

BALTIC

BTEC supports BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art to deliver diversity and customer service excellence in the creative arts sector



Situated on the south bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, England, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art consists of 2,600 square metres of art space, making it the UK's largest dedicated contemporary art institution.

BALTIC's mission is to create greater understanding of the world through outstanding, experimental and inspiring contemporary art which has power, relevance and meaning for individuals and communities.

What kind of people does BALTIC need?

We spoke with Vicky Sturrs, Head of Learning & Engagement at the Centre to find out what she thought of the apprentices and candidates they have employed at the Centre who have completed a BTEC and are now part of their team.

Firstly, we asked Vicky about the kinds of roles the Centre needs. 'We host apprenticeships here at the Centre and they go through Gateshead college. Roles vary but at entry level we have Gallery Assistants and other 'crew' roles that involve dealing with the public. We can teach the art knowledge, but we also need softer skills such and how engage with others.'

What skills do team members need?

'Being happy to deal with anyone confidently is really important. People's roles are very different with regards to our team dynamic and different briefs but ultimately, we are providing roots into the creative sector and opportunities for lots of different kinds of people.'

Vicky adds: 'Enthusiasm, confidence in public speaking, customer service - giving a great experience to all, being able to work across as a team, team building skills and resilience we value most highly. As BTEC offers a more practical route, we find the people we employ who come from that route tend to have more of these skills. Most of our Customer Services team have taken a BTEC.'

Links with local colleges

'We work very closely with Gateshead College and share a lot of partnership opportunities and workshops with them. We support their final show and work with their tutors. We have a formal partnership with Gatehead as they are the training provider for our apprenticeships. We are constantly evaluating the training programme and improving it based on the feedback we get from young people. We have also worked with Newcastle College and Hartlepool College as well as other six form providers. Our links with local colleges and schools are very important to us.

'Here at BALTIC, we work with a variety of people, and the FE colleges and providers of BTEC qualification are at the heart of that. We want young people with diverse skills and from diverse backgrounds.'