

Please note this is a new qualification we are offering from September 2026, but due to the government's constant changes we will not be able to offer to new cohorts in September 2027 and will need to update this information again with V-Levels!

KS5 - Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) BTEC National in Early Childhood Development (Extended Certificate)

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Curriculum Intent:

Studying Early Childhood Development at Key Stage 5 will extend the student's knowledge of growth and development between birth and 8 years old and explore the range of psychological theory surrounding different aspects of development. Those working with children have a statutory duty to keep them safe, therefore it is imperative that our students have a clear grasp of safeguarding, abuse, neglect and how to identify and respond to concerns. Students will explore the diverse approaches to play and learning, considering theory relating to these and learn how curriculum is planned. They will engage with research and understand legal requirements and methods for improving provision and practice

We value the importance of equipping our pupils with work related knowledge, skills and understanding. Our curriculum is enriched with practical examples as well as examples from historical cases, current research, opportunities to visit universities as well as early childhood settings and to engage with those who work with children and families in the early childhood age range.

Students are expected to volunteer and gain experiences in different early childhood settings to gain a clearer understanding of the learning environments and how they support the children's development, to understand policies and practice procedures, and further develop their personal skills and attributes in early childhood settings.

Pupils will also develop transferable skills and attributes that support their general development as an academic, as well as important for their personal development, including digital literacy, time management, presentation skills and communication skills.

Core Knowledge	Procedural Knowledge
Topics: Unit 1 – Children's Development A. Principles of development and how they are applied B. Physical development from birth up to eight years C. Cognitive development from birth up to eight years D. Language development, including communication from birth up to eight years E. Emotional development from birth up to eight years F. Theories linked to social development Unit 2 – Keeping Children Safe A. Legal responsibilities and approaches to health and safety in early years settings B. Recognise hazards and risks to children C. The Early Years Framework and Safeguarding D. Respond to child abuse Unit 3 – Play and Learning A. Types of play and learning activities and how they promote children's learning and development B. Theoretical perspectives of learning and development in early childhood C. Influences on current early years practice D. How to plan activities and experiences to support children's play, learning and development Unit 4 – Research and Reflective Practice in an Early Childhood Setting A. Types of information and data related to research into provision and practice in children's care and education (0-8 years)	Students will: • Develop notetaking skills. • Apply knowledge to specific case studies, disorders and scenarios. • Develop digital literacy when using the computer to present their work, research, gather data, etc. • Develop presentation skills – designing through to delivering. • Develop reflection and evaluative skills. • Develop analytical skills. • Develop literacy when writing reports and responding to examination questions – learning to write concisely whilst drawing on key concepts and research. • Develop research skills including the ability to determine reliable and valid sources and how to cite sources using a formal referencing system (e.g. APA, Harvard). • Be able to produce responses in different media formats including factsheet, report, strategic plans, poster, essay and slideshow. • Draw on learning from different units or other subjects, contexts, making links and connections. • Be able to explain using models, theories, case studies and specific examples. • Discuss and assess, different strategies/methods and the importance of specific approaches. • Provide recommendations and justifications that are supported by substantial evidence. • Learn and recall factual information and apply it to the context of the question.

- B. The purpose and impact of research in the children's care and education sector (0-8 years)
- C. The purpose of reflective practice for those working in the children's care and education sector (0-8 years)

Unit 1 and 2 will be completed in Year 1 of the course and Unit 3 and 4 will be completed in Year 2 of the course.

Unit 4 is synoptic and requires students to draw on key concepts covered in Units 1 and 2.

Homework:

Out of class learning is essential to remembering factual information, practising application of key concepts, practising examination technique and completion of internally assessed work. The best approach to this is little and often.

Students are expected to match the 5 hours of contact time in the classroom with 5 hours of out of class independent study. Each week, at least one of these hours will be directed by the teacher, submitted by a specific deadline and the student will be provided feedback. At different points in the year, more of these hours may be explicitly directed. When not explicitly directed, students will be supported with a choice of independent study tasks, and they are expected to document these on the blue coloured sheet in their file.

Home learning tasks may include some of the following: creating a revision resource, completing past paper questions, watching a documentary, reading an article, super curricular task, completing a section of their assignment.

Assessment:

The AAQ in Early Childhood Development externally assessed examinations can be taken at two possible windows, January and June in each of the two years of the course.

Students are permitted to sit each external examination (Unit 1 and Unit 2) a maximum of 3 times, with the best result contributing to their overall qualification result. To ensure sufficient opportunities are available should they be required, we have designed our delivery so that the students sit Unit 1 and Unit 2 in the first year of the course.

In year 13, students will complete the internally assessed units (Unit 3 and optional unit). Each unit has a Pearson Set Assignment Brief (PSAB) which is set and changed by the exam board annually. The student's teacher will assess the completed work which must be submitted by the set deadline. It may be deemed that the student can have a resubmission, which permits 15 working days for the student to add to their work and resubmit. Work from the internally assessed units are sampled by the exam board to ensure that nationally, there is fairness and consistency in the marking.

The overall qualification result is determined by their score in each of the four units. The Uniformed Mark Score (UMS) that they achieve in each unit is combined to provide a total UMS and then converted to a grade. Below are 3 tables to show the UMS for each grade for internally and externally assessed units and when calculating the overall result.

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 (90 GLH)
U	0
Pass	9
Merit	15
Distinction	24

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 (90 GLH)
U	0
Near Pass	6
Pass	9
Merit	15
Distinction	24

Extended Certificate (360 GLH)

Grade	Points threshold
U	0
Pass	36
Merit	52
Distinction	74
Distinction *	90

Links to Personal Development:

Students are required to complete a placement in an early childhood setting (up to 8-year-olds), as this will support Unit 4: Research and reflective practice in an early childhood setting. Placements are also encouraged as they will greatly support progression for Post-18 choices and support understanding of the different types of learning environments e.g. Montessori, Forest Schools, etc.

Additionally in relation to workplaces/careers, the students will explore legislation and working practices and procedures including, health and safety aspects such as risk assessment, hazards and risk management, safeguarding and how to respond to concerns, and statutory regulations for infection prevention and control.

Students will study attachment and development of self in Unit 1, which although this will focus on Birth to 8-year-olds, the concepts are also highly relevant to different life stages.

Students are taken to taster days at universities to explore possible progression routes and career ideas.

How is my knowledge further developed in Post 18 provision?

Students may choose to continue to study in this field by completing an undergraduate degree such as; BA (Hons) in Children and Childhood, BSc (Hons) or BA (Hons) in Childhood Studies, BA (Hons) Early Years and Primary Education with QTS.

Equally they could pursue an apprenticeship in Nursery/Early Years or as a Teaching Assistant.

With some additional training, they could explore employment roles as a Playworker, Sports Coach/Assistant, Childminder or other similar roles working with children.