



Pearson

Purpose Statement

Name of regulated qualification	
QAN: 603/0246/X	Title: Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Forensic and Criminal Investigation (720 GLH)

Overview

The forensic and criminology sector

The forensic and criminology sector is diverse and wide-ranging including, for example, forensic science, forensic and criminal psychology and forensic criminology. There is a wide range of occupations for graduate entry including forensic laboratories, the police force and the probation service.

Who is this qualification for?

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Forensic and Criminal Investigation** is intended to be an Applied General qualification for post-16 students wanting to continue their education through applied learning, and who aim to progress to higher education, probably in a range of related degree courses, and ultimately to employment. The qualification is equivalent in size to 2 A levels, and it has been designed as part of a two-year programme, normally alongside a further level 3 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 academics to ensure that it supports progression to higher education. The qualification provides the knowledge, understanding and skills that will prepare students for further study or training.

Everyone taking this qualification will study six mandatory units, covering the following areas:

- principles and applications of science
- practical scientific procedures and techniques
- science investigation skills
- forensic investigation procedures in practice
- applications of criminology
- criminal investigation procedures in practice.

Students choose two option units from a group. The option units have been designed to support progression to the range of sector-related courses in higher education and to link with relevant occupational areas. The optional units offer breadth and depth of topic areas relevant to the forensic and criminal investigation sector, and cover areas such as:

- physiology of human body systems
- forensic genetics
- environmental forensics
- forensic fire investigation
- practical chemical analysis.

This qualification enables students to acquire substantial cross-sector scientific knowledge and practical scientific skills, as well as forensic evidence collection and analysis skills, an appreciation of the application of psychology in forensic profiling and an understanding of the criminal justice system.

What could this qualification lead to?

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

In addition to the sector-specific content outlined above, the requirements of the qualification will mean that students develop the transferable and higher-order skills that are highly regarded by higher education and employers. For example, carrying out practical laboratory tasks, planning investigations, and evaluating case studies/sources of information to be able to draw arguments together and produce forensic reports for use in court hearings.

The qualification carries UCAS points and is recognised by higher education providers as contributing to admission requirements to many relevant courses. Taken on its own, the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Forensic and Criminal Investigation offers the opportunity to progress to some applied degree courses. Taken alongside other qualifications, it will prepare students to progress to a wider range of degree programmes. For example, if taken alongside:

- A level in Chemistry, to progress to forensic science degree courses
- A Level in Psychology, to progress to psychology degree courses
- A Level in Sociology, to progress to criminology degree courses
- Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Law, to progress to criminology and law degree courses.

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

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

This qualification is primarily designed to support progression to employment after further study at university. However, it also supports students who choose to progress directly to employment, as the transferable knowledge, understanding and skills will give successful students an advantage when applying for a range of entry level industry training programmes and/or Higher Apprenticeships in areas such as laboratory technician or forensic technician.

Why do this size of qualification?

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 Diploma in Forensic and Criminal Investigation** is equivalent in size to 2 A levels. It typically makes up two-thirds of a 16–19 study programme, and is normally taken alongside other qualifications. The additional qualification(s) studied allow students either to give breadth to their study by choosing a contrasting subject, or to give their studies more focus by choosing a complementary subject.

The suite also includes the following qualifications.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Forensic and Criminal Investigation**, which is equivalent in size to 3 A levels and is typically the major qualification in a full two-year study programme. It is best suited to students wanting to progress to higher education in these sectors.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Foundation Diploma in Forensic Investigation**, which is equivalent in size to 1.5 A levels and is for students looking for a one-year course of full-time study, or for those wishing to study it alongside another area of study that contrasts or complements the qualification over a two-year full-time study programme.

For more detail about the other qualifications listed here, and the different progression opportunities they particularly support, please refer to their statements of purpose.

This qualification is supported by the following organisations

Higher Education

Kingston University

Sheffield Hallam University

University of Central Lancashire

University of Chester

University of Huddersfield

University of Portsmouth

University of South Wales

University of the West of England