

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

The Pearson Level 3 BTEC National Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) in Health and Social Care (Extended Certificate) is designed for students interested in careers in health, social care, or related fields, combining academic study with practical application. The qualification is equivalent in size to one A-Level.

The qualification consists of four units, a mix of external exams and internally assessed assignments:

External Units (Exam-based, 90 GLH each):

1. Human Lifespan and Development
2. Human Biology and Health

Internal Units (Pearson Set Assignments, 90 GLH each):

3. Principles of Health and Social Care Practice (mandatory)
4. One optional unit chosen from:
 - Health, Policy and Wellbeing
 - Promoting Health Education
 - Safe Environments in Health and Social Care
 - Health Science

Assessment:

- External units: 1.5-hour exams (80 marks), first available in May/June 2026. Questions include multiple-choice, short and extended responses.
- Internal units: Assessed by Pearson Set Assignment Briefs (PSABs), timed assessments completed under controlled conditions and verified by Pearson.

Skills Developed:

- Transferable skills (problem-solving, communication, collaboration).
- Digital and research skills.
- Understanding of sustainability in health and social care contexts.
- Application of ethical principles and safe practice.

Career Pathways:

This qualification supports progression to higher education in health and social care-related degrees (e.g. nursing, midwifery, social work, allied health professions). It also enables entry into apprenticeships or employment in the health and social care sector.

Who Is It For?

Students aiming for a career in health and social care who want an alternative academic qualification with practical, real-world application.