



COMPUTER SCIENCE

QUALIFICATION: AS and A2 LEVEL

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

To study Computer Science at AS or A level you need have no formal qualification in the subject, but if you do have a GCSE in Information Technology, you will find that the AS/A level course in Computer Science will build on some of the knowledge and skills that you developed at Key Stage 4. The most important factor is that you have an interest in, and are enthusiastic about, Computing. Students are required to have a 6 grade in GCSE Maths and 4 other GCSEs at grade 5 or preferably above.

What will I learn on this A Level course?

- The study of computing at AS/A level will enable you to learn about the design organisation and development of computer systems;
- You will learn a good deal of technical background knowledge to support your study of computer systems;
- The course is designed to encourage you to develop your problem solving skills and examine your solutions not only from an academic, but also an ethical or social point of view;
- You will need to put the theory of designing computer systems into practice to produce projects for your coursework units, which are worth one third of the available marks for the course;
- You will need to learn a programming language to complete your project. Most students use visual basic.

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

This course will appeal to students who:

- enjoy using computers to solve problems;
- have a good working knowledge of computers;
- have a good understanding of the 'Office' type applications;
- are able to develop skills in programming;
- need to develop a greater understanding of the use of computers to fulfil career ideals.

What examinations will I have to take to get my qualification?

Unit	AS or A2	Type	Exam	Marks AS	Marks A2
1	AS	On-screen	1 Hour 30 Minutes	50%	
2	AS	Written	1 Hour 30 Minutes	50%	
3	A2	On-screen	2 Hours 30 Minutes	-	40%
4	A2	Written	2 Hours 30 Minutes	-	40%
5	A2	Coursework	Centre Assessed	-	20%

Types of activities

- Problem solving and the characteristics of computer systems;
- The social, legal, ethical and economic implications of the use of computers;

- The scientific and business application of computers;
- Using and programming software packages;
- Looking at hardware, networks and communications;
- How people use computer systems;
- Systems analysis and designing computer systems for everyday applications;
- Managing information in databases;
- You will be asked to design a computer system. You will be expected to demonstrate programming and software development skills you have developed.

What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

After you have completed your AS or A level course in Computer Science you may choose to seek employment in the ever growing computing related industries, or continue your study full time at a Further Education Institution.

How can I develop my full range of skills by doing this course?

As well as covering advanced level study of computing, this course will enable you to develop some key skills which will be essential to you whatever you go on to do afterwards.