

GCSE (9-1) Computer Science (J277): Getting Started

Follow this quick start guide

This guide is intended to support teachers who are new to our GCSE (9-1) Computer Science (J277). You may be starting delivery of the subject for the first time or moving to us from another exam board.

This guide will direct you to the sources of information that you will need and suggest steps to take to help familiarise yourself with the range of support materials we produce, and where to find them.

Thank you for choosing OCR.

1 Specification familiarisation


Our 'Specification at a Glance' is a good place to start to become more familiar with the general content requirements of our specification. This may be found here:

 <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/specification-at-a-glance/>

The full specification is located on the Qualification Web Page:

 <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/>

A direct link to the specification for download is here:

 <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/558027-specification-gcse-computer-science-j277.pdf>

2 Stay informed and up to date

Getting the latest news updates and information is extremely important



- **Keep up to date with our newsletter**
We provide a monthly update for you which highlights any essential changes, resource releases and information. Sign up for [email updates](#) and stay updated.
- **Subject Information Updates**
We may send critical updates to centres via your Examinations Officer called Subject Information Updates (SIUs). Any we send may be found under the [Assessment](#) section of the subject web page.
- **Let us know you are planning to teach our qualification**
This will help us keep you supported as you begin to deliver the qualification. To do this, complete a [Teach with OCR](#) form.

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Preparing to teach

We have a range of resources and training that will help you to prepare and plan your course.

Resources are being updated on a rolling cycle – please keep checking our website as we publish these.

The following links direct you to the most relevant support route for your needs.

Professional Development courses

We offer a range of [Professional Development Courses](#) for our qualifications. These courses will help you to understand the specification in more depth and develop your confidence in classroom delivery.

Our training is either face to face, or via webinar.

A face to face event lets you meet our trainers and other teachers directly. Webinars are ideal if you find arranging cover difficult or do not have the time to travel.

Scheme of work

We have created a [Scheme of Work](#) for you. It has two different approaches for delivery - a side-by-side approach running both components in parallel and a unit-by-unit approach.

The Scheme of Work links directly to our Teacher Delivery Packs which can be found on the [Planning and Teaching](#) section of the J277 webpage.

Teacher Delivery Packs

We provide a complete set of [lesson plans and resources](#) for you to use – free of charge. These Teacher Delivery Packs contain lesson plans, PowerPoints, learning activities and multiple choice questions (among other things). They are ‘ready to use’ and a great base for your planning.

Endorsed resources

There are a range of [endorsed text books](#) and e-resources for you to choose from. Many publishers offer inspection copies and trials of their resources.

Assessment story

A guide on how we produce our Sample Assessment Materials and examination papers is available to you. This will help you [understand our assessments](#) and support you in creating internal assessments in the OCR style.



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Preparing for Options Evenings



We have created an Options Evening pack for computer science. This includes a PowerPoint, video, parent handout and posters. We also have other supporting resources you can use. You may find the following useful:

1. Computing Summary Brochure

We have a broader [summary document](#) that covers all of our Computing qualifications. This will also be of use to you if you offer our other L1/L2 Computing qualifications.

2. Computer Science Options Evening pack

Our [options evening pack](#) has everything you need to attract students on to the course. It is free and may be downloaded from the website.

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Staying supported



There are many ways get support for our GCSE and also to engage with us and fellow teachers. You are never far away from help and guidance. We run regular networks in your area, offer webinars, and attend conferences and events.

- **Attend one of our free Teacher Networks**

This is an opportunity to meet one of our Subject Advisors. You will also meet local centres who are delivering our qualifications. This means you can build local support networks. We hold regular [teacher networks](#) across the country.

- **Submit a question to our Computer Science Subject Advisor Team**

You can contact our Subject Advisor team to help support you and clarify any questions you may have. You may contact the Subject Advisor team via:

1. Telephone: 01223 553 998
2. Email: ComputerScience@ocr.org.uk
3. Twitter: [@OCR_ICT](#)

- **Join the Facebook community**

We support a community of teachers on [Facebook](#) teaching our GCSE (9-1) Computer Science (J277) course. There are wide and varied discussions. Many teachers discuss resources and offer advice and guidance on their approach to delivery.

Our Subject Advisors are present within the community to offer extra support.

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Preparation for examinations



There are a range of ways to prepare your candidates in preparation for the formal examinations.

We offer a wide range of [free resources](#) to support assessment and learning.

Preparing the programming skills

- **Coding Challenges**

Our targeted coding challenges booklet provides a set of coding challenges that students can use as practice to get used to the process of Design, Write, Test and Refine process using a high-level text-based language.



- **Algorithm Challenges**

Our algorithm challenges booklet provides 40 algorithm challenges which help build confidence in creating algorithms from real-life problems. They are graduated from very simple to complex!

- **Programming techniques guides**

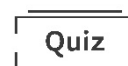
Our specification supports the use of any high-level text-based language. We have guides to the programming techniques in the specification for both [Python](#) and [C#](#).

- **End of Unit quizzes**

We have summative quizzes which test candidate's understanding of the both components of the specification.

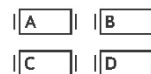
Preparing for the external Examinations

We have a wide range of assessment preparation material for the external examinations.



- **Multiple Choice Questions**

These are included inside the Teacher Delivery Packs and offer formative assessment opportunities at the end of each lesson or topic.



- **End of Unit Quizzes**

The End of Unit quizzes allow you to set candidates questions with more depth to them to really assess the strength of their understanding. These could also be used for homework/revision questions.

- **ExamBuilder**

We offer a free on-line service called [ExamBuilder](#). This service allows you to create mock examination papers sourced from historical assessment material. You may need to ask your Exams Officer to sign up on behalf of the school to get an account.

- **Practice papers**

We have an external set of Sample Assessment Materials within the [Assessment](#) section of the J277 web page.

There will also be a second set of papers for use as unprepared mocks which will be located behind [Interchange](#). Your Exams Officer should be able to give you access to Interchange should you not have access already.

- **Examiners' Report**

After each examination series, the Examiners' Report reviews the examination series and often highlights common issues and strengths with the series. These reports can provide valuable insight for examination preparation.

The legacy J276 reports are available from the [Assessment](#) section of the J276 web page.

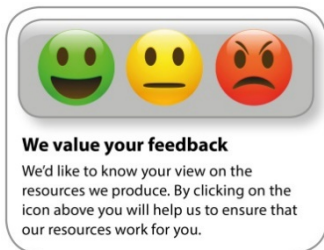
As we are keeping our assessment model stable, these will give insight into the approaches to J277 assessment.

- **Candidate style answers**

We trialled our SAMs with students. The commentaries for the [Candidate style answers](#) are on our website.

- **Forms**

Any forms you will require for entry of candidates may be found under the 'Forms' menu within the [Assessment](#) section of the J277 subject web page.



Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR, or are considering switching from your current provider/awarding organisation, you can request more information by completing the Expression of Interest form which can be found here: www.ocr.org.uk/expression-of-interest

Looking for a resource? There is now a quick and easy search tool to help find free resources for your qualification: www.ocr.org.uk/i-want-to/find-resources/

OCR Resources: *the small print*

OCR's resources are provided to support the delivery of OCR qualifications, but in no way constitute an endorsed teaching method that is required by the Board, and the decision to use them lies with the individual teacher. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions within these resources.

Our documents are updated over time. Whilst every effort is made to check all documents, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, therefore please use the information on the latest specification at all times. Where changes are made to specifications these will be indicated within the document, there will be a new version number indicated, and a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource please contact us at: resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk.

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Please get in touch if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support delivery of our qualifications: resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk