

A Level (including AS Level) Computing (9691) FAQ's

What is the difference between ICT/IT Skills and Computing?

IT and ICT focus on developing competencies for the computer user, whereas Computing is intended for students who wish to learn about computer systems and programming, rather than about the application of ICT.

In the area of ICT, UCLES offers qualifications which assess skills only, in a variety of applications:

- ◆ IT Skills Awards (Foundation and Standard Level)
- ◆ ICT Career Awards (Foundation, Standard and Advanced Level)

In the discipline of Computing we offer:

- ◆ IGCSE/O Level Computer Studies
- ◆ IGCSE IT
- ◆ A/AS Computing
- ◆ Diploma in Computing

What is the difference between A/AS Computing and the Diploma in Computing?

Three out of the four modules/components are identical. The only differences are the Programming Project, which involves less advanced programming skills for the A Level.

How many hours contact time do you recommend for AS /A level?

Over a two year A level course approximately 5 hours per week of teaching time would normally be sufficient. Students will be expected to do individual work outside of this time.

Are there published mark schemes or past papers available for this syllabus?

Yes, both exam papers and mark schemes are published approx. 3 months after the exams have taken place, and are usually available through our Publications Order Form. For further information, please contact Customer Services on international@ucles.org.uk

Where can we obtain examples of 'model' answers that have been awarded the highest grades?

A Standards booklet, containing extracts from candidates' scripts, the mark awarded and comment from the Principal Examiner will be available later in the year. For further information, please contact Customer Services on international@ucles.org.uk

What kind of online support is available?

We have a selection of specimen papers available to download. There is also a list of resources available for our Diploma in Computing, which would be suitable for the A Level syllabus, and can be downloaded from our website – click here to view.

(http://www.cie.org.uk/CIE/WebSite/UCLESData/Documents/Career%20%26%20Skills%20Award%20/DIC/Resources/dic_booklist_2001.pdf)

Keep an eye on other resources for the Diploma in Computing as well. We will soon have schemes of work, classroom ideas and more extensive resource lists which will help you interpret the syllabus.

Where can I obtain books on the resource list?

Most of the textbooks can be obtained over the Internet. The following web-sites may be of interest:

- www.amazon.co.uk
- www.heffers.co.uk

How do we receive the Practical Tasks question paper?

This is available from September for the June session and January for the November session. We send all registered Centres a confidential letter in August and December, containing an email address and password to access the Tasks. Once you have returned the appropriate email, you will receive an auto-reply message from CIE, with the question paper and instructions as an attachment together with a set of confidential instructions which will give information as to how the tasks should be administered.

What is the time limit for each Practical Task?

There is no stated time limit.

Should the Practical Tasks be spread over time or administered in 1 go?

You can do either. It depends entirely on their curriculum.

When will we receive the mark scheme for the Practical Tasks?

These will be available from April 1st for the June session and from October 1st for the November session, and will be automatically distributed via email to all Centres that have requested the practical tasks.

Is there a specific programming language that should be used for the Tasks or Project?

Candidates may use any high level language for either.

When does the students' work for the Tasks or Project have to be submitted to CIE?

By April 30th for the June session and October 31st for the November session.

Do we have to send all work for the Tasks and Project to CIE for moderation or just a sample?

All work must be sent to CIE for moderation. This is to ensure that the standard for the award of marks is the same for each centre and that each teacher has applied the same standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

How can I get in touch with other teachers of A/AS Level Computing?

We have set up an email discussion group for teachers of this syllabus, which is the ideal place to ask questions about teaching, resources or what is expected of students for this or any of the other components of the syllabus. All general questions about the syllabus should be sent there. You can join this group at <http://lists.ucles.org.uk/lists/listinfo/cie-comp-a>

Is International A level equivalent to UK A level and how do universities regard International A level?

Yes, the International A level is equivalent to a UK A level. Similarly International AS and UK AS are of equivalent standard. The best place to find out about acceptability of CIE examinations by British universities is the UCAS website at www.ucas.co.uk/quals/intquals/apps.html.