

Comparison of specifications

Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF) (new qualification for first teaching September 2010)

Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF) (new qualification for first teaching September 2010)

and

Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Certificate in Pharmacy Services (current qualification)

General Comments:

The Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF)
This is a brand new qualification. It has been developed in response to the requirement for a formal qualification to be provided for learners undertaking the Edexcel Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Pharmacy Service Skills (QCF) to provide them a period of "off workstation" learning.

The Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF) provides the underpinning knowledge for the National Occupational Standards and partially covers the knowledge for the Edexcel Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Pharmacy Service Skills (QCF).

The new qualification offers the learners the opportunity to gain knowledge of in-process accuracy checking prior to final checking. This is a new area of learning within the Edexcel Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Pharmacy Service Skills (QCF).

The Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF)
This qualification is very similar to the Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Certificate in Pharmacy Services. The new specification has been developed from the General Pharmaceutical Council's Standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians in Great Britain. These are the standards and criteria against which the General Pharmaceutical Council approve pharmacy technician qualifications and training programmes.

The qualification no longer offers optional units since it was decided that all pharmacy technicians should have the same basic underpinning knowledge when they registered.

The new qualification specification has an increased emphasis on professionalism. Learners will undertake *Unit 14: Professional Development in Pharmacy* (a new unit to this qualification) to ensure the learners (future General Pharmaceutical Council registrants) are fully aware of the need to

act professionally at all times, both at work and socially. Additionally, *Unit 15: Communicating in Pharmacy*, has been developed to give the learner a greater awareness of the importance of communication in Pharmacy.

The new qualification contains more action and uses of medicines units as this area of study has been split into smaller topic areas.

Unit 13: Community Pharmacy Practice and *Unit 16: Dispensing and Supply of Medicines* have been developed to provide the learner with increased knowledge in these two areas and meet the requirements of the General Pharmaceutical Council Standards.

Unit 1: Chemical Principles for Pharmacy Technicians has been developed from some of the learning outcomes in the previous scientific principles for pharmacy and chemistry for pharmacy units.

Delivery:

Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF)

The mode of delivery used is left to the discretion of each centre, providing the chosen mode of delivery meets learner needs. Centres are expected to make appropriate links between the theory and practical aspects of the qualifications. It is also expected that learners will be given the opportunity to draw upon any previous pharmacy experience they might have.

Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science (QCF)

The mode of delivery used is left to the discretion of individual centres, providing the chosen mode of delivery meets learner needs. Centres are expected to make appropriate links between the theory and practical aspects of the qualifications. Learners should be given the opportunity to draw upon any previous experience from their careers in pharmacy.

Centres should be aware that learners require access to the full range of resources necessary to complete the qualifications and that appropriate specialists should be available to teach the range of specialist subject areas, for example *Unit 19: Making medicines in Pharmacy*.

Assessment

Assessment for both the new qualifications encourages the use of a range of assessment methods. The specification documents also advise centres regarding the nature and type of evidence that learners need to produce. The new specifications contain helpful items such as outline learning plans to guide new tutors in particular. The specifications also provide suggested learning activities and assignment titles to enable the learner to achieve the learning outcomes and grading criteria specific to the unit.