



Pearson

Purpose Statement

Name of regulated qualification	
QAN: 603/0454/6	Title: Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Information Technology (1080 GLH)

Overview

The information technology sector

Information technology (IT) involves the use of computers in industry, commerce, the arts and elsewhere. IT includes aspects of IT systems architecture, human factors, project management and the general ability to use computers. Increasingly businesses are implementing IT strategies to manage and process data, both to support many business processes and to deliver new opportunities.

The UK is one of the leading digital nations in the world, and its economy has the highest percentage of GDP involved in the digital economy of all European nations. The digital economy refers to both the digital access of goods and services and the use of digital technology to help businesses.

Research by the National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) showed that the digital economy is larger than conventional estimates show, with almost 270,000 actively digital companies in the UK, or 14.4 per cent of all companies, and 11 per cent of all jobs.

Ongoing developments in the sector include the Government Digital Inclusion strategy to increase SME (small- and medium-sized enterprise) transactions online, with the aim of reaching 1.6 million businesses by 2018.

Who is this qualification for?

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Information Technology** is intended to be an Applied General qualification and is equivalent in size to 3 A levels. It is designed for students who are interested in a two-year, full-time study programme that will meet the entry requirements entry for a course in information technology or computer-related study that supports progression to higher education.

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. In addition, employers and professional bodies have been involved and consulted, in order to confirm its relevance to current industry practice used in IT and related occupational disciplines.

The qualification provides the knowledge, understanding and skills that will prepare students for further study or training.

Students study the relationship between hardware and software, managing and communicating information and data, and the principles of designing and developing digital technologies and processes to support organisations across seven mandatory units:

- information technology systems
- creating systems to manage information
- using social media in business
- programming
- IT project management
- cyber security and incident management
- IT service delivery.

Students choose six additional option units. The option units have been designed to support progression to more specialist IT courses in higher education and to link with relevant occupational areas. This allows students to choose a specific specialist area in which they wish to develop their skills. The option units include content covering areas such as:

- data modelling
- website development
- mobile apps development
- computer games development
- big data and business analytics
- IT technology support and management software testing
- cloud storage and collaboration tools
- digital animation and visual effects
- the internet of everything
- enterprise and entrepreneurship in IT
- business process modelling tools.

What could this qualification lead to?

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

In addition to the content outlined areas outlined above, the requirements of the qualification will mean that students develop some of the transferable and higher-order skills that are highly regarded by higher education and employers. A significant portion of recruitment for specialists in information technology is at graduate level and this qualification is designed to support progression to higher education ahead of employment.

The course is designed to be studied over two years and carries UCAS tariff points. It fully meets entry requirements for progression to a degree course in information technology and related areas, including:

- BSc (Hons) Business Information and Technology
- BSc (Hons) in Digital Technology Solutions
- BSc (Hons) in Computer Games Technology
- BSc (Hons) in Creative Technology
- BSc (Hons) in Information Technology Management for Business
- BSc in Computing Forensics
- BSc in Computer Networks Security.

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 designed primarily to support progression to employment following further study at university. However, it also supports students progressing directly to employment, as the transferable knowledge and skills will allow successful students the opportunity to apply for a range of entry level roles, industry training programmes and Higher Apprenticeship in areas such as IT sales and service, digital marketing, IT consulting, business analysis or information and cyber security analysis.

Why choose 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 Extended Diploma in Information Technology** is equivalent in size to 3 A levels. It is typically the major qualification in a full two-year 16–19 study programme. It allows students to focus their study on this sector with a view to progression to a degree in a technology related field.

The suite also includes the following qualifications.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Information Technology**, which is equivalent in size to 0.5 A level. It is intended for students interested in an introduction to data modelling and website development, when studied within a full-time programme alongside other fields of study, with a view to progressing to a wide range of higher education courses, but not necessarily in IT.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Information Technology**, which is equivalent in size to one A level. It is for students interested in learning about IT systems, database management and social media in business, alongside other fields of study, with a view to progressing to a wide range of higher education courses, but not necessarily in IT.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Foundation Diploma in Information Technology**, which is equivalent in size to 1.5 A levels and is for students looking for a one-year course of full-time study in IT systems and programming, or for students wishing to study these aspects of the sector alongside another area of study that contrasts or complements the qualification, over a two-year full-time study programme.

The **Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Information Technology**, which is equivalent in size to 2 A levels. It typically makes up two-thirds of a 16–19 study programme, and is taken alongside other qualifications. The additional qualification(s) studied allows 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. It is an ideal qualification to take where information technology is the student's main interest, but allows time in a study programme for another level 3 qualification, which will support progression to a range of undergraduate degree courses.

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

Leeds Beckett University

University of Chichester

University of Exeter

University of Huddersfield