

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The ICT qualification is the Award in Digital Applications (AIDA). It is worth the equivalent of one GCSE. It is a practical qualification which enables students to develop their skills in a series of tasks that are linked to a major project.

The early part of the course tackles the development of software skills. In addition, students learn the special techniques that are needed for tracking progress through a lengthy project (Project logs, Gantt charts). The needs of the end-user are a vital consideration so design work, planning and testing play an important role in the learning stages of the course.

The coursework takes up a major part of the course. It consists of a set of publications which must be submitted in an electronic portfolio together with all the supporting documentation (tests, designs, plans, reports, feedback, etc). Time management is at the heart of this qualification. Students learn how to manage projects, allocating time and resources to different stages of a complex task. A typical task would require students to plan for an event, obtain information through research and surveys, analyse the data and make recommendations for future action. Only then would they use ICT to produce the necessary documentation required by the project.

As well as using ICT, students must enjoy writing and planning and group work. These additional activities represent a substantial part of the course. Students must appreciate that **they do not spend all their time** using computers.

Organisation is crucial. There is no end of course examination. All work is ongoing coursework which is put together in an electronic portfolio which is then marked internally and sent away for moderation by the Edexcel examination board. Every piece of work matters and students must be prepared to show determination, commitment and enthusiasm if they are to keep on top of the work. Students who struggle with organisation and deadlines should consider carefully whether or not this is an appropriate option choice as it is unlikely to meet their needs.