Qualification Specification

BT4A12 – VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Scalp Micropigmentation Treatments

610/1642/1

About VTCT

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 Scalp Micropigmentation Treatments
Qualification number	610/1642/1
Product code	BT4A12
First registration date	1st December 2022
Age range	18+
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	67
Guided Learning (GL) hours	21
Assessment	To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments: • Practical Examination • Theory Examination • Case Studies
Overall qualification grading	The overall qualification is graded: • Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction
Entry requirements	Learners are required to hold a Level 3 qualification in anatomy and physiology.

2. Purpose Statement

2.1 Who is this qualification for?

The VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Scalp Micropigmentation Treatments is a beauty aesthetic qualification aimed at level 3 qualified practitioners aged 18 and above, who wish to add scalp micropigmentation to their repertoire of treatment offerings.

Learners are required to hold a level 3 anatomy and physiology qualification or equivalent.

2.2 What does this qualification cover?

This qualification is informed by employers and national and international standards for aesthetic beauty and includes all the required elements to work effectively as a fully commercial scalp micropigmentation practitioner.

Learners must achieve the mandatory unit:

- Enhance appearance using scalp micropigmentation techniques

Throughout this qualification, learners will develop their knowledge and understanding of relevant requirements, regulations and safe practice treatment protocols for scalp micropigmentation. Learners will also develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to consult with clients, and provide specific aftercare and home care advice.

2.3 What could this qualification lead to?

The primary purpose of this qualification is to prepare learners for employment or self-employment in the beauty aesthetic industry providing scalp micropigmentation techniques. Additionally, learners may choose to further develop their knowledge and skills by completing additional specialist qualifications at Level 4, including:

- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Skin Peeling
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Skin Needling
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Ultrasound
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Certificate in Skin Peeling
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Certificate in Skin Needling
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Certificate in Ultrasound
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 4 Award in Dermaplaning
- VTCT (ITEC) Level 5 Award in Micropigmentation for Camouflage and Restoration

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

3. Qualification structure

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

- The mandatory unit
- All case studies
- Practical Examination
- A pass grade in the theory examination*

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

The minimum TQT required to achieve this qualification is **67**

VTCT product code	Unit title	Level	GL	Unit reference number
Mandatory units				
UBT446	Enhance Appearance using scalp micropigmentation Techniques	4	21	Y/650/4598

4. Centre requirements

4.1 Approval and recognition

For existing centres, this qualification is part of the beauty aesthetics qualification suite. Approval to deliver this category of qualification must be sought using the Approval Application – Level 4 and 5 Advanced Aesthetic Therapies Qualifications Form and will be subject to an approval visit for which a fee will be charged in line with published fees.

New centres that intend to deliver this qualification must gain both centre approval and qualification category approval. Please go to the VTCT or iTEC websites for further information or email: qualityassurance@vtct.org.uk

4.2 Resources

Centres must have the physical resources needed to support the delivery of the qualification. 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

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure:

- all equipment used conforms to any applicable safety standards
- products used are those approved for cosmetic use by practitioners
- adequate insurance is in place, for teaching the specific aesthetic beauty treatment, including practical treatment cover for all learners, staff and clients.

4.3 Teaching staff

In order to deliver this qualification, teaching staff must:

- be occupational experts and have knowledge and understanding in the specific discipline of the qualification being delivered. 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 an accredited training provider. Within 18 months of delivering a regulated qualification in the discipline, staff should achieve the regulated qualification themselves.
- 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 experience of teaching and/or providing training
- regularly undertake activities which contribute to their Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

4.4 Centre-based assessors

A centre-based assessor/tutor will assess and mark the case studies as either Pass or Refer. The VTCT (ITEC) External Examiner or External Moderator will verify a sample, either in situ or remotely on e-portfolio.

If the centre is deemed to be low-risk by their VTCT (ITEC) External Quality Assurer or Examiner and the centre is approved for remote practical moderation; centre-assessors will also be involved in the assessment of the practical examination, which is graded Pass/Merit/Distinction.

The centre assessors must ensure assessment decisions are consistently applied and that learners' work is to the required standard. Each assessor's work will be checked and confirmed by the VTCT (ITEC) External Quality Assurer (EQA) for the Centre. 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 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 VTCT (ITEC) 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
Theory examination	Externally set and externally marked examination. The examination assesses knowledge and understanding from Learning Outcomes (LO) LO1 and LO2 of the mandatory treatment-specific unit, at the end of the period of learning.
Case Studies	Externally set and internally marked. Treatment practice, conducted as individual case studies does not contribute to the overall grade, but contributes to the assessment outcome and portfolio of evidence for the qualification. This is a prerequisite evidence requirement, which must be completed prior to learners undertaking the final practical assessment.
Practical Examination	The practical examination is a terminal assessment that assesses the learner's technical skills and abilities from LO3 and LO4 of the mandatory treatment specific unit.

Pre-examination 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 the mandatory unit.

Unit product code	Case Studies	Theory Examination	Practical Examination
UBT446	✓	✓	✓

5.3 Contribution of assessment to the overall qualification grade

Only the external theory examination and the practical examination 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	Grades Available	Contribution to the qualification grade
Theory Examination	Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction	50%
Case Studies	Pass/Refer	Achievement Requirement
Practical Examination	Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction	50%

5.4 Theory Examination

Theory examinations are externally set and externally marked by VTCT (ITEC).

The specification for the external theoretical examination is detailed below.

Theory examination (UBT446)	
Availability (Exam sessions)	To be taken on demand as agreed by the awarding organisation. Available to sit online.
Grading	Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction
Units covered	UBT446 – Enhance Appearance using Scalp Micropigmentation Techniques
Contribution to overall qualification grade	50%
Type of examination	Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) to cover the assessment criteria within the unit for LO1 and LO2 only.

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

5.4.1 Retaking external theory examinations

Learners who fail to achieve the required grade 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 undertake.

5.4.2 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 website and iTEC websites.

5.4.3 Practical Examination

The content of LO3 and LO4 are covered by a practical examination and case studies (see below).

The practical examination will be conducted by an external examiner; either through direct observation at the centre or through the use of remote moderation using live streaming, facilitated by a centre-based internal assessor.

VTCT carries out a range of quality assurance activities to monitor the standards of assessment taking place in centres.

Low or very low risk centres can also avail of an external practical examiner visit at their discretion and from time to time all centres may be subject to a physical external quality assurance visit by VTCT.

In preparation for the practical examination, centres are advised to ensure learners have carried out a series of formatively assessed case studies, comprising of complete practical treatments, in accordance with the practical assessment criteria for the qualification.

It is essential centres use the Practical Assessment Criteria document in order to prepare learners for the Practical Examination. This can be found on the VTCT and iTEC websites.

The Practical Examination must take place under controlled conditions, in a realistic working environment on a real client and in a commercially acceptable timeframe for the practical treatment being examined.

Practical Examination (BT4A12.PE1)	
Availability	To be scheduled through the VTCT (ITEC) booking system, whether being remotely moderated by an External Moderator or conducted by an in-person External Examiner.
Grading model	Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction
Units covered	UBT446 – Enhance Appearance using Scalp Micropigmentation Techniques
Contribution to overall qualification grade	50%
Type of assessment	Observation of practical client treatment

5.4.4 Case Studies

Case studies are an evidence requirement which must be completed prior to learners undertaking the final practical examination. 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 number of case studies to be carried out and evidenced in the portfolio is stated within the unit specifications. These can be found on the VTCT and iTEC websites on the relevant qualification page.

Case studies can be used to prepare learners for the practical examination and the theoretical examination. The purpose of the case study portfolio is to evaluate learner performance and use the information gathered to shape and improve learners' skills in preparation for the practical examination. Centres should also consider the use of formative self and peer assessment as part of the learning journey.

Whilst the case studies do not contribute to the overall grade, they will be marked pass or refer by the centre assessor and sampled by the external quality assurer (EQA).

5.4.5 Practical assessment criteria for case studies

This information is for reference only, the case study documentation can be downloaded from the VTCT and ITEC websites.

Assessment for Scalp Micropigmentation		
Assessment Criteria – The learner has:	**P**	**R**
Prepared self, client and area for treatment in line with health and safety protocols and legislation, ensured that all resources were ergonomically positioned and treatment area was well lit and magnified.		
Performed a full consultation, checked that all relevant tests had been performed and the results of the tests, and checked contra-indications to confirm the client is suitable for treatment.		
Discussed and confirmed the management of pain relief options.		
Used a range of communication skills, discussed and confirmed realistic and achievable treatment objectives and the likely healing process and associated timeframes.		
Discussed possible contra-actions and checked the client's understanding regarding the importance of adherence to aftercare protocols and future treatments.		
Provided information regarding the 'cooling off period' and obtained the client's signed informed consent to proceed with the treatment.		
Discussed, selected, agreed and prepared appropriate pigments, recorded all colour(s), batch numbers, expiry dates, ratios and dilutants in line with manufacturer protocols.		
Performed skin sensitivity tests and visual examination of the condition and health of the client's scalp and skin to establish the skin and hair type, characteristics and condition and confirm the client's suitability for treatment.		
Applied topical anaesthetic/numbing to the area for the recommended time frame and recorded all details.		
Demonstrated pre-treatment cleansing, drew and agreed a template and gained written/signed client consent for the treatment to proceed and photographs being taken.		
Taken pre-treatment photographs and where applicable post template photographs and discussed, agreed and confirmed with the client making adjustments where needed.		
Wore appropriate PPE and changed frequently throughout the procedure as required.		
Selected, checked and prepared the appropriate needle/cartridge configurations and recorded all configurations, batch numbers and expiry dates. Loaded and adjusted needle depth correctly.		

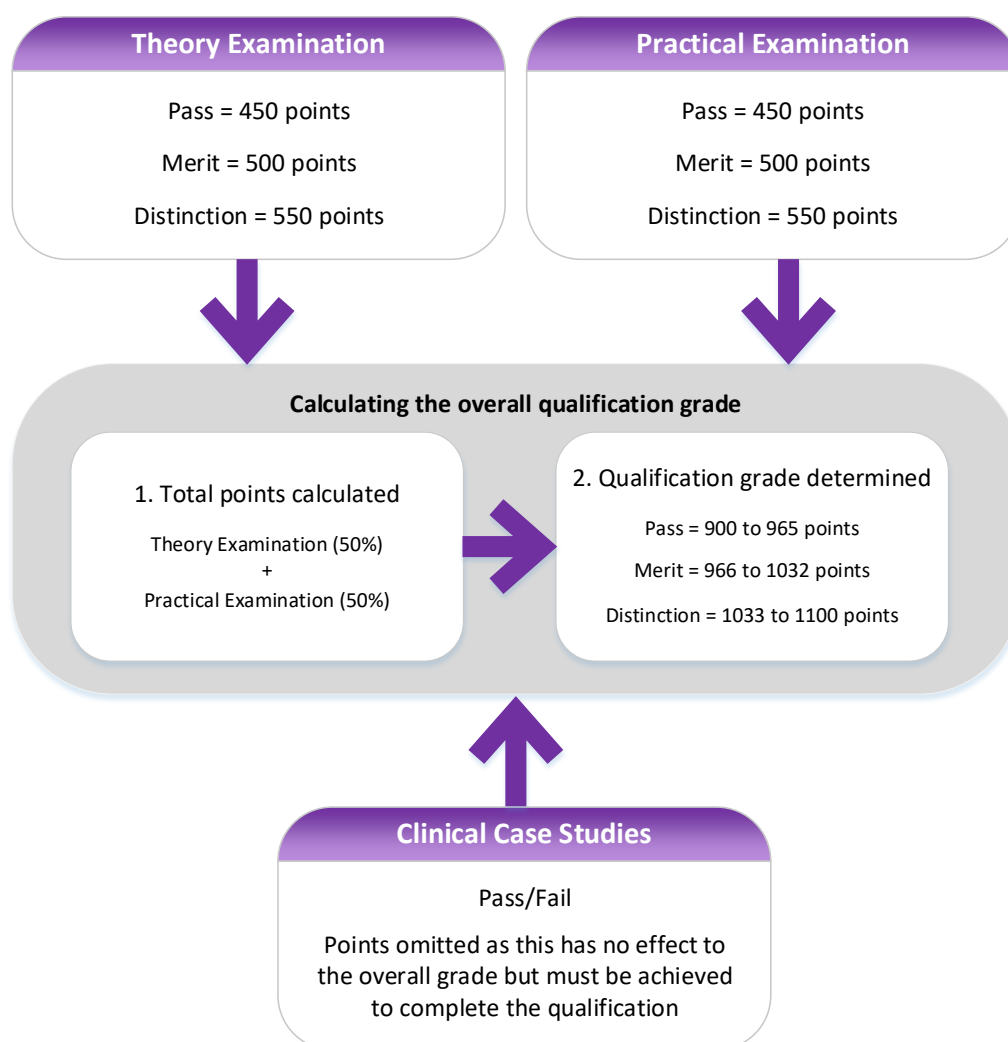| Assessment for Scalp Micropigmentation		
Assessment Criteria – The learner has:	**P**	**R**
Positioned client and self appropriately for the treatment, ensured full support and access to the treatment areas to minimise risk of strain or injury.		
Performed a safe, effective scalp micropigmentation treatment, used and adapted implantation techniques and effects to achieve the desired outcome.		
Monitored the treatment area and checked both client wellbeing and effectiveness of implantation throughout the treatment, gave reassurance or took breaks as necessary.		
Worked to a commercially acceptable time and completed the treatment in line with treatment objectives, removed excess pigment and applied post treatment products as recommended.		
Demonstrated safe disposal of sharps, products, equipment, consumables and contaminated waste in line with organisational requirements and legislation.		
Evaluated treatment outcomes, took post treatment photographs and gained client feedback including signed approval of the treatment results.		
Gave verbal and written aftercare recommendations including advice on further treatments, maintenance required and appropriate intervals.		
Recorded all treatment details in line with organisational requirements and legislation.		

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 Examination and Moderation

7.1 External Examiner Visits

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' internally assessed case studies
- 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 VTCT (iTEC) requirements
- allocates a quality assurance risk-rating to the centre
- provides advice and guidance on quality assurance matters

7.2 External Moderator

VTCT carries out a range of quality assurance activities to monitor the standards of assessment taking place in centres.

Centres rated by their VTCT (ITEC) external quality assurer or practical examiner, as being **very low risk or low risk** can avail themselves of the remote moderation option for the practical exam.

The process of remote moderation of the practical exam requires a suitably qualified centre-based assessor to observe and mark the practical exam for every learner. Simultaneously, a live-streamed External Moderator will observe and mark the practical exam for every learner, using the multiple device set up, within Microsoft Teams, to facilitate the viewing of multiple practical observations at the same time.

VTCT has published a guidance document which sets out all the scheduling, set-up and delivery requirements for facilitating live-stream remote moderation at your centre using MS Teams. VTCT can also facilitate other platforms for remote moderation.

Centres rated as **high or very high risk** by their VTCT (ITEC) external quality assurer or practical examiner shall not be eligible for remote moderation. These centres will be visited physically by an external examiner who will conduct the practical exam for every learner.

7.3 Spot Checking

In addition to the scheduled EQA 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.

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: • 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.
Unit 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 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.

Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
V1.0	16/11/2022	First published	Product and Regulation Coordinator