

WGSB6 A Level Options

Computer Science FAQ Information Sheet



Which exam board and courses are studied at A Level?

AQA A Level Computer Science (7517)

What skills will studying *Computer Science* equip me with?

Studying Computer Science will equip you with problem-solving skills, analytical thinking, programming skills, an understanding of computer hardware and software, algorithm development, and the ability to work collaboratively on projects.

Do I need a specific grade at GCSE to access A level?

A grade 5 or higher in GCSE Computer Science & Mathematics preferred, along with a good understanding of basic computing concepts.

How is the course structured and how will it be taught?

The AQA A Level Computer Science course is structured with two written exams and a non-exam assessment (NEA). Teaching methods include lectures, practical programming activities in Python, group work, and independent project development.

Is there a coursework component?

Yes, there is a non-exam assessment (NEA) component that involves a practical programming project where students develop a solution to a given problem.

Who teaches the course?

Mrs Biggins and Mrs Whiteside teach the course with expertise in computer science, software development, and Mathematics. Mrs Whiteside teaches Paper 1 and Mrs Biggins teaches Paper 2. Both teachers support the students with their NEA Project.

How is the course resourced?

The course is resourced through a combination of textbooks, online learning platforms, software tools for programming, and access to laboratories equipped with the necessary hardware and software.

How well do students achieve in *Computer Science*?

Wirral Grammar School for Boys reports strong performance in AQA A Level Computer Science, often with high pass rates and above-average grades compared to other subjects.

Many previous students have attended Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. Often students opt to continue Computer Science at University.



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Will I need to do a lot of independent study?

Yes, independent study is an important part of the A Level experience. Students are encouraged to engage in self-directed learning, practice programming outside of lessons, and work on their NEA projects independently.

What are typical A level subject choices alongside *Computer Science*?

Typical A Level subject choices alongside Computer Science include Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics and Business Studies.

Do I need to take another subject to support my study of *Computer Science*?

While not strictly required, taking Mathematics alongside Computer Science is highly recommended as it will enhance your understanding of algorithm design, problem-solving, and analytical skills.

What subject-related extracurricular opportunities are offered at A level?

Extracurricular opportunities may include coding clubs, hackathons, workshops, guest lectures from industry professionals, and participation in programming contests.

How might *Computer Science* help me in my next steps / university / career planning?

A Level Computer Science can open pathways to further study in computer science, engineering, data science, and information technology at university. It also provides practical skills relevant to careers in software development, systems analysis, cybersecurity, and tech entrepreneurship.

Other helpful information about studying *Computer Science*

Studying Computer Science can also develop skills that are valuable in various industries, enhance your ability to think logically and critically, and prepare you for a technology-driven future. Additionally, it lays a foundation for lifelong learning in a rapidly evolving field.

