Statement of Purpose

500/9150/5 – Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in IT (QCF)

The Information Technology (IT) sector and aspects of the creative industries, e.g. computer games development, are highly skilled and high growth sectors of the economy. Also, the IT sector is a key enabler for every other industry in the UK. The Sector Skills Council, eskills UK, estimate in the Technology Insights report (2012) that the IT industry contributes 8% of (or £75 billion to) the economy (Gross Value Add). They forecast that over the subsequent seven years the sector could generate up to an additional £47bn GVA to the economy and create 500,000 new jobs.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma (720 GLH) in IT is part of a larger suite of BTEC National qualifications, in a range of sizes, which share the common purpose of helping people to become occupationally ready to take up employment in the IT sector and aspects of the creative industries 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 National, learners develop 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.

Within this suite, the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in IT is primarily a Technical Level qualification, equivalent in size to two A levels. It covers many aspects of the sector and, as well as an unendorsed pathway there are three endorsed pathways available in Business, Networking and Systems Support and Software Development.

The BTEC Level 3 Diploma in IT (QCF) has been designed to occupy two-thirds of a full-time curriculum, enabling learners to develop a substantial common core of knowledge, including communication and employability skills for IT, computer systems, and information systems, and providing extensive opportunity to study in more depth a full range of optional areas of their choice, such as website production, event driven programming and IT technical support. The Diploma allows time in the curriculum to study other qualifications alongside it, for example mathematics, music or art. It can be studied part time by learners in schools, colleges and other training provider organisations. Its size makes it appropriate as the core component of a Technical Baccalaureate programme, allowing time in the curriculum for the study and completion of the other mandatory components.

As the qualification was designed in close collaboration with industry, it is fully supported by the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the sector, eskills UK. A range of professional organisations/employers in the sector have also confirmed their support for this Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in IT. 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 Diploma in IT also provides a well-established route into a variety of specialist Higher Education (HE) courses in this sector and beyond 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 Diploma in IT fulfils their entry requirements when achieved alongside other qualifications.