

Purpose Statement

Name of Regulated Qualification

QAN: 601/7569/2

Title: BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Children's Play, Learning and Development (360 GLH)

Overview

The early years sector

The early years sector in England is made up of over 80,000 settings, with 1.3 million childcare places for children under five. This ranges from childminders and nannies, to nurseries, crèches and preschools. Alongside the care provision, the sector has further career paths for students interested in working with children. Degree courses in speech therapy, social work, special education and playwork offer additional opportunities in the sector.

Who is this qualification for?

This qualification is for students interested in learning about the early years sector as part of a balanced study programme. It is intended as an Applied General qualification, and is equivalent in size to 1 A level. It supports access to a range of higher education courses, possibly in the early years sector, if taken alongside further level 3 qualifications.

No prior study of the sector is needed, but students should normally have a range of achievement at level 2 in GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

What does the qualification cover?

The content of this qualification has been developed in consultation with higher education to ensure it supports progression towards higher study. In addition, employers and professional bodies have been involved, in order to confirm that the content is also appropriate for those interested in working in the sector.

Students taking this qualification will study the following three mandatory units:

- Children's Development
- Development of Children's Communication, Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Play and Learning.

Students will complete 50 hours of work experience in the sector.

Students are able to select one option unit, which supports their progression to specialised degree programmes within the sector and covers areas such as:

- Keeping Children Safe
- Children's Physical Development, Care and Health Needs
- Working with parents and others in Early Years
- The Early Years Foundation Stage

What could this qualification lead to?***Will the qualification support progression to further learning, if so, what to?***

Because the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Children's Play, Learning and Development is generally taken alongside other qualifications as part of a two-year programme of learning, students will be able to choose a wide range of degree programmes to progress to.

The qualification is intended to carry UCAS points and is recognised by HE providers as contributing to meeting admission requirements to many courses. The courses available will depend on the other subjects chosen, but for students interested in a course linked to the sector the following are possibilities:

- BSc (Hons) in Paediatric Nursing, when taken alongside, for example, Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Science and A level Psychology
- BA (Hons) in Childhood Studies, when taken alongside, for example, A levels in English and Psychology
- BA (Hons) in Primary Education, when taken alongside, for example, A levels in English Literature and History.

Students should always check the entry requirements for degree programmes at specific HE providers.

Will the qualification lead to employment, if so, in which job role and at which level?

This qualification is designed primarily to support progression to employment via higher education; however, this qualification will also be relevant for those choosing to progress directly to employment through an Early Years Educator Apprenticeship.

If there are larger and/or smaller versions of this qualification, or it is available at different skills levels, why should the student choose this one?

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Children's Play, Learning and Development** is the smallest qualification in the suite of BTEC Nationals in Children's Play, Learning and Development and is equivalent in size to 1 A Level. It is for students interested in learning about the early year sector alongside other fields of study, probably with a view to progressing to a wide range of HE courses, but not necessarily in the early years sector.

The suite also includes the following qualifications:

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Foundation Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development** is equivalent in size to 1.5 A levels and is for students looking for a one-year course, perhaps after taking further level 2 qualifications, and wishing to enter employment directly to caring roles with children. It can also be taken alongside another area of study that contrasts or complements this qualification over a two-year full-time study programme.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development** (Early Years Educator) is equivalent in size to 2 A levels and is for students wanting to progress directly into work as an Early Year Educator on achieving the qualification. Its size means there is time in a study programme to improve English and mathematics qualifications, if necessary, or to take an additional level 3 qualification to support progression.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development** (Early Years Educator) is equivalent in size to 3 A levels and is for students who know they want to work with children as an Early Year Educator, either directly on achievement of this qualification, or after further study for a sector-related degree.

This qualification is supported by the following organisations

Higher education

University of Huddersfield
University of Chichester
University College Birmingham
University of the West of England

Professional and trade bodies

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years
British Association for Early Childhood Education
Pre-school Learning Alliance

Employers

Smaller Earth