GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE FAQs   OPTIONS EVENING 2023

Q	I'm not a programmer - is Computer Science for me?
A	Maybe. The GCSE course does include a significant programming component needed to get a good grade, but it's not all the course is about. There are a wide range of other issues that the GCSE covers, including computer hardware and components; ethical, environmental, and legal impacts; networks; cybersecurity; databases; algorithms; and data representation. If you're a creative, mathematical, or logical thinker, then you'll enjoy Computer Science!

Q	How does it link to other subjects?
A	Computer Science offers lots of links with other subjects: **Maths** - programming, logic, and data representation all cross over into mathematics and utilise the same kinds of applied problem-solving skills. **Science and Medicine** - logical thinking, questioning, and the scientific method all apply here. It is technically a science subject after all, and is counted as such in your grades! Likewise, if you're considering a career or university course in a science subject, programming skills are a huge boost, as so much science relies on computer modelling today. **EPR** - considering the ethical, moral, and legal impacts of technology, and asking big questions about the way technology operates in society today. **Languages** (English/Spanish/French/German) - learning to program is learning another language, and given the way programming languages are constructed, offers an opportunity to really delve into some linguistic theory along the way. **Design Engineering** - links including the design of embedded systems, logic circuits, and the overlap of computing hardware with electronics. **Art** - creativity, digital skills, the use of computers in art or to create it! **Music** - programming and computing skills are transferable into music production, audio processing (everything from sound encoding through to compression and content distribution), synthesizer/electronic music sequencing, and more.

Q	Which exam board do you use, what exams are there?
A	We use the **Edexcel** (1CP2) course, if you want all the details you can go here. There will be 2 exams, one on paper (1.5 hours) and the other on screen on a computer (2 hours). The paper exam covers computational thinking, data, how computers work, networks and the impact of technology on society. The questions are a mix of multiple choice, and short to long written answers. The on-screen exam covers algorithms, how to understand problems and how to read, write and refine programs in Python. You will have the chance to code using the Python programming language in the exam, this is the only GCSE exam that uses a computer based exam. Check out the helpful Isaac Computer Science website for more detail on the topics: https://isaaccomputerscience.org/topics/gcse?examBoard=all&stage=all#edexcel
Q	Is there any coursework?
A	No. Until two years ago there was some programming coursework but due to cheating across the country it never counted to your final grade. Now programming is assessed in the on-screen exam. This now gives us more time in class to prepare for the exams and explore additional topics outside of the formal specification, if time allows.
Q	What sort of career would Computer Science help with?
A	As we seen over the last few years especially, the use of technology and computers has become a vital part of our lives and society as a whole, and this will only increase. Being able to understand how computers work, and how to program them, will open up many different paths in your future. From the obvious ones such as software developers, IT technicians and web developers. To 3D design, animation and sound technicians. The knowledge you gain from Computer Science would also help in any area where technology is used. Click here to see what UCAS say on this topic.