# Qualification Specification

BT4A8 – VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Ultrasound

610/1639/1

# About VTCT (iTEC)

VTCT is the UK's market-leading specialist vocational and technical awarding organisation for beauty, medical aesthetics, complementary therapies, sports and active fitness, as well as a number of other sector areas including learning and development, early years education, health and social care and hospitality and catering.

VTCT is regulated by the Office for Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) which is a non-ministerial UK government department reporting directly to parliament. VTCT is also regulated by governments in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and is recognised by many government authorities globally for the award of qualifications aligned with national qualifications frameworks.

Our qualifications are delivered under three brands, VTCT, ITEC and Skillsfirst, offered in 50 countries around the world and more than 2,500 approved centres, to more than 120,000 learners every year.

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# 1. Qualification at a glance

| | |
|---|---|
| **Qualification title** | VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Ultrasound |
| **Qualification number** | 610/1639/1 |
| **Product code** | BT4A8 |
| **First registration date** | 1st December 2022 |
| **Age range** | 18+ |
| **Total Qualification Time (TQT)** | 65 |
| **Guided Learning (GL) hours** | 52 |
| **Assessment** | To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments:<br>• Externally set and externally marked graded practical examination (50% of qualification grade)<br>• Externally set and externally marked theory examination (50% of qualification grade)<br>• Externally set and internally marked clinical case studies (no contribution to overall grade) |
| **Overall qualification grading** | The overall qualification is graded:<br>• Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction |
| **Entry requirements** | Learners are required to hold a traditional Level 3 beauty therapy qualification that includes facial electrical and body electrical units, and Level 3 anatomy and physiology. |

# 2. Purpose statement

## 2.1 Who is this qualification for?

The VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Ultrasound is an advanced therapy qualification aimed at level 3 qualified practitioners aged 18 and over, who wish to add this therapy to their repertoire of treatment offerings.

Learners are required to hold a level 3 beauty therapy qualification or equivalent.

## 2.2 What does this qualification cover?

The aim of this qualification is to develop the learners' knowledge, understanding and practical skills when completing Ultrasound Cavitation treatments for fat removal and to improve the appearance of cellulite.

Learners must achieve the following mandatory unit:

- Provide ultrasound treatments

Learners will acquire skills in providing a thorough consultation to establish client suitability for treatment and also the knowledge on how to formulate treatment protocol to suit individual client's needs. Learners will also be able to provide the client with relevant aftercare to maximize treatment results and look after their skin post-treatment.

## 2.3 What could this qualification lead to?

The primary purpose of this qualification is to prepare learners for employment in the advanced aesthetic industry providing ultrasound techniques. Additionally, learners may choose to further develop their knowledge and skills by completing supplementary specialist qualifications at level 4 in one or more of the following areas:

- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Radio Frequency
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Skin Peeling
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Skin Needling

For more qualifications, please see the VTCT and iTEC websites.

# 3. Qualification structure

To be awarded the VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Ultrasound learners must achieve:

- one mandatory unit
- all clinical case studies
- a pass or (higher) grade in the external theory examination*
- a pass or (higher) grade in the external practical examination*

*Please note all clinical case studies must be completed and marked as a Pass **before** the learner can be entered for examination.

The minimum TQT required to achieve this qualification is **65**

| VTCT product code | Unit title | Level | GL | Unit reference number |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mandatory units** | | | | |
| UBT279 | Provide ultrasound treatments | 4 | 52 | L/616/8611 |

# 4. Centre requirements

## 4.1 Approval and recognition

For existing centres, this qualification is part of the Aesthetics Therapies qualifications that are defined as an additional suite. These must be applied for using the Approval Application – Level 4 & 5 Aesthetic Therapies Qualifications form and will be subject to an approval visit which will be charged in line with published fees.

New centres that want to deliver this qualification must gain both centre approval and qualification recognition. Please refer to the VTCT or iTEC websites for further information.

Centre staff should be familiar with current practices and standards in the sector and with the qualification structure, content, assessment and quality assurance arrangements before designing a course programme.

## 4.2 Resources

Centres must possess the physical resources needed to support the delivery of the programme and the assessment of knowledge and skills, which should therefore be of industry standard. Specific resources required for this qualification should include (but are not limited to):

- a minimum of 1 couch and 1 trolley per learner
- products, materials and equipment as appropriate to class numbers in order to practice sufficiently to meet relevant learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the qualification
- machines as appropriate to class numbers in order to practise sufficiently to meet all relevant learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the qualification

It is the centres responsibility to ensure:

- all equipment used conforms to EU-Electromagnetic compliance Directive 2014/30/EU, EU-low voltage Directive 2014/35/EU and the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994/2016 as applicable
- products used are those approved by EU Cosmetics Regulations for cosmetic use by practitioner
- adequate insurance is in place, as recommended by industry, at all times, to include cover for all learners, staff and clients attending VTCT courses.

## 4.3 Teaching staff

In order to deliver this qualification, teaching staff must:

- be occupational experts and have knowledge and understanding in the area for which they are delivering training. This knowledge must be at the same level as, or higher than the training being delivered
- hold an appropriate qualification or accredited training in the subject to be taught. In the absence of a regulated qualification, staff members will be required to demonstrate Continued Professional Development (CPD) with accredited training providers, for each qualification that the approval application lists. Staff would then be required to agree to update their training to a full qualification within 18 months of being approved to deliver. If for any reason the staff member fails to achieve the qualification, the centre would be required to find another competent member of staff to deliver the program or forfeit the right to deliver the qualification.
- understand the qualification's structure and content, and the learning outcomes they are delivering
- have relevant and current industry experience in the specific area they are delivering
- have credible experience of teaching and/or providing training
- undertake activities which contribute to their Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

## 4.4 Internal assessment

The lecturer/internal assessor will assess and mark the case studies and the VTCT (iTEC) external examiner will verify a sample, either in situ on the day of the practical and theory examination or remotely on e-portfolio.

The centre assessors must ensure assessment decisions are consistently applied and that learner work is to the required standard. Each assessor's work will be checked and confirmed by the examiner. Assessment decisions must be standardised to ensure that all learners' work has been assessed to the same standard and is fair, valid and reliable.

## 4.5 Internal quality assurers (IQAs)

Centres must have a rigorous internal quality assurance system in place.

Centres must have an IQA to ensure assessment decisions are consistently applied between assessors, and that learner work is to the required standard. Each assessor's work must be checked and confirmed by the IQA. Assessment decisions must be standardised to ensure that all learners' work has been assessed to the same standard and is fair, valid and reliable.

The IQA must observe assessors carrying out assessments, review assessment decisions from the evidence provided and hold standardisation meetings with the assessment team to ensure consistency in the use of documentation and interpretation of the qualification requirements.

Evidence of internal quality assurance must be recorded, retained and made available for the external quality assurer (EQA).

In order to internally quality assure learners working towards this qualification, IQAs must:

- be occupationally competent in the area they are quality assuring
- understand the assessment and internal quality assurance processes
- have recent and relevant industry experience in the specific area they are quality assuring
- have credible experience of assessment and internal quality assurance within a teaching and/or training environment
- hold a recognised qualification in the quality assurance of assessment, such as the 'Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice' or the 'Level 4 Award in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice'
- undertake activities which contribute to their continuing professional development (CPD)

For information on the roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of IQAs, and internal quality assurance more generally, refer to VTCT's Centre Handbook, which can be downloaded from the VTCT website.

## 4.6 Record keeping

Centres must produce and retain records that include:

- learners on programme, including learner name, date of birth, contact details, assessor's name, IQA's name, and registration date with VTCT (ITEC)
- assessment plans and IQA sampling plans
- learner assessment records detailing who assessed what and when, the assessment methods used, the location of the supporting evidence, and the assessment decision/grade awarded with supporting evidence
- records of internal quality assurance activity detailing who internally quality assured what and when, the sample selected and its rationale, records of IQA standardisation meetings, assessor and IQA competence records, monitoring records of assessor/IQA progress towards achievement of the relevant assessor/internal quality assurance qualifications and requirements for the retention of learner evidence

## 4.6 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

TQT is defined by regulators as the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

TQT is comprised of the following two elements:

- the number of hours which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, and
- an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed – but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training

The TQT for this qualification is detailed in Section 3 of this specification.

# 5. Assessment

## 5.1 Summary of assessment methods

This qualification comprises internal and external assessments. Learners must achieve the assessments detailed in the table below.

| Assessment method | Overview of controls |
|---|---|
| External theory examination (UBT279) | Externally set and externally marked examination. The examination assesses knowledge and understanding from the breadth of the mandatory treatment specific unit at the end of the period of learning. |
| External practical examination (BT4A8.PE1) | Externally set, examined and marked by an external examiner. The examination assesses the learner's technical skills and abilities. The practical examination will take place end of the period of learning. |
| Clinical case studies | Externally set and internally marked. The case studies do not contribute to the overall grade, but contribute to the assessment outcome of the qualification. This is a prerequisite evidence requirement which must be completed prior to learners undertaking the external graded examinations. The case studies can be evidenced as the treatments conducted during training. |

Internal assessment materials are available to download from the VTCT and iTEC websites. See Appendix 1 for detailed information on assessment controls.

## 5.2 Unit assessment methods

The table below identifies the assessment methods used to assess mandatory units.

| Unit product code | Clinical case studies | External theory examination | External practical examination |
|---|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| UBT279 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

## 5.3 Contribution of assessment to the overall qualification grade

Whilst all units and assessments contribute to the assessment outcome of the qualification, only the external theory and practical examinations contribute to the overall grade of the qualification. The table below outlines the grading model for each assessment method and the contribution of each to the overall qualification grade.

| Assessment method | Grading model | Contribution to the qualification grade |
|---|---|:---:|
| External theory examination (UBT279) | Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction | 50% |
| External practical examination (BT4A8.PE1) | Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction | 50% |

## 5.4 External assessment

### 5.4.1 External theory examinations

Theory examinations are externally set and externally marked by the awarding organisation.

### 5.4.2 Test specification

The specification for the external theoretical examination is detailed below.

| External theory examination (UBT279) | |
|---|---|
| **Availability (Exam sessions)** | To be taken on the scheduled date for examination purposes as agreed by the awarding organisation. Available to sit online. |
| **Assessment controls** | *Task setting – high control*. The external examination is set and marked by the awarding organisation.<br><br>*Task taking – high control*. The examination must take place under controlled examination conditions. Centres must ensure that learners are suitably prepared for assessment.<br><br>*Task marking – high control*. The examination is marked by the awarding organisation. |
| **Grading model** | Pass = 450 points<br>Merit = 500 points<br>Distinction = 550 points |
| **Units covered** | UBT279 Provide ultrasound treatments |
| **Contribution to overall qualification grade** | 50% |
| **Type of examination** | Multiple choice questions to cover the assessment criteria within the unit. |

Learners, based on marks achieved in the examinations, are awarded points that contribute to the overall qualification grade.

Examinations must be undertaken by learners under controlled examination conditions in accordance with VTCT's policies and procedures for external assessment.

### 5.4.3 Retaking external theory examinations

Learners who fail to achieve the required Pass mark are permitted to re-sit after having sufficient teaching and additional study time.

There is no limit to the number of retakes a learner can carry out.

### 5.4.4 Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

Information on the reasonable adjustments allowed for the external examinations within this qualification can be found in the Policies section on the VTCT and iTEC websites.

## 5.4.5 External practical examination

Practical examinations are externally set, externally examined, graded and quality assured by VTCT. Information on how to operate practical examinations can be found on the VTCT and iTEC websites.

In preparation for the external practical examination, centres are advised to ensure learners have carried out a series of clinical case studies comprising of complete practical treatments, in accordance with the awarding organisations marking criteria, which must be observed and marked by the centre lecturer/assessors. All treatments must be deemed commercially acceptable by the centre lecturer/assessors.

It is essential centres use the Practical Examination Criteria document in order to make assessment judgments when preparing for examinations. This can be found on a secure portal area on the VTCT and iTEC websites.

The practical examination preparation must take place in a realistic working environment on a real client and in a commercially acceptable time frame for each mandatory unit that contains a practical element.

| External practical examination (BT4A8.PE1) | |
|---|---|
| **Availability (Exam sessions)** | To be taken on the scheduled date for examination purposes as agreed by the awarding organisation and invigilated by an external examiner. |
| **Assessment controls** | *Task setting – high control*. The external practical examination is set and examined by the awarding organisation.<br><br>*Task taking – high control*. The examination must take place under controlled examination conditions. Centres must ensure that learners are suitably prepared for assessment.<br><br>*Task marking – high control*. The examination is marked by the awarding organisation. |
| **Grading model** | Pass = 450 points<br>Merit = 500 points<br>Distinction = 550 points |
| **Units covered** | UBT279 Provide ultrasound treatments |
| **Contribution to overall qualification grade** | 50% |
| **Type of examination** | Practical examined assessment |

| Practical skills examination sequence (approximately 1 hour) | 1. Examiner must be shown evidence of a skin sensitivity test and initial consultation<br>2. Assist client onto the couch and carry out the treatment consultation<br>3. Prepare the area for treatment<br>4. Take pre-treatment photograph<br>5. Check the machine<br>6. Perform a pre-treatment test<br>7. Perform treatment<br>8. Apply aftercare including post-treatment photograph<br>9. Give home care advice<br><br>Oral questions may be asked at any time during the examination. Consultation forms must be filled in by each learner for the unit and made available for the external examiner to check. These should be reviewed and completed at the end of the treatment and will be taken away by the external examiner.<br><br>Learners will be expected to demonstrate excellent hygiene and client care throughout as well as competence in their relevant skills. The external examiner may reduce the treatment timings, as the examination is a demonstration of the learner's professionalism and their accomplished technique.<br><br>Approximate time allocated for changeover of practical examination groups is 15 minutes. |
|---|---|

### 5.4.6 Retaking external practical examination

Learners who fail to achieve the required Pass mark are permitted to re-sit after having sufficient teaching and additional study time.

### 5.4.6 Clinical case studies/treatment portfolio

The clinical case studies/treatment portfolio is an evidence requirement which must be completed prior to learners undertaking the practical and theoretical examinations. The case studies can be evidenced from the treatments conducted during training. They do not need to be additional to the treatments completed during training. Each treatment delivered should be documented as an individual case study.

The awarding organisation specifies the amount of clinical case studies to be carried out and evidenced in the portfolio within the unit specifications. These can be found on the VTCT and iTEC websites on the relevant qualification page.

The clinical case studies/treatment portfolio can be used as a confirmatory and formative assessment to prepare learners for the practical and theoretical examinations. The purpose of this portfolio is to evaluate learner performance and use the information gathered to shape and improve learners' performance in preparation for summative examination. Centres should also consider the use of formative self and peer assessment as part of the learning journey.

Whilst the clinical case studies/treatment portfolio do not contribute to the overall grade, they will be marked pass or fail by the centre lecturer/assessor and sampled by the external examiner.
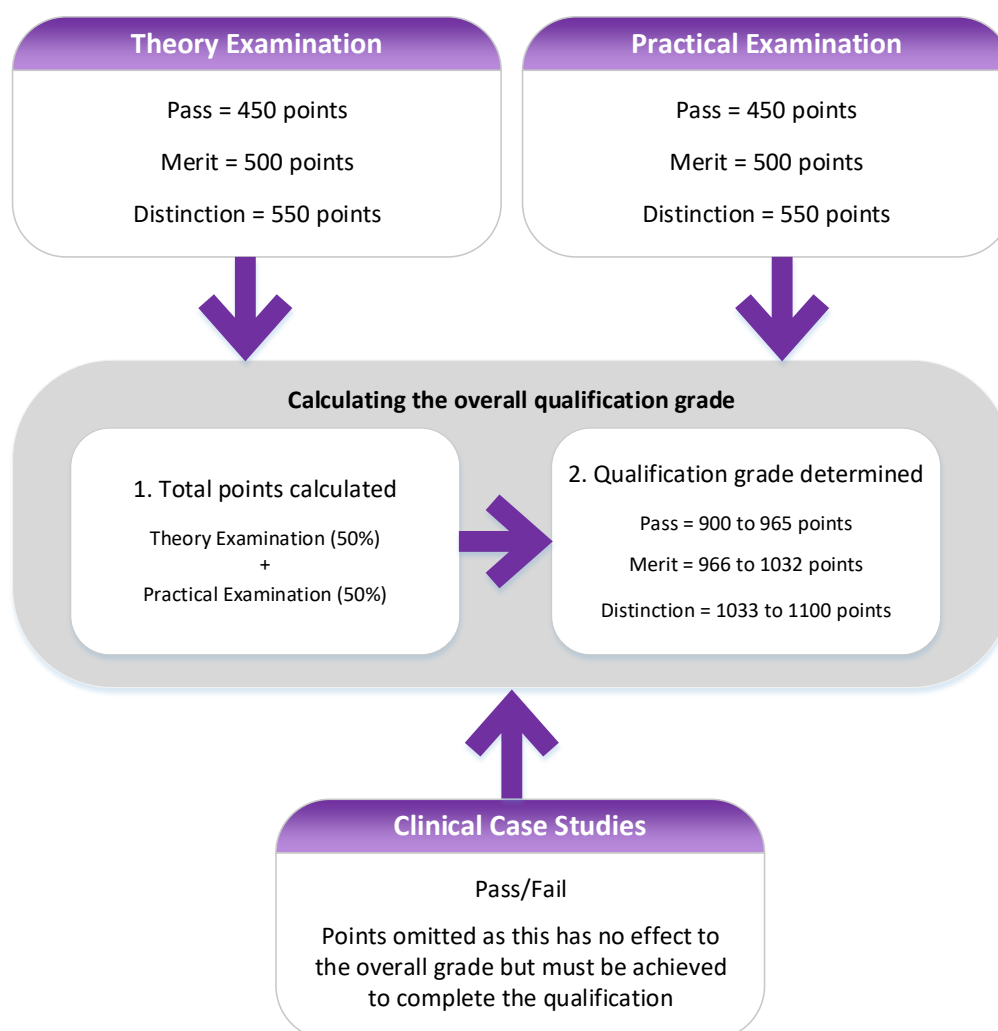
# 6. Grading

## 6.1 Overview

This qualification is graded Pass/Merit/Distinction.

The grading model employed in this qualification differentiates learner performance and in particular recognises high achievement.

There are two separate components in the grading model for this qualification, a graded external theory examination and a graded external practical examination. Each component contributes 50% to the overall qualification grade.

Learners must achieve a Pass grade or higher in the external theory and practical examinations. The grades achieved in each assessment correlate to points. These points will then be added together to determine the overall grade of the qualification, as depicted below:

**Theory Examination**

Pass = 450 points

Merit = 500 points

Distinction = 550 points

**Practical Examination**

Pass = 450 points

Merit = 500 points

Distinction = 550 points

**Calculating the overall qualification grade**

1. Total points calculated

Theory Examination (50%)
+
Practical Examination (50%)

2. Qualification grade determined

Pass = 900 to 965 points

Merit = 966 to 1032 points

Distinction = 1033 to 1100 points

**Clinical Case Studies**

Pass/Fail

Points omitted as this has no effect to the overall grade but must be achieved to complete the qualification

## 6.2 Grade boundary review

Grade boundaries for units and the overall calculation for the qualification grade are open to annual review. Following this review, these boundaries and overall calculations can be adjusted by VTCT. This review and possible change within a qualification are to ensure the standard of the qualification grade is upheld throughout the qualification's lifecycle.

# 7. External Examiner

## 7.1 External Examiner visits

This qualification is externally examined by the awarding organisation. Centres delivering this qualification will have a quality assurance visit each time an examiner visits the centre.

On a centre visit an examiner:

- examines all learners entered for the external practical examination
- samples learners' internal assessments
- verifies that appropriate staff and sufficient resources are in place, and that the centre is continuing to meet the criteria specified in the centre contract
- checks that the centre's policies and procedures continue to meet the awarding organisation's requirements
- Verifies internal assessments

## 7.2 Spot checking

In addition to the scheduled practical examination visits, targeted and unannounced spot checks of centres delivering this qualification will be undertaken as part of the awarding organisation's formal quality assurance process.

## 7.3 Support and guidance

Unit specifications, consultation sheets, assessment records and internal assessment materials are available to support qualification delivery and assessment.

For more information, visit the VTCT and iTEC websites (www.vtct.org.uk, www.itecworld.co.uk).

# 8. Unit structure

Units are available as separate specifications and can be downloaded from the VTCT and iTEC websites. Units that make up this qualification are structured as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Product code** | The code allocated by the awarding organisation. This should be used when communicating directly with the awarding organisation. |
| **Title** | Reflects the content of the unit. |
| **Unit reference number** | This is the unit reference number assigned by Ofqual |
| **Level** | This represents the level of achievement. The Regulated Qualifications Framework level descriptors and similar qualifications at this level inform the allocation of the unit level. |
| **Guided Learning (GL) hours** | All units have GL assigned to them. This is the time a learner spends:<br>• being taught or given instruction by a lecturer, tutor, supervisor or other appropriate provider of education or training. |
| **Overview** | Provides a summary of what learners will cover in a unit, and outlines the knowledge, understanding and skills to be developed. |
| **Learning outcomes** | Specify what a learner will know, understand and be able to do as a result of completing a unit. |
| **Assessment criteria** | Assessment criteria specify the minimum standard required by the learner to achieve the relevant grade. Learners must provide sufficient and valid evidence to achieve the grade. |
| **Taught content** | Provides the basis for the teaching, learning and assessment of each learning outcome. Lecturers should ensure that the full breadth of unit content is delivered. |
| **Assessment requirements** | Detail the assessments that must be completed and achieved to be awarded a unit. For more information on assessment methods see Section 5 of this specification. |

**Document History**

| Version | Issue Date | Changes | Role |
|---|---|---|---|
| V1.0 | 09/11/2022 | First published | Product and Regulation Coordinator |
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