

PRESS RELEASE

NVC SECURES EDEXCEL CONTRACT TO VALIDATE BTEC FOUNDATION DEGREES

London, 20 June 2005: The University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) has today signed a three-year contract with Edexcel to validate BTEC Foundation Degrees through their new validation body, NVC.

The contract with Edexcel marks the official launch of the NVC, a flexible, national awarding service established as a company limited by guarantee by UVAC to meet the needs of colleges, employers, public bodies and other higher vocational training providers without their own degree awarding powers.

"The creation of the NVC reflects the importance government and Higher Education Institutions are placing on vocational learning and the need for progression routes from the new vocational diplomas into higher education," says Professor Simon Roodhouse, chief executive of UVAC.

Professor David Melville, chair of UVAC, adds: "UVAC believes that quality higher vocational learning and training supplied by higher education institutions, professional bodies, training providers and, where appropriate, employers should enjoy the same status as higher academic study. Now, at last, there is a flexible mechanism in place through the NVC to validate such programmes and provide them with the recognition they deserve. Still in its early stages, the model will continue to evolve to meet the needs of higher vocational learning providers across all levels and occupational sectors."

UVAC is the independent representative of more than 80 universities and colleges with an interest in higher vocational learning. As with UVAC's other services, the NVC places the vocational learner at the heart of its activities.

Rick Firth, Edexcel's BTEC director, adds: "Edexcel looks forward to working with UVAC and the NVC to offer its BTEC Foundation Degrees. This complements the full range of BTECs

and allows full progression for learners studying vocational qualifications from 14-19 and also adult learners and those studying for work-based qualifications.

"There are ten sectors and 85 titles covered and there is already considerable interest shown by colleges around the country for the NVC-validated BTEC Foundation Degree. The first three sectors - Computing, Engineering, and Business - are ready to teach from October 2005."

Professor Melville concludes: "BTEC awards have historically enjoyed an excellent reputation for the standard of their vocational learning, so it is wholly appropriate that the NVC's first contract should cover the accreditation of BTEC Foundation Degrees."

Edexcel's first students for the NVC-validated BTEC Foundation Degrees will enrol in Autumn 2005.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

BTEC Foundation Degrees will be offered in: Art and Design; Business; Computing; Construction and the Built Environment; Engineering; Hospitality; Land and the Environment; Performing Arts and Theatre; Public Services; Sport; Exercise and Fitness.

About NVC

NVC is a partnership organisation made up of Higher Education Institutions and the University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC).

Further information about the NVC from Professor Simon Roodhouse on +44 (0)7810 200202.

About the University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) - <http://www.uvac.ac.uk>

UVAC is the independent voice on higher vocational learning in the Higher Education and Further Education sectors. With a growing membership of over 100 academic institutions and corporate organisations, we work closely with our partners to promote the value of experiential and reflective learning. For further media information contact Ashley Coidan on **01204 903357** or **a.j.coidan@uvac.ac.uk**.

About Edexcel - <http://www.edexcel.org.uk>

Edexcel, part of the Pearson group, is the largest awarding body offering the joint currencies of academic and vocational qualifications offered across 112 countries around the world. Its qualifications include GNVQs, NVQs, GCSE, A/S and A levels, and the Higher Nationals and BTEC qualifications, including the BTEC Foundation Degree.

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