

Statement of Purpose

601/2527/5 - Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development (Early Years Educator)

Sector overview

The childcare and education sector is a large employer of over 500,000 in the UK, of whom approximately 70% work in early years and childcare. With the drive to increase early years provision to disadvantaged two year olds, there is an increased demand for Early Years Educators. Following on from publication of the Nutbrown Review (2012) and More Great Childcare Report (2013), the focus is on up-skilling the early years workforce, with the sector aspiring to be graduate-led.

The suite of BTEC National qualifications in early years can be studied in a range of sizes, which between them support progression to employment in the sector. Employment can follow directly after achieving one of the larger qualifications, or can be via the stepping stone of Higher Education (HE) in university or college. The smaller qualifications support similar progression routes by being part of a broader programme of study. By studying a BTEC National, learners develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required by the sector 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 BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development (Early Years Educator) (VRQ)

Within this suite, the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development (Early Years Educator) (VRQ) is primarily a Technical Level qualification, equivalent in size to three A-levels, which is designed to confer Early Years Educator status on learners, qualifying them to work directly in the sector. The qualification provides learners with a comprehensive sector specialism by developing a deep common core of knowledge, understanding and skills in the sector through mandatory content, as well as enabling learners to specialise in particular areas of interest. This common core covers all the content, which is regarded as most important by employers and also defined by the Level 3 Early Years Educator criteria, such as:

- child development
- play and learning
- meeting children's physical development
- physical care and health needs
- health and safety
- working with parents and others
- supporting children's communication and language
- supporting children's personal, social and emotional development
- safeguarding
- observation, assessment and planning
- supporting children's literacy and numeracy development
- reflective practice
- the Early Years Foundation Stage
- research skills.

This size qualification is particularly appropriate for those with an interest in directly progressing to a career as an Early Years Educator (e.g. nursery worker, childminder, nanny), or who wish to progress to Higher Education in an early years or related field, for example primary teaching, with this Diploma making up their full study programme.

This qualification was designed in collaboration with industry, so has the specific support of the key organisations and bodies in the early years sector. This qualification has been approved by the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) as conferring Early Years Educator status on learners.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development (Early Years Educator) (VRQ) supports entry to a variety of HE courses in this sector and beyond. This is confirmed by the specific support of a range of universities. UCAS points for the qualification have been confirmed, further details will be available on the Pearson website in spring 2014.