



Qualification Specification

BT4A13 – VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 4 Award in High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)

610/2394/2

Version 4

About VTCT Skills

VTCT Skills is a market-leading specialist vocational and technical Awarding Organisation.

We offer a comprehensive range of qualifications, assessments and services in 17 sectors, including Hairdressing, Beauty, Logistics and Early Years. Working closely with employers and training providers, our ranges are backed by industry and trusted around the world.

With over 3,000 training locations, we help over 120,000 learners achieve professional skills that transform their lives, every year.

For more information, please visit our website or contact our dedicated Customer Support Team via email; customersupport@vtctskills.org.uk or call +44 (0)23 8068 4500.

www.vtctskills.org.uk

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1. Qualification at a glance

Qualification title	VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 4 Award in High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)
Qualification number	610/2394/2
Product code	BT4A13
First registration date	1st April 2023
Age range	18+
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	42
Guided Learning (GL) hours	21
Assessment	<p>To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practical Examination• Theory Examination• Case Studies
Overall qualification grading	<p>The overall qualification is graded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction
Entry requirements	Learners are required to hold a Level 3 qualification in beauty therapy or an access to aesthetics qualification or equivalent

2. Purpose Statement

2.1 Who is this qualification for?

The VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 4 Award in High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) is a beauty aesthetic qualification aimed at level 3 qualified practitioners aged 18 and over, who wish to add High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) to their repertoire of treatment offerings.

Learners are required to hold a level 3 beauty therapy qualification or an appropriate access to aesthetics 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 qualified High Intensity Focused Ultrasound practitioner.

Learners must achieve the mandatory unit:

- Enhance Appearance Using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)

Throughout this qualification, learners will develop their knowledge and understanding of relevant requirements, regulations and safe practice treatment protocols for High Intensity Focused Ultrasound. 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 high intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) treatments. Additionally, learners may choose to develop their knowledge and skills further by completing additional specialist qualifications at Level 4 and 5, including:

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

3. Qualification structure

To be awarded the VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 4 Award in High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) 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 **42**.

VTCT Skills product code	Unit title	Level	GL	Unit reference number
Mandatory units				
UBT448	Enhance Appearance Using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)	4	21	L/650/6628

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 Skills website for further information or email:

qualityassurance@vtctskills.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 Skills External Examiner will verify a sample, either in situ or remotely on e-portfolio.

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 Skills 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 Skills 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 Skills website.

5.2 Unit assessment methods

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

Unit product code	Case Studies	Theory Examination	Practical Examination
UBT448	✓	✓	✓

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 Skills.

The specification for the external theoretical examination is detailed below.

Theory examination (UBT448)	
Availability (Exam sessions)	To be taken on demand as agreed by the awarding organisation. Available to sit online.
Grading	Fail: 0-59% = 0 points Pass: 60-74% = 450 points Merit: 75-89% = 500 points Distinction: 90-100% = 550 points
Units covered	UBT448 – Enhance Appearance Using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)
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 Skills 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 may 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 Skills website.

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 through direct observation at the centre.

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

In preparation for the practical examination, centres are advised to ensure learners have carried out a series of formatively assessed case studies, comprising 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 Skills website.

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 (BT4A13.PE1)	
Availability	To be scheduled through the VTCT Skills booking system, whether being remotely moderated by an External Moderator or conducted in person by an External Examiner.
Grading model	Fail: 0-59% = 0 points Pass: 60-74% = 450 points Merit: 75-89% = 500 points Distinction: 90-100% = 550 points
Units covered	UBT448 – Enhance Appearance Using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)
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 Skills website 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 Skills website.

Case Study/Internal Assessment for Enhance Appearance Using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)		
Assessment Criteria The learner has:	P	R
Prepared self, client and area for treatment (including the use of PPE if appropriate), in line with health and safety protocols and legislation, ensuring that all resources are ergonomically placed and the treatment area is well lit		
Confirmed all consultation details, skin/body assessments and relevant tests had been performed, checked results and contraindications		
Performed skin sensitivity tests and visual examination of the condition and health of the client's skin to establish the skin characteristics and condition and confirmed the client's suitability for treatment		
Discussed and confirmed the management of pain relief options and topical anaesthetic/numbing for the area if required and recorded all details		
Used a range of communication skills, discussed and confirmed realistic and achievable treatment objectives and the likely healing process and associated time frames		
Discussed possible contra-actions and expected treatment reactions and checked the client's understanding regarding the importance of adherence to aftercare protocols and future treatments intervals		
Provided information regarding the 'cooling off period' and obtained the client's signed, informed consent to proceed with the treatment		

Case Study/Internal Assessment for Enhance Appearance Using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)

Assessment Criteria The learner has:	P	R
Gained consent for, and taken, pre-treatment photographs, discussed, agreed and confirmed the desired treatment outcomes with the client, making adjustments where required		
Demonstrated pre-treatment cleansing, mapped and agreed a treatment grid and gained signed consent for the treatment to proceed		
Ensured client, clothes and modesty were protected appropriately and applied the conductor gel evenly to the areas to be treated		
Selected, checked and prepared the appropriate transducer/cartridge/treatment heads suitable for the treatment objectives and recorded all details		
Positioned client and self appropriately for the treatment ensuring full support and access to the treatment area and minimised risk of strain or injury		
Performed a safe, effective treatment using and adapting techniques to achieve the desired outcome		
Monitored the treatment area and checked client wellbeing using the 1-10 pain threshold scale throughout the treatment giving reassurance or taking breaks as necessary		
Worked to a commercially acceptable time in line with treatment objectives, removed excess gel and applied post treatment products as recommended		
Demonstrated safe disposal of all treatment waste in line with organisational requirements and legislation		
Evaluated treatment outcomes, taken post treatment photographs and gained client feedback including signed approval accepting the results of treatment		
Given verbal and written aftercare recommendations including advice on further treatments and maintenance required with appropriate intervals and gained signature from the client agreeing to follow all aftercare/post treatment advice		
Recorded all treatment details in line with organisational requirements and legislation		

6 External Examination and Moderation

6.1 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 Skills requirements
- allocates a quality assurance risk-rating to the centre
- provides advice and guidance on quality assurance matters

6.2 Spot Checking

In addition to the scheduled External Examiner 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 Skills.

7. Unit structure

Units are available as separate specifications and can be downloaded from the VTCT Skills website. The unit that makes up this qualification is 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 as detailed on Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	01/04/2023	First published	Product and Regulation Coordinator
v2.0	03/04/2023	Clarified assessment method pg10-11	Product and Regulation Coordinator
v3.0	06/04/2023	Removed reference to an Appendix	Qualifications Administrator
v4.0	01/01/2025	New branding	Qualifications Administrator