



Level 2 Higher Project

Specification and Centre Guidance

August 2008

Organisational profile

VTCT is a Government approved Awarding Body offering National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and other vocationally related qualifications (VRQs). VTCT has been in existence for over forty years and has been at the forefront of developing the vocational system of qualifications in the United Kingdom.

With a head office in Eastleigh, Hampshire, the company employs around forty staff and has a field force of over fifty external verifiers working on a contract basis.

VTCT is involved in many of the new initiatives being introduced into the education system, including the embedding of key skills, the move to functional skills and towards e-assessment. VTCT will continue to strengthen its presence in the vocational qualifications market in the United Kingdom.

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1. Introduction

Why choose VTCT?

VTCT is a large specialist awarding body with over forty years experience of delivering vocational qualifications in the beauty therapy and hairdressing industries. It has a field force of fully trained verifiers, who are kept updated to current industry and educational practice. VTCT qualifications are available from over 580 colleges of further education, private training providers, schools and prisons throughout the United Kingdom.

VTCT Level 2 Higher Project

The Higher Project forms part of the generic learning skills within the Diploma or provides opportunity for further progression if studied as a separate qualification. Learners are to complete a project in order to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have acquired. The Higher Project will provide an opportunity for learners to draw on and integrate learning from and to other areas of study by demonstrating independent learning skills, whether completing this as a component of their Diploma or a 'stand alone' qualification.

The Level 2 Higher Project can be taken in two distinct ways:

- **As an individual qualification:** The Higher Project may be taken as an extension from studies for other qualifications at Level 2, for example, BTEC, GCSE, or other academic or vocational qualifications including apprenticeships. The learner may choose, however, to explore an area of personal interest or activity outside the main programme of study.
- **As part of a Diploma:** The Higher Project is an obligatory part of the Diploma qualification. If taken as part of the Diploma, the project topic must complement and develop the themes and topics of the Principal Learning component the learner is/has studied and identify how it supports learner progression.

Unit Structure

The unit structure has been specifically designed for ease of use. It is intended that distinct sections will directly engage and be relevant to the learner, the tutor/assessor or the centre as a whole. It is anticipated that centres will make the 'learner material' available to learners to inform their study. The Project units are composed in the following format:

The following information is aimed directly at the learner, however it can also be used to inform the tutor/assessor:

- **Level, Unit Title and GLH**
- **Purpose:** This section of the project unit provides the learner, assessor/tutor and the centre with an introduction and overview of the unit.
- **Learning Outcomes:** These specify what the learner should know, be able to do, or understand as an end result of completing the unit.
- **What you will cover:** This part clearly identifies all the taught content of the learning programme. It highlights the subjects that must be taught and the subject material that could be included but is not compulsory.
- **Assessment criteria:** This is a description of how the learning outcomes will be demonstrated.
- **Assessment method:** The method of assessment is variable. Assessment can be:
 - internally assessed and externally moderated

- externally assessed and moderated
- **Mark Band descriptors:** This describes aspects of learner performance against assessment criteria across three mark bands. The mark descriptions show that the upward progression across the bands is a result of improved performance by learners in relation to the specified assessment requirements rather than of their performing additional tasks not set out in this specification.

Learner aims

The Level 2 Higher Project requires learners, with guidance where appropriate, to:

- select either individually or as part of a group, an appropriate topic.
- identify a question, task or brief which specifies an intended outcome.
- produce a plan for how they will deliver their intended outcome.
- conduct research and select information to support meeting the requirements of the project brief using appropriate techniques.
- develop the intended outcome using selected tools and techniques safely.
- demonstrate the capacity to see through a project to completion.
- share the outcome and an evaluation of the project, including a review of their own learning and performance, with others, using appropriate communication methods.

During the course of completing their project, learners must demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of:

- connections and links where appropriate, with other areas of study and/or areas of interest.
- how to transfer skills developed as part of their project to other areas of study.

During the course of completing their study, learners must also be provided with opportunities to apply and develop:

- Personal Learning and Thinking Skills.
- The functional skills of Mathematics, English and ICT.
- Any further specialist technical skills, where they are relevant to the chosen topic.

2. Delivery of the Level 2 Higher Project

Prior learning

Identified prior learning is not required. The Higher Project supports the progression on to further education, apprenticeship or into the world of work by developing generic skills required to plan, research, manage a project through to completion, evaluate, self-evaluate and communicate.

Delivery

The unit comprises 60 guided learning hours. This is an estimate of time that might be allocated to:

- direct teaching
- instruction and assessment
- directed work
- supported individual study

The guided learning hours do not take into account time spent on learner-initiated private study.

VTCT suggest that centres note the GLH when considering the programme delivery setting reasonable time to deliver the GLH component. VTCT suggest 30 hours should be dedicated to preparatory learning and 30 hours to assessment, however, this is variable depending on the needs of learners.

It is recommended that centres devise a range of delivery methods for the taught component considering the needs of the learners. A range of delivery methods can be employed such as:

- group work
- individual directed study
- whole class teaching
- e-learning

In order to cover construction styles, project management tools, project planning tools, range and types of research, analysis techniques and different presentation styles to communicate effectively, it is essential that learners completing this project, can evidence development and communicate their findings.

Employing ICT aspects within the learning is beneficial in exposing the learner to a wide range of products and services this could be provided through web-cams, CD-roms, interactive learning packages and virtual learning environments.

It is essential that learners are assigned an individual tutor/assessor to guide them through the Higher Project. An appropriate tutor should be selected in relation to the project topic and this person should act as a facilitator of the research and planning process. Therefore it is important the learner carries out some research prior to a tutor being assigned.

The taught element of this unit can be approached and delivered in a number of ways and should consider the most appropriate method for the learner. VTCT suggests delivery and/or incorporation of some of the following methods:

- Through lessons in other subjects such as GCSE's
- Structured lessons delivered throughout the duration of the unit on a regular basis
- Blocks of teaching – where aspects of the project are taught whereupon the learner carries out some study based on this before the next block of teaching
- All of the teaching component delivered prior to learner assessment
- A combination of the above

What is an appropriate topic?

- Each project topic must be chosen by the learner, through negotiation with the tutor/assessor or where necessary the employer.
- If taken as part of the Diploma, the centre must verify to VTCT that the chosen topic is relevant to the chosen Principal Learning.
- Learners may choose one of many different types of project, but the topic selected must have the potential to provide the learner with opportunities to meet all the assessment objectives shown in the relevant table.

Group Work

Where group work will inform the individual learner's project then the defined contribution must be pre-approved by the assessor/tutor and learners must submit individual written reports evidencing their own contribution within the group.

Experiential Learning

Learners will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of all Learning Outcomes, therefore it is essential that the learner is provided with the opportunity to experience the testing and application procedures required to complete this unit. It is essential the learner can try out a task, review it, reflect on their experience and discuss it with peers, tutors/assessors and a wider audience if necessary. This learning cycle should be an ongoing, repeating process that allows the learner to grow in confidence and to develop learning and thinking skills.

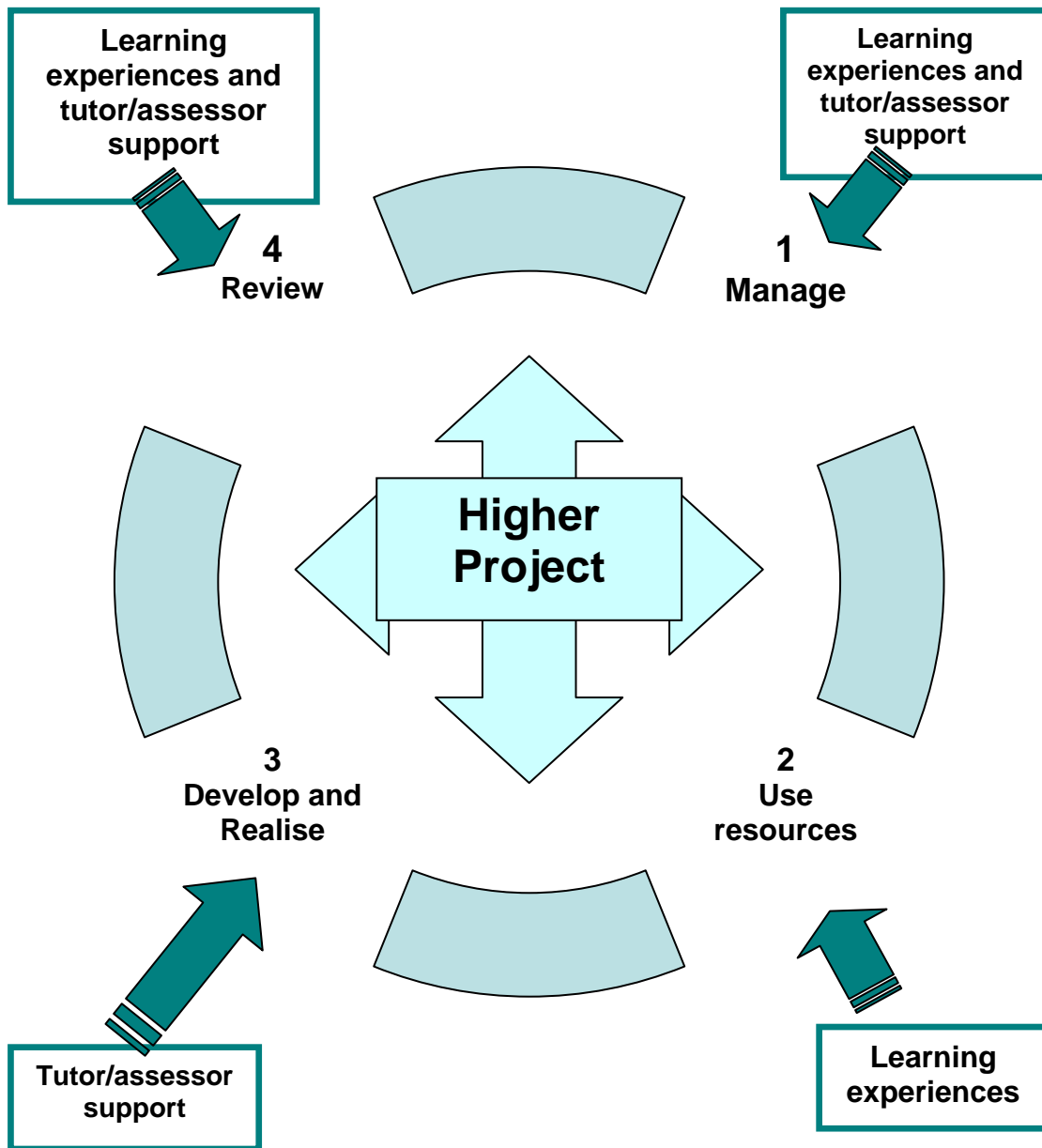
Tutors/assessors need to encourage learners to plan and develop a project that will provide them with opportunities to:

- ***develop and enquire as independent learners:*** this may include interviews with employees and employers, peers, and others, carry out questionnaires or use an e-testing platform to question others.
- ***explore and be inspired by new methods or areas of study:*** this may include discovering new emerging trends, products, services within a chosen topic or researching the impact of technology and how it is used.
- ***apply the experiential learning process (see experiential learning cycle below):*** this may include planning and implementing the project; using time management and organisational skills to advance the project, carry out the project aims, assess whether the objectives were met and then present/communicate the results.
- ***use the learning experience to plan and support personal goals for further study and career development:*** this may include planning ahead by means of a long range educational/career plan.
- ***Mature and grow as an e-confident learner and apply appropriate technologies:*** This may include using e-mail, PowerPoint presentations, databases, Web site design.

Throughout the Project it is intended that the learner engage within a learning cycle which encompasses four stages:

1. **Manage**
2. **Use resources**
3. **Develop and Realise**
4. **Review**

Learning Cycle



3. Guidance to the tutor/assessor on assessment

Assessment principles

VTCT is committed to ensuring that assessment is fit for purpose in that it provides a:

- **valid** measure of the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the qualification specification.
- **reliable** measure of the learners' performance.
- **rigorous** assessment that meets the appropriate standards regardless of the centre or assessment window.
- **fair** assessment, free from bias, using methods, subject matter and language which enable the diverse range of learners to demonstrate their attainment over the full range of the qualification specification.
- **authentic** measure of the learners own performance.
- **manageable** process that can be reasonably resourced and implemented by centres and the awarding body.

VTCT will uphold these principles ensuring that assessment personnel are trained and managed, that proper controls are enforced within the assessment process and that assessment outcomes are standardised and moderated in accordance with the requirements set out in *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2004)* and *Code of Practice (2007)* and by complying with the overarching criteria for the Diplomas. A Chief Examiner will be responsible for making sure that internal and external assessment meets these principles and that standards are maintained from year to year.

Guidance for tutors/assessors and moderators on control of assessment

The tutor/assessor is central to the management of the assessment process within the project. VTCT will provide tutor/assessor and moderator training to ensure that the assessment meets the assessment principles and the controls listed below.

Higher Project setting:

- Learners must choose their project and project title but this is agreed and signed off by the tutor/assessor, through a process of negotiation
- The project must facilitate the achievement of the learning outcomes of the project qualification
- The project proposal form provides a framework for achievement of learning outcomes and facilitates the agreement of SMART targets
- Centres and consortia must have a mechanism in place to moderate the appropriateness of the project proposals. VTCT will provide feedback on this within the standards moderation process
- The assessment time for this unit is 30 hours (the remaining 30 hours should be used for learners' to develop their skills in preparation for the summative project).
- Learners must be given access to the resources required to complete their project having negotiated the resource requirement within the project setting stage.
- The learners may be shown sample/exemplar projects within supervised classes to give them an idea of the scope and quality of project that is anticipated. VTCT will provide some exemplar material for teaching purposes. The learner must not be issued with exemplar projects as a template for their own.

Higher Project taking

- The assessment time for this unit is 30 hours (the remaining 30 hours should be used for learners' to develop their skills in preparation for the summative project).
- Learners must evidence a written element (minimum 100 words).
- Learners must be given access to the resources required to complete their project having negotiated the resource requirement within the project setting stage.
- Learners must be given guidance on plagiarism and referencing prior to starting their project. A VTCT guidance sheet will be provided.
- The learner will be required to complete a project authentication record (appendix 2) that the work submitted is their own, that they have not plagiarised sources or received help other than from the tutor/assessor.
- The tutor/assessor is required to monitor and supervise the individual closely enough to ensure that their work is authentic, representing the individual's own performance. This will require frequent checks on progress (a minimum of three tutorials within the 30 hour project). This is generally achieved through mid-project individual tutorials and appropriate records.
- The tutor must avoid giving learners instruction within the assessment process but may provide guidance to enable learners to access assessment where not doing so would be a barrier to further progress. The tutor will keep a record of the support and guidance provided to learners in enabling them to access the assessment. This will be taken into account in marking the project and be included in the evidence for moderation.
- Acceptable evidence includes:
 - completing the project outcomes, this could be:
 - Photographs
 - Signed observation sheets
 - Video recording
 - Audio recording
 - Written report
 - Evidence of reviewing project and own conclusion, this could be:
 - statistical
 - audience feedback
 - technical expert feedback
 - relating to other similar project outcomes
 - whether it is successful
 - Written presentation (minimum 1000 words) of the project outcomes considering the appropriate format for the intended audience
 - Include a signed Project Authentication Record (Appendix 2)

Higher Project marking and moderation

- Projects will be marked by the tutor/assessor using the marking grid provided within the unit specification. The marks allocated should be in accordance with a best-fit approach to the mark bands. Marks should be allocated within the bands according to the learner's performance against the descriptors.
- The centre/consortium is required to have a robust system of internal moderation of marked work overseen by the Chief Moderator. This must sample the range of marks given by the each individual assessor. The Chief Moderator is required to provide a moderation report identifying the process and moderation decisions made.
- VTCT will identify a sample of marked projects (and associated evidence) to externally moderate. The sample will be the square route of the number of learners, chosen from across the range of marks.

- Learners can resubmit projects or submit new projects within subsequent assessment windows in an attempt to improve their grades. Since it is the process as well as the project outcome that is assessed it is essential that the learner spends further monitored/supervised time on the project in which their further work can be authenticated.



Level 2 Higher Project

60 Guided learning hours (GLH)

Internally assessed (30 hours learning time with approx. 30 hours for assessment)

Purpose

The ability to ask questions to extend your thinking, research answers, problem-solve, to review progress and provide supported conclusions is an important aspect of developing personal learning and thinking skills. Importantly, the Level 2 Project should be seen as a 'learning journey' where the depth and scope of each stage of the topic is measured, not just the outcome.

The Project is a chance for you to explore inspirational ideas, to express your creativity, to grow as an e-confident learner and will give you the opportunity to showcase the skills and knowledge you have learnt as well as those you are developing. This unit allows you to specialise and focus on a specific topic area which inspires you, to ask questions, plan and research your chosen topic. You will be expected to use resources to gather and select information to achieve the purpose of your study. A range of skills, including appropriate technologies and problem solving are essential in managing the project plan. Finally, you will be expected to review your project and draw on your own conclusions enabling you to communicate your findings to a wider audience.

Learning outcomes (LO)

On completion of this unit, you will:

LO1: Know how to identify, plan and carry out an individual project

LO2: Be able to research, select, organise and use information and resources

LO3: Be able to develop and realise planned project outcomes

LO4: Be able to review and communicate the project outcomes and own learning

You should familiarise yourself with both the purpose and learning outcomes for this unit at the outset so that you are clear about what you will be trying to achieve and why.

What you will cover

In order to achieve the learning outcomes for this unit you must cover all bullet points **but examples given within italics indicate what may be covered within these.**

LO1: Know how to identify, plan and carry out an individual project

Topic and title:

- Select individually or as part of a group; *realistic; achievable*
- Identify a question, task or brief, reasons for your choice, links to progression
- Explore an area of personal interest or activity: *either outside the main programme of study or if taken as part of the Diploma, to complement and develop the themes and topics of the Principal Learning component*

Project proposal:

- Aims of the project, outcomes expected
- Format of the project outcomes: *report, performance, show, competition, an artefact, a commissioned piece of work,*
- Format of the presentation of the project: *a report, performance, show, competition,*
- Completion date
- Resources required: *computer, data-logger, samples, laboratory time; guidance required to complete tasks identified*
- Project proposal discussed and agreed with tutor/assessor

Planning:

- Use planning tools *such as mind maps, spider diagrams, flow charts, spreadsheets etc*
- Develop an action plan with timescales and milestones
- Consider manageability

Managing:

- Use project management tools: *action plan with timescales and milestones; use of software*
- Monitor and review progress of the project
- Adjust the plan as the result of review
- Access guidance from tutor/assessor

Present evidence of planning:

- Signed and agreed Project Proposal Form incorporating an action plan

LO2: Be able to research, select, organise and use information and resources**Research:**

- Access a range of resources *i.e. observations; collection of samples; books; journals; newspapers; websites; parliamentary and legal; EU publications; global publications; formal reports; conferences; reviews; interviews; personal communication; visual and audio-visual; experiential;*

Range of sources:

- Collect a range of sources: *internet and book; information used should be referenced within the project but evidence kept in the appendices or other form of appendix; evidence; reliability; manageability practical work, observations, expert, internet and books*

Information:

- *Books; media; newspapers; practical work, observations, expert, books; collection of samples; parliamentary and legal; EU publications; global publications; formal reports; reviews;*
- Apply selected information relevantly to the study, *from reliable sources* to achieve the project outcomes

LO3: Be able to develop and realise planned project outcomes**Skills:**

- Personal learning and thinking skills: independent enquiry, creative thinking, reflective learning, team working, self-management, effective participation
- Communication skills; *listening, speaking, reading and writing*
- Technological skills, ICT skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Group work/individual
- Practical skills
- Functional skills appropriate to Level 2
- Use skills appropriately to contribute to the project outcomes
- Develop skills to inform the project progression

LO4: Be able to review and communicate the project outcomes and own learning

Analytical tools:

- Statistical comparison: *mean, mode, median, standard deviation;*
- feedback and review; *audience; technical expert review; questionnaire; measurement against another project;*

Draw own conclusions:

- Findings / outcomes: *what has been learned? What is the quality of the product? How effective is the technique? Have you answered the question posed? self-assessment;*

Review

- Comparisons to other projects; were the project outcomes met/not met; identification of strengths and weaknesses; improvement considered, skills learned and developed and how these have improved your progression opportunities

Assessment criteria (AC)

How learning outcomes will be demonstrated

Learning outcomes (LO)	Assessment criteria (AC)
<p>LO1: Know how to identify, plan and carry out an individual project</p>	<p>AC1: Identify topic area and title providing justifying choice</p> <p>AC2: Plan and define intended project outcomes and agree a project proposal</p> <p>AC3: Apply skills and methods to achieve agreed objectives</p>
<p>LO2: Be able to research, select, organise and use information and resources</p>	<p>AC4: Use a range of reliable sources to carry out a variety of research</p> <p>AC5: Select, organise and use information to inform project development</p> <p>AC6: Interpret data and apply the findings to develop the project</p>
<p>LO3: Be able to develop and realise planned project outcomes</p>	<p>AC7: Select and use a range of skills to successfully complete the project</p> <p>AC8: Apply appropriate technologies and techniques to achieve planned outcomes</p>
<p>LO4: Be able to review and communicate the project outcomes and own learning</p>	<p>AC9: Use analytical tools to evaluate and review project outcomes and own learning and performance</p> <p>AC10: Communicate evidenced project outcomes in an appropriate format</p>

5. Assessment

Assessment method – Internal

Assessment for this unit covers the full range of learning outcomes, promoting understanding of how the different aspects of project planning and management are linked to produce the outcomes set.

The project at level 2 is assessed internally by your assessor/tutor. You will use your knowledge and understanding of your chosen topic to complete the following:

- A project proposal form should be researched and completed (appendix 1)
- Discussion and agreement of project topic with your tutor/assessor (tutorial records)
- Evidence of research carried out
- Evidence of skills developed and used to inform and achieve the project outcomes
- Evidence of completing the project outcomes, this could be:
 - Photographs
 - Signed observation sheets
 - Video recording
 - Audio recording
 - Written report
- Evidence of reviewing project and own conclusion, this could be:
 - statistical
 - audience feedback
 - technical expert feedback
 - relating to other similar project outcomes
 - whether it is successful
- Written presentation (minimum 1000 words) of the project outcomes considering the appropriate format for the intended audience
- Include a signed Project Authentication Record (Appendix 2)

Assessment Band Descriptors

Learning Outcome	Assessment criterion	Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
LO1: Know how to identify, plan and carry out an individual project	AC1: Identify topic area and title providing justifying choice	Topic area and title identified providing brief justification of choice with frequent support and guidance from the tutor/assessor Up to 2 marks	Topic area and title identified providing justification of choice with some guidance and support from the tutor/assessor Up to 4 marks	Topic area and title identified providing in-depth justification of choice with little guidance and support from the tutor/assessor 5 marks
	AC2: Plan and define intended project outcomes and agree a project proposal	Intended project outcomes planned and defined with limited accuracy Up to 2 marks	Intended project outcomes planned and defined accurately Up to 4 marks	Intended project outcomes planned and defined in detail and accurately 5 marks
	AC3: Apply skills and methods to achieve agreed objectives	Applied a limited range of skills or methods to achieve agreed objectives with frequent support and guidance from the tutor/assessor Up to 2 marks	Applied a range of appropriate skills and methods with some guidance and support from the tutor/assessor Up to 4 marks	Applied a wide range of appropriate skills and methods with little guidance and support from the tutor/assessor 5 marks

Learning Outcome	Assessment criterion	Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
LO2: Be able to research, select, organise and use information and resources	AC4: Use a range of reliable sources to carry out a variety of research	<p>Carry out research from a limited range of reliable sources</p> <p>Primary or secondary research is included</p> <p>Linked research selected to the project development.</p> <p>Up to 3 marks</p>	<p>Carry out research from a range of reliable sources</p> <p>Primary and secondary research is included</p> <p>Clearly linked research selected to the project development appropriately</p> <p>Up to 6 marks</p>	<p>Carry out justified research from a range of reliable sources</p> <p>Accurate and relevant primary and secondary research is included</p> <p>Accurately and clearly linked research selected to the project development appropriately</p> <p>Up to 8 marks</p>
	AC5: Select, organise and use information to inform project development	<p>Selected limited range of information.</p> <p>Attempted to organise and use information to inform the project outcome</p> <p>Up to 3 marks</p>	<p>Selected a range of information.</p> <p>Clearly organised and used information appropriately to inform the project outcome</p> <p>Up to 6 marks</p>	<p>Selected a wide range of information.</p> <p>Methodically and clearly organised and used information appropriately to inform the project outcome</p> <p>Up to 8 marks</p>
	AC6: Interpret data and apply the findings to develop the project	<p>Limited interpretation of the data and basic application of the findings to develop the project</p> <p>Up to 4 marks</p>	<p>Clear interpretation of the data and appropriate application of the findings to develop the project</p> <p>Up to 7 marks</p>	<p>Detailed interpretation of the data and appropriate and well articulated application of the findings to develop the project</p> <p>Up to 9 marks</p>

Learning Outcome	Assessment criterion	Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
LO3: Be able to develop and realise planned project outcomes	AC7: Select and use a range of skills to successfully complete the project	Use a limited range of skills to complete tasks Evidence of problem-solving used within the project Up to 8 marks	Use a range of skills to complete tasks Clear evidence of problem-solving used the within the project Up to 14 marks	Use a wide range of skills to complete tasks Clear and accurate evidence of problem-solving used within the project Up to 20 marks
	AC8: Apply appropriate technologies and techniques to achieve planned outcomes	Selected limited range of appropriate technologies and techniques Up to 8 marks	Selected a range of appropriate technologies and techniques Up to 14 marks	Selected a wide range of appropriate technologies and techniques Up to 20 marks

Learning Outcome	Assessment criterion	Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
<p>LO4: Be able to review and communicate the project outcomes and own learning</p>	<p>AC9: Use analytical tools to evaluate and review project outcomes and own learning and performance</p>	<p>Used limited range of analytical tools to review project and own outcomes</p> <p>Meets projects outcome/s</p> <p>Brief conclusion provided</p> <p>Made suggestions on improving future performance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Up to 4 marks</p>	<p>Clearly used a range of analytical tools to review project and own outcomes</p> <p>Clearly meets projects outcome/s</p> <p>Reasoned conclusion provided</p> <p>Identified skills learned or developed, to inform improving future performance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Up to 7 marks</p>	<p>Clearly used a wide range of analytical tools to review project and own outcomes</p> <p>Accurately and clearly meets projects outcome/s</p> <p>Justified conclusion provided</p> <p>Evaluated skills learned or developed, to inform improving future performance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Up to 10 marks</p>
	<p>AC10: Communicate evidenced project outcomes in an appropriate format</p>	<p>Selected appropriate communication method and presentation format to communicate the outcomes</p> <p>Written presentation communicated briefly the project outcomes</p> <p>Reason provided as to why the project will assist further study</p>	<p>Selected and applied appropriate communication method and presentation format to clearly communicate the outcomes</p> <p>Clear and well-presented written presentation of the outcomes</p> <p>Reasons provided as to why the project will assist further study</p>	<p>Selected and applied appropriate communication method and presentation format to clearly and accurately communicate the outcomes</p> <p>Clear and well-articulated written presentation of the outcomes</p> <p>Accurate reasons provided as to why the project will assist further study</p>

Learning Outcome	Assessment criterion	Mark band 1	Mark band 2	Mark band 3
		Required frequent support and guidance from the tutor/assessor Up to 4 marks	Required some support and guidance from the tutor/assessor Up to 7 marks	Required little guidance and support from the tutor/assessor Up to 10 marks

Mark Band 1	Up to 40 Marks (Up to 40%)
Mark band 2	Up to 70 marks (Up to 70%)
Mark Band 3	Up to 100 marks (Up to 100%)

The table below offers guidance on how to interpret specific words given in the assessment grid.

Word	Meaning
Identify/identification	Name or otherwise characterise
Describe/description	Set out characteristics – could be a diagram, report etc
Explain/explanation	Set out the purposes or reasons
Define	To give a definition, to state or explain
Basic	The work comprises the minimum required and provides the base or starting point from which to develop. Responses are simple and not complicated; the simplest and most important facts are included
Most	At least 75% of the content which is expected has been included
Adequately	There is clear understanding of the concepts and principles but may not have provided the full details, expansions or examples needed in order to gain the highest marks
Breadth	Broadness of answer
Some	About 50% of the content which would have been expected is included
Brief	A summary of the facts
Clear/clarity (in relation to description)	The evidence related to a statement exists and is directly relevant to the task
Accurate/accuracy (in relation to description)	Exact, precise, free, or largely free, from errors to an extent of approx. 80% - 100%; a notion of being accurate
Reasonable	The work, whilst not ideal, is of a quality and type which is acceptable for the task and level
Outline	Set out the main characteristics
Just/Justified/Justify	Present a reasoned case
Detailed	Work includes item by item descriptions and includes or considers all the relevant information for the marking criterion statement
In depth	Thorough and intensive investigation
Limited	Up to 40% - the work comprises an attempt to include information – could be a list, label/s with little or no description
Reasoned	Supported with justification
Supported (when describing)	Using reference material, citations etc to support the point made
Supported (tutor/assessor)	One to one assistance, advice and questioning – providing answers

Overview of assessment

All assessment criteria must be assessed within the internal assessment for this unit. However it is not expected that all of the contents within the 'What you will cover' section of the unit will be assessed on every occasion. However, on other occasions a different range of knowledge and understanding from content will be assessed so that over time all aspects of the content are subject to assessment and must therefore be learned.

To mark each learner's assessment evidence for this unit, assessors will have to use the assessment grid above. The grid has three mark bands expressing the characteristics of different levels of assessment performance and capturing progression across the full spectrum of attainment which learners can demonstrate.

The mark descriptions show that the upward progression across the bands is a result of improved performance by learners in relation to the specified assessment requirements rather than of their performing additional tasks not set out in this specification. However, it is not intended that a learner must fully fulfil one band to receive a mark in the band above.

Using the grid, assessors will choose those descriptors that represent the best fit with the performance of the learner whom they are assessing and will mark this performance accordingly. In other words, you will be following the 'best fit' approach of assessment

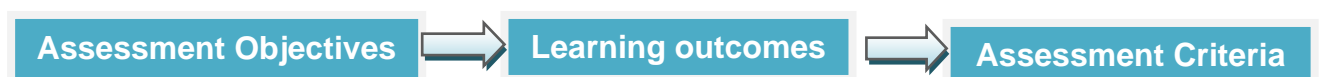
Assessing the measure and depth of support and guidance given to the learner is an integral part of the Higher Project. The project criteria promotes independent enquiry and learner-centered activity, the tutor/assessors role in this is as a facilitator of the project process.

Tutors/assessors should be clear on the measure and depth of guidance and support:

- **Frequent** support and guidance: this indicates regular, ongoing support and guidance to progress the project, the learner is dependent on the support and the project couldn't progress without the tutor/assessors continual prompting
- **Some** support and guidance: this indicates the occasional assistance from the tutor/assessor, in maintaining the project throughout, keeping it on track. The learner isn't dependent on this support for realisation of the outcomes but for focus in maintaining the project target.
- **Little** support and guidance: this indicates insignificant support, in other words, the tutor/assessor guidance and support is not having an impact on the outcomes or the management of the process. The learner uses the support and guidance rarely and only for clarification.

Assessment Objectives

Learners must meet the assessment objectives listed below. Each of the objectives are weighted to demonstrate their importance. The Higher Project topic must provide evidence for a range of assessment objectives and these provide the rationale for the development of the learning outcomes, and in turn, the assessment criteria.



The criteria for the assessment objectives originate from Ofqual and are as follows:

Assessment Objectives	Weighting
AO1: Manage Identify, plan and carry out a project, applying a range of skills and methods to achieve objectives	15 - 25%
AO2: Use Resources Research, select, organise and use information, and select and use a range of resources, interpret data and apply findings	15 - 25%
AO3: Develop and Realise Select and use a range of skills, including, where appropriate, new technologies and problem solving, to achieve planned outcomes	35 - 45%
AO4: Review and Communicate Evaluate project outcomes and own learning and performance. Use communication skills to present evidenced project outcomes and conclusions in an appropriate format	15 - 25%

Obligatory Requirements of the Level 2 Higher Project Topic

The Higher Project topic must be chosen by the learner, through negotiation with the tutor, assessor, mentor and, if appropriate, an employer. If taken as part of the Diploma, the centre must verify to VTCT that the chosen topic complements and develops the themes and topics for learners' principal learning and how it supports learner progression. Learners may choose one of many different types of project, but the topic selected must have the potential to provide the learner with opportunities to meet all the foundation project assessment objectives shown in the table.

The assessment evidence must include at least one piece of written evidence. Overall this must include evidence of the planning and of the process of the project and of the decision making process. Sources and range of information accessed, the range of skills used, an evaluation of the outcome both of the project and of themselves. Finally, there should be evidence to demonstrate how the learner met the assessment objectives.

Learners will need to be instructed how to present their findings in the format of a report and where possible produce the work in a word processed format and all experiential learning i.e. performances etc, is observed by an assessor and a signed observation record provided.

The learner will be assessed internally. VTCT will carry out centre quality assurance processes. Please see the 'Diploma Specification and Centre Guidance' for more details.

The unit is assessed by the assigned assessor/tutor who will undertake the following:

- Carry out and document an initial individual tutorial to discuss the learner's ideas and how the learner proposes to develop the project.
- Agree and sign-off the Project Proposal Form detailing the project topic and title, considering SMART aspects.

- Carry out and document mid-project individual tutorials to review the project outcomes. Confirm that some form of record-keeping evidence is maintained by the learner.
- Carry out and document an individual tutorial upon completion of the project: Complete the Project authentication record (Appendix 2).
- Verify the written component.

Grading

If awarded as part of the Diploma, the grade of the project qualification must be reported on the Diploma transcript.

The Higher Project qualification is graded according to the following grading scales:

- Attainment that is sufficient to lead to the award of the qualification is reported on a four-grade scale from A* to C, where A* is the highest
- Attainment that is insufficient to lead to the award of a qualification is reported as unclassified or (U)

Grade Descriptions

Grade A*: Learners identify their project and produce well structured and well organised plans. There is clear evidence that they have responded effectively to guidance given. Learners research, select, organise and use relevant information and use a range of suitable resources to good effect. Problems and issues are identified and conclusions drawn. Learners select and use a range of skills including, where appropriate, new technologies, to achieve good quality outcomes that realise the intentions of the project. They use communication skills to clearly present project outcomes and conclusions in an appropriate format with supporting evidence. In their analyses, learners evaluate the project outcomes and their strengths and weaknesses in carrying out their project. They demonstrate through their responses to questions good knowledge of the topic area studied at this level.

Grade C: Learners identify their project and produce plans that enable them to achieve most of their overall objectives. There is some evidence that learners have responded to guidance given. Learners research, select, organise and use information and partially exploit a range of resources. Some problems and issues are identified, some conclusions drawn, and intended outcomes are partially realised. Elements of the projects are generally well presented through the use of communication skills. In their analyses, candidates reflect on their project and on their strengths and weaknesses in carrying out the project. They demonstrate through their responses to questions basic knowledge of the topic area studied at this level.

Appendices

1: Project Proposal Form:

To be completed by the learner and signed by the tutor/assessor and checked through moderation

2: Project Authentication Record:

To be completed by the learner and signed by both the learner and tutor/assessor upon completion of the project and attached to the Project Proposal Form

How will the Project Outcomes be developed?

- Timescales?

- Possible risks?

- Support Required?

- Other aspects to consider?

Project Management:

- Tools required to manage the project

- Objective end dates



Date:



Date:



Date:

Discussion points:

✓

✓

✓

✓

✓

Agreed Project Outcomes:

✓

✓

✓

✓

Will you be working as part of a group? If so, please state your role:

Learner signature:

Tutor/assessor signature:

Moderator's signature:

Date:



Project Authentication Record

Level 2 Higher

Centre Name:

Centre Number:

Learner Name:

Learner Number:

Learner information

The work you have submitted is your own. You may be disqualified from certification if you copy someone else's work or allow another learner to copy your work.

Learner Declaration

I can confirm that the work submitted for assessment is my own and I understand and agree with the learner information provided above.

Signed: _____

DATE: _____

Print Name: _____

Tutor/assessor Declaration

I can confirm, to the best of my knowledge that the work submitted for assessment is the learners own and was carried out under the controls specified in the Level 2 Guidance and Specification

Signed: _____

DATE: _____

Print Name: _____

What are Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)?

The Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) are generic transferable skills vitally important for employability, progression to further study and effective functioning in life in general, which is why they will be assessed within Principal Learning and will be integrated also within the Project/Extended Project and work experience.

The PLTS framework comprises six groups of skills, listed below. For each group, there is a focus statement which identifies an overarching ability and a set of outcome statements which provide further detail. Many of the statements are sequential in nature.

Although each group is distinctive and coherent, the groups are also interconnected, and it is likely that any one learning experience will develop skills from more than one group.

All unit specifications in this document clearly indicate how relevant PLTS are integrated into the learning outcomes.

Independent enquirers

Focus:

Young people process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.

Young people:

- identify questions to answer and problems to resolve (IE1)
- plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions (IE2)
- explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives (IE3)
- analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value (IE4)
- consider the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events (IE5)
- support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence (IE6)

Creative thinkers

Focus:

Young people think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

Young people:

- generate ideas and explore possibilities (CT1)
- ask questions to extend their thinking (CT2)
- connect their own and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways (CT3)
- question their own and others' assumptions (CT4)
- try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through (CT5)
- adapt ideas as circumstances change (CT6)

Reflective learners

Focus:

Young people evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.

Young people:

- assess themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements (RL1)
- set goals with success criteria for their development and work (RL2)
- review progress, acting on the outcomes (RL3)
- invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setback and criticism (RL4)
- evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress (RL5)
- communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences (RL6)

Team workers

Focus:

Young people work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to, and take account of, different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.

Young people:

- collaborate with others to work towards common goals (TW1)
- reach agreement, managing discussions to achieve results (TW2)
- adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations (TW3)
- show fairness and consideration to others (TW4)
- take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution (TW5)
- provide constructive support and feedback to others (TW6)

Self-managers

Focus:

Young people organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.

Young people:

- seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change (SM1)
- work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance (SM2)
- organise time and resources, prioritising actions (SM3)
- anticipate, take and manage risks (SM4)
- deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands (SM5)
- respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed (SM6)

Effective participators

Focus:

Young people actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for other as well as themselves.

Young people:

- discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed (EP1)
- present a persuasive case for action (EP2)
- propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps (EP3)
- identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves (EP4)
- try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions (EP5)
- act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own (EP6)

PLTS developed through this unit

The VTCT Level 2 Project supports the development and application of a range of skills necessary for further learning, employment and personal development. Those skills include three Functional Skills (FS) in English, mathematics and ICT and six Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS): Independent Enquirers, Creative Thinkers, Reflective Learners, Team Workers, Self-managers and Effective Participators. Throughout the Project programme, teachers should emphasise the considerable importance and universal relevance of those skills and highlight to learners the opportunities for their development. Below is an indication of when and how these skills could naturally occur and develop during the Higher Project. This is not exhaustive and PLTS may occur naturally during a range of activities not signposted here.

PLTS	How PLTS will be developed through the activities for this unit
Independent enquirers	When learners are selecting, planning and carrying out an individual project they will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC1: Identify questions to answer and problems to resolve [IE1] • AC4: Plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequence of decisions [IE2]. Analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value [IE4] • AC2: Explore issues, events or problems from different prospective [IE3] • AC7: Consider the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events [IE5]. Support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence [IE6].

PLTS	How PLTS will be developed through the activities for this unit
Creative thinkers	<p>When learners are selecting, planning and carrying out an individual project they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC1: Generate ideas and explore possibilities [CT1]. Ask questions to extend their thinking. • AC3: Connect their own ideas and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways [CT3] • AC4: Question their own and others' assumptions [CT4] • AC6: Try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through [CT5]. Adapt ideas as circumstances change [CT6]
Reflective Learners	<p>When learners are selecting, planning and carrying out an individual project they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC8: Assess themselves and other, identifying opportunities and achievements [RL1]. Invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism [RL4]. Evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress [RL5]. • AC2: Set goals with success criteria for their development and work [RL2] • AC3/AC5/AC6: Review progress, acting on the outcomes [RL3] • AC7: Communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences [RL6]
Team workers	<p>When learners are selecting, planning and carrying out an individual project they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC2/AC6: Collaborate with others to work towards common goals [TW1] • AC7: Reach agreements; managing discussions to achieve results [TW2] • AC6: Adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations [TW3]. Provide constructive support and feedback to others [TW6] • AC8: Show fairness and consideration to others [TW4] • AC3: Take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution [TW5]

PLTS	How PLTS will be developed through the activities for this unit
Self managers	<p>When learners are selecting, planning and carrying out an individual project they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC1: Seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change [SM1] • AC2: Work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance [SM2]. Organise time and resources, prioritising actions [SM3]. Anticipate, take and manage risks [SM4]. Respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed [SM6] • AC3: Deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands [SM5]
Effective Participators	<p>When learners are selecting, planning and carrying out an individual project they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC4: Discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed [EP1]. Propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps [EP3]. Act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own [EP6] • AC2: Present a persuasive case for action [EP2] • AC7/AC8: Identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves [EP4] • AC6: Try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions [EP5]

What are Functional Skills?

These are the core elements of English, mathematics and ICT, which provide the essential knowledge, skills and understanding needed to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and at work.

Functional Skills developed through this unit

This unit will also provide learners with opportunities for the development of some aspects of the Functional Skills, specified below.

English

Functional Skill: English	How English will be developed through the activities for this unit
Listening and speaking Make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a range of contexts	When learners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• interacting with the tutor/assessor during the project• contributing to discussions within a group• communicating the project outcomes
Reading Compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	When learners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• obtaining and selecting a range of information and applying it to the chosen project topic• working as part of a group
Writing Write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively	When learners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• producing and keeping information• Communicating the project outcomes• constructing leaflets, posters, etc.

ICT

Functional Skill: ICT	How ICT will be developed through the activities for this unit
<p>Use ICT Systems</p> <p>Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs</p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system used</p> <p>Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval</p> <p>Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices</p> <p>Troubleshoot</p>	<p>When learners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obtaining relevant information about the project topic • using ICT as a communication tool • Using ICT as a project planning tool • obtaining and selecting a range of information and applying it to the chosen project topic • Checking the reliability of the sources used in the project • resolving ICT problems as they arise in the course of their work on the project
<p>Find and select information</p> <p>Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task</p> <p>Assess, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose</p>	<p>When learners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obtaining and selecting a range of information and applying it to the chosen project topic
<p>Develop, present and communicate information</p> <p>Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	<p>When learners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constructing the Project Proposal Form • keeping the information and reviews up to date • providing conclusions to their outcomes

<p>Bring together information to suit content and purpose</p> <p>Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience</p> <p>Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information</p> <p>Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively, including storage of messages and contacts lists</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating the project outcomes • using project planning and management tools • obtaining and selecting a range of information and applying it to the chosen project topic
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Mathematics

Functional Skill: Mathematics	How Mathematics will be developed through the activities for this unit
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	When learners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recording the results of numerical tests
Select and apply a range of mathematics to find solutions	When learners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recording the results of numerical tests
Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar routine contexts and situations	When learners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recording the results of numerical tests