

Purpose Statement

Name of regulated qualification	
QAN: 601/7570/9	Title: BTEC Level 3 National Foundation Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development (540 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, nannies, nurseries, crèches and pre-schools.

Who is this qualification for?

This qualification is intended as a Tech Level, equivalent in size to 1.5 A levels. When studied alongside mathematics and English GCSEs, and other sector requirements such as paediatric first aid certification, it supports access to careers in the early years sector; when studied alongside level 3 mathematics and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), it would be eligible for the Tech Bacc measure.

The qualification aims to provide a comprehensive introduction to study of the sector. It is primarily for students looking for a one-year full-time course who are intending to gain employment directly, or via an Apprenticeship, or progress to an Early Years Educator qualification.

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 employers and professional bodies to confirm that it is appropriate for those interested in working in the sector. Academics have also been involved to ensure it meets requirements for entry to related courses in higher education.

The qualification focuses on developing the knowledge, understanding and skills that provide an excellent basis for employment or for further education.

All the content is mandatory. Students taking this qualification will study seven units covering the following topics:

- Children's development
- Development of Children's Communication, Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Play and Learning
- Keeping Children Safe
- Children's Physical Development, Care and Health Needs
- Working with Parents and Others in Early Years
- The Early Years Foundation Stage

All students taking this qualification will be required to engage with sector employers as part of their course. This includes 300 hours in mandatory work experience.

What could this qualification lead to?

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

This qualification does not confer Early Years Educator status, and is primarily designed to support progression to employment in support roles in the early years sector, for example:

- supervised nursery worker
- classroom assistant
- childminding assistant
- nanny
- through an Early Years Educator Apprenticeship.

Will the qualification support progression to further learning, if so, what to?

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Foundation Diploma in Children's Play Learning and Development is generally taken as a one-year course; students can progress to larger sizes in the BTEC National Children's Play, Learning and Development suite in order to gain Early Years Educator status, or to a complementary subject at level 3. When achieved alongside other level 3 qualifications as part of a two-year programme of learning, students will be able to further progress to a range of degree programmes within the early years sector.

The qualification is intended to carry UCAS points and is recognised by HE providers as contributing to meeting admission requirements to many relevant courses. For example, if taken alongside:

- A levels, it could lead to a BA (Hons) in Childhood Studies
- a Foundation Diploma in Health and Social Care, it could lead to a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Advanced Practice in Work with Children and Families.

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

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 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 who wish 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 suite also includes the following qualifications:

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 years 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 **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 Years 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 Years 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

Professional and trade bodies

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

Employers

The Hall Road Kindergarten
Smaller Earth

Higher education

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