vocational Qualifications at the Sixth Form at George Abbot.

Good luck with your courses, work hard and remember we are here to support you in your studies and to help you be successful in the sixth form. If you have any problems please remember to speak to your subject assessors.

How do Universities view vocational qualifications?

95% of universities and colleges in the UK accept Vocational Qualifications, including competitive universities from the Russell Group. In 2017 100,000 students got University places studying ONLY vocational courses.

Nearly all universities accept vocational courses in relevant subject areas, similar to how they would with equivalent A-Level qualifications.

Vocational students can often be better prepared for higher education in terms of the independent studying that's required at degree level, due to the coursework/assignment nature of the courses. The time management and self-organisation you will gain can give you the added edge.

Vocational students who achieve good grades are just as sought after as students with good A-Level results.

UCAS Points	
BTEC National Certificate L3 D* = 28 Points D = 24 Points M = 16 Points P = 8 Points	BTEC National Diploma L3 D*D* = 112 Points D* D = 104 Points D D = 96 Points D M = 80 Points M M = 64 Points M P = 48 Points P P = 32 Points
BTEC National Extended Certificate L3 D* = 56 Points D = 48 Points M = 32 Points P = 16 Points	BTEC National Diploma L3 D*D*D* = 168 Points D*D*D = 160 Points D*D D = 152 Points DDD = 144 Points DDM = 128 Points DMM = 112 Points MMM = 96 Points MMP = 80 Points MPP = 64 Points
BTEC National Foundation Diploma L3 D* = 84 Points D = 72 Points M = 48 Points P = 24 Points	

What will happen in lessons?

The lessons will vary according to the subject and level but all students should experience most of these activities:

- Discussion – one to one or in groups.
- Research – group or individual using a variety of methods.
- Report writing.
- Presentations – in groups or individually.
- Practical work.
- Display work visits to organisations/companies.
- Work with visitors.
- Preparation for external examinations.

Outline of the work

Each unit of work has a series of assignments that you will need to complete for the unit. For each assignment you will work with an assignment sheet that lists the tasks you need to complete and will have an assessment grid that outlines the criteria needed to achieve a **Pass/Merit/Distinction**. You have to meet all of the criteria at Pass level in order to move up to Merit level and meet all merit criteria to move up to the top grade of Distinction. Achieving an overall grade for the module will be determined on achieving all criteria at the highest grade.

What will be expected of you?

You will be expected to do all of the following as part of your day-to-day work:

- Read and research.
- Keep a record of the information you find and the sources.
- Plan your work in a logical order and keep a record of your progress.
- Talk to your teachers about your ideas and how to achieve the best results.
- Produce drafts and final copies of your work.
- **Produce high quality work** with high standards of grammar and spelling.
- Present your work in a suitable format according to the purpose and the audience.
- Evaluate your work and make suggestions for improvement.

- Meet deadlines as outlined in the assessment calendars which your teachers will provide.
- Keep a record of the work you have completed, including the grades and points you have been awarded.

Grades

Obtaining a Pass Grade

To achieve this grade you will have to work independently to identify information. You will also be expected to **describe** in your own words the information you have found and show that you and select the appropriate information for the scenario you are working on.

Complete	Complete a form, diagram or drawing.
Demonstrate	Show that you can do a particular activity.
Describe	Give a clear, straightforward description which includes all the main points.
Identify	Give all the basic facts which relate to a certain topic.
List	Write a list of the main items.
Name	State the proper terms related to a drawing or diagram.
Outline	Give all the main points, but without going into too much detail.
State	Point out or list the main features.

Examples:

- List the main features on your mobile phone.
- Describe the best way to greet a customer.
- Outline the procedures you follow to keep your computer system secure.

Obtaining a Merit Grade

To achieve this grade you will have to work independently and find information using different methods. You will have to write in detail and give examples to show that you have understood the information well. You will have to **explain** in details using your own words and give **reasons** for the points that you make. You will have to review what you have done and give reasons for the choices you made.

Analyse	Identify the factors that apply, and state how these are linked and how each of them relates to the topic.
Comment on	Give your own opinions or views.
Compare/contrast	Identify the main factors relating to two or more items and point out the similarities and differences.
Competently use	Take full account of information and feedback you have obtained to review or improve an activity.
Demonstrate	Prove you can carry out a more complex activity.
Describe	Give a full description including details of all the relevant features.
Explain	Give logical reasons to support your views.
Justify	Give reasons for the points you are making so that the reader knows what you are thinking.
Suggest	Give you own ideas or thoughts.

Examples:

- Explain why mobile phones are so popular.
- Describe the needs of four different types of customers.
- Suggest the type of procedures a business would need to introduce to keep its IT system secure.

Obtaining a Distinction Grade

To achieve this grade you will have to be completely independent, using your own ideas, giving your **opinion and justifying the points that you make**. You will be expected to **link ideas together and evaluate your work** by identifying the strengths and weaknesses and giving ideas for improvement.

Analyse	Identify several factors, show how they are linked, and explain the importance of each.
Compare/contrast	Identify the main factors in two or more situations, then explain the similarities and differences, and in some cases adapt your original ideas.
Demonstrate	Prove that you can carry out a complex activity taking into account information you have obtained or received to adapt your original ideas.
Describe	Give a comprehensive description which tells a story to the reader and shows that you can apply your knowledge and information correctly.
Evaluate	Bring together all your information and make a judgement on the importance or success of something.
Explain	Provide full details and reasons to support the arguments you are making.
Justify	Give full reasons or evidence to support your opinion.
Recommend	Weigh up all the evidence to come to a conclusion, with reasons, about what would be best.

Examples:

- Evaluate the features and performance of your mobile phone.
- Analyse the role of customer service in contributing to an organisation's success.
- Justify the main features on the website of a large successful organisation of your choice.

Assessment

Assignment Briefs

Your assessment is carried out through various types of assignments.

Assignment briefs are issued once the content for the unit of work has been delivered. They are your reference point for assessment throughout the unit and therefore should always be at hand; especially when writing coursework.

Each assignment brief will include:

- Date issued; hand in date and assessment date.
- Qualification being studied.
- Unit covered.
- Scenario.
- Description of task.
- Description of evidence to be submitted.
- Criteria covered.
- Resources list.

Submission of Evidence

- The rule framework allows for **one** submission of evidence for each assignment.
- Your tutor will formally record the assessment result and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria.
- You must submit an assignment for assessment which consists of evidence towards the targeted assessment criteria.
- A signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity with each assignment.
- **Always check the brief to ensure you have completed all the necessary tasks.**
- Coursework should be word processed unless otherwise stated. You should always keep an electronic copy of each completed assignment for your reference.

You should regard all assessment marks as provisional until an assessment sheet has been completed. However, this can still be subject to moderation and change until BTEC results day.

All work within the assignments must be your own work. It should not be copied from another student nor cut and pasted from articles on the internet. This is regarded as plagiarism. This is **extremely serious** and could jeopardise your obtaining the qualification.

Deadlines

You must meet the deadline stated on your assignment brief; failing to meet the stated deadline will mean you are **NOT** entitled to a resubmission date and the Lead Internal Verifier will not be permitted to authorise a resubmission date. You will also be issued with a P6 Detention.

Feedback to students

Once you are working on the assignments which you will submit for assessment, you must work **independently** to prepare and produce evidence for assessment.

Before starting the assessment task, your teacher will ensure that you understand the:

- **Assessment requirements.**
- **Nature of the evidence you need to produce.**
- **Importance of time management and meeting deadlines.**

Once you begin the work for your assessment your tutor must **not**:

- **Provide specific assessment feedback on the evidence you produce before it is submitted for assessment.**
- **Confirm achievement of specific assessment criteria until the assessment stage.**

Your tutor **can** continue to give general feedback and support, particularly around the development of knowledge, understanding and skills. Once assignments have been submitted your tutor will create an assessment record. Assessment records for all assignments completed will include the following information:

- Unit title.
- Issue date.
- Submission deadline.
- Date submitted.
- First submission/resubmission.
- Authorisation of resubmission (if applicable).
- Target criteria covered.
- Criteria achieved (yes/no).
- Assessment comments- this will include comments on how you achieved or did not achieve specific criteria.
- General comment from assessor.
- Assessor declaration and signature.
- Learner comment and signature.

Re-submission Policy and Procedures

Please be aware of the importance of **meeting** formal assessment deadlines in order for your tutor to accept evidence for assessment or for re-submission.

Every assignment contributes towards the final qualification grade. The rule framework allows for **one resubmission of evidence for each assignment**. Re-submissions can only be authorised by a Lead Internal Verifier, however, for them to authorise the re-submission following conditions must be met:

- You have met initial deadlines set in the assignment, or has met an agreed deadline extension.
- Your tutor can judge that you will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance.
- The assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment and the evidence is accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by you.

If you do not meet the above conditions you will **NOT** be authorised for a resubmission.

You will be given a deadline for resubmission within **15 school days** of receiving the results of the assessment.

Retakes

If you have met all of the conditions listed above in opportunities for resubmission, but still **NOT** achieved the targeted pass criteria following resubmission of an assignment, the Lead Internal Verifier **MAY** authorise one retake opportunity to meet the **required pass criteria**.

The Lead Internal Verifier must only authorise a retake in exceptional circumstances where they believe it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so.

The retake will be a **NEW** task or assignment targeted **only to the pass** criteria which you did not achieve in the original assignment.

The assessor will agree and record a clear deadline before you start the retake.

Your tutor will **not** be able to award a merit or distinction grade for a retake.

You will **not** be allowed any further resubmissions or retakes.

Marking and moderation

All assignments are marked by your teacher in relation to the set criteria appropriate to each unit learning outcome. You will be awarded a pass; merit or distinction grade for each unit completed and evidence produced that meets the grading criteria.

The assessment process is then subject to internal verification from a second marker from within the Vocational team. Moderators second mark samples of work to ensure that marking is consistent and reflects appropriate standards of achievement.

The exam board will also check the grading of randomly selected assignments to make sure marking is correctly done.

Appeals Procedure

- Any discrepancies that the student feels has taken place are first discussed with the candidate and the assessor.
- If no headway is made at this point, the assessor and Internal Verifier (IV) meet to discuss the appeal. The assessors will then feedback to the candidate the IV's decision.
- The candidate is at liberty to discuss this decision with the IV.
- If this does not clear the situation then the information will be passed onto the Quality Nominee – Mrs Furse, if the candidate is still not happy with outcome the External Verifier for the subject will be asked to make a decision, which can be upheld by the Awarding Body.
- This should give a prompt, fair and accurate feedback to the candidate.

Learner declaration

Please sign the statement below to declare you understand the importance of meeting deadlines and you understand the procedures for resubmissions and retakes.

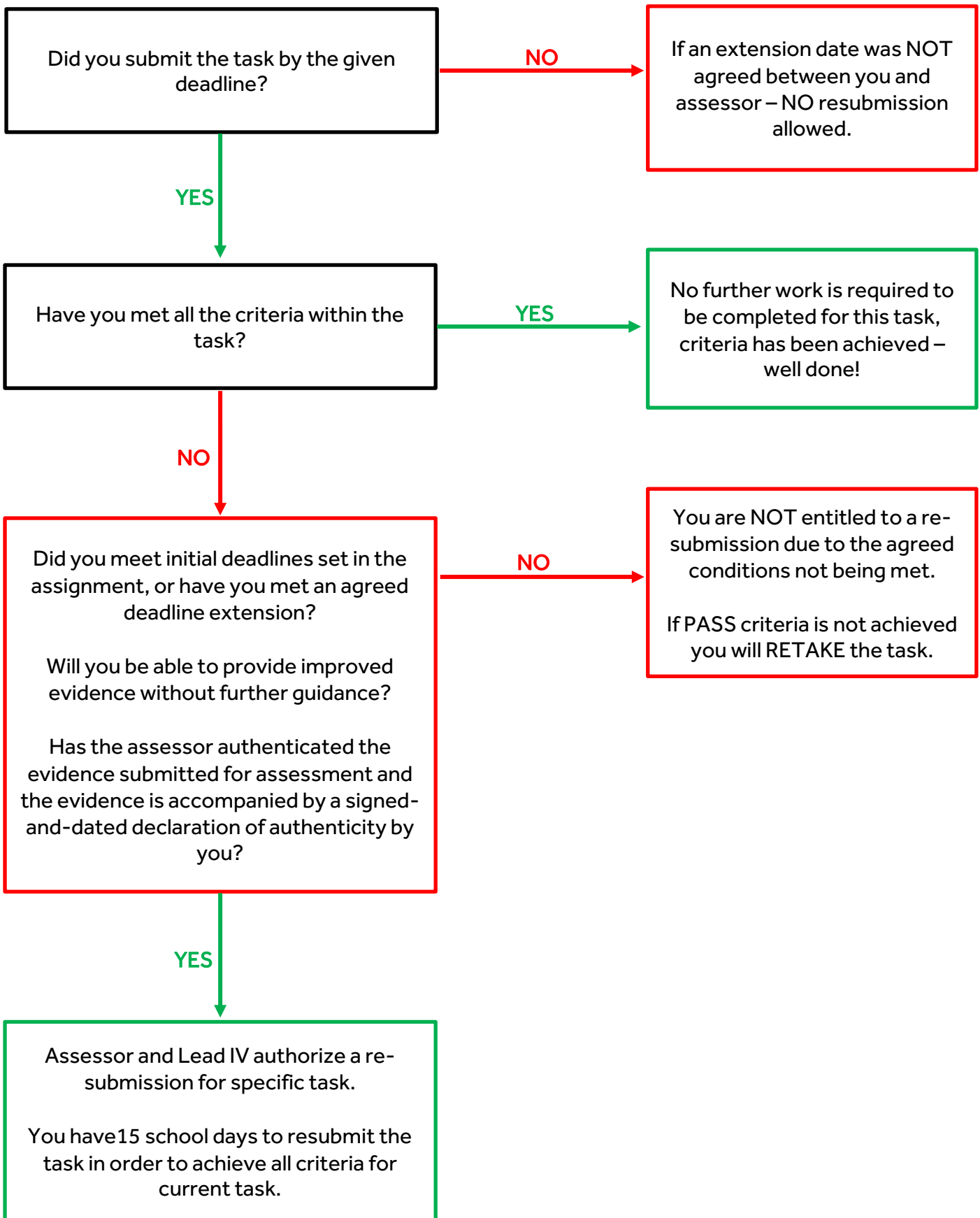
I certify all work submitted is my own. I am aware of the importance of meeting deadlines and the procedures for resubmissions and retake opportunities.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Example of Submission Process



Key things to remember

Be organised

Sort out your files and make sure that all of your notes and assignment details are stored safely at all times. Keep back-up copies of electronically stored work.

Make use of the resources available to you

Resources are everywhere: the internet, library, newspapers, textbooks, teachers, family and friends. Different resources will give you different perspectives on what you are studying and will add detail and perspective to your analysis. Remember to reference and DO NOT copy and paste.

Be smart about your time

Make sure you record the deadline dates for any tasks or assignments. You may be taught by more than one teacher at a time. **Make sure that you meet your deadlines! The consequences of not doing so can be very severe. YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE GIVEN A P6 DETENTION or informed to attend the compulsory VOCATIONAL CATCH up session.**

Prioritise your work

You will need to work out what is the most important element of your work and do this first. Until the key pieces of work are complete it is difficult to make progress on anything else.

Review your progress

During the teaching of an upcoming assignment Pre-Tasks may get returned to you with comments. These comments could be ways to improve your work, or highlight corrections which need to be made. This can be part of your teacher judging when you are ready to take the assessment. You must ensure you act upon these comments as they are there to help you. Also use your Go4Schools Report to read and follow up the progress you are making prior to starting the assessment.

Ask for help when you need it

Don't be afraid to ask for help. The chances are that if you don't understand something then someone else won't either. Highlight any areas which need clarifying and your teacher will do his/her best to improve your understanding.

Your teachers are there to help

Teachers want you to attain the highest grade you can for the course, and we are happy to help you whenever we can, however, we cannot write or undertake your work for you! If you act upon advice given and comply with all of the deadline dates there are no reasons why you cannot achieve success on your course.

Reading Check Quiz:

What happens if you do not meet all the assessment criteria but meet the initial deadline?

How many school days will you be given to re-submit work?

What type of command word would be seen in a merit level assignment?

When handing in your assignment to your teacher, what else will you need to hand in with this work?

Give 2 things your teacher CAN'T do during the time you are completing your assignment.

You must read this document carefully and complete the reading check quiz in order to have your learning licence 'signed off' by your tutor.