



Your guide to
**BTEC Nationals
2025**

Partnering with you to create a future for every learner

Funded in England only

May 2025

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BTECs are evolving

The Government announced the outcomes of the Review of Qualifications Reform in England in December 2024. The ambition is to continue to reform and introduce new qualifications, giving centres certainty of qualifications that are available and funded until 2027.

Throughout this reform process, we have and will continue to provide support and guidance so you can make any required changes to your curriculum.

Visit our dedicated Level 3 Review webpage for all your latest updates, including funding guide.

BTEC Nationals 2025

BTEC Level 3 Nationals 2025 qualifications provide students with meaningful and practical learning experiences across a range of career sectors.

They equip students with the applied knowledge, skills and personal attributes they need to enter and thrive in higher education and meet the demands of future employment in our fast-changing world.



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Who are BTEC Nationals 2025 for?

BTEC Level 3 Nationals 2025 are for post-16 students aiming to progress to higher education as a route to graduate level employment. With their applied and practical focus, they perfectly complement A levels as a part of a mixed programme of learning, helping to bring more theoretical learning to life.

Students can take BTEC Nationals 2025 (AAQs) alongside A levels and/or other vocational qualifications including AAQs. Students study programmes should be designed to support the learners intended progression to further study.



Why choose BTEC Nationals 2025?

Developing skills for the future



The qualifications are designed to help learners recognise and develop transferable skills and digital skills, as well as engage with sustainability education.

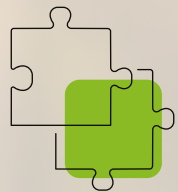
Streamlined assessment



External assessments are now all exams so more manageable to deliver than examined tasks.

Less internal assessments so less marking for teachers.

Designed to be delivered alongside A levels



Subject content that complements and extends the learning in A levels.

Lower number of internal assessments and flexibility of verification means they are easier to deliver alongside A levels.

Less assessment allows more time for teaching and learning across study programme subjects.

Strong progression opportunities



High number of universities accepting/supporting BTECs for entry to undergraduate courses.

Digital badging helping learners to recognise and showcase their skills for onward progression.

Great support and wrap around



Paid-for Student Books and Teacher Packs.

Complimentary teaching and learning resources and support.

Broad training and CPD offer.

Pre-exam and post-results support including Exam Wizard and ResultsPlus.

The new BTEC Level 3 National qualifications are being developed in two cycles in line with the phasing of the reform.

The following qualifications submitted to the Department for Education have been **approved for funding**.

Cycle 1		
Subject	Size	First Teach
Applied Science	360 GLH	September 2025
Computing	360 GLH	September 2025
Construction	360 GLH	September 2025
Early Childhood Development	360 GLH	September 2025
Engineering	360 GLH	September 2025
Health and Social Care	360 GLH	September 2025
Information Technology	360 GLH	September 2025
Medical Science	360 GLH	September 2025



Overview of qualifications

Applied Science



Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Applied Science (Extended Certificate)

The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Applied Science (Extended Certificate) enables students to study the principles and applications of biology, chemistry and physics, as well as practical scientific procedures and techniques. Students will also have the opportunity to develop their investigation skills or explore contemporary issues in science.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme. It can link to learning in a range of A level subjects such as A level Psychology and A level Sociology. The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Applied Science (Extended Certificate) is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

Mandatory units, learners complete all units

1	Principles and Applications of Biology	60 GLH	External
2	Principles and Applications of Chemistry	60 GLH	External
3	Principles and Applications of Physics	60 GLH	External
4	Practical Scientific Procedures and Techniques	90 GLH	Internal

Optional units, learners complete 1 unit

5	Scientific Investigation Skills	90 GLH	Internal
6	Contemporary Issues in Science	90 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	50%
Mandatory content	75%
Choice of Optional Units	1 of 2
External Assessment Administration	3 x Exams: 1hr each (please note - in the current version one paper was split into 3 sittings, the AAQ has less sittings)
Internal Assessments	2 units
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 4: 75hrs Unit 5: 60hrs Unit 6: 65hrs
Total assessments taken	5 units

Computing

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Computing (Extended Certificate)



The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Computing (Extended Certificate) gives students opportunities to develop the core knowledge, skills and understanding that underpin computer programming and to develop computational thinking and programming skills that will enable them to solve problems. Students will explore the critical components that safeguard information systems and data and will acquire knowledge and skills to comprehend and apply security and encryption principles and practices to computer networks in various situations. Students will also have the opportunity to examine the underlying principles of human-computer interaction (HCI) and develop a HCI solution to meet the requirements of a given brief. Students will draw synoptically on their programming learning and computational thinking skills to manage the development of a software solution to a problem.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A levels in Mathematics, Physics and Business. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Programming Fundamentals	120 GLH	External
2	Computer Network Security and Encryption	120 GLH	External
3	Human-Computer Interaction	60 GLH	Internal
4	Practical Programming	60 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	66%
Mandatory content	100%
External Assessment Administration	2 x Exams: 1 x 2hrs 30mins, 1 x 2hrs 15mins
Internal Assessments	2 units
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 3: 20hrs Unit 4: 36hrs
Total assessments taken	4 units

Construction

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Construction and the Built Environment (Extended Certificate)



This qualification reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving construction and the built environment – a qualification that enables your students to apply themselves and give them the skills to succeed in their chosen pathway.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A level subjects such as A level Mathematics, A level Physics and A level Design and Technology. It is intended for students that wish to progress to higher education as a pathway to employment.

Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Construction Principles	120 GLH	External
2	Construction Technology	60 GLH	External
3	Design for Construction and the Built Environment	60 GLH	Internal
Optional units, learners complete and achieve 2 units			
4	Construction Commercial Management	60 GLH	Internal
5	Retrofit in Construction and the Built Environment	60 GLH	Internal
6	Modelling in Construction	60 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	50%
Mandatory content	Principles (Construction Maths and Science), Technology, Design
Choice of Optional Units	2 of 3 from 4 Commercial Management, 5 Retrofit, 6 Modelling
External Assessment Administration	2 x Exams: 1hr 45mins each
Internal Assessments	Other than 5 Retrofit, all briefs will change each year. Every Assessment has one part that must be completed under supervision, such as carrying out the CAD or modelling work using software in the centre.
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 3: 15hrs Unit 4: 15hrs Unit 5: 9hrs 30 mins Unit 6: 12hrs
Total assessments taken	5 units

Early Childhood Development

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Early Childhood Development (Extended Certificate)

The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Early Childhood Development (Extended Certificate) allows students to engage in a broad investigation of the children’s care and education sector (0-8 years). There are four mandatory units; two examined and two internally assessed. The internally assessed units give students the opportunity to engage in applied knowledge and understanding tasks to develop their health and social care knowledge.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A levels in Sociology, Psychology, Biology and English. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.



Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Children's Development	90 GLH	External
2	Keeping Children Safe	90 GLH	External
3	Play and Learning	90 GLH	Internal
4	Research and Reflective Practice in an Early Childhood Setting	90 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	50%
Mandatory content	100%
External Assessment Administration	2 x Exams: 1 hr 45mins each
Internal Assessments	2 units
Total assessments taken	4 units

Engineering

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Engineering (Extended Certificate)

The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Engineering (Extended Certificate) enables students to study the principles and applications of engineering including the fundamental mechanical, electrical/electronic and mathematical principles, the engineering sectors, engineering materials, engineering processes and emerging technologies.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A level STEM subjects such as A level Mathematics and A level Physics. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

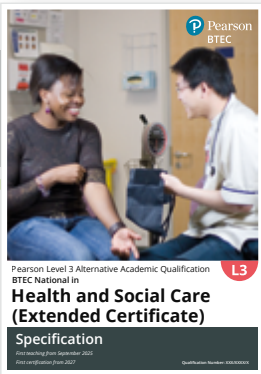


Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Engineering Principles	120 GLH	External
2	Engineering Applications	60 GLH	External
3	Engineering Design	120 GLH	Internal
4	Engineering Project	60 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	50%
Mandatory content	100%
External Assessment Administration	2 x mandatory Exams: 1 x 2hrs 15mins, 1 x 2hrs
Internal Assessments	2 units
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 3: Engineering Design 32hrs, certain tasks under supervision Unit 4: Engineering Project 30hrs, certain tasks under supervision
Total assessments taken	4 units

Health and Social Care

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Health and Social Care (Extended Certificate)



The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Health and Social Care (Extended Certificate) allows students to engage in a broad investigation of various aspects of the health and social care sector. There are two mandatory examined units and one mandatory internally assessed unit. Students will select a further optional unit from the four available. The internally assessed units give students the opportunity to engage in applied knowledge and understanding tasks to develop their health and social care knowledge.

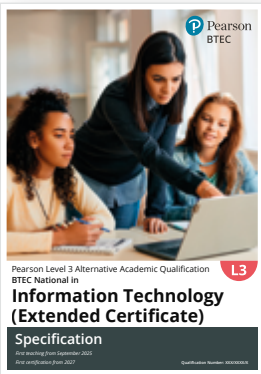
The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A levels such as Psychology, Biology or English. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Human Lifespan and Development	90 GLH	External
2	Human Biology and Health	90 GLH	External
3	Health and Social Care Practice	90 GLH	Internal
Optional units, learners complete 1 unit			
4	Health, Policy and Wellbeing	90 GLH	Internal
5	Promoting Health Education	90 GLH	Internal
6	Safe Environments in Health and Social Care	90 GLH	Internal
7	Health Science	90 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	50%
Mandatory content	75%
Choice of Optional Units	1 of 4
External Assessment Administration	2 x Exams: 1 hr 30mins each
Internal Assessments	2 units
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 3: 16hrs Unit 4: 15hrs under supervision Unit 5: 17hrs, 1 task under supervision Unit 6: 16hrs Unit 7: 16hrs Depending on unit choice, learners will be assessed for approx. 32hrs (learners only do two internal assessments)
Total assessments taken	4 units

Information Technology

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Extended Certificate)



The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Extended Certificate) allows students to study the fundamental knowledge of Information Technology covering the role and implications of using Information Technology systems and cyber-security threats and how to manage attacks. Students will also develop important skills for creating websites to meet a specific purpose and to manage data through the development of a relational database solution.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A level Mathematics and A level Business Studies. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Information Technology Systems	120 GLH	External
2	Cyber Security and Incident	120 GLH	External
3	Website Development	60 GLH	Internal
4	Relational Database Development	60 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	66%
Mandatory content	100%
External Assessment Administration	2 x Exams: 1 x 2hrs, 1 x 2hrs 15mins
Internal Assessments	2 units
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 3: 15hrs Unit 4: 15hrs Learners will be assessed for 30hrs (learners complete two internal assessments)
Total assessments taken	4 units

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification
BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate)



The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Medical Science (Extended Certificate) enables students to study the principles and applications of medical science through three mandatory units, and further explore other areas in more detail via an optional unit. Students will also learn practical and investigation skills that build on this fundamental knowledge.

The qualification is designed to be taken alongside A levels as part of a study programme and can link to learning in A level subjects such as physical education and sport, sociology, chemistry and psychology. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

Mandatory units, learners complete all units			
1	Principles of Human Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology	90 GLH	External
2	Human Biology and Health Issues	120 GLH	External
3	Practical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases	90 GLH	Internal
Optional units, learners complete 1 unit			
4	Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies	60 GLH	Internal
5	Biomedical Science	60 GLH	Internal
6	Human Reproduction & Fertility	60 GLH	Internal

External Assessment	50%
Choice of Optional Units	1 of 3
External Assessment Administration	2 x Exams: 1 x 1hr 30mins 1 x 2hrs
Internal Assessments	2 units
Internal Assessment Length	Unit 3: mandatory 19hrs Unit 4: Diseases, Disorders, Treatments and Therapies: 11hrs Unit 5: Biomedical science: 18hrs Unit 6: Human Reproduction and Fertility: 11hrs Depending on unit choice learners will be assessed for between 30 and 37 hours (learners only do two internal assessments). Typically, with a minimum of 25hrs under classroom supervision.



BTEC Level 3 Technical Qualifications



In addition to the BTEC Nationals 2025 suite of qualifications, we also have BTEC Level 3 Technical qualifications.

BTEC Level 3 Technical Qualifications enable students to develop a purposeful and coherent combination of knowledge, skills and behaviours to confidently enter or progress into employment in occupations that are recognised and demanded by employers.

Our new Technical Qualifications have been validated by a panel of employers to ensure that the qualifications meet the current and emerging needs of industry and provide reliable evidence of students' readiness to progress in their chosen occupation.



BTEC Nationals 2025 and Edexcel A levels

The complete solution for your 16-19 mixed study programmes

The new BTEC Nationals 2025 can be taken as part of a programme of study that includes A Levels.

Pearson Edexcel A levels are available in a wide range of subjects and give learners the chance to develop and focus their knowledge as they explore subjects in greater depth.

HE Engagement and Recognition

BTEC as a progression route into HE

Nearly 100,000 BTEC Level 3 National students progress to HE each year.

BTECs are the second most popular qualification used to access HE in the UK, after A levels.

Over 99% of UK universities recognise relevant BTEC Level 3 National subjects for entry onto related degree programmes. They are the most widely recognised vocational qualification used to access HE in the UK.

Research shows that there is a positive earnings differential for BTEC students that go to HE, at 18% for males and 22% for females. Meanwhile the wage premium for those entering HE with a mix of BTEC and A levels is 15% and 23% for males and females respectively ([Patrignani et al, CVER, 2019](#)).

HE engagement

It was incredibly important to us at Pearson that the updated BTEC qualifications continued to provide a strong progression route into HE.

Each of our BTEC subjects had a HE panel, consisting largely of university academics from across a variety of universities in the UK and a range of related specialisms, as well as relevant professional bodies and Level 3 teaching staff. This panel advised and input into the structure, content and assessment of the new qualifications.

We were so grateful for the extensive input of these HE panels, which commented in detail on multiple iterations of the specification and sample assessment materials till we arrived at the final versions, which received glowing feedback from each of the HE panels.

Over 100 university academics input into the development of the cycle one BTEC Level 3 National subjects. Over 150 university academics input into cycle two subjects. So, over 250 university academics in total input into the development of the content and assessment of the updated BTEC Level 3 Nationals.

Based on anecdotal feedback to date, we expect the HE recognition for the updated BTEC Level 3 Nationals (AAQ) to be broadly comparable to the existing RQF qualifications.

In some cases, it might even be better than before! For example, one university has already informed us that they would lower their standard entry requirement for holders of our updated BTEC Level 3 National in Computing (AAQ), because they liked the content and assessment so much and they felt it was great preparation for HE.

Please contact the universities of interest for information on their respective entry requirements.

UCAS Points and Information

UCAS points

We are pleased to announce that UCAS points have been confirmed for the new suite of BTEC Level 3 Nationals (AAQ).

The qualifications attract the same number of points as the existing RQF versions. Below is a table detailing the points, which includes A levels as a point of comparison.

Extended Certificate	A Level	UCAS tariff points
D*	A*	56
D	A	48
	B	40
M	C	32
		28
	D	24
		20
P	E	16
		12
		10
		8
		6

UCAS information

The new qualifications will appear as a drop-down option on the UCAS application form for 2026 entry onwards.

Please note due to the title length limit on the form, an abbreviated version of the title will appear on the UCAS application form. For example: 'Pearson Level 3 AAQ BTEC in Applied Science (Extended Cert)'.

Find out more

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