

Computer Science and Digital Technology Newsletter – April 2024

Welcome!

Firstly, hello and thank you for taking the time to read this.

I am Gareth Gillard the new Subject Officer for Computer Science and Digital Technology. I would like to introduce myself to you all, and state what an exciting time we are at in terms of the development of the new Computer Science qualification and looking forward to the first entries for the A-Level Digital Technology qualification.

Computer Science

As you might be aware, the Qualification Outline for the new Computer Science qualification has been uploaded. IF you have not seen it, please view it [here](#).

You may also be aware that within the Outline there are some important changes, one of which is the requirement to teach Python as the prescribed language. This, I know might be a daunting time for some, and I would like to reassure you that I will be here to assist you with any questions or queries you have to ensure the smooth transition from your current programming language to Python.

I would actively encourage all centres to introduce Python to Year 9 (or below) to ensure that all pupils are ready for the new GCSE.

Below are some resources that you may wish to visit to start your journey:

- [Python.org](https://python.org) – the home of Python, download and read the documentation.
- [W3Schools](https://www.w3schools.com/python/) – Python section provides code snippets and explanations.
- [Pytch.org](https://pytch.org) – currently being developed in Dublin by Trinity College Dublin, and in collaboration with Swansea University. This is an online bridging tool, used to help learners transition from Scratch to Python. It mirrors Scratch's interface, while using custom Python functions to create Scratch-style games. These functions mirror Scratch's blocks, allowing learners to use the knowledge they have previously learnt to quickly gain the basics of Python syntax, while also making exciting games. This tool is useful for learners who may be about to begin their python journey, by providing something quite familiar, and boosting confidence.
- realpython.com – a website for learning python. With tutorials quizzes etc.
- [TutorialsPoint.com](https://www.tutorialspoint.com/python/) – the popular website, with a section for Python programming
- [CodeClub Projects](https://codeclubprojects.org) – setup by the Raspberry Pi foundation. Projects are focused on learners.

Digital Technology

This year marks the first completion of both the GCSE and A-Level course to be fully completed. This, I am sure has been an experience and lessons will have been learnt. I am hoping, that from this iteration of the course I could gain some feedback from you all to allow me to ensure that this course is as exciting, creative, and interesting as it can be.

The development for the new GCSE suites is no-going, and although new, the Digital Technology course is part of the second wave of qualification to be considered, so please ensure that you become actively involved in the feedback to steer the qualification into the future, and enable all students to be enthralled, engaged, and equipped for their futures.

Since starting I have been compiling a list of sites to assist with the more technical areas of the GCSE and A-Level courses - below - if you would like to add to this list, then please feel free to email me digitech@wjec.co.uk to give me your suggestions.

Area	Link(s)
Gamemaker	Gamemaker Shaun Spalding
HTML	W3Schools Programming with Mosh Traversy Media
CSS	W3Schools Traversy Media
SQL	W3Schools Programming with Mosh
PHP	W3Schools Traversy Media
JavaScript	W3Schools Programming with Mosh Traversy Media
Programming Guides	GoalKicker Books