Utopia BTEC Student Handbook 2024-2025

Adopted by Utopia – for review by the Board of Directors
Updated September 2024
For review – Annually

WHAT IS A BTEC?

BTEC qualifications have been developed to provide specialist workplace inspired qualifications in a wide range of different areas. If you enjoy 'hands on' practical work with plenty of real-life situations or 'scenario's' you will probably find these courses stimulating and engaging.

Many of the courses require you to produce a folio of coursework, which is assessed in a variety of ways at set points over the duration of the course. These assessments will determine what level of qualification you will gain from the course.

A STRAIGHT FORWARD STRUCTURE

Each BTEC is made up of a number of units. This will usually be between anything from 2-8 units depending which course you are doing.

In order to achieve success in each unit, your projects have to show achievement against a set of outcomes or criteria. These will be listed in the 'Assignment brief' you receive. Much of the work you do will be as part of a group and/or a practical task that provides evidence that you have understood the work you have been taught.

Rqf & QCF BTECs are not exam based qualifications. However NQF BTECs have a small element of external assessment. At Utopia, we currently only deliver Rqf & QCF qualifications.

The assignments that you do form the basis of Unit results, they are assessed by your tutors and external verifiers and based on this assessment you will be given an overall result. However, the grade awarded by your assessor is not definite until both internal and where appropriate external verification has taken place. Your learning will be spread over 1 or two years depending on the course you are doing allowing you enough time to build the skills you will need to be successful.

BTEC COURSES AVAILABLE AT UTOPIA PROJECT

(QCF) BTEC Entry Level & Level 1 ….

- Sport & Active Leisure (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

This qualification gives you an introduction to the world of sport and active leisure. The sport and active leisure sector covers a wide range of activities, and so the choice of units available gives you the opportunity to work towards your own interests and progression aspirations. You will be able to learn about aspects of how the body works, how to plan your own programmes for fitness, take part in different sorts of activities, how to assist with running an event, and what it is like to work in this sector. There are also opportunities to understand more about what it means to work as part of a team, and to work safely.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Sport and Active Leisure (QCF) is a 13-credit and 130 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification that consists of units ranging between a 1 credit and 4 credit value.

Level 1	7- 37 credits	The Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Award, certificate or diploma provides an introduction to the skills, qualities and knowledge that may be required for employment in a particular vocational sector.

(Rqf) BTEC Introductory Level 1 ….

- Introduction to Sport (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

This is a skills-based qualification designed to help you develop the personal and social skills needed to progress to independent living, future employment or further vocational study. Core units focus on general personal development and social skills that are transferable across a variety of sectors. Whilst additional units studied enable you to explore Sport as a sector and develop knowledge and skills in a specific area. This will enable you to progress to further education or employment. All units are 100% internally assessed.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Introductory Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Introductory Level 1 Certificate in Sport is a 180 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification

Level 1	Award	The Award offers you the opportunity to study a sector unit (often practical based) and plan for your next steps by completing the mandatory unit: *Developing a Personal Progression Plan*
Level 1	Certificate	The Certificate offers you the opportunity to progress quickly to further study, it offers a basic introduction to the early years sector. 2 core units 3 sector units.
Level 1	Diploma	The Diploma can be studied over the course of a year and is designed to develop a range of skills in the early years sector and supporting progression on to further study. 4 core units and 6 sector units.

(QCF) BTEC Entry Level & Level 1 ….

- Creative Media Production (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

This qualification gives you an introduction to the world of Creative Media Production. The Creative Media Production sector covers a wide range of activities, and so the choice of units available gives you the opportunity to work towards your own interests and progression aspirations. You will be able to learn about aspects of; Using the Internet, Creating Images Digitally, Investigating, Animation, Job Opportunities in Media, Interactive Media Products and much more. There are also opportunities to understand more about what it means to work as part of a team, and to work safely.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Creative Media Production (QCF) is a 16-credit and 130 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification that consists of units ranging between a 1 credit and 4 credit value.

Level 1	7- 37 credits	The Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Award, certificate or diploma provides an introduction to the skills, qualities and knowledge that may be required for employment in a particular vocational sector.

(Rqf) BTEC Introductory Level 1 ….

- Introduction to Digital Media (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

This is a skills-based qualification designed to help you develop the personal and social skills needed to progress to independent living, future employment or further vocational study. Core units focus on general personal development and social skills that are transferable across a variety of sectors. Whilst additional units studied enable you to explore Digital Media as a sector and develop knowledge and skills in a specific area. This will enable you to progress to further education or employment. All units are 100% internally assessed.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Introductory Level 1 Certificate in Digital Media is a 180 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification

Level 1	Award	The Award offers you the opportunity to study a sector unit (often practical based) and plan for your next steps by completing the mandatory unit: *Developing a Personal Progression Plan*
Level 1	Certificate	The Certificate offers you the opportunity to progress quickly to further study, it offers a basic introduction to the early years sector. 2 core units 3 sector units.
Level 1	Diploma	The Diploma can be studied over the course of a year and is designed to develop a range of skills in the early years sector and supporting progression on to further study. 4 core units and 6 sector units.

(Rqf) BTEC Level 1 Introductory Qualification….

- Caring for Children Under 5 (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

The aim of this qualification is to develop transferable skills, attributes, and behaviours needed to progress to further study and ultimately employment. By completing sector based units, you will be able to gain valuable vocation experience in your chosen sector.

Qualification profile:

- BTEC qualifications at Level 1 are assessed at Award, Certificate and Diploma level.

Level 1	Award	The Award offers you the opportunity to study a sector unit (often practical based) and plan for your next steps by completing the mandatory unit: *Developing a Personal Progression Plan*
Level 1	Certificate	The Certificate offers you the opportunity to progress quickly to further study, it offers a basic introduction to the early years sector. 2 core units 3 sector units.
Level 1	Diploma	The Diploma can be studied over the course of a year and is designed to develop a range of skills in the early years sector and supporting progression on to further study. 4 core units and 6 sector units.

The course consists of:

- **Assignments:** You will be required to collate a portfolio of evidence that may include; written assignments, photographic/video evidence, tutor observations
- **Assessments:** Your tutor will set specific assessment tasks in order for you to achieve set criteria.
- **Practical Activities:** As part of the sector units you will have the opportunity to undertake practical activities and gain industry experience.

(Rqf) BTEC Introductory Level 1 ….

- Introductory in Business (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

This is a skills-based qualification designed to help you develop the personal and social skills needed to progress to independent living, future employment or further vocational study. Core units focus on general personal development and social skills that are transferable across a variety of sectors. Whilst additional units studied enable you to explore Business as a sector and develop knowledge and skills in a specific area. This will enable you to progress to further education or employment. All units are 100% internally assessed.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Introductory Level 1 Certificate in Business is a 180 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification

Level 1	Award	The Award offers you the opportunity to study a sector unit (often practical based) and plan for your next steps by completing the mandatory unit: *Developing a Personal Progression Plan*
Level 1	Certificate	The Certificate offers you the opportunity to progress quickly to further study, it offers a basic introduction to the early years sector. 2 core units 3 sector units.
Level 1	Diploma	The Diploma can be studied over the course of a year and is designed to develop a range of skills in the early years sector and supporting progression on to further study. 4 core units and 6 sector units.

(Rqf) BTEC Introductory Level 1 ….

- Introductory in Art & Design (Award, Certificate, Diploma)

What's it all about?

The Pearson BTEC Level 1 Introductory Award, Certificate and Diploma in Art and Design are designed around practical skills and tasks that place an emphasis on you demonstrating what you can do rather than what you know in theory. The qualifications give you the opportunity to acquire and develop generic, transferable and sector-specific skills in order to complete tasks and demonstrate a level of achievement that enables them to progress to further learning.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Introductory Level 1 Certificate in Art & Design is a 180 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification

Level 1	Award	The Award offers you the opportunity to study a sector unit (often practical based) and plan for your next steps by completing the mandatory unit: *Developing a Personal Progression Plan*
Level 1	Certificate	The Certificate offers you the opportunity to progress quickly to further study, it offers a basic introduction to the early years sector. 2 core units 3 sector units.
Level 1	Diploma	The Diploma can be studied over the course of a year and is designed to develop a range of skills in the early years sector and supporting progression on to further study. 4 core units and 6 sector units.

BTEC Level 1 Skills Qualification….

- Teamwork and Personal Skills in the Community (Award)

What's it all about?

This is a specialist qualification designed to help you develop Teamwork and Personal Skills in the Community. The qualification is designed to support are learners seeking involvement or increased involvement with their community, and who want to prepare for employment or develop teamwork and personal skills. All units are 100% internally assessed.

Qualification profile:

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Certificate

The Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Award Introductory Certificate Teamwork and personal skills in the Community is a 70 guided-learning-hours (GLH) qualification that consists of units ranging between a 1 credit and 4 credit value.

Level 1	1- 12 credits	The Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Award, certificate or diploma provides an introduction to the skills, qualities and knowledge that may be required for employment in a particular vocational sector.

BTEC Level 1 & 2 Skills Qualification….

- Home Cooking Skills QCF (Award)

What's it all about?

The aim of this qualification is to give you the basic skills and knowledge to be able to cook in a healthy and cost-effective way for the rest of your life, as well as gain the confidence to share these skills with friends and family.

Qualification profile:

- Consists of two single-unit BTEC qualifications at Level 1 and Level 2

Level 1	4 credits	Focuses on giving all you the skills to prepare delicious and nutritious home-cooked food using fresh ingredients, as well as an understanding of the value of passing on cooking knowledge.
Level 2	6 credits	Develops your ability to plan and prepare a series of nutritious home-cooked meals for breakfast, snacks, lunch and dinner, and understand how to cook economically.

The course consists of over 80 recipes, all divided into manageable sections and covering key topics from eggs and baking to vegetables and quick-cook meats. This is all supported by a range of fact sheets dealing with other basics and essentials such as:

- **kitchen basics:** what equipment you need and the best way to stock your store cupboard, fridge and freezer
- **food safety and hygiene:** knife safety, fridge management and rotation
- **how to shop cleverly:** shopping lists, seasonal food, planning ahead preparing ingredients and how to understand confusing food labels.

HOW WILL I LEARN AND HOW WILL MY ACHIEVEMENT BE ASSESSED?

Most BTEC courses involve learning a section of a particular Unit (or subject) followed by a period of work where the assignment containing certain tasks related to what you have just learnt about will be completed.

Some of the work you produce in these assignments could cover one part or a section of the Unit other pieces could cover the whole Unit. This will vary between different programmes.

Your tutors will make the learning as practical and engaging as possible and the assignments you complete will always have a link to the world of work for that particular subject, for example in the 'Sport' course references will be made to different roles within the sports industry. These will be called 'Scenarios' which means the task you have been given has been set in a 'made up' setting, like the one mentioned above.

HOW WILL MY LEARNING BE ASSESSED?

Courses recognised by BTEC give you credit for what you do as you learn. The methods of assessment will vary according to the type and level of course you are on. Assessment can be through anything that reflects what you have achieved during the course such as: diary notes, video recordings, photographs, presentations, interviews, written reports etc. NQF courses will include an external assessment that can take place in 3 different forms depending on your course; paper based, set tasks or computer based 'onscreen' assessments.

For RQF & QCF courses because there is no final examination you have to keep a portfolio of evidence of all your achievements. This includes the work you produce such as photographs, diaries, questionnaires, work placement reports, etc. It shows you and your tutor what you have done and the level you are working at.
In many cases your tutor will keep these for you in a secure place at the centre. After completion of each assignment your work will be assessed or marked, you will then be given feedback including the 'Level' you are working at and what you need to do to improve the work.

You will receive one of the following grades for your work:-

REFERRAL - this means your work is below the necessary standard to achieve a pass, you will be given feedback on how to improve to help you progress

Level 1 Award, Certificate, Diploma;

PASS	-	You have met the required standards
MERIT	-	You have achieved above the required standards
DISTINCTION	-	You have excelled the required standards

If you progress to the Level 2 Certificate;

PASS	-	equivalent to 'C' at GCSE
MERIT	-	equivalent to 'B' at GCSE
DISTINCTION	-	equivalent to 'A' at GCSE

Internal Verification

Internal verification is an important part of BTEC delivery and assessment. It makes sure that internally assessed units that you complete:

- have appropriate assessment opportunities
- are assessed accurately to national standards.

Internal verification is a process undertaken to check that:

- assessment and grading is consistent across the programme
- assessment instruments (assignments) are fit for purpose - i.e. they enable you to produce evidence which meets the targeted assessment criteria
- assessment decisions accurately judge learner evidence against the assessment criteria.

Internal Verification Process

Assignment briefs that you receive should be internally verified before you receive them to ensure that it:

- has accurate unit details
- has accurate programme details
- has clear deadlines for assessment
- shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit(s) covered in the assignment
- indicates relevant assessment criteria targeted against each task
- clearly states what evidence you need to provide
- is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient
- is set at the appropriate level

- has a time period of appropriate duration
- uses suitable vocational language
- has a clear presentation format.

Timing

Internal verification will be carried out in a timely way throughout the year. It will usually take place at the end of each Unit of work that you complete (this is usually termly). Internal verification is important as it helps support your Assessors, making sure that they mark your work correctly and give you constructive feedback.

Internal verification takes place once your tutor assesses the work that you have submitted. The Internal Verifier then checks your tutor's assessment decisions, to make sure that they are correct in relation to the assessment criteria of each unit.

Internally verifying assessment decisions

The Internal Verifier reviews the Assessor's judgments against the learning aim, unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification. They will check:

- your work against the assessment criteria and judge whether it has been assessed accurately.

- coverage of the unit content and assessment guidance to see if the Assessor has taken this into account - does the assessment reflect the breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding identified in the content?

- the feedback from Assessor to you is accurate and linked to the assessment criteria. Remember, the Internal Verifier is judging the Assessor, not you.

If the Internal Verifier judges that your work has been inaccurately assessed, appropriate action will be identified on the internal verification form. If inaccuracies are identified, the Assessor will re-assess your work in the light of the Internal Verifier's comments and it will then be checked again by the Internal Verifier, signed and dated. It may be necessary for you to do some additional work.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

Attend regularly and on time with the equipment you need for that lesson or task.

Behave responsibly and safely at all times.

Contribute to creating a pleasant learning environment by respecting the diverse backgrounds of staff and other learners.

Ask for help if you are having difficulties with any aspect of the course.

Make any suggestions you have to help us improve the different courses we offer.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

Equal opportunities.

High quality teaching/tutoring.

An individual approach to your learning.

Regular feedback on your progress.

Opportunities to feedback on the course you are doing.

Support and guidance throughout the course informing you of your current achievement and how you can improve to the next level.

SECTION 6

SETTING UP REFERENCES AND QUOTATIONS

Referencing sources online

Referencing work from electronic sources is important within BTEC courses as you are often researching information online. If you take information in the form of online source for example a picture or diagram or piece of writing you must include the type of resource plus the URL and when it was accessed.

For example:

British Sports – Disability sports online reference.

hhtp://britishsports.com/disabilitysports.htm (downloaded 7.02.11)

GENERAL QUOTATIONS

Using quotations reproduces in your work the actual words a writer uses. You should, therefore, take care to copy accurately. When you do this you use quotation marks, "like this" and give a reference.

In this example:

Jack Frost wrote, "Summer is not coming in"

(Frost, A 2001 p1) would appear next in the text.

Note "Summer is not coming in" is the quotation. (Frost, A 2001 p1) is the reference.

MALPRACTICE WITHIN BTEC COURSES

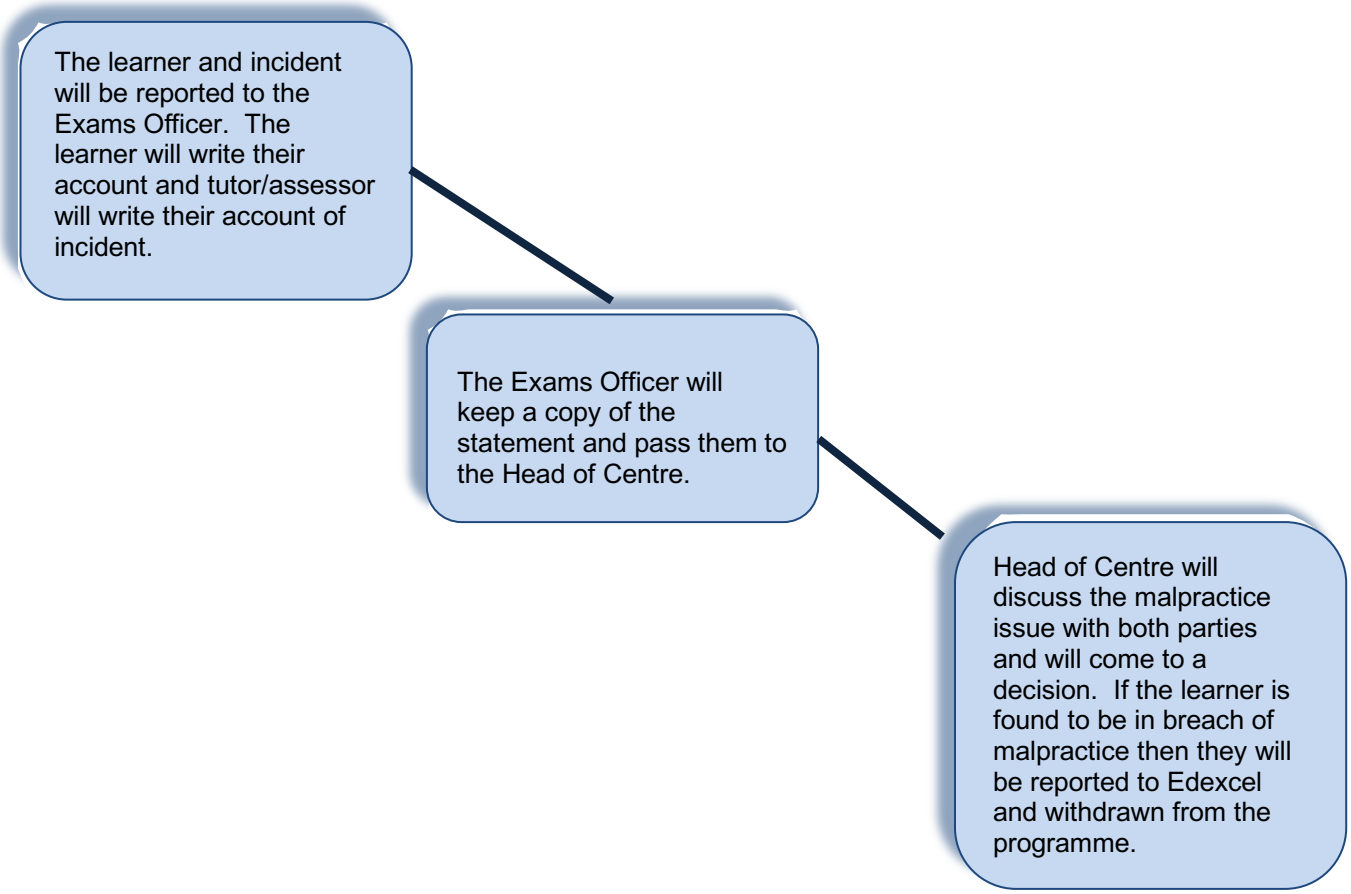
Utopia Project and all BTEC tutors follow the Edexcel policy, which is set out below.

The Edexcel Policy on Assessment malpractice applies to all BTEC and NVQ programmes. The policy provides a definition of malpractice, examples of what constitutes malpractice by both candidates and centre staff and positive steps that can be taken to prevent or reduce candidate malpractice.

Malpractice consists of acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification. Edexcel reserves the right to impose sanctions and/or penalties on candidates or centres where incidents or attempted incidents of malpractice have been proven.

LEARNER MALPRACTICE

If a learner has conducted malpractice then the following actions will occur:



MALPRACTICE AND PLAGIARISM

Definition of Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and this centre at its discretion may consider other instances of malpractice:

- Plagiarism of any nature.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with others to produce work that is submitted as individual work.
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying).
- Deliberate destruction of another's work.
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is copying and passing off work that is not yours as your own. This can be a whole piece of work or a part, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including the internet), thoughts, inventions etc. This is taken very seriously and work handed in that is a form of plagiarism will not be accepted.

To ensure you do not plagiarise write using your own words. If you do use the work of others e.g. books, Internet etc., you must reference using the procedures above.

Student and Parental Declaration

This Student Handbook should be stored in a safe place so that it can be referred to when necessary – leave this in Utopia/ within your folder to use as a reference.

You and your parents/carer will be given information about your programme of study at your initial outreach visit. During this time we will go through this handbook with you and you will be asked to sign this document as acknowledgement that you have read the contents of the Handbook and agree to follow the explained guidelines.

Furthermore, to declare that all work you will submit will be your own and that you will work to the best of your ability to complete the course/courses you have chosen to undertake.

Student Name: _____

School: _____

Course/courses: _____

I agree to follow the course and meet set deadlines in each of the units of my programme.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

I have read the content of the Student Handbook and understand the commitment my son/daughter has made to complete their BTEC course. I will encourage him/her to fulfill the demands and meet all deadlines.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT AN ASSESSMENT DECISION – APPEAL PROCESS

At Utopia Project we will follow Edexcel's policy regarding your right to appeal. Edexcel will also not intervene until we have carried out an extensive internal enquiry which involves these four stages:

Stage 1

You are unhappy with the grade/outcome of assessed work.

Stage 2

You must discuss the outcome with your teacher that marked that work. If you are still unhappy with the outcome then go to stage three.

Stage 3

Your work will be re-assessed by Chris Black (Quality Nominee). If you are still unhappy with the outcome move to stage four.

Stage 4

The Quality Nominee will review your work and make a judgement in favour of the student or the assessor. If you are still unhappy with the outcome of the appeal then they move to stage five.

Stage 5

We will refer the appeal to Edexcel. The appropriate documentation will be completed by the exams officer.

STUDENT REVIEW DETAILS

Student Review Details Name: …….…..…….. Assessor: ……

Date	Details of Discussions	Action/Targets	Learner Feedback

Student Review Signed:

Name: …….…..…….. Assessor: ……

GLOSSARY of Command Verbs (used for SMART aims/objective setting and also for setting projects/assignments)

Pass	Example	Merit	Example	Distinction	Example
Describe	Give a clear description that includes all the relevant features. Think of it as 'painting a picture with words.'	***Analyse***	**Identify separate factors, say how they are related and how each one contributes to the topic.**	***Appraise***	Consider the plus and minus points and give a reasoned judgement.
Define	Clearly explain what a particular term means and give an example, if appropriate, to show what you mean	***Assess***	**Give careful consideration to all the factors or events that apply and identify which are the most important or relevant.**	***Assess***	Make a judgement on the importance of something (similar to evaluate)
Design	Create a plan, proposal or outline to illustrate a straightforward concept or idea.	***Compare/ contrast***	**Identify the main factors that apply in tow or more situations and explain the similarities and differences or advantages and disadvantages.**	***Comment critically***	Give your view after you have considered all the evidence. In particular decide the importance of all the relevant positive and negative aspects.
Explain	Set out in detail the meaning of something, with reasons. More difficult than describing or listing so it can help to give an example to show what you mean. Start by introducing the topic then give the 'how' and 'why'.	***Demonstrate***	**Provide several relevant examples or related evidence which clearly supports the arguments you are making. This may include showing practical skills.**	***Criticise***	Review a topic or issue objectively and weigh up both plus and minus points.
Identify	Point out (i.e. choose the right one) or give a list of the main features.	***Design***	**Create a plan, proposal or outline to illustrate a relatively complex concept or idea.**	***Draw conclusions***	Use the evidence you have provided to reach a reasoned judgement.

Illustrate	Include examples or a diagram to show what you mean.	***Explain in detail***	**Provide details and give reasons and/or evidence to clearly support the argument you are making.**	***Evaluate***	Review the information then bring it together to form a conclusion. Give evidence for each of your views or statements.
Interpret	Define or explain the meaning of something	***How/why/justify***	**Give reasons or evidence to support your opinion or view to show how you arrived at these conclusions**	***Evaluate critically/ critically analyse***	Decide the degree to which a statement is true or the importance or value of something by reviewing the information. Include precise and detailed information and assess possible alternatives, bearing in mind their strengths and weaknesses if they were applied instead.
List	Provide the information in a list, rather than in continuous writing				
Outline	Write a clear description but not a detailed one				
Plan	Work out and plan how you would carry out a task or activity				
State	Write a clear and full account				
Summarise	Write down the main points or essential features.				