
Qualification Specification

iHB3D11 – VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in
Hairdressing

603/5114/7

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 3 Diploma in Hairdressing
Qualification number	603/5114/7
Product code	iHB3D11
First registration date	1 st September 2019
Age range	16-18, 19+
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	547
Guided Learning (GL) hours	472
Assessment	To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments: • Theory examination (MCQ) • Synoptic practical examination • Service portfolio
Grading	The overall qualification is graded: • Fail, Pass, Merit, Distinction
Entry requirements	It is recommended that learners should hold a Level 2 Diploma in Hairdressing or equivalent qualification. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that learners have the required knowledge, understanding and skills to enrol and successfully achieve this qualification.

3. About this qualification

3.1 Purpose

The VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Hairdressing is a higher level qualification that provides the learner with the knowledge, understanding and skills to work creatively as an employed and/or self-employed hairdresser. This qualification is aimed at those learners who hold a recognised Level 2 or equivalent hairdressing qualification and ideally work in a salon.

Learners must achieve all four mandatory units for this qualification which, include:

- Provide client consultation services
- Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques
- Creatively colour and lighten hair
- Creatively style and dress hair

This qualification offers a wider range of optional units of which one must be achieved, these include:

- Provide hair colour correction services
- Provide a variety of relaxing services
- Provide specialist hair and scalp treatments
- Provide creative hair extension services
- Create a variety of permed effects

This qualification is most suitable for those learners who wish to become a senior stylist. The qualification builds on existing knowledge and understanding of hairdressing and develops more creative and advanced technical skills necessary for employment. It rewards learner's individual abilities both in practical and theory with a graded outcome of Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction.

3.3 Progression

Learners who achieve this qualification are able to work as a senior stylist, learners could work in a variety of different sectors, which might include:

- Commercial salons
- Senior stylist/manager
- Independent/self-employed/mobile/home-based salon settings
- Product manufacturing
- Training/teaching within private centres/colleges
- Cruise liners

Whilst this qualification's primary purpose is to prepare the learner for employment as a senior stylist they may choose to complement their skills base or become a specialist in a particular field of hairdressing by undertaking a Level 4 Certificate in Trichology for Hairdressers.

To note: Within the United Kingdom, when this qualification is completed, learners are eligible to become a State Registered Hairdresser (SRH) with The Hairdressing Council.

4. Qualification structure

To be awarded the VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Hairdressing learners must achieve:

- all mandatory units
- a minimum of one optional unit
- the theory examinations
- the synoptic practical examination

The minimum TQT required to achieve this qualification is 547.

Product code	Unit title	Level	GL	Unit reference number
Mandatory units				
iUHB309	Provide client consultation services	3	90	H/617/8092
iUHB310	Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques	3	121	K/617/8093
iUHB311	Creatively colour and lighten hair	3	121	M/617/8094
iUHB312	Creatively style and dress hair	3	68	T/617/8095
Optional units				
iUHB313	Provide hair colour correction services	4	137	A/617/8096
iUHB314	Provide a variety of relaxing services	3	90	F/617/8097
iUHB315	Provide specialist hair and scalp treatments	4	97	J/617/8098
iUHB316	Provide creative hair extension services	4	72	L/617/8099
iUHB317	Create a variety of permed effects	3	90	T/617/8100

5. Centre requirements

5.1 Approval and recognition

Existing centres that wish to deliver this qualification must obtain recognition using the standard qualification recognition procedures.

New centres that want to deliver this qualification must gain both centre approval and qualification recognition. Please refer to the awarding organisation's website 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.

5.2 Resources

Centres must possess the physical resources and suitable environment needed to support the delivery of the programme and the assessment of knowledge and skills, which should therefore be of industry standard. Where specific resources are required these have been indicated in the content of individual units.

It is recommended the following items are available for learners:

- Salon equipment to include:
 - Brush/broom, pan and covered receptacle for disposing of hair cuttings, sterilising equipment, wipes and/or fluid – sharps box
 - Basins, working units with mirrors and back mirrors, hand-held hairdryers, electrical Styling Equipment (Refer to the unit content for requirements)
 - Steamer, hood dryers, electrical accelerator/heat developer
 - Set of hair clippers, set of neck trimmers
 - Chemical mixing area (that meets health and safety regulatory requirements)
 - Full range of shampooing, conditioning, tonics and treatment products
 - Full range of salon products, tools and equipment for all salon services including chemical services
 - Full range of products tools and equipment to undertake additional (optional) units within the qualification
- Reception desk/area to include:
 - Telephone and till, internet, books, magazines, service/treatment price lists
 - Retail products/items
- Health and safety products, tools and equipment, to include:
 - Personal protective equipment (PPE), towels, gowns, gloves, aprons and capes, sharps bin, cleaning equipment and bins with lids and disposable liners for disposing of waste

5.3 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
- Understand the qualification's structure and content, and the learning outcomes they are delivering
- Have recent and relevant 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)

5.4 Verification

The lecturer/internal assessor will assess and mark the service portfolios and the external examiner will verify a sample, either in situ on the day of the practical exam or remotely on e-portfolio.

5.5 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

TQT is defined under the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition, General Condition J1.8, 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 4 of this specification.

6. Assessment

6.1 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 examinations (MCQ)	Externally set and marked examinations.
Synoptic practical examination (HB3D11.PE1)	Externally set, examined and marked by an external examiner.
Service portfolio including style collections	Externally set and internally marked. Subject to examiner monitoring.

6.2 Unit assessment methods

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

Unit product code	Service portfolio	Theory examination	Synoptic practical examination
iUHB309	✓	✓	✓
iUHB310*	✓		✓
iUHB311	✓	✓	✓
iUHB312*	✓		✓

*To include a style collection

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

Unit product code	Portfolio of evidence	Theory examination	Synoptic practical examination
iUHB313	✓	✓	
iUHB314	✓	✓	
iUHB315	✓	✓	
iUHB316	✓	✓	
iUHB317	✓	✓	

6.3 Theory examination

The specification for the theory examination is detailed below.

External theory examinations	
Availability	Available on demand online
Grading model	Mandatory units: Pass: 60%-74% = 175 points each Merit: 75%-89% = 200 points each Distinction: 90%-100% = 225 points each Optional units*: Pass/Fail *N.B: a Pass mark must be achieved in the optional unit chosen to achieve the qualification, however this will not contribute to the overall grade.
Units that will be individually assessed by an multiple choice questions (MCQ)	Mandatory units: iUHB309 Provide client consultation services iUHB311 Creatively colour and lighten hair Optional units: iUHB313 Provide hair colour correction services iUHB314 Provide a variety of relaxing services iUHB315 Provide specialist hair and scalp treatments iUHB316 Provide creative hair extension services iUHB317 Create a variety of permed effects
Contribution to overall qualification grade	50% (mandatory units only)
Type of examination	Multiple choice questions

Grades achieved in each external examination are awarded points that contribute to the overall qualification grade.

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

6.4 Synoptic practical examination

The synoptic practical examination is externally set, externally examined, graded and quality assured by VTCT Skills. Information on how to operate practical examinations can be found on the awarding organisations website.

In preparation for the external synoptic practical examination, centres are advised to ensure learners have completed their service portfolios and conducted an internal mock practical examination. As part of the service portfolio learners are required to have completed their style collection before the synoptic practical examination is taken. The style collection work must be available for the external examiner to view on the day of the synoptic practical examination.

It is essential centres use the Synoptic Practical Examination Criteria document in order to make assessment judgements when preparing for examinations. This can be found on the awarding organisations website.

The synoptic practical examination preparation must take place in a realistic working environment on a real client and in a commercially acceptable time frame.

External synoptic practical examination (HB3D11.PE1)	
Availability	To be taken on the scheduled date for examination purposes as agreed by the awarding organisation and invigilated by an external examiner.
Grading model	Pass: 60%-74% = 350 points Merit: 75%-89% = 400 points Distinction: 90%-100% = 450 points
Units covered	iUHB309 Provide client consultation services iUHB310 Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques iUHB311 Creatively colour and lighten hair iUHB312 Creatively style and dress hair
Contribution to overall qualification grade	50%
Type of examination	Synoptic practical examined assessment
Practical skills examination sequence (approximately 3 hours)	Details for the synoptic practical examination criteria can be found in the Synoptic Practical Examination Criteria document located on the VTCT Skills website. There is a maximum of 12 learners permitted per synoptic practical examination.

6.4.1 Retaking external 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.

6.4.2 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 awarding organisation's website.

6.5 Service portfolio

A service portfolio for each unit is required to be completed under the supervision of a lecturer who must monitor the quality of the services performed throughout the learner's training. The criteria of what must be included in the service portfolio is detailed in the unit specification and the learner logbook which are available to download from the website.

The service portfolio will include a style collection for:

- iUHB310 - Creatively cut hair using a combination of techniques
- iUHB312 - Creatively style and dress hair

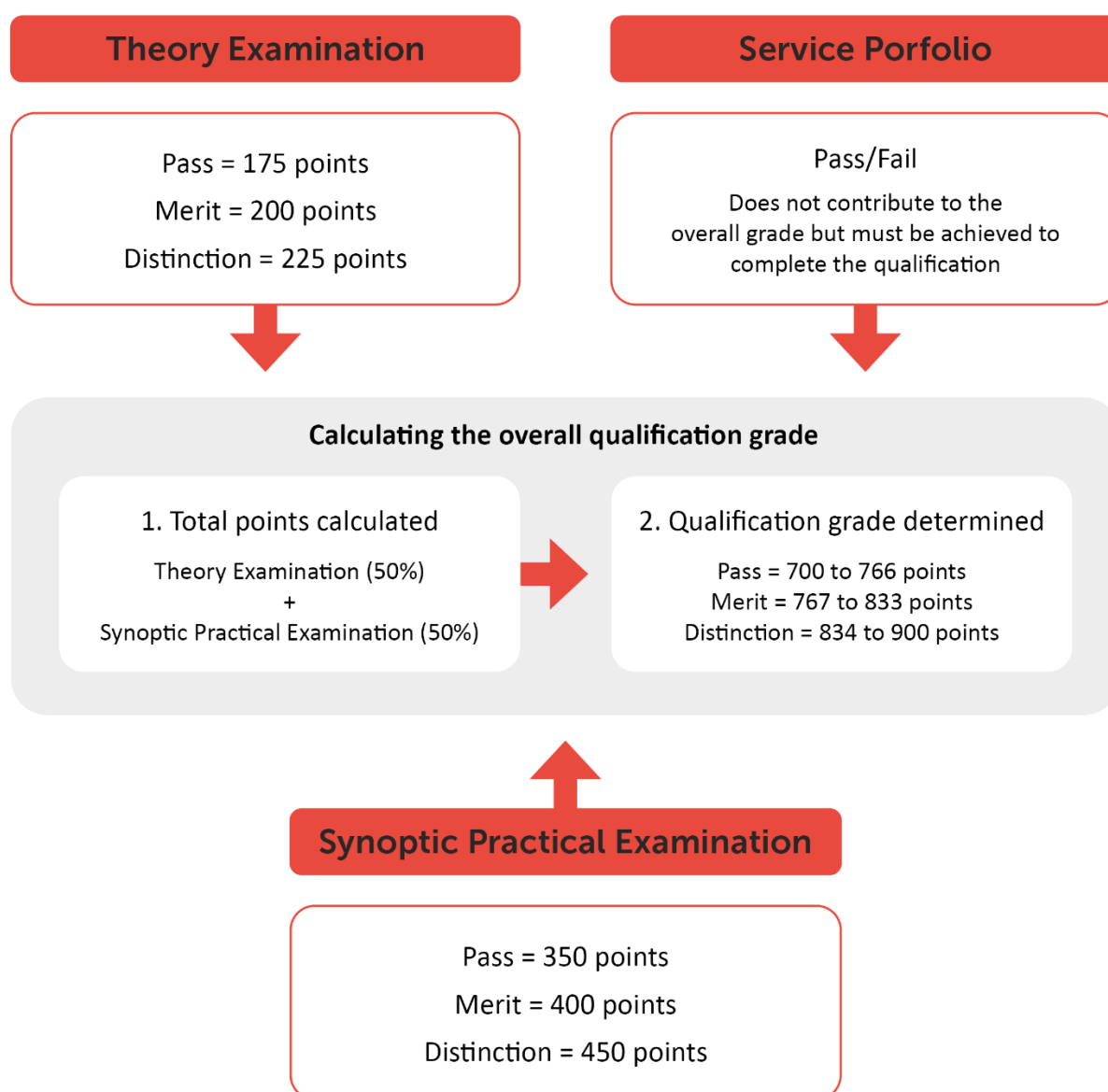
7. Grading

7.1 Overview

This qualification is graded Pass/Merit/Distinction. This is only applicable to the mandatory units. Optional units are graded Pass/Refer and at least one unit must be achieved to be awarded the qualification, however they do not contribute to the overall grade.

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

Learners must achieve a Pass grade or higher in the external theory examinations and synoptic practical examination. 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 shown below:



7.2 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 Skills. This review and possible change within a qualification are to ensure the standard of the qualification grade is upheld throughout the qualification's lifecycle.

8. External examiner

8.1 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' service portfolio
- 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

9. Support and guidance

In parallel to using this qualification specification the following resources are available to support qualification delivery and assessment:

- Unit specifications
- Learner logbooks
- Mock practical examination form
- Sample assessment materials
- Consultation sheets

For more information, visit the VTCT Skills website (vtctskills.org.uk).

10. Unit structure

Units are available as separate specifications and can be downloaded from the VTCT Skills website. 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 as detailed on Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications.
Level	This represents the level of achievement. The National 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.
Unit requirements	Specifies 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	30/08/2019	First published	Head of Qualifications and Processing
v2.0	03/12/2019	Added grade boundary review	Qualifications Administrator
v3.0	01/09/2020	Added COVID-19 Infection Prevention pre-requisite	Product and Regulation Manager
V4.0	01/08/2022	Removed COVID-19 Infection Prevention pre-requisite	Product and Regulation Coordinator
V5.0	01/01/2025	New branding	Qualifications Administrator
v6.0	20/07/2026	Rebranding	Development Administrator