

Frequently Asked Questions

BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in IT Application Skills Schools Qualifications – 600/6943/0

1. What is the purpose of this qualification?

This vocational qualification will give young people the knowledge and skills to use IT software applications to progress their learning in IT, or in any subject where basic IT skills are required. It will also teach them how to use a computer confidently and effectively, and encourage problem-solving, creativity and communication.

2. What does this qualification cover?

Completing this qualification will improve the learner's understanding of IT applications commonly used around the world and teaches learners how to use the software efficiently.

The qualification consists of four mandatory units:

- Word Processing Software [R/502/4628](#)
- Presentation Software [M/502/4622](#)
- Spreadsheet Software [F/502/4625](#)
- Improving Productivity [J/502/4156](#)

You can view the qualification specification and syllabus on the BCS Approved Centre Forum here: [Home > Qualifications > ECDL for Schools](#).

3. Why should a learner take this qualification?

Learners will gain a variety of skills which can be used to support their learning in other subject areas as well as help them progress to the next level of learning.

In summary, learners will benefit by:

- using word processing skills to accurately create and edit a variety of documents;
- using tools such as macros and mail merge to work efficiently;
- using spreadsheets to present and analyse data, and prepare management information;
- creating effective presentations to communicate well with the audience;
- planning, evaluating and improving procedures involving IT to make tasks more productive and efficient;
- using sound and video to present effectively.

In addition the qualification:

- increases the overall productivity of the learner, upskills them in the use of common applications, and can build on existing knowledge;
- provides the learner with confidence to use IT systems and software effectively;
- provides the learner with an effective knowledge of IT applications that can be used for future study or their chosen career path;
- creates a drive for excellence through reflection on the work the learner has produced.

4. Why should I choose this qualification for my learners?

This qualification will provide IT skills that support their further learning in most other subjects, whichever course they choose to progress to. It enables learners to work more effectively and build on existing skills. They also have the ability to select the most appropriate application for the task in-hand. If they are entering employment, they will know how to use the most commonly employed IT applications in the work place, where 80% of job roles need a level of IT use.

5. Which type of learners will benefit?

A typical learner is aged between 14 and 19 years old. Schools will have prepared a programme of learning suitable for their KS4 learners, including vocational options together with alternative pathways.

6. Does this qualification meet all my school's computing curriculum needs?

This vocational qualification is designed to sit alongside other computing qualifications and can be used to support the learning delivered in core subjects. When reviewing your computing curriculum delivery, under Progress 8 Performance measures it is possible for your learners to study both GCSE Computing and BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in Application Skills.

7. How difficult is a level 2 qualification?

Achievement at level 2 reflects the ability to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. It includes taking responsibility for completing tasks and procedures, and exercising autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance.

8. What do qualifications at level 1 cover?

At level 1 the learner will demonstrate basic factual knowledge of the subject and/or knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined routine tasks and address simple problems. The learner will use basic cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined routine tasks and procedures.

9. What do qualifications at level 3 cover?

At level 3 the learner will demonstrate they have factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that, while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine, as well as interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. At level 3 the learner is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.

10. Is this qualification a GCSE equivalent?

The government has recognised the value of both academic and vocational qualifications to support all learners and has appropriately provided for both in the design of Progress 8 Performance measures. This vocational qualification has been approved for Progress 8 measures and can be taught alongside GCSEs. An RQF qualification at level 2 is compared as a GCSE equivalent grade A* to C.

11. How long does this qualification take to complete?

You need to allow a minimum of 120 hours for guided learning with a learner who has no prior knowledge of the subject. We recognise that each learner is different and we expect the school to support each individual depending on their learning needs and prior IT experience. The learner has three years to complete the qualification from their first successful exam pass.

12. How can I support students within my teaching and learning?

We do not prescribe how this qualification is taught. We expect the teacher to provide engaging lessons to support the needs of the class size and learning requirements. We can supply online courseware to support the learning as part of a broader teaching programme. It is important to note the guided learning hour's value of this qualification and ensure that learners are well prepared ahead of the assessments.

13. Are there revision aids?

Some schools choose to run three to five day intensive revision sessions to allow learners to recap on the knowledge and skills they have learnt previously. Some schools source external support to assist with these revision sessions. If you are delivering a broad teaching programme that delivers the 120 guided learning hours and you are using staggered assessments (which we would recommend), then intensive revision sessions are unlikely to be needed.

14. How is this qualification assessed?

All units within this qualification are tested in controlled exam conditions using automated testing. Each unit provides the outcome of the test upon completion. This gives instant feedback to your learners and meets the Department for Education's requirements for 50% of the qualification being externally assessed.

The assessments contain a variety of question types including performance-based questions within the application modules. In the Improving Productivity unit, learners demonstrate through synoptic assessment that they can identify and effectively use an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the other application units.

15. How is the qualification graded?

The learner must pass each of the four units to achieve this qualification. The qualification is graded across four levels; pass, merit, distinction and distinction*. The grade is determined by the aggregate score across the four units with 70% being the minimum pass level for the whole qualification.

16. Which module tests do I assign my learners on ATLAS Cloud?

BCS L2 Schools Improving Productivity MS Office (MS Office) Cert UK Eng
ICDL / ECDL 5.0 L2 Spreadsheet Software MS Excel (MS Office) Cert UK Eng
ICDL / ECDL 5.0 L2 Presentation Software MS PowerPoint (MS Office) Cert UK Eng
ICDL / ECDL 5.0 L2 Word Processing MS Word (MS Office) Cert UK Eng

17. How do I claim certificates for this qualification?

Certificates for this qualification are dispatched to centres automatically. Once your learners have completed the last module, we will validate the results and issue certificates within four weeks, though it is usually a lot quicker.

18. Where will I find pricing for this qualification?

You will need to purchase a qualification registration credit for each learner and a minimum of four certification test credits, one per module. You can also purchase re-sit credits if needed and diagnostic (mock test) credits to assist with preparation for the certification test. A full list of our prices is available on the Approved Centre Forum here:

Home > News, Information & Support > Document Library > Price List

If you'd like to discuss the purchasing of this qualification with a member of our team, please telephone 01793 417445 or email bcssales@bcs.uk

19. How many performance points does this qualification offer?

This qualification has been approved for Performance Tables and attracts the following points per grade:

- Distinction* 58 points
- Distinction 52 points
- Merit 46 points
- Pass 40 points

20. Where do I find the products for this qualification on the Approved Centre Forum order page?

Registrations

Level 2 Qualification Registration Credits > ECDL in IT Application Skills (Schools Performance Points).

Test credits

Certification tests & Certification Re-sits: Tests, Re-sits & Diagnostics > I/ECDL Cert Standard (Level 2 – Schools)

Diagnostic tests & Diagnostic Re-sits: Tests, Re-sits & Diagnostics > I/ECDL Diag Standard (Level 2 – Schools)

21. How do I register my learners?

You register your learners on the BCS Approved Centre Forum, where they are given an individual BCS ID. You then download them onto the **ATLAS Cloud** Testing Platform.

22. Who can invigilate the automated certification exams?

Anyone can invigilate the exams as long as they have had nothing to do with the teaching of the subject. They will need to be registered members of staff with BCS and have completed the relevant training. A minimum of two invigilators will need to be registered.

23. What is the best method of delivery for this qualification in my school?

This qualification can be delivered in a number of ways and implemented depending on the needs of your learners. It can be timetabled as an ICT subject or taught alongside other subjects where IT can be embedded. It can also be delivered as part of enrichment-time or as an after-school class. You need to allow a minimum of 120 hours for guided learning with a learner who has no prior knowledge of the subject.

24. Where else is this qualification taught?

Over the last two years the number of schools choosing to deliver this qualification has risen significantly. These schools recognise the value of this qualification to support cross curricular learning together with the employability skills it provides. Similar qualifications offered by BCS are used by universities to enhance their student's learning regardless of the degree subject they have chosen. A similar qualification is also used by a high number of commercial organisations who provide support services to help get the unemployed back into the workplace.

25. Can BCS help me deliver the whole of the Computing curriculum?

Our Computing at Schools (CAS) group is a free-to-join community encouraging and supporting the delivery of Computer Science. It is made up of over 22,000 like-minded professionals and has provided over 50,000 instances of CPD to teachers since 2013. CAS has trained nearly 300 master teachers who now provide locally tailored professional development for schools and teachers in their area, and this number will continue to grow.

CAS has over 3,000 resources freely available to support your delivery of Computer Science. Some great examples of CAS resources can be found here: <http://www.quickstartcomputing.org/> and if you're interested in becoming a member, you can join here: <http://www.community.computingatschool.org.uk/door>.

Do you have a question that has not been answered in this document?

Please contact our client support team by telephoning 01793 417530.