International
GCSE Computer Science (9210)

Minor changes to specification from Nov 2023

The following wording in the GCSE Computer Science (9210) specification has been updated from November 2023.

The minor updates to the specification aim to ensure parity with the domestic GCSE Computer Science qualification.

There are no changes to the assessment in the exams, and students' work will still be assessed in exactly the same way.

NB: Added text to the specification is highlighted in **bold.**

Specification updates

Word change to section 3.6.1. Cyber security threats
Page 28 – in the additional information box Penetration testing is the process of attempting to gain access to resources without knowledge of user names, passwords and other normal means of access. Students should understand the following two types of penetration testing: • **when the person or team testing the system has knowledge of and possibly basic credentials for the target system, simulating an attack from inside the system (a malicious insider).** • **when the person or team testing the system has no knowledge of any credentials for the target system, simulating an attack from outside the system (an external attack).**

Word change to section 3.2.13. Classification of programming language and translators
Page 17 – in the additional information box Students should understand that most computer programs are written in high-level language and explain why this is the case. **Students will need to know that:** • **Assemblers and compilers translate their input into machine code directly** • **Each line of assembly language is assembled into a single machine code instruction** • **Interpreters do not generate machine code directly (they call appropriate machine code subroutines within their own code to carry out statements).**

Word change to section 3.4.3. Software classification

Page 24 – in the additional information box

System software manages the computer system resources. It also acts as a platform to run application software.

Application software is software that performs end-user tasks.

Word change to section 3.4.4. Systems architecture

Page 24 – in the additional information box

A bus is a collection of wires through which data is transmitted from one component to another

Main memory will be considered to be any form of memory that is directly accessible by the CPU, (except for cache and registers).

Secondary storage is considered to be any non-volatile storage mechanism which is not directly accessible by the CPU.