



Pearson

Providing Access to High Quality Career Focussed Education:

BTEC Firsts Results
October 2018

Image by Lu Yi



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BTEC is the leading internationally recognised standard in career education

Supporting student progression to HE, careers & lifelong learning



Illustration by Lucy Vigrass

Introduction: Understanding BTEC Firsts Results 2018

BTEC Firsts 2018 - Overview

The following pages show the outcomes of BTEC qualifications for Level 1/2 Firsts for the academic year 2017/18. The outcomes from the previous year have been included for comparison.

As a result of some Level 1/2 BTEC First subjects, such as Applied Science, not being recognised on KS4 measures, there has been a significant decrease in numbers for those sectors. Overall however the number of learners completing BTEC Firsts in 2017/18 was greater than in 2016/17.

Cohort and Completion

The results published this year represent achievement for learners in UK schools and further education establishments (FE) for the 2017/18 full academic year (from September 2017 to August 2018). They represent learners at a cohort level, i.e. those that were expected to complete in 2017/18. This provides a picture of the results for BTEC Firsts over the year. Performance tables report on completion rates, so the inclusion of this data aligns these results closely with national reporting.

Learners' results may be reported as 'not completed' for a number of reasons: put simply, the student has not passed the qualification in the expected timeframe. However it may be they are still studying for their qualification, or that a fallback Certificate of Unit Achievement was requested, or that they have withdrawn from the course.

Introduction: Understanding BTEC Results 2018

Qualification suites and qualification frameworks

The current suite of BTEC First qualifications at Level 1/2 (GCSE level) were developed to sit within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). These specifications were introduced for first teaching in 2012. The earlier BTEC Firsts were aligned to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). More than 90% of learners take the NQF rather than the QCF qualifications. The NQF BTEC First qualifications include an additional Level 1 Pass grade which was not available in the QCF versions.

Although it is convenient to refer to NQF and QCF qualifications using the qualification frameworks applicable when they were developed, it should be noted that the current qualification framework is the RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework), which was introduced in 2015.

Learner completions – BTEC Firsts

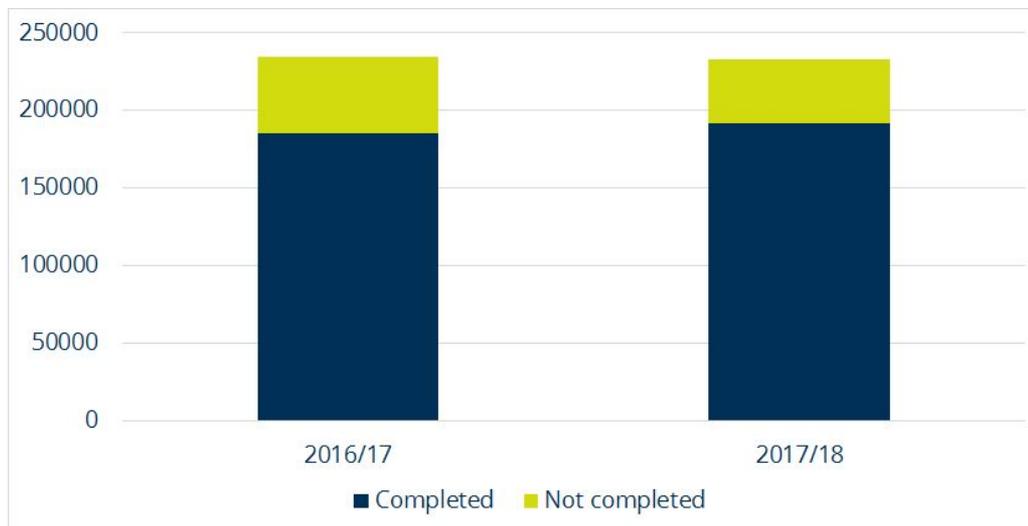
(Level 1/2 qualifications)

Grade outcomes and
technical reporting

Interest in completing a BTEC remains strong

BTEC Firsts Cohort Overview

The size of the BTEC Firsts cohort as whole is very similar in 2016/17 and 2017/18, however the proportion of learners completing their qualification within the specified course duration has grown.



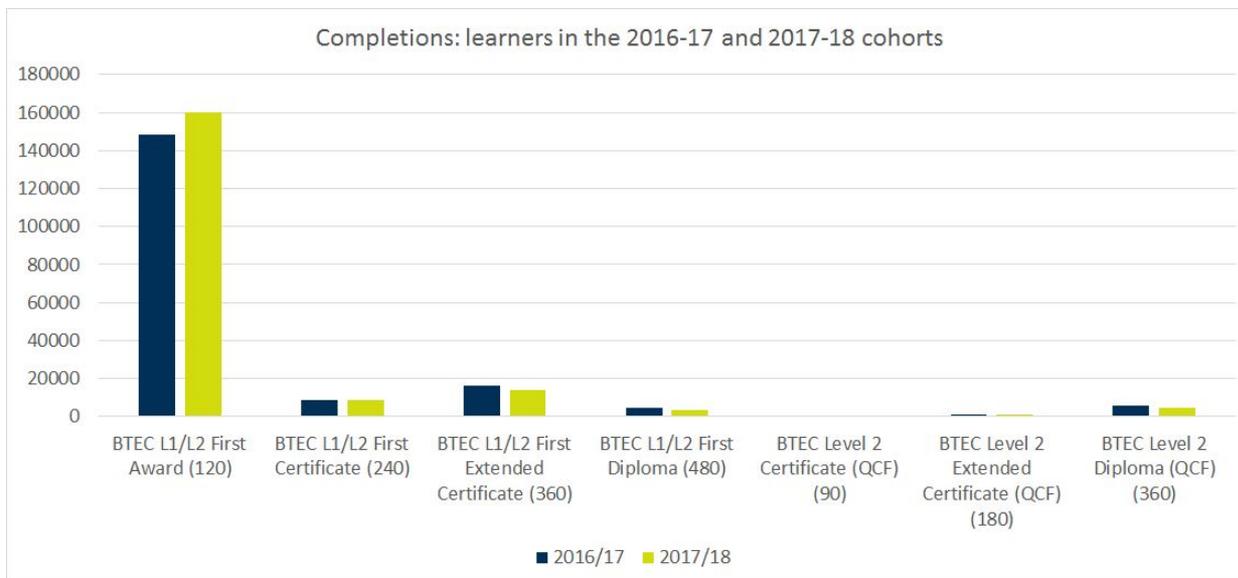
Completed: learners who completed by the end of the specified course duration and were awarded a qualification grade.

Not completed: learners who withdrew, claimed fallback, or were yet to complete at the end of the specified course duration.

The BTEC First Award is most popular with learners

Cohort Overview by Qualification Size

These figures show the BTEC Firsts (NQF) and the older QCF qualifications separately.

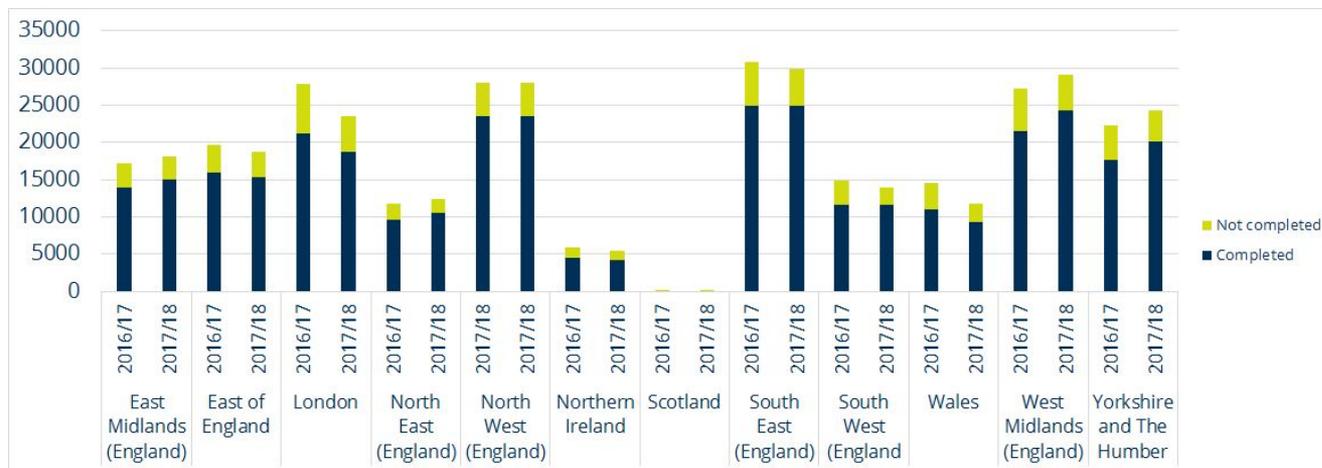


The First Award is the most popular size qualification for the BTEC Firsts. Most learners take this as a two year course.

BTEC continues to appeal to learners nationwide

BTEC Firsts: an overview of volume by region

As in 2016-17 South East England had the most learners in 2017-18. In 2017-18 the West Midlands has the second greatest number of learners, in 2016-17 it was North West England



Learners' results may be reported as 'not completed' for a number of reasons: put simply, the student has not passed the qualification in the expected timeframe. However it may be they are still studying for their qualification, or that a fallback Certificate of Unit Achievement was requested, or that they have withdrawn from the course.

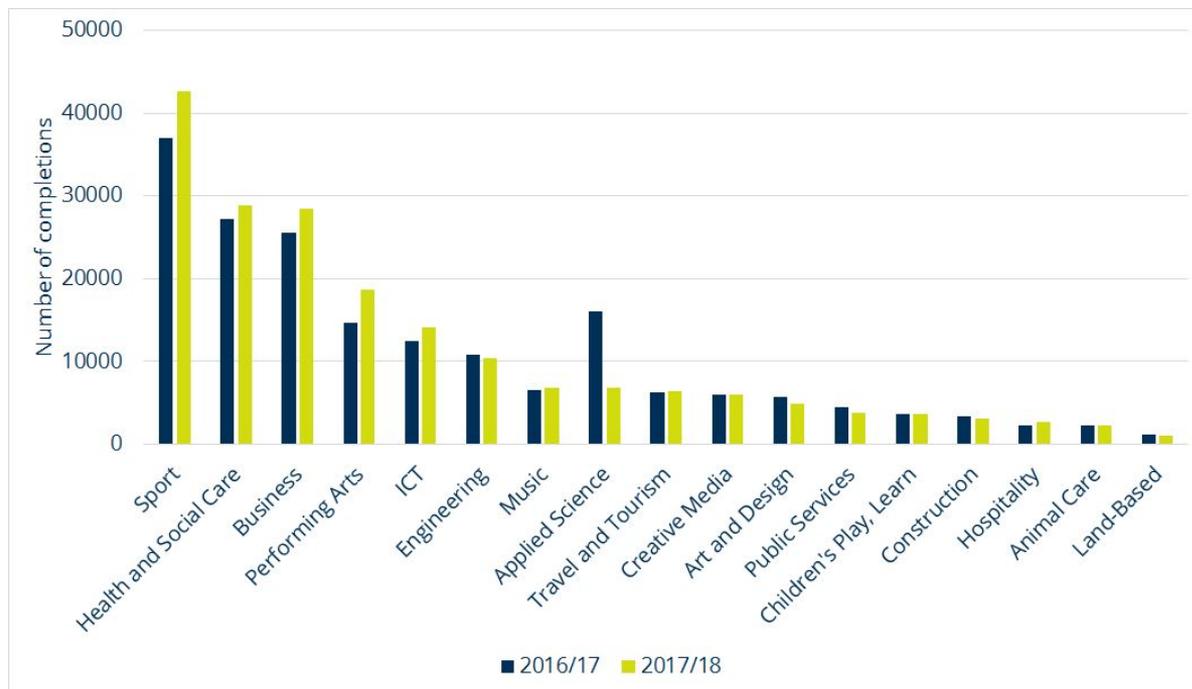
More learners are completing their BTEC Firsts

BTEC Firsts: completions by sector

The chart shows the number of completed qualifications for sectors with more than 250 learners.

Most of these sectors show an increase in the number of completions from 2016/17 to 2017/18.

Registration figures for Applied Science however have been affected by changes in recognition for performance tables at KS4.



Learners increasingly seek pathways to sectors with employability growth

Business, Technology & Health and Social Care among top five sectors of interest

Sector	Cohort		Completion	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
Sport	45,300	50,800	37,000	42,700
Health and Social Care	33,500	34,200	27,200	28,900
Business	31,400	34,200	25,600	28,500
Performing Arts	17,800	21,700	14,600	18,600
ICT	14,700	17,600	11,900	14,100

BTEC Firsts: cohort and completion – top 5 sectors in 2017/18

The cohorts for these sectors have grown from 2016/17 to 2017/18. The number of completions has also grown in 2017-18 compared to 2016-17. The growth of ICT has put it in the five most popular sectors, displacing Applied Science.

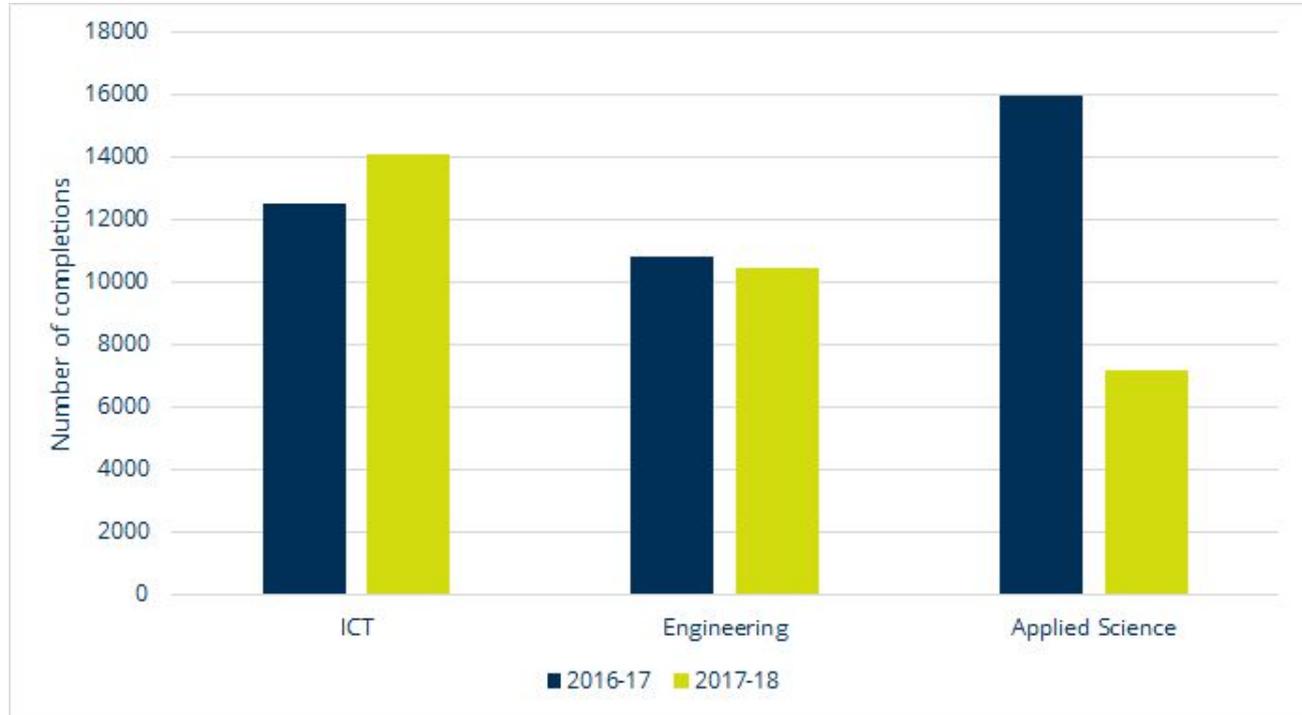
Students continue to complete a BTEC to pursue a career in STEM

BTEC Firsts: completions in STEM sectors

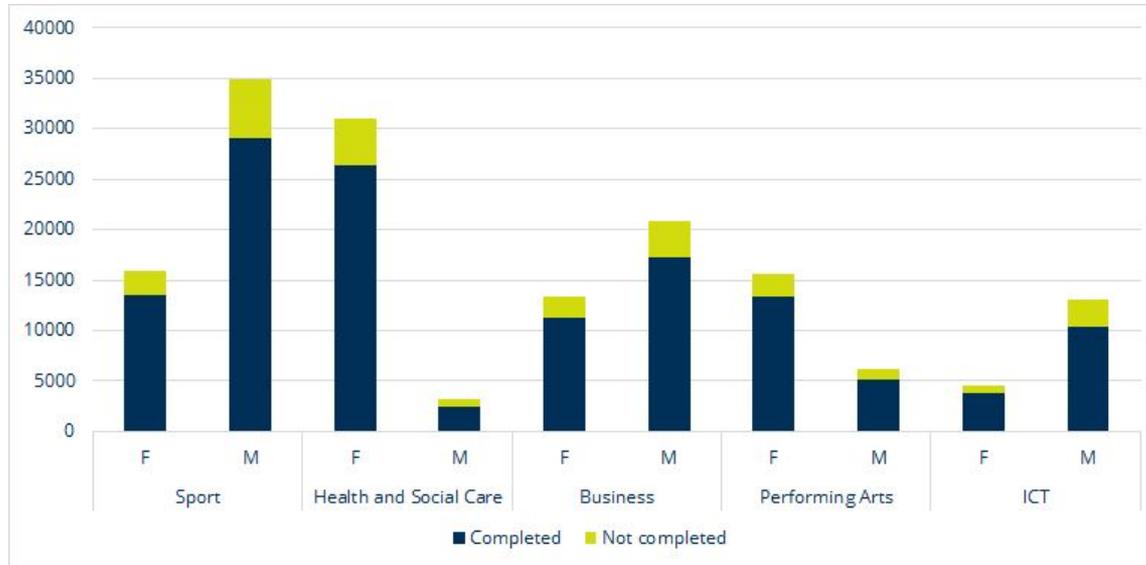
Numbers for ICT have grown in 2017-18.

Numbers for Engineering remain fairly stable.

Registration figures for Applied Science have been affected by changes in recognition for performance tables at KS4.



Gender differences exist among subject choice



BTEC Firsts: 2017/18 top 5 sectors by volume and gender

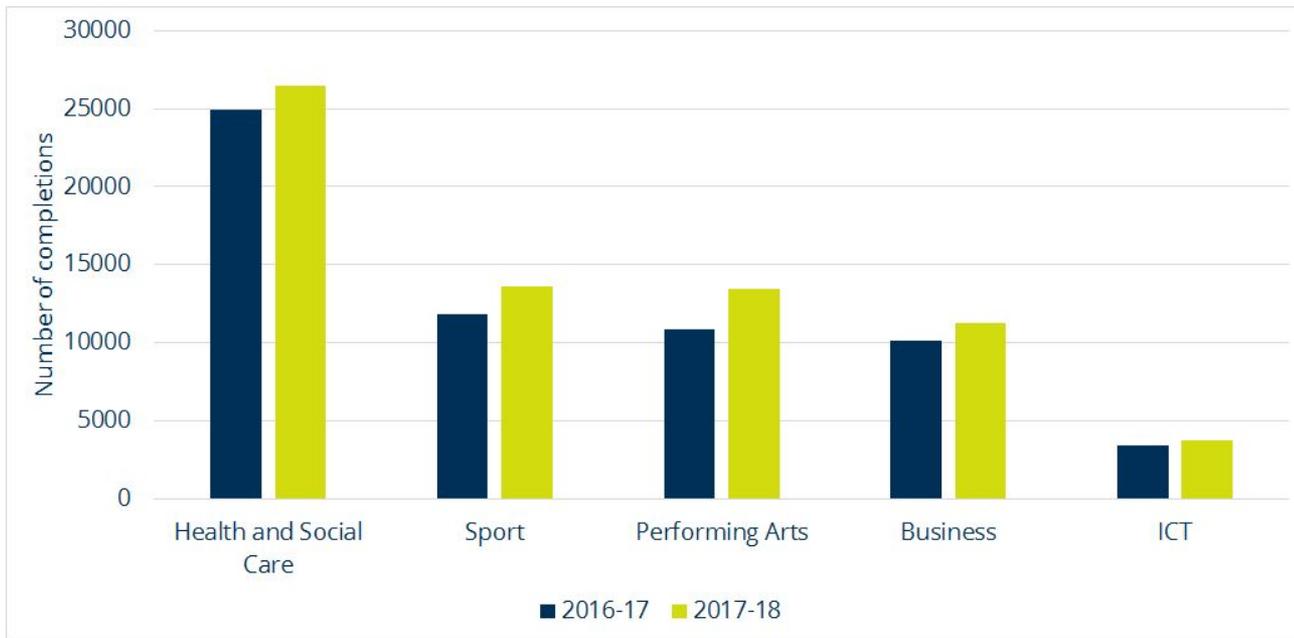
Learners taking Business, ICT and Sport are more likely to be male, while learners taking Health and Social Care and Performing Arts are more likely to be female.

Learners' results may be reported as 'not completed' for a number of reasons: put simply, the student has not passed the qualification in the expected timeframe. However it may be they are still studying for their qualification, or that a fallback Certificate of Unit Achievement was requested, or that they have withdrawn from the course.

Health & Social Care continues to be of great interest to female learners

BTEC Firsts: top 5 sectors for female learners by completion volume

Health and Social Care has maintained its position as the most popular sector for female learners. All these sectors show an increase in the number of learners in the 2017/18 cohort completing the qualifications compared with 2016/17.



Sport continues to be of great interest to male learners

BTEC Firsts: top 5 sectors for male learners by completion volume

Sport is the most popular sector for male learners in 2017-18, as it was the previous year.

The number of male learners in the 2017-18 cohort completing qualifications has risen in all these sectors since 2016-17, except Engineering.



Learner achievement – BTEC Firsts

BTEC Level 1 / Level 2 Firsts (NQF) grades explained

Qualification Grade	Grade name
D*	Distinction Star
D	Distinction
M	Merit
P	Pass
L1P	Level 1 Pass
U	Unclassified

The BTEC Level 1 / Level 2 Firsts (NQF) have four grades at Level 2 (Distinction Star, Distinction, Merit and Pass) and one grade at Level 1 (Level 1 Pass).

Learners passing the First Award (120 GLH) at Level 2 are awarded single grades, e.g. D. Learners passing the Certificate (240 GLH), Extended Certificate (360 GLH) or Diploma (480 GLH) at Level 2 are awarded double grades, e.g. DM.

Learners who have met the standard for a Pass at Level 1 but not at Level 2 are awarded a Level 1 Pass (1) on all sizes of the qualification.

Learners who have not met the standard for a Level 1 Pass are graded U (Unclassified) on all sizes of the qualification.

BTEC Level 2 Firsts (QCF) grades explained

Qualification Grade	Grade name
D*	Distinction Star
D	Distinction
M	Merit
P	Pass
U	Unclassified

The BTEC Level 2 Firsts (2010, QCF) have four qualifying grades (Distinction Star, Distinction, Merit and Pass). All are Level 2 grades and there is no Level 1 grade. Learners who have not met the standard for a Pass are graded U (Unclassified) on all sizes of the qualification.

BTEC Firsts achievement by year (single grades)

BTEC Firsts achievement: grade distribution overview

For these qualifications: Award (NQF, 120 GLH), Certificate (QCF, 90 GLH), Extended Certificate (QCF, 180 GLH), Diploma (QCF, 360 GLH)

Grades at pass and above for these qualifications are awarded as a single grade, e.g. D.

This table shows the percentage of learners on each grade, or with each outcome.

Year	Cohort	D*	D	M	P	L1P	U	Not completed
2016-17	193,700	7.5%	8.7%	22.3%	29.2%	11.5%	1.4%	19.4%
2017-18	197,900	11.1%	11.5%	24.8%	25.7%	9.7%	1.0%	16.2%

BTEC Firsts achievement by year (double grades)

BTEC Firsts achievement: grade distribution overview

For these qualifications: Certificate (NQF, 240 GLH), Extended Certificate (NQF, 360 GLH), Diploma (NQF, 480 GLH)

Grades at pass level and above for these qualifications are awarded as two grades, e.g. DM.

This table shows the percentage of learners on each grade, or with each outcome.

Year	Cohort	D*D*	D*D	DD	DM	MM	MP	PP	L1P	U	Not completed
2016-17	40,700	1.1%	1.3%	2.1%	7.0%	10.5%	13.0%	23.4%	13.8%	0.7%	27.3%
2017-18	35,000	1.8%	1.3%	2.2%	8.2%	11.3%	13.2%	22.8%	12.2%	0.5%	26.5%

BTEC Firsts achievement by gender (single grades)

BTEC Firsts achievement: gender and grade overview

For these qualifications: Award (NQF, 120 GLH), Certificate (QCF, 90 GLH), Extended Certificate (QCF, 180 GLH), Diploma (QCF, 360 GLH)

Grades at pass and above for these qualifications are awarded as a single grade, e.g. D.

This table shows the percentage of learners on each grade, or with each outcome.

Year	Gender	Learners in the gender cohort	Gender cohort as a percentage of annual cohort	Percentage of gender cohort with each outcome						
				D*	D	M	P	L1P	U	Not completed
2016-17	Female	92,100	48%	10.4%	10.4%	24.1%	26.5%	9.9%	1.0%	17.8%
	Male	101,600	52%	4.8%	7.2%	20.8%	31.7%	13.0%	1.7%	20.7%
2017-18	Female	94,300	48%	15.0%	13.2%	25.8%	22.9%	7.9%	0.7%	14.5%
	Male	103,600	52%	7.4%	10.0%	23.9%	28.3%	11.3%	1.3%	17.8%

In both years shown, there is a higher proportion of male learners than female learners.

In both years, a higher percentage of female learners than male learners completed the qualification within the projected time. Female learners' performance was better across the range, with a higher percentage of female learners being awarded higher grades (M and above) and a higher percentage of male learners being awarded lower grades (P and below).

BTEC Firsts achievement by gender (double grades)

BTEC Firsts achievement: gender and grade overview

For these qualifications: Certificate (NQF, 240 GLH), Extended Certificate (NQF, 360 GLH), Diploma (NQF, 480 GLH)

Grades at pass level and above for these qualifications are awarded as two grades, e.g. DM.

This table shows the percentage of learners on each grade, or with each outcome.

Year	Gender	Learners in the gender cohort	Gender cohort as a percentage of annual cohort	Percentage of gender cohort with each outcome									
				D*D*	D*D	DD	DM	MM	MP	PP	L1P	U	Not completed
2016-17	Female	18,800	46%	1.6%	1.8%	2.8%	8.5%	11.3%	13.1%	20.1%	12.1%	0.5%	28.2%
	Male	21,900	54%	0.6%	0.7%	1.4%	5.7%	9.8%	12.9%	26.2%	15.4%	0.9%	26.4%
2017-18	Female	12,100	47%	3.1%	2.2%	3.0%	10.1%	12.6%	13.2%	19.6%	10.7%	0.4%	25.1%
	Male	13,600	53%	0.7%	0.6%	1.6%	6.6%	10.2%	13.2%	25.6%	13.4%	0.6%	27.5%

In both years shown, there is a higher proportion of male learners than female learners.

In both years, female learners' performance was better across the range, with a higher percentage of female learners being awarded higher grades (MM and above) and a higher percentage of male learners being awarded lower grades (PP and below), though it should be noted that male learners had a higher completion rate in 2016-17.

BTEC Firsts achievement: most popular sectors (single grades)

BTEC Firsts achievement: gender and grade overview for the 5 largest sectors

For these qualifications: Certificate (QCF), Extended Certificate (QCF), Diploma (QCF), Award (NQF)

Grades at pass and above for these qualifications are awarded as a single grade, e.g. D.

This table shows the percentage of learners on each grade, or with each outcome.

Year	Gender	Learners in the gender cohort	Gender cohort as a percentage of annual cohort	Percentage of gender cohort with each outcome						
				D*	D	M	P	L1P	U	Not completed
Business	Female	11,300	39.2%	11.4%	19.1%	24.9%	21.4%	8.1%	1.0%	14.1%
	Male	17,500	60.8%	8.9%	12.4%	23.3%	28.5%	10.3%	1.6%	15.0%
Health and Social Care	Female	23,900	90.5%	16.8%	14.8%	26.4%	22.5%	7.7%	0.6%	11.2%
	Male	2,500	9.5%	5.0%	7.6%	18.4%	31.7%	15.5%	1.5%	20.3%
ICT	Female	4,000	32.5%	2.1%	17.0%	28.2%	26.6%	8.5%	1.3%	16.3%
	Male	8,300	67.5%	1.5%	12.3%	23.5%	31.0%	11.9%	1.5%	18.3%
Performing Arts	Female	14,500	71.8%	23.6%	7.9%	28.2%	20.9%	5.9%	0.2%	13.3%
	Male	5,700	28.2%	12.4%	7.5%	26.6%	25.8%	11.9%	0.4%	15.4%
Sport	Female	15,300	32.2%	15.8%	14.8%	27.5%	19.5%	7.5%	0.7%	14.2%
	Male	32,200	67.8%	9.1%	11.0%	27.1%	25.7%	10.0%	1.2%	15.9%

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BTEC Firsts achievement: most popular sectors (double grades)

BTEC Firsts achievement: gender and grade overview for the 5 largest sectors

For these qualifications: Certificate (NQF, 240 GLH), Extended Certificate (NQF, 360 GLH), Diploma (NQF, 480 GLH)

Grades at pass level and above for these qualifications are awarded as two grades, e.g. DM.

This table shows the percentage of learners on each grade, or with each outcome.

Year	Gender	Learners in the gender cohort	Gender cohort as a percentage of annual cohort	Percentage of gender cohort with each outcome									
				D*D*	D*D	DD	DM	MM	MP	PP	L1P	U	Not completed
Business	Female	2,100	38.9%	1.1%	1.3%	2.6%	10.1%	11.1%	12.3%	20.6%	12.3%	0.4%	28.2%
	Male	3,300	61.1%	0.6%	0.7%	1.6%	7.3%	10.8%	12.5%	25.8%	13.7%	0.7%	26.3%
Health and Social Care	Female	7,100	91.0%	1.8%	2.1%	2.9%	10.4%	12.4%	12.6%	20.7%	10.7%	0.2%	26.2%
	Male	700	9.0%	0.5%	0.8%	1.8%	7.7%	9.1%	11.8%	24.8%	11.4%	0.5%	31.6%
ICT	Female	600	11.1%	0.2%	0.3%	2.9%	11.2%	13.1%	14.8%	19.1%	10.6%	0.5%	27.3%
	Male	4,800	88.9%	0.1%	0.5%	1.9%	7.5%	10.8%	12.9%	26.8%	13.5%	0.4%	25.6%
Performing Arts	Female	1,000	66.7%	18.4%	7.3%	3.9%	10.5%	12.7%	12.3%	10.8%	5.3%	0.1%	18.7%
	Male	500	33.3%	9.2%	3.7%	4.1%	10.1%	12.5%	16.6%	12.9%	9.2%	0.2%	21.5%
Sport	Female	500	15.2%	1.3%	1.7%	2.1%	10.5%	10.9%	12.4%	22.5%	12.5%	0.2%	25.9%
	Male	2,800	84.8%	0.2%	0.3%	0.6%	4.7%	9.0%	12.9%	32.9%	13.2%	0.6%	25.6%

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