

Statement of Purpose

500/6725/4 – Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science (QCF)

The applied science industry offers huge potential for learners interested in the sector. The UK is currently regarded as a world leader in sectors including renewable energy, space, low carbon, pharmaceutical, utilities, automotive, agri-food and bioscience. The 2010 National Strategic Skills Audit identified problems in filling associate or 'para' professional and skilled technician roles in a number of sectors identified, including: health care, oil, gas, electricity, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and transport equipment (UKCES, 2010). Some of these concerns have been accentuated by ageing among the current technician workforce, (Science, engineering and technology technicians in the UK economy, Geoff Mason, National Institute of Economic and Social Research, London).

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science (360 GLH) is part of a larger suite of BTEC Applied Science qualifications, in a range of sizes, which share the common purpose of helping people to become occupationally ready to take up employment in the applied science sector at the appropriate level. This can follow either directly after achieving the qualification, or via the stepping stone of Higher Education (HE) in university or college. By studying a BTEC Level 3 National, learners develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required by the sector, including essential employability skills, and apply them in real work contexts. Learners can operate at a standard that can reasonably be expected of an 18 year old in full-time education.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science (360 GLH) is primarily an Applied General qualification, equivalent in size to an A level, which has been designed to occupy one third of the curriculum within a broader programme of study, which could include other vocational or academic qualifications. Its main purpose is to allow learners to develop the core specialist knowledge, understanding and skills – including fundamentals of science, scientific practical techniques, and working in the science industry – required by the sector. It provides a basis for progression into a broad range of roles within the sector when supported by relevant qualifications at level 2, such as GCSE English and mathematics, and/or at level 3, such as A levels, e.g. science, psychology, or another BTEC Level 3, e.g. sport, health and social care, or IT. Learners have some opportunity to study in more depth a range of option areas of their choice, including:

- informatics in science
- biochemistry and biochemical techniques
- industrial chemical reactions
- electrical circuits and their applications.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science is also approved as a Technical Certificate by SEMTA and Cogent in a range of advanced apprenticeship frameworks, or it can be studied part time by learners in schools, colleges and other training provider organisations.

As the qualification was designed in close collaboration with industry, it is fully supported by the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the sector, Cogent. A range of professional organisations/employers in the sector have also confirmed their support for this Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science. This means it is a highly respected route for those who wish to move into employment in the sector, either directly or following further study.

A significant proportion of recruitment in this sector is at graduate level. The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science also provides a well-established route into a variety of specialist Higher Education (HE) courses in this sector, when taken alongside other qualifications appropriate for the desired course of study. UCAS has reviewed the qualification

to assess its value for access to higher education, and has allocated UCAS points. See details published on the Pearson website here:

<http://www.edexcel.com/i-am-a/student/results/Pages/BTEC-equivalence.aspx>

In addition, a number of universities have individually confirmed that this Pearson BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science fulfils their entry requirements when achieved alongside other qualifications.