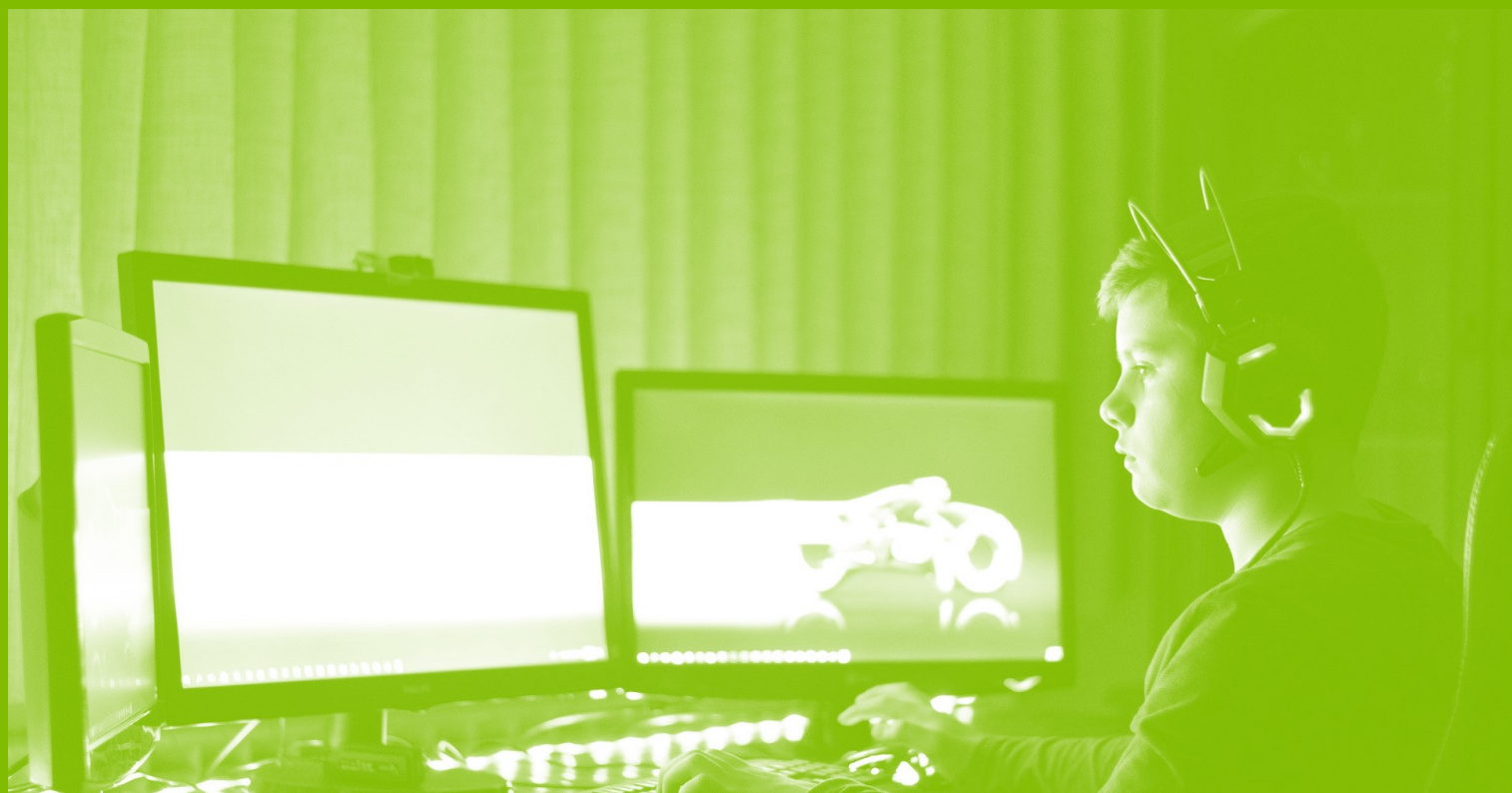GCSE

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WJEC GCSE IN
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Assessment Guide

Getting the most from our Specification and Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)

When we develop new qualifications, we produce two documents that you will find useful:

- Specification – this covers all the information and skills that learners are expected to know by the end of their course.

- Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs) – these are sample exam papers (and where appropriate sample NEA tasks) and mark schemes.

This guide builds upon the information in the specification and SAMs to help further your
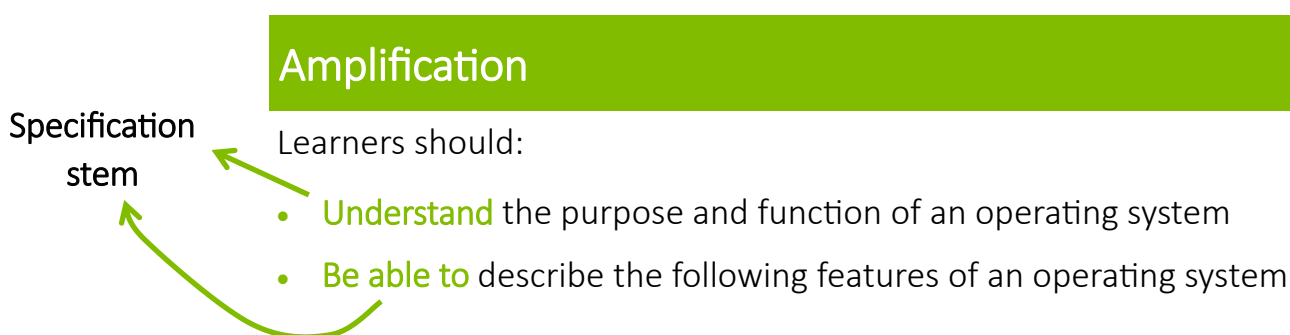
HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE SPECIFICATION AMPLIFICATION

Learners should be made aware of:

- What specification stems are
- What do the specification stems mean.

Specification stems

When you look through the specification for GCSE Digital Technology, you will notice that in the amplification column, we use a variety of wording before the list of content learners need to know; we call this a stem:

Specification stem

Amplification

Learners should:

- **Understand** the purpose and function of an operating system
- **Be able to** describe the following features of an operating system

Each Stem is used for a slightly different reason:

| Specification Stem	When it is used
'Learners should understand'	This is used for unit content where knowledge needs to lead to a sense of understanding.
'Learners should be aware of'	This is used when the volume of content or amplification is quite extensive, and learners do not need to understand all aspects in detail.
'Learners should be able to'	This is used when learners need to apply their knowledge and understanding to a scenario or practical situation.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND COMMAND WORDS

Learners should be made aware of:

* What command words are
* What does each command word mean
* What does each command word assess.

Command words

Command words are the words and phrases we use in our assessments that tell learners how they should answer the question. These words are linked to the Assessment Objectives which are the knowledge, understanding and skills that learners need to demonstrate in their responses to questions in an examination or tasks in NEA.

(a) Name one analogue device.
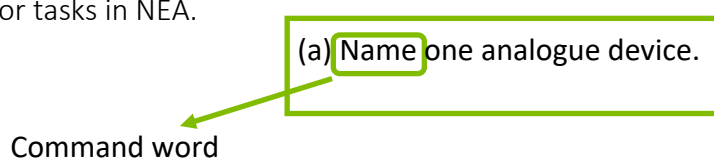
Command word

The following list is not exhaustive, but will give you a good idea of the command words we typically use for each Assessment Objective (AO):

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of digital technology systems.
Command Word	**Meaning**
Define	Give the exact meaning of
Describe	Provide characteristics / main features or a brief account
Give	Provide / name / select / recognise brief facts or examples (from a given source or from recall)
Identify	As for 'give'
List	As for 'give'
Name	As for 'give'
Outline	Set out the main points / provide a brief description or main characteristics
State	As for 'give'
Suggest	Put forward an idea, reason or course of action
Summarise	Select and present the main points (without detail)

AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of digital technology systems in a range of contexts
Command Word	Meaning
Apply	Use knowledge and understanding of a theory or concept and relate it to a specified context
Calculate	Work out from given facts, figures or information
Construct	Create a framework or argument
Explain	Provide details and reasons for how and why something is the way it is
Illustrate	Use a diagram or words to make clear how a concept or theory works in a particular context
Interpret	Translate information provided into another form
Show	As for 'illustrate'
Use	Apply the information provided to a particular theory or concept

AO3	Apply knowledge, skills and understanding to identify audience needs and plan digital products and communications that meet these needs.
Command Word	Meaning
Analyse	Examine an issue in detail / how parts relate to whole, to explain and interpret
Apply	Use knowledge and understanding of a theory or concept and relate it to a specified context
Calculate	Work out from given facts, figures or information
Construct	Create a framework or argument
Explain	Provide details and reasons for how and why something is the way it is
Illustrate	Use a diagram or words to make clear how a concept or theory works in a particular context
Interpret	Translate information provided into another form
Show	As for 'illustrate'
Use	Apply the information provided to a particular theory or concept

AO4	Develop, test and evaluate digital products that meet the needs of specified audiences.
Command Word	**Meaning**
Advise	Suggest a proposal or course of action based on supported reasons
Assess	Make an informed judgement
Compare	Identify and comment on / explain similarities
Consider	Review and respond to given information
Contrast	Identify and comment on / explain differences
Discuss	Examine an issue in detail / in a structured way, taking into account different ideas
Distinguish	Identify and explain the differences between ideas or topics
Evaluate	Make a judgement by weighing up evidence to come to a conclusion
Examine	Investigate closely, in detail
Justify	Support a case with evidence / argument
Recommend	Put forward a proposal based on reasons / evidence

HOW TO UNDERSTAND MARK SCHEMES

Learners should be made aware of:

- What banded mark schemes are
- How many bands should they expect per question
- What does each band mean.

Banded mark schemes

Each question in our assessments will be allocated a number of marks (the tariff). How many marks are allocated to a question will determine how many mark bands you will see in the mark scheme (unless the question is points-based – this will feature a mark scheme which lists the points that are acceptable for an answer. These tend to be low-tariff questions):

Mark range for questions and NEA criterion per assessment objective	Number of bands
Up to 7*	3
8 to 16	4
More than 17	5

*may be points based, depending on focus of question

Each of these bands will use a descriptor. This includes an adjective that describes the level of a candidate's performance:

5 bands		4 bands		3 bands	
Descriptor / Adjective		Descriptor / Adjective		Descriptor / Adjective	
Band 5	Excellent	Band 4	Excellent	Band 3	Very good
Band 4	Good	Band 3	Good	Band 2	Good
Band 3	Satisfactory	Band 2	Basic	Band 1	Basic
Band 2	Basic	Band 1	Limited		
Band 1	Limited				

It is important to remember that these descriptors are used to describe the range of achievement at GCSE and therefore need to be interpreted in the context of the requirements of a GCSE qualification.