



Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification  
BTEC National in

L3

# Information Technology (Certificate)

## Specification

*First teaching from September 2026*

*First certification from 2027*

Issue 3

Qualification Number: 610/6195/5



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## About Pearson

We are the world's leading learning company operating in countries all around the world. We provide content, assessment and digital services to learners, educational institutions, employers, governments and other partners globally. We are committed to helping equip learners with the skills they need to enhance their employability prospects and to succeed in the changing world of work. We believe that wherever learning flourishes so do people.

This specification is Issue 3. Key changes are summarised on the next page. We will inform centres of any changes to this issue. The latest issue can be found on our website.

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# Welcome

BTEC Nationals are widely recognised by higher education and industry as the vocational qualification of choice at Level 3. They provide students with meaningful and practical learning experiences across a range of career sectors to prepare them to progress to higher education as a route to graduate-level employment.

Recent data has shown that one in five adults of working age in the UK has a BTEC qualification. What's more, well over 90,000 BTEC students apply to UK universities every year and their BTEC Nationals are accepted by over 150 UK universities and other higher education institutions for relevant degree programmes either on their own or in combination with A Levels.

## Why are BTECs so successful?

BTECs embody a fundamentally student-centred approach to the curriculum, with a flexible, unit-based structure and knowledge applied through a balanced combination of assignments and examinations. They enable the holistic development of the practical, interpersonal and thinking skills required to succeed in higher education and employment.

When creating these BTEC Nationals we focused on the skills and personal attributes needed to navigate the future, and have worked with many higher education providers, professional bodies, colleges and schools to ensure that their needs are met. Employers are looking for future employees with a thorough grounding in the latest industry requirements and work-ready skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. Higher education needs students who have experience of research, extended writing and meeting deadlines.

We have addressed these requirements by:

- Facilitating and guiding the development of transferable skills through the design and delivery of the qualifications, using a holistic and practical framework which is based on recent research into the most critical skills needed to navigate the future. This Transferable Skills framework has been used to embed transferable skills in the qualifications where they naturally occur and also to signpost opportunities for delivery and development as a part of the wider BTEC learning experience. See page 7 for further information.
- Supporting the delivery of Sustainability Education and Digital Skills development naturally through the content design of the qualifications. Mapping is provided for each qualification to identify where the opportunities for teaching and learning exist.
- Updating sector-specific content to ensure it is relevant and future-facing.
- Implementing a consistent approach to assessment with a balanced combination of internal and external assessments to better engage students, make the qualifications more accessible for them and more manageable for centres to deliver.

We are providing a wealth of support, both resources and people, to ensure that students and their teachers have the best possible experience during their course. See Section 5 for details of the support we offer.

This specification document should be used in conjunction with the [\*Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National Specification Supplementary Information\*](#) document which is available on our website.

## **A word to students**

Today's BTEC Nationals will require commitment and hard work, as you would expect of the most respected applied learning qualification in the UK. You will have to complete a range of units, be organised, take some assessments that we will set and mark and undertake practical tasks and assignments. But you can feel proud to achieve a BTEC because, whatever your plans in life – whether you decide to study further, go on to work or an apprenticeship – your BTEC National will be your passport to success in the next stage of your life.

Good luck, and we hope you enjoy your course.

## Summary of changes to Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate) specification Issue 3

Summary of changes made between previous issue and this issue	Page number
Content A1.3.1 in Unit 1 has been updated from system diagrams to network diagrams	22

If you need further information on these changes or what they mean, please contact us via our website at: [qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html).



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# 1 Introduction

## Why choose Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate)

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We've listened to feedback from all parts of the Information Technology subject community, including higher education. We've used this opportunity of curriculum change to redesign qualifications so that they reflect the demands of a truly modern and evolving digital environment – qualifications that enable your students to apply themselves and give them the skills to succeed in their chosen pathway.

The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate) allows students to study the fundamental knowledge of Information Technology covering the role and implications of using Information Technology systems. Students will also develop important skills for creating websites to meet a specific purpose.

There is one examined unit and one internally assessed unit where students will engage in practical tasks to develop their Information Technology skills and 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 Media Studies and A Level Mathematics. It is intended for students that wish to progress into higher education as a pathway to employment.

## Total Qualification Time

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For all regulated qualifications, Pearson specifies a total number of hours that it is estimated students will require to complete and show achievement for the qualification: this is the Total Qualification Time (TQT). Within TQT, Pearson identifies the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) that we estimate a centre delivering the qualification might provide. Guided learning means activities, such as lessons, tutorials, online instruction, supervised study and giving feedback on performance, that directly involve teachers and assessors in teaching, supervising and invigilating students. Guided learning includes the time required for students to complete external assessment under examination or supervised conditions.

In addition to guided learning, other required learning directed by teachers or assessors will include private study, preparation for assessment and undertaking assessment when not under supervision, such as preparatory reading, revision and independent research.

BTEC Nationals have been designed around the number of hours of guided learning expected. Each unit in the qualification has a GLH value of 60, 90 or 120. There is then a total GLH value for the qualification.

Each qualification has a TQT value. This may vary within sectors and across the suite depending on the nature of the units in each qualification and the expected time for other required learning.

The following table shows the qualifications in this sector and their GLH and TQT values.

Qualification title	Size and structure	Summary purpose
<p><b>Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate) (from 2026)</b></p>	<p>180 GLH (238 TQT)</p> <p>Equivalent in size to half an A Level.</p> <p>2 units of which both are mandatory and 1 is external.</p> <p>Mandatory content (100%).</p> <p>External assessment (66%).</p>	<p>The Certificate is for students who are interested in learning about Information Technology and how it applies in multiple sectors alongside other fields of study, with a view to progressing to a wide range of higher education courses, not necessarily in the IT sector.</p> <p>It is designed to be taken as part of a programme of study that includes A Levels.</p>
<p><b>Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Extended Certificate)</b></p>	<p>360 GLH (468 TQT)</p> <p>Equivalent in size to one A Level.</p> <p>4 units of which 4 are mandatory and 2 are external.</p> <p>Mandatory content (100%).</p> <p>External assessment (66.6%).</p>	<p>The Extended Certificate is for students who are interested in learning about the Information Technology sector alongside other fields of study, with a view to progressing to a wide range of higher education courses, not necessarily in Information Technology-related subjects.</p> <p>It is designed to be taken as part of a programme of study that includes A Levels.</p>

## Structures of the qualifications at a glance

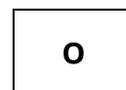
This table shows all the units and the qualifications to which they contribute. The full structure for this Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate) is shown in *Section 3 Structure*. **You must refer to the full structure to select units and plan your programme.**

### Key

Externally assessed units are shown in bold



**Mandatory units**



**Optional units**

Unit (number and title)	Unit size (GLH)	Certificate (180 GLH)	Extended Certificate (360 GLH)
<b>1 Information Technology Systems</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>2 Cyber security and Incident Management</b>	<b>120</b>		<b>M</b>
3 Website Development	<b>60</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>
4 Relational Database Development	<b>60</b>		<b>M</b>

## Qualification and unit content

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Pearson has developed the content of the new BTEC Nationals in collaboration with representatives from higher education and relevant professional bodies. In this way, we have ensured that content is up to date and that it includes the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes required in the sector.

Centres should ensure that delivery of content is kept up to date. Some of the units within the specification may contain references to legislation, policies, regulations and organisations, which may not be applicable in the country you deliver this qualification in (if teaching outside of England), or which may have gone out-of-date during the lifespan of the specification. In these instances, it is possible to substitute such references with ones that are current and applicable in the country you deliver subject to confirmation by your Standards Verifier.

## Assessment

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Assessment is specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. It includes a range of assessment types and styles suited to vocational qualifications in the sector. There are three main forms of assessment that you need to be aware of: external, internal and synoptic.

### Externally assessed units

Each external assessment for a BTEC National is linked to a specific unit. All of the units developed for external assessment are of 60, 90 or 120 GLH to allow students to demonstrate breadth and depth of achievement. Each assessment is taken under specified conditions, then marked by Pearson and a grade awarded. Students are permitted to resit the examination twice. This equates to three attempts in total: one inclusive of registration, the remaining two attempts as resits. If students resit an examined unit, the best grade achieved will count towards their overall qualification grade, not necessarily the most recent sitting. External assessments are available twice a year. For detailed information on the external assessments, please see the table in *Section 3*. For further information on preparing for external assessment, see the [Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National Specification Supplementary Information](#) document, which is available on our website.

### Internally assessed units

Internally assessed units are assessed by a Pearson Set Assignment Brief (PSAB), which is set by Pearson, marked by you and subject to external standards verification. Before you assess you will need to become an approved centre, if you are not one already. You will need to prepare to assess using the guidance in the [Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National Specification Supplementary Information](#) document, which is available on our website. You will make grading decisions based on the

requirements and supporting guidance given in the units. Where a student has not achieved their expected level of performance for an assignment, they may be eligible for one resubmission of improved evidence for each assignment submitted if authorised by the Lead Internal Verifier.

To ensure any resubmissions are fairly and consistently implemented for all students, the Lead Internal Verifier can only authorise a resubmission if certain conditions are met. If the Lead Internal Verifier does authorise a resubmission, it must be completed within 15 working days of the student receiving the results of the assessment.

Feedback to students can only be given to clarify areas where they have not achieved expected levels of performance. Students cannot receive any specific guidance or instruction about how to improve work to meet assessment criteria or be given solutions to questions or problems in the tasks.

If a student has still not achieved the targeted pass criteria following the resubmission of improved evidence for an assignment, the Lead Internal Verifier may authorise, under exceptional circumstances, one retake opportunity to meet the required pass criteria. The retake assignment must be based on a different content theme, sector challenge/issue or context brief as relevant to the PSAB for that subject. The deadline for submission of the retake must fall within the same academic year.

## **Synoptic assessment**

Synoptic assessment requires students to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively, in an integrated way, an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole sector as relevant to a key task. Synoptic links between units are flagged within the units. Please refer to *Unit 1: Information Technology Systems* and *Unit 3: Website Development* for further details.

## **Language of assessment**

Assessment of the internal and external units for these qualifications will be available in English. All student work must be in English. A student taking the qualifications may be assessed in British or Irish Sign Language where it is permitted for the purpose of reasonable adjustment.

For information on reasonable adjustments see the [Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National Specification Supplementary Information](#) document, which is available on our website.

## Grading for units and qualifications

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Achievement in the qualification requires a demonstration of depth of study in each unit, assured acquisition of a range of practical skills required for progression to higher education, and successful development of transferable skills. Students achieving a qualification will have completed all units.

Units are assessed using a grading scale of Distinction (D), Merit (M), Pass (P), Near Pass (N) and Unclassified (U). The grade of Near Pass is used for externally assessed units only. All mandatory and optional units contribute proportionately to the overall qualification grade, for example a unit of 120 GLH will contribute double that of a 60 GLH unit.

BTEC National qualifications are graded using a scale of P to D\*, **or** PP to D\*D\*, **or** PPP to D\*D\*D\* depending on the size of the qualification. Please see *Section 6* for more details. The relationship between qualification grading scales and unit grades will be subject to regular review as part of Pearson's standards monitoring processes on the basis of student performance and in consultation with key users of the qualification.

## UCAS tariff points

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The BTEC Nationals attract UCAS points. Please go to the UCAS website for full details of the points allocated.

# Preparing students for the future

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## Transferable skills

Recent future skills reports have highlighted the growing importance of transferable skills for students to succeed in their careers and lives in this fast-changing world.

Following research and consultation with FE educators and higher education institutions, Pearson has developed a Transferable Skills Framework to facilitate and guide the development of transferable skills through this qualification. The Framework has four broad skill areas, each with a cluster of transferable skills as shown below:

1. **Managing Yourself:** (1) Taking personal responsibility; (2) Personal strengths and resilience; (3) Career orientation planning; (4) Personal goal setting
2. **Effective Learning:** (1) Managing own learning; (2) Continuous learning; (3) Secondary research skills (4) Primary research skills
3. **Interpersonal Skills:** (1) Written communications; (2) Verbal and non-verbal communications; (3) Teamwork; (4) Cultural and social intelligence
4. **Solving Problems:** (1) Critical thinking (2) Problem solving; (3) Creativity and innovation

Each transferable skill has a set of descriptors that outline what achievement of the skill looks like in practice. Each unit in the qualification will show whether a transferable skill has been:

1. fully embedded through the design of the teaching and learning content and assessment of the unit. Skills that are embedded are 'naturally occurring' in that they are inherent to the unit content and don't require extension activities to deliver.
2. signposted as an opportunity for delivery and development and would require extension activities to deliver.

Units will show a summary of the transferable skills that have been embedded or signposted and *Appendix 2* shows the descriptors for each skill across all the skill clusters.

More information on the framework, its design and relevance for student progression is available in the *BTEC Transferable Skills Guide for Teachers*. Resources and guidance to support teachers in the delivery and development of these skills will be available in the Planning and Teaching Guide for this qualification and through our training offer.

## Digital skills

Digital skills are required in every industry as well as in everyday life and, with the acceleration of automation and AI in industry, it is critical for students to understand how digital technologies are relevant and applied in the context of the sector they are studying.

With this in mind, we have used the Digital Skills Framework published by IFATE as a frame of reference to identify opportunities for the delivery and development of digital skills in this qualification.

This Digital Skills framework has five categories with specific digital characteristics that apply in varying extent across sectors:

3. **Problem Solving** – The use of digital tools to analyse and solve problems
4. **Digital Collaboration and Communication** – Using digital tools to communicate and share information with stakeholders
5. **Transacting Digitally** – Using digital tools to set up accounts and pay for goods/services
6. **Digital Security** – Identify threats and keep digital tools safe
7. **Handling Data Safely and Securely** – Follow correct procedures when handling personal and organisational data

Opportunities to develop these digital skills are identified where they are relevant and appropriate to a sector, meaning that:

- where they naturally occur
- where they add no assessment burden
- where they will enhance a student's skills and knowledge in the sector.

*Appendix 3* shows a mapping of the teaching and learning content to the five categories of the framework to show where opportunities to develop these digital skills exist in this qualification.

## Sustainability skills

To help students develop sustainability skills, practices and mindset, we have designed content in this qualification, aligned to the [UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals](#) (17 SDGs), that are relevant and appropriate to the sector. The SDGs are the most common point of reference for content that addresses sustainability and provides a useful and pragmatic way of organising this content.

Sustainability knowledge and understanding may be included in the teaching and learning content but not directly assessed. Alternatively, it could be assessed – the approach chosen for each unit is based on the relevance of the sustainability skills, knowledge or understanding to the purpose and scope and scope of the unit.

*Appendix 4* shows a mapping of the teaching and learning content to the relevant SDGs to show where sustainability has been included in this qualification.

## 2 Qualification purpose

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

In this section you will find information on the purpose of this qualification and how its design meets that purpose through the qualification objective and structure. We publish a full 'Statement of Purpose' for each qualification on our website. These statements are designed to guide you and potential students to make the most appropriate choice of qualification at recruitment.

#### **Who is this qualification for?**

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate) is an Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) designed for post-16 students with an interest in the Digital sector and aiming to progress to higher education as a route to graduate level employment.

Equivalent to half an A level in size, it is suitable for students looking to develop their applied knowledge and skills in Information Technology as part of a study programme alongside A levels.

#### **What will the student study as part of this qualification?**

The qualification has been developed in consultation with higher education representatives and sector experts to ensure students have the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to progress to, and thrive, in higher education.

The qualification has two mandatory units covering the following topics:

- **Information Technology Systems** – Information technology systems, including the relationship between software and hardware, and the issues related to IT systems
- **Website Development** – The development tools, techniques and processes used in website development and how to test usability, functionality and fitness for purpose.

#### **What knowledge and skills will the student develop as part of this qualification and how might these be of use and value in further studies?**

Students will develop the following knowledge and skills:

- Digital technologies and how organisations plan digital projects and follow a project lifecycle
- Technical skills to design and build a website to meet user requirements using relevant tools and techniques, including testing for usability, functionality and fitness for purpose
- Transferable skills such as creativity and innovation, written communications, critical thinking and taking personal responsibility.

Students will develop the ability to apply digital concepts to different sectors which is beneficial to the analytical approach included in many degrees. The ability to take personal responsibility and written communication skills will develop students' ability to manage their own work and independently create extended writing tasks which is a good foundation for academic success.

### **Which subjects will complement this qualification?**

The following subjects would be suitable to combine with this qualification:

- Media Studies
- Mathematics
- Statistics
- Art & Design.

### **What further learning will this qualification lead to?**

This qualification can lead to progression to the following degrees:

- BA (Hons) Economics
- BA (Hons) Business and Management
- BSC (Hons) Biotechnology
- BA (Hons) Marketing.

This qualification is part of a larger suite. This size provides students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of the digital sector in order to progress into the sector through degree or degree apprenticeship pathways. It also allows for progression onto degree programmes with significant IT content, which is the case in many sectors.

The Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Extended Certificate), equivalent to one A Level, is for those students who require additional knowledge and skills specific to the Digital sector with the intention of progression into Higher Education to study degrees in Information Technology or Computing.

# 3 Structure

## Qualification structure

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

Students must complete 2 mandatory units.

See *Section 6* for rules on qualification awarding.

#### Mandatory units – students complete all units

Unit number	Unit title	GLH	Type	How assessed
1	Information Technology Systems	120	Mandatory	External

#### Optional units – students complete all units

Unit number	Unit title	GLH	Type	How assessed
3	Website Development	60	Mandatory	Internal

#### External assessment

66.6% of the total qualification GLH is made up of external assessment. A summary is given below. See the unit content and sample assessment materials for more information.

Unit	Type	Availability
<b>Unit 1: Information Technology Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An external examination set and marked by Pearson</li><li>• 90 marks</li><li>• 2 hours</li></ul>	<b>January and May/June</b> <b>First assessment January 2027</b>

## Synoptic assessment

The assessment of synoptic knowledge requires students to apply learning from one unit to the assessment in another unit. Within the assessment for *Unit 3: Website Development*, students will be assessed on underpinning knowledge, ideas and concepts from *Unit 1: Information Technology Systems*. Synoptic links are flagged within the units.

There might be some further naturally occurring synoptic opportunities across the qualification where students can synthesise their learning. These will be outlined in the Planning and Teaching Guide to help with planning for your teaching.

# 4 Units

## Understanding your units

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The units in this specification set out our expectations of assessment in a way that helps you to prepare your students for assessment. The units help you to undertake assessment and quality assurance effectively.

Each unit in the specification is set out in a similar way. There are two types of unit format:

- Internally assessed units
- Externally assessed units.

This section explains how the units work. It is important that all teachers, assessors, internal verifiers and other staff responsible for the programme review this section.

### Internally assessed units

Section	Explanation
<b>Unit number</b>	The number is in a sequence in the sector. Numbers may not be sequential for an individual qualification.
<b>Unit title</b>	This is the formal title that we always use and it appears on certificates.
<b>Unit level</b>	All units are Level 3 on the national framework.
<b>Unit type</b>	This confirms that the unit is internally assessed. See structure information in <i>Section 3</i> for full details.
<b>GLH</b>	Units may have a Guided Learning Hours (GLH) value of 120, 90 or 60. This indicates the numbers of hours of teaching, directed activity and assessment expected. It also shows the weighting of the unit in the final qualification grade.
<b>Unit in brief</b>	A brief formal statement on the content of the unit that is helpful in understanding its role in the qualification. You can use this in summary documents, brochures etc.
<b>Unit introduction</b>	This is designed with students in mind. It indicates why the unit is important, how learning is structured and how learning might be applied when progressing to employment or higher education.
<b>Learning aims</b>	These help to define the scope, style and depth of learning of the unit. You can see where students should be learning standard requirements ('understand') or where they should be actively researching ('investigate'). You can find out more about the verbs we use in learning aims in <i>Appendix 1</i> .

Section	Explanation
<b>Summary of unit</b>	This helps teachers to see the main content areas against the learning aims and the structure of the assessment at a glance.
<b>Content</b>	This sets out the required teaching content of the unit. Content is compulsory except where shown as 'e.g.'. Students should be asked to complete summative assessment only after the teaching content for the unit or learning aim(s) has been covered.
<b>Assessment criteria</b>	Each learning aim has Pass and Merit criteria. Each assignment has at least one Distinction criterion. A full glossary of terms used is given in <i>Appendix 1</i> .  Distinction criteria represent outstanding performance in the unit. Some criteria require students to draw together learning from across the learning aims.
<b>Transferable skills</b>	This summarises the transferable skills present within this unit. The key helps to identify whether they are signposted but require additional assessment, embedded and achieved on completion or not present in this unit.
<b>Essential information for Pearson Set Assignment Brief (PSAB)</b>	This shows a brief summary of the activities required for the mandatory Pearson Set Assignment Brief. Centres must download and use the mandatory PSAB without alteration or contextualisation.
<b>Further information for teachers and assessors</b>	This gives you information to support the implementation of assessment. It is important that this is used carefully alongside the assessment criteria and PSAB.
<b>Resource requirements</b>	Any specific resource requirements that you need to be able to teach and assess are listed in this section.
<b>Essential information for assessment decisions</b>	This information gives guidance for each learning aim or assignment of the expectations for Pass, Merit and Distinction standard. This section contains examples and essential clarification.
<b>Links to other units</b>	This shows you the main relationship between units. This can help you to structure your programme and make best use of materials and resources.

## Externally assessed units

Section	Explanation
<b>Unit number</b>	The number is in a sequence in the sector. Numbers may not be sequential for an individual qualification.
<b>Unit title</b>	This is the formal title that we always use and it appears on certificates.
<b>Unit level</b>	All units are Level 3 on the national framework.
<b>Unit type</b>	This confirms that the unit is externally assessed. See structure information in <i>Section 3</i> for full details.
<b>GLH</b>	Units may have a Guided Learning Hours (GLH) value of 120, 90 or 60. This indicates the numbers of hours of teaching, directed activity and assessment expected. It also shows the weighting of the unit in the final qualification grade.
<b>Unit in brief</b>	A brief formal statement on the content of the unit that is helpful in understanding its role in the qualification. You can use this in summary documents, brochures etc.
<b>Unit introduction</b>	This is designed with students in mind. It indicates why the unit is important, how learning is structured and how learning might be applied when progressing to employment or higher education.
<b>Summary of assessment</b>	This sets out the type of external assessment used and the way in which it is used to assess achievement.
<b>Assessment outcomes</b>	These show the hierarchy of knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours that are assessed. Includes information on how this hierarchy relates to command terms in sample assessment materials (SAMs).
<b>Content</b>	For external units all content is obligatory. The depth of content is indicated in the assessment outcomes and sample assessment materials (SAMs). The content will be sampled through the external assessment over time, using the variety of questions shown.
<b>Transferable skills</b>	This summarises the transferable skills present within this unit. The key helps to identify whether they are signposted but require additional assessment, embedded and achieved on completion or not present in this unit.
<b>Key terms typically used in assessment</b>	These definitions will help you analyse requirements and prepare students for assessment.
<b>Resources</b>	Any specific resource requirements that you need to be able to teach and assess are listed in this section.

## Index of units

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## Unit 1: Information Technology Systems

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**Level:** 3

**Unit type:** External

**Guided learning hours:** 120

### Unit in brief

Students will study the role of Information Technology (IT) systems and the implications of their use in personal and professional situations. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of issues relating to the use of IT in personal and professional situations.

### Unit introduction

IT systems have a significant role in the world around us and play a part in almost everything we do. Having sound knowledge and understanding of how to effectively select and use appropriate IT systems will benefit you personally and professionally.

You will explore the relationships between the hardware and software that form an IT system, how systems work individually and together, and the relationship between the user and the system. You will examine issues related to the use of IT systems and the impact that they have on organisations and individuals.

This unit will give you a fundamental understanding of all areas of IT, supporting your progression to an IT-related higher education course.

### Summary of assessment

The unit will be assessed through one examination of 90 marks lasting 2 hours.

Students will be assessed through a number of short- and long-answer questions. The questions will assess knowledge and understanding of IT systems and the implications of their use in personal and professional situations.

The assessment availability is twice a year in January and May/June. The first assessment availability is May/June 2026.

Sample assessment materials will be available to help centres prepare students for assessment.

### **Assessment outcomes**

- AO1** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of information technology systems, terminology, concepts and processes.
- AO2** Apply knowledge and understanding of information technology systems, terminology, concepts and processes.
- AO3** Analyse and evaluate the factors and implications of information technology systems.

**[SP-CT]**

## Content

The essential content is set out under content areas. Students must cover all specified content before the assessment.

### **A: Explore the concepts and implications of the use of, and relationships among devices that form IT systems**

#### **A1 Functions and use of digital devices, and the notation used to represent the design of IT systems**

Students should apply their knowledge and understanding of the features and uses of digital devices in IT systems to meet the needs of individuals and organisations. Students should apply their knowledge of notation used in designing IT systems and flowcharts. This knowledge is essential for the effective use of technology in both personal and professional settings.

##### **A1.1** Features of digital devices that form part or all of IT systems:

**A1.1.1** personal computers

**A1.1.2** multifunctional devices

**A1.1.3** mobile devices

**A1.1.4** servers

- file
- application
- web

**A1.1.5** entertainment systems

**A1.1.6** digital cameras

- still
- video

**A1.1.7** navigation systems

**A1.1.8** communication devices and systems

**A1.1.9** embedded systems

- Sensors
- Internet of Things (IoT).

##### **A1.2** Function and use of the above digital devices for:

**A1.2.1** personal

**A1.2.2** education and training

**A1.2.3** social

**A1.2.4** retail

**A1.2.5** manufacturing

## UNIT 1: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

**A1.2.6** healthcare

**A1.2.7** creative tasks

**A1.2.8** automation and robotics.

**A1.3** Forms of notation used to design IT systems:

**A1.3.1** network diagrams

**A1.3.2** flowcharts.

### **A2 Peripheral devices and media**

Students should apply their knowledge and understanding of the features and uses of peripheral devices and media in IT systems to meet the needs of individuals and organisations.

**A2.1** Features and uses of peripheral devices used with other digital devices to form part of an IT system:

**A2.1.1** input devices

**A2.1.2** output devices

**A2.1.3** storage devices.

**A2.2** Assistive technologies

**A2.2.1** adaptive keyboards

**A2.2.2** screen readers

**A2.2.3** braille displays

**A2.2.4** screen magnifiers

**A2.2.5** head pointers

**A2.2.6** single switch entry devices

**A2.2.7** foot switches

**A2.2.8** sip-and-puff switches

**A2.2.9** eye-tracking software

**A2.2.10** text-to-speech software.

**A2.3** Characteristics and implications of storage media used to form part of an IT system.

**A2.3.1** capacity

**A2.3.2** cost

**A2.3.3** speed

**A2.3.4** compatibility

**A2.4** Data processing.

**A2.4.1** manual

**A2.4.2** automatic

### **A3 Computer software in an IT system**

Students should know and understand the concepts, implications and impact on individuals and organisations of the use of, and relationships between hardware and software.

#### **A3.1** Types of operating systems:

- A3.1.1** batch
- A3.1.2** distributed
- A3.1.3** multitasking
- A3.1.4** network OS
- A3.1.5** real-time OS
- A3.1.6** mobile OS
- A3.1.7** single use
- A3.1.8** multi-user

#### **A3.2** Role of the operating system in managing:

- A3.2.1** networking (protocols, connections, data transmission and reception, resource allocation and monitoring)
- A3.2.2** security (access control, malware protection, encryption, firewall)
- A3.2.3** memory management (allocation and deallocation, memory protection, virtual memory, swapping and paging)
- A3.2.4** multi-tasking (process scheduling, CPU time management, context switching)
- A3.2.5** device drivers (installation and loading, communication, driver management and updates, error handling, resource allocation)
- A3.2.6** user accounts (user authentication, user profiles, account management tools).

#### **A3.3** Types, uses and features of software:

- A3.3.1** utility
- A3.3.2** application.

#### **A3.4** Factors impacting the choice and use of operating system and application software.

- A3.4.1** cost
- A3.4.2** security
- A3.4.3** hardware and software compatibility
- A3.4.4** features
- A3.4.5** business and/or user needs
- A3.4.6** performance.

**A3.5** Types of user interface and factors affecting the choice of user interface:

- A3.5.1** command line
- A3.5.2** menu-driven
- A3.5.3** graphical user
- A3.5.4** touchscreen graphical user.

**A3.6** Principles and implications of open source and proprietary software:

- A3.6.1** operating systems
- A3.6.2** application software.

**A3.7** Features of common file types and formats used for:

- A3.7.1** images
- A3.7.2** audio
- A3.7.3** videos
- A3.7.4** application software.

#### **A4 Choosing IT systems**

Students should know and understand how the features of an IT system can affect its performance and the factors impacting on the choice.

**A4.1** Factors affecting the choice of IT systems:

- A4.1.1** user needs
- A4.1.2** specifications
- A4.1.3** compatibility
- A4.1.4** connectivity
- A4.1.5** cost
- A4.1.6** efficiency
- A4.1.7** implementation
  - timescales
  - testing
  - migration to new system(s)
  - downtime
- A4.1.8** productivity
- A4.1.9** security.

**A4.2** Features and implications of IT systems used by organisations for:

- A4.2.1** stock control
- A4.2.2** data logging
- A4.2.3** data analysis

**A4.2.4** general office tasks

**A4.2.5** creative tasks

**A4.2.6** advertising

**A4.2.7** manufacturing

**A4.2.8** security

**A4.2.9** automation.

**A4.3** Impact and implications for organisations of IT systems in terms of:

**A4.3.1** user experience

- ease of use
- performance
- availability
- accessibility

**A4.3.2** employee and customer needs

**A4.3.3** cost

**A4.3.4** implementation

- timescales
- testing
- migration to new system(s)
- downtime

**A4.3.5** replacement or integration with current systems

**A4.3.6** productivity

**A4.3.7** working practices

**A4.3.8** staff training needs

- Initial
- ongoing

**A4.3.9** user support

**A4.3.10** security.

## **A5 Emerging technologies**

Students should understand how emerging technologies can be used by individuals and organisations.

**A5.1** The concepts and implications of how emerging technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) affect the performance of IT systems.

**A5.2** Implications of emerging technologies and AI on the personal use of IT systems.

**A5.3** Implications of emerging technologies and AI on the use of IT systems in organisations.

## **B: Transmitting data**

The essential content topics require understanding of the concepts, processes and implications of transmitting data within and between IT systems.

### **B1 Connectivity**

**B1.1** Wireless and wired methods of connecting devices and transmitting data within and between IT systems.

**B1.1.1** Bluetooth

**B1.1.2** USB

**B1.1.3** Wi-Fi

**B1.1.4** Ethernet

**B1.2** How the features of connection types can meet the needs of individuals and organisations.

**B1.3** Implications of selecting and using different connection types.

**B1.4** Impact of connection types on the performance of an IT system.

### **B2 Networks**

Students should know the concepts and implications for individuals and organisations of connecting devices to and from a network.

**B2.1** Network topologies:

**B2.1.1** star

**B2.1.2** ring

**B2.1.3** bus.

**B2.2** Types of networks:

**B2.2.1** Personal Area Network (PAN)

**B2.2.2** Local Area Network (LAN)

**B2.2.3** Wide Area Network (WAN)

**B2.2.4** Virtual Private Network (VPN).

**B2.3** Factors affecting the choice of network:

**B2.3.1** user needs

**B2.3.2** specifications

**B2.3.3** connectivity

**B2.3.4** cost

**B2.3.5** efficiency

**B2.3.6** compatibility

**B2.3.7** implementation

- timescales
- testing
- downtime

**B2.3.8** productivity**B2.3.9** security.

**B2.4** How the features of a network and its component parts affect the performance of an IT system.

**B3 Issues relating to transmission of data**

Students should know and understand how the features and processes of data transmission affect the use and performance of IT systems.

**B3.1** Protocols used to govern and control data transmission for common tasks:

**B3.1.1** email

- SMTP
- POP
- IMAP

**B3.1.2** voice and video call over the internet**B3.1.3** web pages

- HTTP
- HTTPS

**B3.1.4** secure payment systems

**B3.2** Security issues and considerations when transmitting data over different connection types and networks.

**B3.3** Factors affecting and implications of bandwidth and latency.

**B3.4** Implications of common file types and formats used for:

**B3.4.1** images**B3.4.2** audio**B3.4.3** videos**B3.4.4** application software

**B3.5** Factors affecting the choice of compression types:

**B3.5.1** lossy**B3.5.2** lossless.

**B3.6** Use and implications of codecs when using and transmitting audio and video in digital format.

## **C: Operating online**

The essential content topics require understanding of the implications for individuals and organisations of using online IT systems.

### **C1 Online systems**

Students should know and understand the features, impact and implications of the use of online IT systems to store data and perform tasks.

#### **C1.1** Cloud computing models

**C1.1.1** private cloud

**C1.1.2** public cloud

**C1.1.3** hybrid cloud

**C1.1.4** Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

**C1.1.5** Software as a Service (SaaS)

**C1.1.6** Platform as a Service (PaaS)

**C1.2** Impact and implications of using cloud computing for individuals and organisations.

**C1.3** Systems that enable and support remote working:

**C1.3.1** VPNs

**C1.3.2** remote desktop technologies.

**C1.4** The way factors affect the use and selection of online systems:

**C1.4.1** security

**C1.4.2** cost

**C1.4.3** ease of use

**C1.4.4** features

**C1.4.5** connectivity

**C1.4.6** scalability.

### **C2 Online communities**

Students should know and understand the features of online communities and the implications of their widespread use for individuals and organisations.

**C2.1** Ways of communicating and interacting with online communities:

**C2.1.1** social media

**C2.1.2** blog/vlog

**C2.1.3** wiki

**C2.1.4** chatrooms

**C2.1.5** instant messaging

**C2.1.6** podcasts

**C2.1.7** forums.

**C2.2** Considerations for individuals and organisations of using and accessing online communities:

**C2.2.1** user experience

- ease of use
- performance
- availability
- accessibility

**C2.2.2** meeting user needs

**C2.2.3** cost

**C2.2.4** privacy

**C2.2.5** security

**C2.2.6** downtime

**C2.2.7** training

**C2.2.8** integration with current systems

**C2.2.9** productivity

**C2.2.10** working practices and company policies.

## **D: Protecting data and information**

The essential content topics require understanding of the issues and implications of storing and transmitting information in digital form.

### **D1 Threats to data, information, and systems**

Students should know and understand the types of accidental and malicious threats to the security and integration of data, held in and used by IT systems.

**D1.1** Types of external threats to data:

**D1.1.1** viruses and other malware

**D1.1.2** unauthorised access – hackers

**D1.1.3** accidental damage

**D1.1.4** social engineering.

**D1.1.5** natural disasters

**D1.2** Types of internal threats to data:

**D1.2.1** access to inappropriate websites

**D1.2.2** accidental disclosure of data

**D1.2.3** stealing/leaking information

**D1.2.4** use of portable devices.

**D1.3** Impact on individuals and organisations from threats to data, information and systems:

**D1.3.1** loss of data

**D1.3.2** financial loss due to legal action

**D1.3.3** loss of customers due to public image.

## **D2 Protecting data**

Students should know the uses and implications of systems and procedures used to protect the data of individuals and organisations.

**D2.1** Techniques used to protect data and systems:

**D2.1.1** file permissions

**D2.1.2** access levels

**D2.1.3** backup and recovery procedures

**D2.1.4** passwords/multi-factor authentication

**D2.1.5** biometrics

**D2.1.6** physical access control

**D2.1.7** digital certificates.

**D2.2** Features and functions of using antivirus software to protect data.

**D2.3** Features and functions of using firewalls to protect data.

**D2.4** Features and functions of encryption methods to protect:

**D2.4.1** stored data

**D2.4.2** data during transmission

**D2.4.3** data in secure websites (HTTPS).

## **E: Impact of using IT systems**

The essential content topics require understanding of the uses, issues and implications of IT systems and their impact on individuals and organisations.

### **E1 Online services**

Understand how the features of online services are used to meet the needs of individuals and organisations.

**E1.1** Features and implications of using online services to support:

**E1.1.1** retail

**E1.1.2** financial services

**E1.1.3** education and training

**E1.1.4** news and information

**E1.1.5** entertainment and leisure

**E1.1.6** booking systems.

**E1.2** Uses, impact and implications for individuals and organisations of:

**E1.2.1** transactional data

**E1.2.2** targeted marketing

**E1.2.3** collaborative working

**E1.2.4** remote working.

## **E2 Using and manipulating data**

Understand the uses, processes and implications for individuals and organisations of accessing and using data and information in digital form.

**E2.1** Sources of data:

**E2.1.1** primary

**E2.1.2** secondary.

**E2.2** Methods of ensuring reliability of information.

**E2.3** Methods of collecting data and opinions:

**E2.3.1** survey

**E2.3.2** questionnaire

**E2.3.3** focus groups

**E2.3.4** interview.

**E2.4** Reasons for ensuring data accuracy.

**E2.5** Methods of ensuring data accuracy:

**E2.5.1** verification

**E2.5.2** validation.

**E2.6** Characteristics and considerations of user interfaces for data collection and processing systems:

**E2.6.1** ease of use

**E2.6.2** accessibility

**E2.6.3** error reduction

**E2.6.4** functionality

**E2.6.5** performance

**E2.6.6** compatibility.

## **F: Issues**

The essential content topics require understanding of the concepts, impacts, and implications of moral, ethical and legal issues relating to the use of IT systems.

### **F1 Moral and ethical issues**

Understand the moral and ethical factors and implications of using information technology for individuals and organisations.

**F1.1** Moral and ethical factors and implications of the use of information technology:

**F1.1.1** privacy

**F1.1.2** environmental impact

**F1.1.3** unequal access to information technology

**F1.1.4** access to assistive technology

**F1.1.5** online behaviour and netiquette

**F1.1.6** acceptable use policies.

### **F2 Legal issues**

Understand the legal issues relating to the use of IT systems, and the implications for individuals and organisations.

**F2.1** Role and impact of current legislation in protecting IT systems, users and their data from attack and misuse:

**F2.1.1** computer misuse legislation

**F2.1.2** copyright, designs and patents legislation

**F2.1.3** copyright regulations (computer programs)

**F2.1.4** health and safety and display screen equipment regulations

**F2.1.5** data protection legislation

**Transferable skills**

Managing Yourself	Effective Learning	Interpersonal Skills	Solving Problems
MY – TPR	EL – MOL	IS – WC	SP – CT *
MY – PS&R	EL – CL	IS – V&NC	SP – PS
MY – COP	EL – SRS	IS – T	SP – C&I
MY – PGS	EL-PRS	IS – C&SI	

**Table key**

*	Signposted to indicate opportunities for development as part of wider teaching and learning.
√	Embedded in teaching, learning and assessment
blank	TS not embedded or signposted in unit

## Key terms typically used in assessment

The following table shows the key terms that will be used consistently by Pearson in our assessments to ensure students are rewarded for demonstrating the necessary skills.

Please note: the list below will not necessarily be used in every paper/session and is provided for guidance only.

Command or term	Definition
Describe	Students provide an account of something or highlight several key features of a given topic. May also be used in relation to the stages of a process.
Discuss	Students consider the different aspects in detail of an issue, situation, problem or argument and how they interrelate.
Draw	Students represent understanding using a diagram or flowchart.
Explain	Students identify a point and give a linked justification/exemplification of that point. The answer must contain some linked reasoning.
Evaluate	Students consider various aspects of a subject's qualities in relation to its context such as: strengths or weaknesses, advantages or disadvantages. They come to a judgement supported by evidence which will often be in the form of a conclusion.
Identify	Students select some key information from a given stimulus/resource.
State, name, give	Students recall one or more pieces of information

## Unit 3: Website Development

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**Level:** 3

**Unit type:** Internal

**Guided learning hours:** 60

### Unit in brief

Students will investigate fundamental principles in website development. They will design and develop a website in response to a client brief.

### Unit introduction

Website development skills are more essential than ever if you want to be noticed, reach your goals and generate interest in today's sophisticated, competitive and dynamic online environment. Modern lifestyles are digitally driven and as a website developer you must combine different tools and techniques to capture and maintain the user's interest. Website developers need to understand and acquire the necessary skills to find solutions to a variety of scenarios and problems.

In this unit, you will explore how existing websites use the principles of website development to appeal to their intended audience and meet their specific purpose. You will plan, design and develop a website in response to a client brief by applying website development tools, techniques and processes. You will also reflect on the usability, functionality and fitness for purpose of the website using a testing and review process.

Many software developers, database experts and systems managers need web-client development skills as an integral part of their overall portfolio of expertise. This unit will benefit you to progress on to information technology courses in higher education.

### Learning aims

In this unit you will:

- A** Understand how the principles of website development are used to create effective websites.
- B** Explore website design skills and techniques to meet client requirements.
- C** Develop a website to meet client requirements.

## Summary of unit

Learning aim	Key content areas	Assessment approach
<p><b>A</b> Understand how the principles of website development are used to create effective websites</p>	<p><b>A1</b> Purpose and principles of websites</p> <p><b>A2</b> Planning a website in response to a client brief</p>	<p>Pearson-Set Assignment Brief Task 1: Conduct research to analyse how the principles of website development are used to meet a specific purpose and develop ideas and plans to meet a client's requirements.</p>
<p><b>B</b> Explore website design skills and techniques to meet client requirements</p>	<p><b>B1</b> Website design</p> <p><b>B2</b> Asset management techniques</p>	<p>Pearson-Set Assignment Brief Task 2: Produce designs and assets for a website to meet a client's requirements.</p>
<p><b>C</b> Develop a website to meet client requirements</p>	<p><b>C1</b> Common tools and techniques to produce a website</p> <p><b>C2</b> Website development processes</p> <p><b>C3</b> Testing</p>	<p>Pearson-Set Assignment Brief Task 3: Develop a website to meet a client's requirements.</p>

## Content

The essential content is set out under content areas. Students must cover all specified content before the assessment.

### **Learning aim A: Understand how the principles of website development are used to create effective websites [EL-SRS]**

#### **A1 Purpose and principles of websites**

- Purpose and audience:
  - purpose of websites, to include:
    - eCommerce
    - to provide information
    - to promote products or services
    - to provide entertainment
  - target audience, to include:
    - demographics
    - user personas.
- Principles of website development:
  - page layout, to include:
    - F-Shaped pattern
    - Z-shaped pattern
    - grid layout
    - visual hierarchy
    - grouping elements
    - separating content
    - unconventional layouts
  - navigation, to include:
    - fixed/sticky navigation bars
    - vertical navigation
    - hamburger menu
    - logical navigation
  - content, to include:
    - written content
    - visual content
    - calls-to-action
  - design, to include:
    - typography
    - colour scheme

## UNIT 3: WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- user experience:
  - accessibility, to include:
    - colour contrast
    - colour combinations
    - closed captions, transcripts
    - keyboard-only navigation
    - breadcrumbs
    - customisable features
  - consistency, to include:
    - branding
    - page layout
    - design
    - User Interface (UI) elements
  - user-friendly, to include:
    - simplicity
    - intuitive
    - engaging
    - responsive
  - use of motion and movement, to include:
    - micro-interactions
    - animation
    - parallax scrolling
    - image sliders
    - purpose of motion
- dynamic websites, to include:
  - customised user experience
  - controlled access to content
- cross-browser compatibility, to include:
  - reducing discrepancies in different browsers
  - mobile compatibility
- search engine optimisation.

### **A2 Planning a website in response to a client brief**

- Establishing the client's requirements:
  - purpose, to include:
    - problem to be solved
    - key messages
    - user motivations and goals
  - intended audience
  - technical requirements

- Research to identify new ideas:
  - existing websites
  - content ideas
  - available resources
  - legal and ethical constraints:
    - copyright
    - data protection
    - digital accessibility
    - inclusive and diverse content and representations
- Structuring the website:
  - site map:
    - number of pages
    - content and features
    - site navigation.

## **Learning aim B: Explore website design skills and techniques to meet client requirements**

### **B1 Website design**

- Creating wireframes:
  - wireframing tools, to include:
    - sketching on paper
    - graphic design software
    - UX design software
    - wireframing app
  - wireframing techniques, to include:
    - hierarchy of page elements
    - balance of content
    - grouping elements
    - aligning elements
    - accurate dimensions.
- Design ideas:
  - visual style, to include:
    - colour palette
    - branding
    - typography

### UNIT 3: WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- Reviewing fitness for purpose:
  - quality, to include:
    - clarity
    - detail
  - user experience
  - meeting client requirements.

#### **B2 Asset management techniques**

- Creating assets:
  - writing headlines and copy, to include:
    - short sentences
    - short paragraphs
    - avoiding jargon
    - appropriate mode of address
  - visual assets, to include:
    - image editing techniques
    - image manipulation techniques
    - vector graphic drawing techniques.
- Sourcing assets, to include:
  - written copy
  - stock images
  - icons
  - video.
- Preparing assets, to include:
  - trimming video
  - compression
  - file formats.
- Managing assets, to include:
  - logical folder structure
  - naming conventions.

#### **Learning aim C: Develop a website to meet client requirements [MY-TPR]**

##### **C1 Common tools and techniques to produce a website**

- Hypertext Markup Language (HTML):
  - navigation, to include:
    - menus
    - internal and external links
    - anchors

- adding content, to include:
  - text
  - images
  - video
  - tables of information
- forms.
- Cascading Style Sheets (CSS):
  - styling, to include:
    - colour
    - web typography
    - text formatting
    - links and buttons
    - tables
    - forms
  - page layout, to include:
    - CSS box model
    - responsive layouts, to include:
      - CSS media queries
      - layout tools.
- Function of JavaScript in website development, to include:
  - displaying images:
    - sliders
    - gallery
  - displaying information:
    - accordion
    - tabs
    - modal box
    - filtering information
  - animation:
    - hover effects
    - transitions
    - animated logo
    - motion
  - search functionality
  - shopping cart
  - interactive maps
  - video, to include:
    - controlling video
    - video backgrounds.

## **C2 Website development processes**

- Accessibility:
  - features, to include:
    - alternative tags
    - zoom features
    - text-to-speech
  - standards, to include:
    - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
    - World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) standards
    - HTML5 standards
  - semantic HTML.
- Consideration of search engine optimisation.
- Self-review:
  - areas for consideration:
    - quality in comparison to similar websites
    - suitability for audience and purpose
    - meeting client requirements
    - legal and ethical constraints
    - consistency
    - readability
- Publishing the website.

## **C3 Testing**

- Functionality testing:
  - test plan
  - areas, to include:
    - links
    - user interactivity
    - responsive to different screen sizes.
- Usability testing:
  - user testing audit
  - areas, to include:
    - accessibility
    - logical navigation
    - clarity of information
    - user experience.

## Assessment criteria

### Learning aim A: Understand how the principles of website development are used to create effective websites

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<p><b>A.P1</b> Undertake research which shows adequate understanding of how the principles of website development are used to meet a specific purpose, using partially relevant examples.</p> <p><b>A.P2</b> Produce a site map that partially meets the client's requirements.</p>	<p><b>A.M1</b> Undertake research which shows a good understanding of how the principles of website development are used to meet a specific purpose, using mostly relevant examples.</p> <p><b>A.M2</b> Produce a site map that mostly meets the client's requirements.</p>	<p><b>A.D1</b> Carry out effective research to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the principles of website development and how to comprehensively meet the client's requirements, using pertinent examples.</p>

### Learning aim B: Explore website design skills and techniques to meet client requirements

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<p><b>B.P3</b> Produce adequate wireframes and visual designs for a specific purpose. <b>[SP-C&amp;I]</b></p> <p><b>B.P4</b> Use asset management techniques to develop assets that partially meet the client's requirements. <b>[SP-C&amp;I]</b></p>	<p><b>B.M3</b> Produce mostly effective wireframes and visual designs for a specific purpose.</p> <p><b>B.M4</b> Use asset management techniques to develop assets that meet most of the client's requirements.</p>	<p><b>B.D2</b> Make effective use of website design skills to develop designs and assets that comprehensively meet the client's requirements.</p>

### Learning aim C: Develop a website to meet client requirements

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<p><b>C.P5</b> Use tools, techniques, processes and testing to produce a website that partially meets the client's requirements. <b>[SP-C&amp;I]</b></p>	<p><b>C.M5</b> Use tools, techniques, processes and testing to produce a website that meets most of the client's requirements.</p>	<p><b>C.D3</b> Use tools, techniques, processes and testing to produce a website that comprehensively meets the client's requirements.</p>

### Transferable skills

Managing Yourself	Effective Learning	Interpersonal Skills	Solving Problems
MY – TPR *	EL – MOL	IS – WC	SP – CT
MY – PS&R	EL – CL	IS – VC	SP – PS
MY – COP	EL – SRS *	IS – T	SP-C&I ✓
MY – PGS	EL-PRS	IS- C&SI	

### Table key

*	Signposted to indicate opportunities for development as part of wider teaching and learning.
✓	Embedded in teaching, learning and assessment
blank	TS not embedded or signposted in unit

## Essential information for Pearson Set Assignment Briefs (PSAB)

Pearson sets the assignment for the assessment of this unit.

The PSAB will take 15 hours to complete.

The PSAB will be marked by centres and verified by Pearson.

The PSAB will be valid for the lifetime of this qualification.

## Assessing the PSAB

You will make assessment decisions for the PSAB using the assessment criteria provided.

*Section 1* gives information on PSABs and there is further information on our website.

## Further information for teachers and assessors

### Resource requirements

For this unit, students must have access to resources that will enable them to develop the skills and techniques to design and develop websites, including:

- wireframing tools
- software and apps to create visual styles and visual representations
- equipment and software to create and prepare assets
- software tools to develop a website.

The website does not need to include a payment system.

The choice of tool can be made by centres. There are three considerations, which are as follows:

- Can you be sure that the work done is that of the student (Cloud services can be accessed at any time by anyone and so there may be doubt about who really created the evidence)?
- Can every student evidence all assessment criteria (the tool must not be functionally limiting in any way)?
- Can the evidence be produced in a format that is accessible to your Standards Verifier (it is worth checking with your Standards Verifier early if the evidence will be in an unusual format)?

## Essential information for assessment decisions

### Learning aim A

**For distinction standard**, students will show a thorough understanding of how different websites combine principles of website development to meet their purpose. Students will also analyse the impact of the use of these principles on the user. Students will draw on pertinent examples and consider positive and negative outcomes.

### UNIT 3: WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Students will conduct accomplished research to underpin their planning, including effective research into existing websites, possible content for the website and legal and ethical constraints. A detailed site map will be annotated to clearly show how the proposed website will meet the client requirements.

The response will be considered and well-structured and relevant technical vocabulary will be used accurately.

**For merit standard**, students will show good understanding of how different websites employ principles of website development to meet their purpose. Students will also explain the impact of the use of these principles on the user. Understanding will be supported by some mostly relevant examples from the chosen websites.

Students will conduct mostly effective research to underpin their planning, including relevant research into existing websites, possible content for the website and legal and ethical constraints. A site map will be annotated to show how the proposed website will meet most of the client requirements.

The response will have an appropriate structure and some relevant technical vocabulary will be used.

**For pass standard**, students will show adequate understanding of how different websites employ some principles of website development to meet their purpose. Understanding will be supported by some partially relevant examples from the chosen websites.

Students will conduct adequate research to underpin their planning, including some research into existing websites, possible content for the website and legal and/or ethical constraints. A site map will show how the proposed website will meet some of the client requirements.

The response will be detailed, although it may lack a coherent structure and it may include some inaccuracies.

### Learning aim B

**For distinction standard**, students will make accomplished use of wireframing tools and techniques to produce effective wireframes. Effective designs for the visual style of the website and representations of the web pages will demonstrate thorough understanding of the client's requirements and user needs.

Assets will be created, sourced and prepared through effective use of asset management techniques. The assets will have clear audience appeal and will comprehensively meet the client's requirements.

**For merit standard**, students will make good use of wireframing tools and techniques to produce mostly effective wireframes, successfully achieving the result for the specific purpose. Appropriate designs for the visual style of the website and representations of the web pages will demonstrate good understanding of the client's requirements and user needs.

Assets will be created and sourced through good use of asset management techniques. The assets will have appropriate audience appeal and meet most of the client's requirements, although one or two requirements may be missed.

**For pass standard**, students will make basic use of wireframing tools and techniques to produce adequate wireframes. Straightforward designs for the visual style of the website and representations of the web pages will demonstrate partial understanding of the client's requirements.

Assets will be created and sourced through basic use of asset management techniques. The assets will have some appropriate audience appeal and will meet the key requirements of the client but will not meet other requirements of the client.

### Learning aim C

Students are expected to make appropriate use of online tools, techniques and processes to produce a website in response to a Pearson Set Assignment Brief. This includes the use of artificial intelligence (AI), such as AI tools in web development software, website builders, online code generators and generative AI.

The unit encourages student-led creativity, supported by use of new and emerging technologies, including generative AI. However, any use of AI tools and technologies must be explained by students. This could be through annotated screen shots or narrated screen recordings.

**For distinction standard**, students will make creative use of tools and techniques to build a website that meets all of the client's requirements. Effective understanding of web standards will be demonstrated through the development of a consistent and accessible website.

Students will conduct effective functionality and usability testing. Students will use the outcomes of the testing and a thorough self-review of their website to make considered refinements to the final website.

**For merit standard**, students will make good use of tools and techniques to build a website that meets most of the client's requirements, although one or two minor requirements may be missed. Students will demonstrate good understanding of web standards through the appropriate use of accessibility features that clearly meet the requirements of the brief.

Students will conduct appropriate functionality and usability testing. Students will use the outcomes of the testing and a self-review of their website to make appropriate refinements to the final website.

**For pass standard**, students will make basic use of tools and techniques to build a website that meets the key requirements of the client but will not meet other requirements of the client. The website will be functional, although there may be some performance issues.

### UNIT 3: WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Students will provide evidence of straightforward functionality and usability testing. Students will use the outcomes of the testing and a self-review of their website to refine the final website.

#### **Links to other units**

This assessment for this unit allows students to draw on on knowledge, understanding and skills developed from *Unit 1: Information Technology Systems*.

# 5 Planning your programme

## Supporting you in planning and implementing your programme

There will be lots of free teaching and learning support to help you deliver the new qualifications:

- Our Planning and Teaching Guide will help you to plan how to deliver the content and assessments that make up the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate) qualification. It also highlights opportunities to develop the transferable skills identified within the units in this specification.
- Sample Assessment materials are available for each external unit to help you to plan and prepare for assessments.
- Our mapping document highlights key differences between the new qualification and the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Information technology 601/7574/6 which it replaces.

## Is there a student entry requirement?

As a centre it is your responsibility to ensure that students who are recruited have a reasonable expectation of success on the programme. There are no formal entry requirements but we expect students to have qualifications at or equivalent to Level 2.

Students are most likely to succeed if they have:

- five GCSEs at good grades, and/or
- BTEC qualification(s) at Level 2
- achievement in English and mathematics through GCSE or Functional Skills.

Students may demonstrate ability to succeed in various ways. For example, students may have relevant work experience or specific aptitude shown through diagnostic tests or non-educational experience.

# 6 Understanding the qualification grade

## Awarding and reporting for the qualification

This section explains the rules that we apply in awarding a qualification and in providing an overall qualification grade for each student. It shows how all the qualifications in this sector are graded.

The awarding and certification of these qualifications will comply with regulatory requirements.

## Eligibility for an award

In order to be awarded a qualification, a student must:

- complete and **have an outcome** (D, M, P, N or U) for all units within a valid combination
- achieve the **minimum number of points** at a grade threshold.

## Awarding the qualification grade

The final grade awarded for a qualification represents an aggregation of a student's performance across the qualification. As the qualification grade is an aggregate of the total performance, there is some element of compensation in that a higher performance in some units may be balanced by a lower outcome in others.

BTEC Nationals are Level 3 qualifications and are awarded at the grade ranges shown in the table below.

Qualification	Available grade range
Certificate	P to D*

The *Awarding the qualification grade* table, shown further on in this section, shows the minimum thresholds for calculating these grades. The table will be kept under review over the lifetime of the qualification. The most up-to-date table will be issued on our website.

Pearson will monitor the qualification standard and reserves the right to make appropriate adjustments.

Students who do not meet the minimum requirements for a qualification grade to be awarded will be recorded as Unclassified (U) and will not be certificated. They may receive a Notification of Performance for individual units. The *Information Manual* gives full information.

## Points available for internal units

The table below shows the number of **points** available for internal units. For each internal unit, points are allocated depending on the grade awarded.

Grade	Unit size (60 GLH)
U	0
Pass	6
Merit	10
Distinction	16

## Points available for external units

Raw marks from the external units will be awarded **points** based on performance in the assessment. The table below shows the **minimum number of points** available for each grade in the external units.

Grade	Unit size (120 GLH)
U	0
Near Pass	8
Pass	12
Merit	20
Distinction	32

Pearson will automatically calculate the points for each external unit once the external assessment has been marked and grade boundaries have been set. For more details about how we set grade boundaries in the external assessment please go to our website.

## Claiming the qualification grade

Subject to eligibility, Pearson will automatically calculate the qualification grade for your students when the internal unit grades are submitted and the qualification claim is made. Students will be awarded qualification grades for achieving the sufficient number of points (with valid combinations) within the ranges shown in the relevant *Awarding the qualification grade* table for the cohort.

## Awarding the qualification grade

Applicable for registration from 1 August 2026.

### Certificate (180 GLH)

Grade	Points threshold
U	0
Pass	18
Merit	26
Distinction	37
Distinction *	45

The table is subject to review over the lifetime of the qualification. The most up-to-date version will be issued on our website.

Example grading table for Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification BTEC National in Information Technology (Certificate)

Unit number	GLH	Type (Int/Ext)	Grade	Unit points
1	120	Ext	Merit	22
3	60	Int	U	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>		<b>Pass</b>	<b>22</b>



# Appendix 1 Glossary of terms used for internally assessed units

Term	Definition
<b>Adequate</b>	Student work is satisfactory or acceptable in quality and quantity.
<b>Analyse</b>	Students break the issue/situation down into the key elements and show their understanding of the issues/situation applied to the scenario/context. Responses would be significantly beyond generic.
<b>Apply/use/employ</b>	Students implement a method, technique, process or approach in an activity.
<b>Assess</b>	Students give careful consideration to all the factors or events that apply, identify which are the most important or relevant and make a judgement on the importance of the factors.
<b>Carry out</b>	Students demonstrate skills through practical activities, in line with certain requirements.
<b>Clear/ly</b>	The qualities required are well demonstrated, unambiguous and beyond a basic level.
<b>Coherent</b>	Student intentions are clear, logically structured and can be interpreted by others.
<b>Compare</b>	Students show knowledge and understanding by identifying the main factors relating to two or more items/situations or aspects of a subject that is extended with the required explanations, e.g. similarities/differences, advantages/disadvantages, impacts.
<b>Comprehensive</b>	Used to describe either scope or depth, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student work is well developed and thorough covering all aspects/information in terms of both depth and breadth</li> </ul> Or: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrate in-depth and accurate understanding of the aspects being assessed.</li> </ul>
<b>Confident</b>	Student work demonstrates well-developed and secure application of skills or processes that are significantly beyond a basic level.
<b>Consistent</b>	Students demonstrate reliable and constant practice that maintains a set standard.
<b>Create/produce</b>	Students generate an idea/outcome to specific criteria.
<b>Demonstrate</b>	Students carry out and apply knowledge, understanding and/or skills in a practical situation.
<b>Describe</b>	Students provide an account of something, or highlight a number of key features of a given topic or process that shows a level of understanding.
<b>Effective</b>	Students demonstrate skills or provide outcomes that are well developed with a range of proficient qualities and that achieve objectives

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Detailed</b>	Students cover most if not all of the expected requirements and demonstrate a high level of understanding.
<b>Develop</b>	Students apply a process of improving/progressing skills, concepts or work in order to produce outcomes.
<b>Discuss</b>	An issue, situation, process will be presented and the student will need to break the issue/situation/process down into the key elements, show their understanding of the issues/situation/process applied to the scenario/context (so generic answers are not acceptable), and show interrelationship in their answers.
<b>Evaluate</b>	Students consider various aspects of a subject's qualities in relation to its context such as: strengths or weaknesses, advantages or disadvantages, pros or cons. They will come to a judgement supported by evidence which will often be in the form of a conclusion.
<b>Examine</b>	Students demonstrate an ability to thoroughly inspect something in order to determine its qualities beyond a basic exploration.
<b>Explain</b>	Students can give an insight into the topic showing some level of understanding by providing reasons or examples.
<b>Explore</b>	Students undertake practical research or investigation to develop their skills or understanding of the topic/activity.
<b>Implement</b>	Students take actions or measures to put something into effect.
<b>Investigate</b>	Students perform a systematic inquiry into a topic using research skills, usually to demonstrate their understanding of a topic.
<b>Justify</b>	Students give relevant and logical reasons or evidence to support their actions or opinions.
<b>Partial/some</b>	To an extent, but not completely. Students do not include all of the requirements.
<b>Perform</b>	Students demonstrate a range of skills required to complete a given activity.
<b>Prepare</b>	Students organise a task/equipment/individuals/activities in advance of carrying it out.
<b>Refine/optimize</b>	Students make considered improvements to outcomes.
<b>Review</b>	Students consider evidence in order to make judgements about the qualities.
<b>Realistic/feasible</b>	Students demonstrate insight into the logistics and manageability of proposals/plans/objectives/ideas and show consideration of the potential to achieve the outcomes.
<b>Understand</b>	Students demonstrate insight or ability to interpret a subject.
<b>Undertake</b>	Students demonstrate skills through practical activities, often referring to given processes or techniques.

# Appendix 2 Transferable Skills framework

Code = transferable skill initials-skill cluster initials

## Managing yourself

Code	Skill cluster	Performance Descriptor
MY-TPR	Taking personal responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of their role and responsibilities and the expected standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• Demonstrates compliance with codes of conduct and ways of working.</li> <li>• Makes use of available resources to complete tasks.</li> <li>• Manages their time to meet deadlines and the required standards.</li> <li>• Demonstrates accountability for their decisions or actions.</li> </ul>
MY-PS&R	Personal strengths and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies own personal strengths and demonstrates the ability to use these in relevant areas.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to adapt own mindset and actions to changing situations or factors.</li> <li>• Seeks support from relevant sources to deal with challenges.</li> <li>• Uses challenges as learning opportunities.</li> </ul>

Code	Skill cluster	Performance Descriptor
MY-COP	Career orientation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertakes research to understand the types of roles in the sector in which they could work.</li> <li>• Reviews own career plans against personal strengths and identifies areas for development to support progression into selected careers.</li> <li>• Takes part in sector-related experiences to support career planning.</li> </ul>
MY-PGS	Personal goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets SMART goals using relevant evidence and information.</li> <li>• Reviews progress against goals and identifies realistic areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Seeks feedback from others to improve own performance.</li> </ul>

## Effective learning

Code	Skill cluster	Performance Descriptor
EL-MOL	Managing own learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains a focus on own learning objectives when completing a task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to work independently to complete tasks.</li> <li>• Reviews and applies learning from successful and unsuccessful outcomes to be effective in subsequent tasks.</li> </ul>
EL-CL	Continuous learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engages with others to obtain feedback about own learning progress.</li> <li>• Responds positively to feedback on learning progress from others.</li> <li>• Monitors own learning and performance over the short and medium term.</li> </ul>
EL-SRS	Secondary research skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the research topic or question.</li> <li>• Uses valid and reliable sources to collate secondary data.</li> <li>• Interprets secondary data and draws valid conclusions.</li> <li>• Produces a reference list and cites sources appropriately.</li> </ul>
EL-PRS	Primary research skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the research topic or question.</li> <li>• Carries out primary data collection using appropriate and ethical research methodology.</li> <li>• Interprets primary data to draw valid conclusions.</li> </ul>

## Interpersonal skills

Code	Skill cluster	Performance Descriptor
IS-WC	Written communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produces formal written communication using appropriate language and tone to suit purpose.</li> </ul>
IS-V&NC	Verbal and non-verbal communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses verbal communication skills effectively to suit audience and purpose.</li> <li>• Uses body language and non-verbal cues effectively.</li> <li>• Uses active listening skills and checks understanding when interacting with others.</li> </ul>
IS-T	Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engages positively with team members to understand shared goals and own roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Respectfully consider the views of team members and consistently shows courtesy and fairness.</li> <li>• Completes activities in line with agreed role and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Provide support to team members to achieve shared goals.</li> </ul>
IS-C&SI	Cultural and social intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of own cultural and social biases.</li> <li>• Demonstrates diversity, tolerance and inclusivity values in their approach to working with others.</li> </ul>

## Solving problems

Code	Skill cluster	Performance Descriptor
SP-CT	Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the problem or issue to be addressed.</li> <li>• Makes use of relevant information to build ideas and arguments.</li> <li>• Assesses the importance, relevance and/or credibility of information.</li> <li>• Analyses, interprets and evaluates information to present reasoned conclusions.</li> </ul>
SP-PS	Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a clear definition of the problem.</li> <li>• Gathers relevant information to formulate proposed solutions.</li> <li>• Selects relevant and significant information to formulate proposed solutions.</li> <li>• Identifies negative and positive implications of proposed solutions.</li> <li>• Presents and justifies selected solutions to problems.</li> </ul>
SP-C&I	Creativity and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies new and relevant ideas to help solve a problem.</li> <li>• Refines ideas into workable solutions based on test results and/or feedback.</li> </ul>

# Appendix 3 Digital Skills framework

## Problem solving

Using digital tools to analyse and solve problems:

Performance descriptor	Unit mapping
Use digital tools and techniques for research, collaboration and resolution of problems.	Unit 3, content area A
Have up-to-date knowledge of ways that technology is used within a sector.	Unit 3, content area A
Present ideas and finding using digital tools.	Unit 3, content area B
Use digital tools to manipulate data.	N/A

## Digital collaboration and communication

Using digital tools to communicate and share information with stakeholders:

Performance descriptor	Unit mapping
Understand and use digital collaboration and communication platforms.	N/A
Use collaboration tools to meet with, share and collaborate with customers and colleagues.	N/A

## Transacting digitally

Using digital tools to set up accounts and pay for goods/services:

Performance descriptor	Unit mapping
Use online systems to access and update digital records.	N/A
Set-up accounts to complete transactions.	Unit 3, content area C

## Digital security

Identify threats and keep digital tools safe:

Performance descriptor	Unit mapping
Understand the types of malware.	Unit 1, content area B
Understand the threats involved in carrying out online activities.	N/A
Protect personal and organisation information and data.	N/A
Keeping systems secure.	N/A

## Handling data safely and securely

Follow correct procedures when handling personal and organisational data:

Performance descriptor	Unit mapping
Manage passwords and keep them secure.	Unit 1, content area B
Identify websites and services that are secure and insecure.	Unit 1, content area B
Understand the digital policy for a sector.	Unit 3, content area A
Understand the impact of online data.	Unit 1, content area C
Understand copyright and intellectual property.	Unit 3, content area A

## Appendix 4 Sustainability framework

Sustainable development goal	Unit mapping
SDG 1: No poverty	N/A
SDG 2: Zero hunger	N/A
SDG 3: Good health and wellbeing	N/A
SDG 4: Quality education	N/A
SDG 5: Gender equality	N/A
SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation	N/A
SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy	N/A
SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth	N/A
SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure	Unit 1, content area A
SDG 10: Reduced inequalities	Unit 1, content area F and Unit 3, content area C
SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities	N/A
SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production	Unit 1, content area F
SDG 13: Climate action	N/A
SDG 14: Life below water	N/A
SDG15: Life on land	N/A
SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions	Unit 1, content area F and Unit 3, content area B
SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals	N/A



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