

Widening Participation through the Acceptance of Non-Traditional Entry Qualifications

BTecs 'set students up for failure' at university

Julie Henry Published: 2 November 2014

Comment (1) Print



University students with vocational qualifications go on to get worse degrees and have higher drop out rates than those with traditional A-levels, new research has revealed.

**Dr Debbi Stanistreet, Dr Tammy Thiele, Ms Ceri Coulby
and Professor Mike Speed University of Liverpool**

Qualitative findings

- Students felt that university was 'harder' than they expected academically
- Some felt 'overwhelmed' by the demands and what they perceived as lack of tutor support
- All had noticed gaps in their underpinning knowledge.
- Sometimes they felt helpless and left behind. None had joined any clubs or societies citing that there 'wasn't enough time due to study commitments'.

Quantitative findings

- Students with BTEC are 78% less likely to gain 50% or more during their first year of studies compared to A-level students. .
- Students from Polar groups 3 to 5 are 64% more likely to gain 50% or more during their first year of studies compared to students from Polar groups 1 and 2.
- Students with 5 GCSE's in English and Maths are 93% more likely to gain 50% or more during their first year of studies.