Statement of Purpose

500/9148/7 – Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in IT (QCF)

The Information Technology (IT) sector and aspects of the creative industries, e.g. computer games development, are highly skilled and high growth sectors of the economy. Also, the IT sector is a key enabler for every other industry in the UK. The Sector Skills Council, eskills UK, estimate in the Technology Insights report (2012) that the IT industry contributes 8% of (or £75 billion to) the economy (Gross Value Add). They forecast that over the subsequent seven years the sector could generate up to an additional £47bn GVA to the economy and create 500,000 new jobs.

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate (180 GLH) in IT is part of a larger suite of BTEC National qualifications, in a range of sizes, which share the common purpose of helping people to become occupationally ready to take up employment in the IT sector and aspects of the creative industries at the appropriate level. This can follow either directly after achieving the qualification, or via the stepping stone of Higher Education (HE) in university or college. By studying a BTEC National, learners develop knowledge, understanding and skills required by the sector, including essential employability skills, and apply them in real work contexts. Learners can operate at a standard that can reasonably be expected of an 18 year old in full-time education.

Within this suite, the Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in IT (180 GLH) is primarily an Applied General qualification, equivalent in size to an AS level, which is designed to be taken alongside one or more substantial qualifications within a 16–19 study programme. The qualification provides learners with an element of sector specialism as part of their wider programme by developing a primary common core of knowledge in the sector through mandatory content. This common core covers the content, such as communication and employability skills for IT and computer systems, that is regarded as most important by employers. It also offers some opportunity for learners to focus their study on the aspects that will be of greatest value to them through a limited choice of optional units. It is therefore particularly appropriate for those with an interest in progressing to a career in an IT-related field, who want to pursue this via a principally academic route and take it alongside other qualifications, such as physics, mathematics, art and music. It is also appropriate for those aged 16 who are ready to start an element of level 3 vocational study while completing aspects of their level 2 programme.

The qualification was designed in collaboration with industry, so has the specific support of the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the sector, eskills UK. The Pearson BTEC Level 3 Certificate in IT supports entry to a variety of HE courses in this sector and beyond, when taken in conjunction with other qualifications. This is confirmed by the specific support of a range of universities. In addition, the qualification carries UCAS points – see details published on the Pearson website here:

http://www.edexcel.com/i-am-a/student/results/Pages/BTEC-equivalence.aspx