



# A GUIDE TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR BTEC STUDENTS

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## ABOUT BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

Our origins date back to 1843. We achieved university status in 1992 as the University of Central England and we changed our name to Birmingham City University in 2007, reflecting our commitment to, and pride in, our home city. Each year, we welcome over 22,000 students from over 80 countries to study with us and the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey 2011/12 showed that 90 per cent of our undergraduate students were in employment or further study within six months of leaving.

From the UK's leading criminologist to visiting speakers and guest lecturers from the professional and business world, our experts come from and maintain links with industry, ensuring you benefit from their knowledge and insight. As the biggest producer of creative professionals outside London, we work with well-known industry names such as Goldsmiths, Marks & Spencer, Magnum Photos, Merlin Entertainment and Saatchi and Saatchi, and we also work with Apple, Cisco and Cartier to develop cutting-edge curriculums and collaborate on course projects.

We're part-way through a £238 million investment programme into our estate, and the Complete University Guide 2012 and 2013 put us in the UK's top 10 universities for spending on facilities for the past two years. The programme includes the new £62 million Parkside Building at our City Centre Campus for art, design and media students, and construction is now under way on Phase 2 of the development, which will provide a 24,300 sq m building to house our business, law, social science and English courses, as well as new library, IT and student support facilities, providing a 'one stop shop' for all student support needs.

We bring courses to life through virtual learning environments, including the Faculty of Health's Virtual Case Creator, the School of Law's Virtual Solicitor's Office and Green Moor Primary School, the School of Education's virtual school, and our new student employment agency, OpportUNlty - Student Jobs on Campus, allows you to apply for temporary and casual roles at the University, helping you gain skills to take into the workplace.





## Studying at university

If you have a BTEC qualification, you'll be interested to hear that there are various routes on to programmes at Birmingham City University. We aim to provide a broad and balanced education, equipping you with the abilities and confidence to take your place in the workplace.

There is a lot to consider if you are thinking about higher education and this leaflet should help answer some of your questions.

### Is it true that universities prefer A Level students?

At Birmingham City University we appreciate the qualities offered by BTEC and are just as happy to receive applications from BTEC students as A Level students.

### Will I struggle at university?

Degrees are not easy and you need to be committed but this applies to students from all educational backgrounds. There may even be elements of the teaching that you'll find easier than A Level students.

### Do I have to study the same subject?

No. For example, if you undertook BTEC Business, you don't have to do a business-related university course. You may be able to apply for anything from sociology to construction, so it's always worth investigating.

### As my course is practical, do I need to have work experience?

Not necessarily but research always helps. If you're applying for a popular course such as nursing you need to make yourself stand out and this could be achieved with an impressive work experience portfolio.

### What if I am studying a combination of A Levels and BTECs?

That's fine too. We're happy for students to apply for courses with tariff points across various courses.

**Faye Rathbone, BSc (Hons) Computer Science, studied BTEC National Diploma Level 3 ICT Practitioner at Derby College.**

“You should never feel like you're going to be behind compared to A Level students. Don't give up if you can't find a university that will accept you because you don't have A Level Maths – there are plenty of universities that now accept BTEC students because we have more experience and knowledge.”

**Joseph Shaw, BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Television), studied a BTEC in Travel and Tourism after attending St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Sixth Form in Birmingham.**

**“The reason I got into university was because of my BTEC in Travel and Tourism, not my A Level in Media, so without the BTEC I wouldn't be studying here today.”**

## **HOW TO APPLY TO UNIVERSITY**

### **Application process**

Most students apply through UCAS and students write a single application, regardless of the number of universities they apply to. Refer to the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) for more information.

### **Personal statement**

Take time and care when creating your statement. If you are expected to gain the right grades, universities usually complete the selection process by looking at personal statements.

### **Making yourself a more attractive candidate**

You could do work experience, research or attend a university lecture. Find out about compulsory conditions – for example, we expect radiography applicants to have visited a local health authority. More information is in our prospectus [www.bcu.ac.uk/courses/prospectus](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/courses/prospectus).

### **Interviews**

Attend on the date you are offered and treat it like a job interview. You should demonstrate that you have researched the course and art and design applicants should bring a portfolio.

### **How courses are delivered**

Most of our courses are modular. They involve lectures, classroom teaching and tutorials, and placements for courses such as nursing and teaching. Hours vary depending on your course.



**Ula Bujauskaite, BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture, studied BTEC 3D Design at Milton Keynes College.**

“After studying spatial, two-dimensional and three-dimensional design subjects at college I was familiar with the techniques and methods used in the field, which made the coursework a lot easier. Make sure you use your knowledge gained throughout the BTEC course to its full potential and demonstrate how much you already learned and know... Everyone who is passionate, motivated and hardworking is perfectly capable to go to university and achieve the highest results.”



## Assessment

Assessments can include exams, presentations, group work, assignments, projects or practical assessments.

## Open days

Attend open days at the universities you intend to apply to. Investigate the area and ask yourself if you would be happy studying there. Look carefully at the courses – modules for an English degree at Birmingham City University might be different elsewhere.

**Navdeep Dhillon, BA (Hons) Marketing, Advertising and PR, studied a BTEC Certificate in Business at Aldridge School Sixth Form.**

“The BTEC course prepared me not only to build on current skills but to work independently and in groups. By studying a vocational course I had the advantage of learning how to balance my workload, manage my time and prepare for exams.”

**Laura Davies, BA (Hons) Business and Marketing, studied a BTEC Business Diploma at Pembrokeshire College.**

“At first university is difficult as the writing, teaching and marking style is different to the BTEC course, however there is a lot of support and teaching available to aid understanding and show you how to adapt writing styles and references.”

**Sian Taylor, BA (Hons) Textile Design (Printed Textiles and Surface Design) undertook a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Art and Design at CTC Kingshurst Academy in Birmingham.**

**“You will have gained skills from doing a BTEC that others won’t have, so this makes you stand out from the crowd and prepare you for university. From doing the BTEC, you will have organisation skills, the ability to meet deadlines (some of which are only a few weeks long) and experience of working within the industry through placements.”**

## **HOW CAN I USE MY BTEC AT BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY?**

**Some of the courses that are popular with BTEC students include:**

### **BSc (Hons) Nursing – Child**

This is a three-year programme and you will need 280 UCAS tariff points to apply, which is the equivalent of Distinction Merit Merit. You will also need a minimum of three GCSEs at grade C or above, including English Language, Mathematics and Science or equivalent (BTEC Science can be accepted in place of GCSE Science).

### **HND Jewellery and Silversmithing**

This is a two-year Higher National Diploma (HND) and you can add a third year to increase this qualification to a full degree. You will need a good portfolio, 120 tariff points, a BTEC National Diploma with 120 points (equivalent to PPP), a BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Foundation Studies (Art and Design) with MMP, International Baccalaureate with 24 points or equivalent qualification(s) or experience.

### **FdSc Mechanical Engineering**

Foundation degrees can be a great way to access a course if you don’t have sufficient points. They can also lead on to the three-year full-time programme. You will need 200 points (equivalent to MMP) and advanced diplomas are accepted. You must have GCSE Mathematics and English grade C must be achieved.

Go to **[www.bcu.ac.uk](http://www.bcu.ac.uk)** for full details of courses and requirements.



## **FIND OUT MORE**

If you have any further questions about studying at Birmingham City University, please contact our Course Enquiries team on **+44 (0)121 331 5595**, email **[Education.Liaison@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Education.Liaison@bcu.ac.uk)** or visit our website at **[www.bcu.ac.uk](http://www.bcu.ac.uk)**.