



Pearson Level 3
Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in

L3

Medical Science (Extended Certificate)

Transition Guide

First teaching from September 2025

Pre-publication draft

Qualification Number: 610/3958/5

This document is for centres/practitioners moving (transitioning) from Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Human Biology to the Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate)

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Introducing the BTEC Level 3 Nationals from 2025 (AAQs)

The BTEC Nationals from 2025 qualifications provide students with meaningful and practical learning experiences across a range of career sectors. They equip students with the applied knowledge, skills and personal attributes they need to enter and thrive in higher education and meet the demands of future employment in our fast-changing world.

BTEC Nationals from 2025 (AAQ) are:

- **Engaging and future-focused** - providing opportunities for students to learn in real, relatable and practical ways and designed to ensure that they develop critical knowledge and transferable skills to navigate the future.
- **Accessible and fair for students, balanced with the demands of progression to the next stage of learning** - the use of the N Grade and our holistic approach to designing assessment criteria means that qualifications are attainable for students whilst ensuring that they have a solid foundation of skills and knowledge, and the confidence to progress.
- **Accepted and supported by universities** - developed in collaboration with educators and universities to ensure students have the right combination of skills and knowledge for success in higher education. Over 100 letters of support from universities.
- **Well supported and straightforward to deliver and administer** - simple structure making unit combination more straightforward; uniformed format of external assessment across subjects to streamline administration; Pearson-Set Assignment Briefs (PSABs) removing the need for centres to plan their own assignments, and wide range of training and support.



What is new?

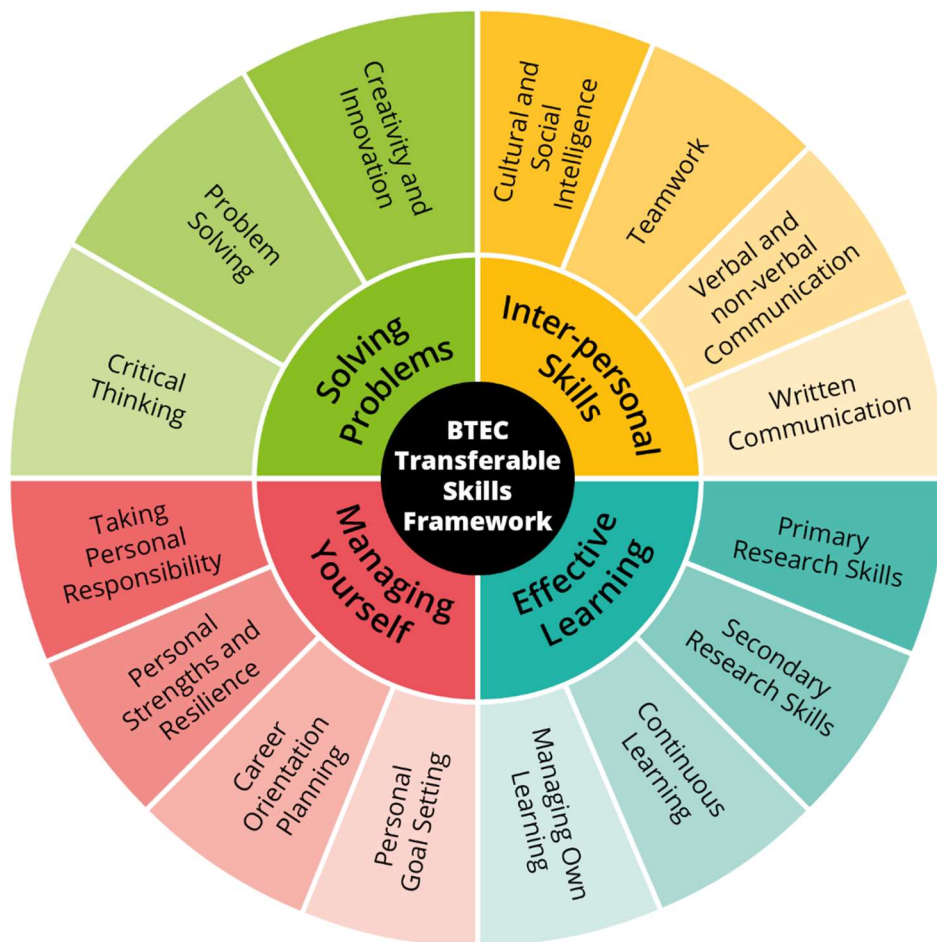
Preparing students for their future

Our new BTEC Level 3 Nationals from 2025 (AAQ) qualifications are designed with a clear focus on the future.

Our aim is to ensure that students are given every opportunity to develop the new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they need to navigate and thrive through the uncertainty and to shape their world. We have identified three critical skill areas for the future – *transferable skills, digital skills and sustainability* – and have designed our new BTEC qualifications with these areas at the heart. Join us on the journey as we prepare young people to be the best versions of themselves for the future.

[Read our brochure.](#)

Click on the infographic to see further information.



What makes it easy to transition to the new BTEC National from 2025 (AAQ)?

- Auto approval - if you are currently approved to deliver BTEC Nationals you will receive automatically approval for the new qualification.*
- Refreshed and updated content and assessments – to ensure your learners continue to progress to popular progression routes into HEIs and beyond.
- Simple, manageable and flexible structure – you can continue to structure your delivery of teaching, learning and assessment when it best suits you and your learners.
- Unchanged Quality Assurance process with Standards Verification at the heart.
- Assessments - Externally Assessed Exams available twice a year, and Internally Assessed units, Assessments set by Pearson, and taken by learners when they are ready.
- Familiar retake and resubmission rules.
- Grading, marking and assessment methodologies unchanged - you can continue to teach and assess with confidence.
- Dedicated support - our Subject Advisors and assessments teams are here to support you every step of the way.

*You must be approved in the relevant sector to receive automatic approval.



Support offer

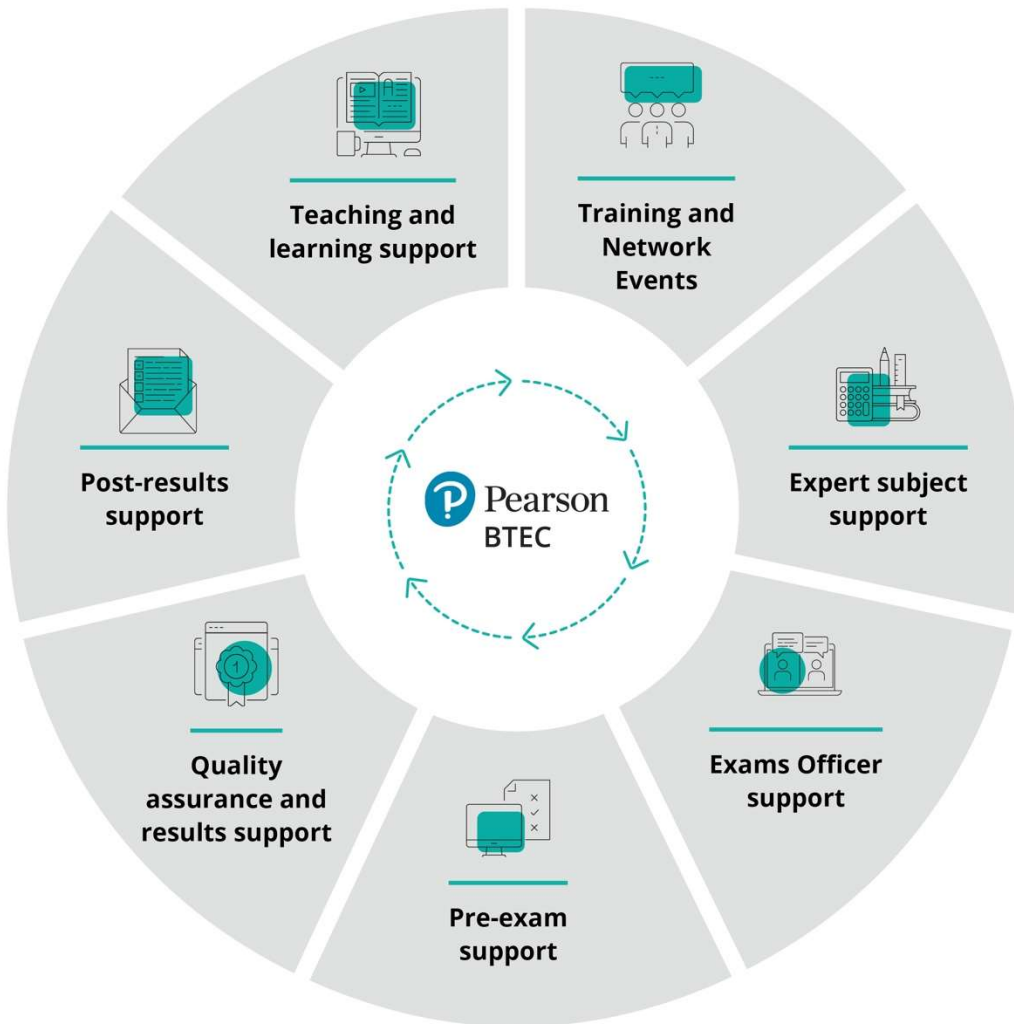
Complimentary resources and services

- **BTEC National Teacher Guide** – a comprehensive guide to support preparation for delivery of your new BTEC National AAQ.
- **Sample Assessment Materials** - showing how tasks, questions and marking will be applied, which can be used as sample papers/tasks to prepare learners.
- **Exam Wizard** - an online resource containing a bank of past paper questions and support materials to help you create your own mock exams and tests.
- **Results Plus** - a free online results analysis tool for teachers that gives you a detailed breakdown of your students' performance in BTEC external assessments.
- **Training** and standardisation – Getting Started and Preparing to Assess training events and recorded sessions will be available from July 2024 onwards.
- **Network events** – an opportunity to hear about the latest developments from subject experts within Pearson and to share good practice with fellow centres.
- Dedicated **Subject Advisor** available throughout the year so please do get in touch if you would like any support or guidance with:
 - Planning your courses
 - Overview of BTEC quality assurance processes
 - Suggested resources
 - Teaching and Assessment of internal units and components
 - Teaching external units and components
 - The training and support materials we have available.

Comprehensive Package of Paid resources

- **Student Books** – provide concise yet complete coverage of each sector, with ample student activities and assessment practice, covering all mandatory and optional units. Available in print and e-book formats.
- **Teacher Packs** – provide further supporting teacher resources for each sector. Designed to help students excel, including a front-of-class version of the e-book, activity sheets, fact sheets, videos and interactive knowledge check quizzes. Available as a bundle of units for each sector or as single unit packs.

Click on the infographic to see further information.



Qualification Structure

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Human Biology			
Unit number	Unit title	GLH	How assessed
Mandatory units - learners complete and achieve all units			
1	Principles of Applied Human Biology	90	External
2	Practical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases	90	Internal
3	Human Biology and Health Issues	120	External
Optional units - learners complete one unit			
4	Functional Physiology	60	Internal
5	Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies	60	Internal
6	Genetics and Genetic Engineering	60	Internal
7	Biomedical Science	60	Internal
8	Human Reproduction and Fertility	60	Internal

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate)			
Unit number	Unit title	GLH	How assessed
Mandatory Units, learners complete all units			
1	Principles of Human Physiology, Anatomy and Pathology	90	External
2	Health Issues and Scientific Reporting	120	External
3	Practical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases	90	Internal
Optional units - learners complete one unit			
4	Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies	60	Internal
5	Biomedical Science	60	Internal
6	Human Reproduction and Fertility	60	Internal

Summary of key similarities and differences

- Continued vocational approach to the qualification ensuring practical application and skill development important for progression into higher education.
- Established and well-recognised grade profiles inclusive of Pass, Merit and Distinction.
- Developed mandatory human biology content providing solid knowledge foundations for application in more specialist contexts.
- Familiar optional units offering teacher flexibility and a variety of progression opportunities for learners.
- Enhanced opportunities to apply data analysis, critical thinking and communication skills using appropriate scientific knowledge.



Assessment Structure

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate)

Mandatory units, learners complete all units				Assessments
1	Principles of Human Physiology, Anatomy and Pathology	90 GLH	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An external examination set and marked by Pearson 80 marks Assessment Availability: January and June First assessment June 2026
2	Health Issues and Scientific Reporting	120 GLH	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An external examination set and marked by Pearson 80 marks Available January and June First assessment June 2026
3	Practical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases	90 GLH	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pearson sets the assignment for the assessment of this unit The PSAB will take approximately 19 hours to complete, and consists of 4 tasks The PSAB will be marked by centres and verified by Pearson You will make assessment decisions for the PSAB using the assessment criteria provided in the specification The PSAB will be valid for the lifetime of this qualification.

Optional units - learners complete one unit				
4	Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies	60 GLH	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson sets the assignment for the assessment of this unit • The PSAB will take approximately 11 hours to complete, and consists of 3 tasks • The PSAB will be marked by centres and verified by Pearson • You will make assessment decisions for the PSAB using the assessment criteria provided in the specification • The PSAB will be valid for the lifetime of this qualification.
5	Biomedical Science	60 GLH	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson sets the assignment for the assessment of this unit • The PSAB will take approximately 18 hours to complete, and consists of 3 tasks • The PSAB will be marked by centres and verified by Pearson • You will make assessment decisions for the PSAB using the assessment criteria provided in the specification • The PSAB will be valid for the lifetime of this qualification.
6	Human Reproduction and Fertility	60 GLH	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson sets the assignment for the assessment of this unit. • The PSAB will take approximately 11 hours to complete, and consists of 3 tasks • The PSAB will be marked by centres and verified by Pearson. • You will make assessment decisions for the PSAB using the assessment criteria provided in the specification • The PSAB will be valid for the lifetime of this qualification.

Pearson Set Assignment Briefs (PSAB)

Internally assessed units are assessed using a Pearson Set Assignment Brief (PSAB), which is set by Pearson, marked by you and subject to external standards verification. The PSAB will be valid for the lifetime of this qualification, with [clear guidance on how to deliver for each new cohort](#).



Mapping Guide

Mapping of Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate) to the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Human Biology specification.

Title: Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate)	Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Human Biology	Comments
Unit 1: Principles of Human Physiology, Anatomy and Pathology (90 GLH) External	Unit 1: Principles of Applied Human Biology (90 GLH) External	
<p>Assessment outcomes: AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and theories, terminology, definitions and scientific formulae used in human physiology, anatomy and pathology AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and theories, procedures, processes and techniques relating to human physiology, anatomy and pathology in given contexts AO3 Analyse and interpret scientific information relating to human physiology, anatomy and pathology.</p>	<p>Assessment outcomes: AO1 Demonstrate knowledge of human biology, health and disease facts, terms, definitions AO2 Demonstrate understanding of human biology, health and disease concepts, procedures, processes and techniques and their application AO3 Analyse, interpret and evaluate information and data relating to human biology, health and disease to make judgements and reach conclusions AO4 Make connections, use and integrate different areas of knowledge and understanding of human biology, health and disease concepts, procedures, processes or techniques.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased content coverage of tissue function and organisation • Introduction of the endocrine system into content • Removal of diagnostic techniques content from this unit • Removal of immune response, dysfunction and treatment from this unit • Introduction of further homeostasis content • Removal of genetic content from this unit • Introduction of the musculoskeletal system into this unit inclusive of joints, tissues and muscles and their associated disorders • Maintenance of the cardiovascular and respiratory system content in this unit • Maintenance and expansion of the digestive and renal system content in this unit.

<p>Unit 2 Health Issues and Scientific Reporting (120 GLH) External</p>	<p>Unit 3 Human Biology and Health Issues (120 GLH) External</p>	
<p>AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific concept and theories, terminology, definitions and scientific formulae used in health issues and scientific reporting AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and theories, procedures, processes and techniques relating to health issues and scientific reporting in given contexts AO3 Analyse and interpret scientific information relating to health issues and scientific reporting AO4 Make judgements or conclusions using scientific concepts, procedures, processes and techniques relating to health issues and scientific reporting.</p>	<p>AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of health issues and associated initiatives and reporting AO2 Apply understanding of health issues and associated initiatives and reporting AO3 Be able to interpret, analyse and evaluate different sources of scientific information AO4 Be able to synthesise different sources of scientific information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic techniques have been introduced into this unit (previously in unit 1) • Immune response and dysfunction has been incorporated into this unit (previously in unit 1) • Genetics has been introduced to this unit from unit 1 • Development of cancer has been introduced to the content • Interpretation, analysis and evaluation of scientific information has been retained in this unit • Content on health issues, associated initiatives and scientific reporting have been streamlined in this unit.
<p>Unit 3 Practical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (90 GLH) Internal</p>	<p>Unit 2: Practical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (90 GLH) Internal</p>	
<p>Learning aims: A Understand the classification and nature of microorganisms B Examine the transmission and treatments of infectious diseases C Explore the application of techniques to culture and identify microorganisms D Investigate the effects of antimicrobial agents on the growth of microorganisms.</p>	<p>Learning aims: A Understand the classification and nature of microorganisms B Examine the transmission and treatments of infectious diseases C Explore the application of techniques to culture and identify microorganisms D Investigate the effects of antimicrobial agents on the growth of microorganisms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content in this unit has remained largely the same with small updates to the content and required practical applications.

<p>Unit 4 Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies (60 GLH) Internal</p>	<p>Unit 5 Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies (60 GLH) Internal</p>	
<p>Learning aims: A Understand biological molecules and pathways and their effect on the body B Understand the effects of physiological diseases and disorders and associated treatments C Examine the development of innovative and future types of treatment for physiological diseases and disorders.</p>	<p>Learning aims: A Understand biological molecules and pathways and their effect on the body B Understand the effects of physiological diseases and disorders and associated treatments C Understand the causes and effects of psychological diseases and disorders and associated treatments D Examine the development of innovative and future types of treatment for physiological and psychological diseases and disorders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlining of content on biological molecules Maintenance of physiological diseases and disorders Removal of psychological diseases and disorders and associated treatments Maintenance of drug and medicine discovery and development content.
<p>Unit 5 Biomedical Science (60 GLH) Internal</p>	<p>Unit 7 Biomedical Science (60 GLH) Internal</p>	
<p>Learning aims: A Understand the principles of haematology and its use in medical diagnosis B Examine the use of health screening, histology and cytology in medicine C Examine the use of urinalysis as an analytical and diagnostic tool.</p>	<p>Learning aims: A Understand the principles of haematology and its use in medical diagnosis B Examine the use of histology and cytology in medicine C Examine the use of urinalysis as an analytical and diagnostic tool.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content in this unit has remained largely the same with small updates to the content and required practical applications.
<p>Unit 6 Human Reproduction and Fertility (60 GLH) Internal</p>	<p>Unit 8 Human Reproduction and Fertility (60 GLH) Internal</p>	
<p>Learning aims: A Understand the anatomy and physiology of the human reproductive system B Understand the role of hormones in the regulation and control of the reproductive System C Examine the causes, treatments and impact of infertility on people’s health.</p>	<p>Learning aims: A Understand the anatomy and physiology of the human reproductive system B Understand the role of hormones in the regulation and control of the reproductive system C Examine the causes, treatments and impact of infertility on the health of human beings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content in this unit has remained largely the same with small updates to the content.

