

ST MARY'S COLLEGE



At St Marys, we have gained the impression over the past 18 months that many students are unsure of the difference between AS Computing and AS ICT. We outline the main differences below.

Computing is more technical than ICT

The essential difference between computing and ICT is that Computing deals with the more technical aspects of computing systems, whereas ICT focuses more on the uses of ICT in society.

When we say that Computing is more technical than ICT, we mean in the theory content and the fact that computing at both AS and A2 involves some programming.

Typical subjects you will study in Computing are:

- Programming languages and how to design and write programs.
- Binary Number System – the mathematics which explains how all computers work.
- Data structures – quite advanced ideas on how data is organised inside the computer (there are trees in there, you know).

Contrast this with typical ICT subjects:

- Computer applications packages and how to use them.
- Social impacts of ICT (we have all slipped into a virtual world without even noticing?).
- Qualities required of a computer professional (it's not just about being good with computers).



There is no programming in ICT

Computing is for Mathematicians and Scientists, ICT is for business people

If you don't like subjects such as Mathematics or Physics, then it's unlikely that you'll like Computing. There isn't very much actual Maths in Computing, but much of the thinking is similar – logical and analytical. We reckon that you need a grade C or above in Maths to be comfortable on the Computing course.

If you just want to improve your general ICT knowledge, then ICT is the one for you.

Is having GCSE an advantage?

Only a slight one. There really isn't much theoretical content in GCSE, so most of the areas won't have been covered anyway. Both AS courses are a big step up from GCSE.

