A qualification for every digital path

No matter which path your learners want to follow, a solid foundation in digital skills can help them progress beyond the classroom into their chosen career or next steps in education.

Ensuring learners are equipped for success

We've developed a range of Key Stage 4 digital qualifications across our GCSE and BTEC portfolios, designed to help your students develop those all-important digital skills. We're here to help you discover and determine the ideal pathway for your individual learners. And we'll be there to support you, every step of the way.

Skills for a digital future

What are the digital skills that today's young people need to thrive in the future? This supplement considers how the new Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) in Computer Science can prepare students for the modern world.

Visit us online for more information: go.pearson.com/ks4digital
Digital skills and employability

The landscape of digital skills is constantly changing and, as such, qualifications and schools are adapting to prepare learners for the modern world...

Digital skills

Digital literacy is all about the digital skills we need for success now, and in the future. It is about developing the knowledge and skills that help us to stand out to employers. By developing these skills in their formative years, students can be better equipped to face the digital challenges of the future – and it enables teachers to enhance their own digital skills too. As companies invest more in online products and services, students need to know how they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to keep up with the speed of change. In fact, 76 per cent of CEOs are concerned with the availability of digital skills in their workforce (PwC, 2016).

Defining employability

Employability is not about fulfilling people into a specific job. It is about the skills we need as people for success now and in the future. It is about being fulfilled and engaged in a rewarding career that helps you grow in ways you may not even have imagined. Students and teachers, along with the rest of us, are entering a period of reflection and reinvention caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and therefore may choose to focus more on building skills for a career in a digital, global, more technological world. That future may bring a renewed focus on careers carried out via remote working, furthering the trend towards asynchronous work and a growing demand for workers, who are able to carry out their roles independently. Key to success here will be communication skills and the ability to work in teams. As companies, we can provide work experiences – and ensuring students are prepared for the lifelong learning that the changing workplace demands.

Computing and digital skills are two areas we are working and learning more on. So perhaps now is the time to take a look at what we teach and learn and where opportunities lie.

Digital qualifications

Pearson offers a range of digital qualifications across GCSE, BTEC and A Level to help develop those all-important skills in your students. Whether they are aspiring software developers, digital media or software developers, digital media developers, or just need to develop a broad overview of IT skills, there is a pathway for everyone.

Our new GCSE in Computer Science develops and refines the skills needed for a digital career, regardless of industry or employer. It encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of emerging trends in computing technologies and the impact of computing on individuals, society and the environment, including ethical, legal and ownership issues.

Our new BTECs offer a range of digital qualifications through Pearson’s portfolio of digital qualifications via:

- GCSE in Computer Science: https://bit.ly/2EUp6OR
- BTEC Tech Award in Digital IT: https://bit.ly/3i0oQw8
- BTEC Tech Award in Digital Design: https://bit.ly/2EOqEKx

For full details of the new GCSE in Computer Science, read our evidence report...
Pearson Edexcel’s new GCSE in Computer Science offers an innovative mix of terminal examination and on-screen assessment. But how will this work in practice?

Pearson Edexcel’s GCSE in Computer Science is being taught from September 2020 and takes the form of a written examination of 90 minutes. This equates to 50 per cent of the qualification. Paper 1 assesses topics 1 to 5 of the qualification. Understanding of what algorithms are, what they are used for and how they work, ability to follow, amend and write algorithms, ability to construct truth tables.

Paper 2 is about the application of computational thinking. It is assessed by means of a practical on-screen examination of two hours. The main focus is understanding what the students can do. Students need to be used for and how they use computing to solve problems, different data types. The paper is practical in nature and requires students to design, write, test and refine programs in order to solve problems. Students will complete this assessment on-screen using their Integrated Development Environment (IDE) of choice.

Paper 1

Paper 2

By studying the GCSE, students will be able to develop skills in understanding hardware and software components of computer systems and characteristics of programming languages. Networks: Understanding of computer networks and network security. Issues and impact: Awareness of emerging trends in computing technology and the impact of computing on individuals, society, and the environment, including ethical, legal and ownership issues.

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What will students learn?

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The paper consists of four compulsory questions, each one focused on one of the topic areas. The questions consist of multiple-choice, open-response, and tabular and diagrammatic items.

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Paper 2 is about the application of computational thinking. It is assessed by means of a practical on-screen examination of two hours. The main focus is understanding what the students can do. Students need to be used for and how they use computing to solve problems, different data types. The paper is practical in nature and requires students to design, write, test and refine programs in order to solve problems. Students will complete this assessment on-screen using their Integrated Development Environment (IDE) of choice.

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