

Standard Grade

Glossary



Foundation, General and Credit

General Purpose Packages	
Computer Systems	
Commercial Data Processing	
Automated Systems	

Absolute reference	A cell reference in a spreadsheet which remains the same when copied (replicated) to another cell
Access	To gain entry to a computer system
Accuracy	Whether or not information is correct – this is essential
Accuracy of information	Whether or not information is correct – this is essential
Adaptability	The ability of an automated system to be able to carry out a variety of different tasks
Addressability	A way of identifying storage locations in main memory using a number called an address
Alignment	The way text is set out, for example, right, left, centred or justified
Amend	To change
Analogue I/O	A signal which changes continuously rather than in steps, such as temperature and speed
Analogue to digital converter	Equipment (usually a chip) which can accept an analogue signal and changes it into a digital signal (usually binary)
Analysis	The analysis stage involves reading and understanding a problem
Anatomy	Anatomy –parts of a robot which resemble human anatomy – waist, shoulder, elbow, wrist
Animation	Data made up of moving graphics
Applications package	A piece of software (together with its accompanying manual and disks) which performs a particular task
Arithmetic/Logic Unit (ALU)	Part of the processor of a computer system which does the calculations and makes the decisions
ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
Audio	A type of data made up of music or any sound produced by a computer
AVERAGE(..)	A function used to find the average value in a range
Background job	A secondary task or program which runs in a computer system at the same time as an interactive program being run by the user
Backing storage	A system for permanently holding data on media such as disk or tape
Backing storage medium	An object upon which software and data may be held, such as a CD-ROM
Backup	A copy of a program or data made in case the original is lost or destroyed
Backup	A copy of a program or data made in case the original is lost or destroyed
Bar code	A bar code is a set of lines of varying widths, which can be read by passing a bar code reader across them. Used to identify goods in a shop
Basic hardware for Commercial Data Processing	Basic hardware for Commercial Data Processing is a mainframe computer and terminals (VDU)
Basic hardware for General Purpose Packages	Basic hardware for General Purpose Packages includes a processor, monitor, keyboard, mouse disk drive and printer
Batch processing	Collecting together all the data to be processed and inputting it into the computer in one set or 'batch'
Batch system	A system which carries out batch processing, for example cheque clearing, as and electricity billing

Binary	Having only two states, counting using only two digits, 1 and 0
Biometrics	Using physical characteristics to identify person, e.g. fingerprint, retinal scan or voiceprint
Bit	A binary digit, either one (1) or zero (0)
Broadband connection	A high speed connection to the Internet, for example, at least 512 Kilobits/second
Byte	A group of eight bits
Cable	A medium for the transmission of data, including copper wires or optical fibre.
CAD/CAM	Computer Aided Design / Computer Aided Manufacture
Capacity of backing storage	The quantity of data that can be held on a backing storage medium, such as CD-ROM
Capital costs	The cost of buying or setting up a computerised system. Also called initial costs
CD-Rewriteable (CD-RW)	A CD which can be written to and erased over and over again
CD-Recordable (CD-R)	A CD which can be written to until it is full
CD-ROM	Compact Disk Read Only Memory. An optical disk which can hold 600 or 700 Mb of data
Cell	A box on a spreadsheet that can contain text, numbers or a formula
Cell attributes	The way the spreadsheet cell displays data such as numbers or dates
Cell format	The way the spreadsheet cell looks, for example, changing the column width or alignment
Cell protection	Locking the contents of a cell to prevent them from being changed
Central Processing Unit (CPU)	The part of the mainframe computer which processes the information
Character set	A list of all the characters, symbols and numbers which can be produced by a keyboard
Charting	Drawing a graph from a set of numerical data, usually from a spreadsheet program
Check digit	A figure that's calculated from the digits of a number and placed at the end of a number. Used to check that the number has been input correctly
Chip	A small piece of silicon used to make an integrated circuit
Circuit board	A thin board on which chips and other components are fixed by solder
Client and server network	A method of network organisation in which network stations or clients make use of resources available on one or more servers
Clip art	Images on backing storage or on the World Wide Web which may be added to a document
Closed loop system	A control system which uses feedback
Columns	Vertical parts of a spreadsheet
Command driven software	Software that needs commands typed in by the user to work
Commercial software	Software which is not free and must be paid for. It is also subject to considerable restrictions as to how it may be used

Common HCI	The similarity of the human computer interface across the different parts of an integrated package makes it easy to learn how to use the package
Comparison operators	Equals (=), greater than (>), less than (<), does not equal (<>)
Compiler	A translator program which is part of the systems software of a computer. A compiler translates a high level language into machine code in a single operation
Complex formulae	Complicated formulas used in a spreadsheet
Complex search	A search on more than one field in a database
Complex search for information on CD-ROM/WWW (Internet)	A search using more than one condition or keyword – an advanced search on a search engine
Computed field	A field containing a calculation involving one or more other fields
Computer Aided Design (CAD)	Using a computer system to help design something
Computer Aided Manufacture (CAM)	Using a computer system to help manufacture something
Computer crime	Using a computer for criminal purposes. Hacking is a computer crime
Computer Misuse Act	A law which allows computer criminals like hackers and the creators of viruses to be prosecuted
Computer Numerical Control (CNC)	Automatically controlling a machine like a lathe according to instructions
Computer operator	A person who oversees the day to day operation of a mainframe computer system using a terminal
Control language	A special language designed to control a device such as a robot or a robot arm
Control unit	Part of the processor which controls the running of a program
Corrupt	To corrupt a file means to damage it so that it cannot be read. This is why you should always keep a backup copy
Crop graphic	To reduce the size of the graphic by cutting parts from the edges of the graphic
Customising HCI	Changing the HCI of a General Purpose Package or an Operating System to suit the user
Data	A general term for numbers, characters, symbols, graphics and sound which are accepted and processed by a computer system
Data collection	Part of the data processing cycle which involves the gathering of data. May involve source documents
Data controller	The person or organisation holding the data (previously known as the data user)
Data file	A file containing data on backing storage or in memory. May be organised as a set of records
Data file	A file containing data on backing storage or in memory. May be organised as a set of records
Data glove	An input device used in virtual reality
Data input	Part of the data processing cycle when data is input to the computer system. May be direct or indirect
Data output	Part of the data processing cycle where data is sent out
Data preparation operator	Person who inputs data into the computer system
Data processing	Processing data as part of the data processing cycle
Data processing cycle	A cycle of events beginning with data collection and preparation and ending with data output

Data Protection Act	A law which regulates how personal data about individuals should be kept on computer
Data storage	Part of the data processing cycle which involves the transfer of data to backing storage
Data subject	A person about whom data is held
Data user	The person or organisation holding the data (now known as the data controller)
Database	A structured collection of similar information which can be searched
Dedicated	A computer or machine which can only perform one particular task
Degrees of freedom	The number of independent axes (or planes) of movement
Delete	To remove data
Design (of a program)	Design involves the careful planning of a solution to the problem using a recognised design methodology, for example top-down design
Desktop computer	A microcomputer consisting of a processor, keyboard, mouse and monitor which is normally operated sitting at a desk
Desktop publishing (DTP)	Producing professional looking publications by using a computer, peripherals and software
Device	A single item of computer hardware
Device drivers	A program which is an add-on to the operating system on a computer, to allow the computer to operate a particular device which is attached to it
Dial-up connection	A method of connecting to the Internet using a modem and a telephone line
Digital	A signal which changes in steps and not continuously like an analogue signal
Digital still camera	A digital camera mainly used for taking still photographs
Digital to analogue converter	Equipment (usually a chip) which can accept a digital signal (usually binary) and change it into an analogue signal
Digital video camera	A digital camera mainly used for taking movies
Digital Video Disk (DVD)	An optical storage medium, similar to CD-ROM, which can hold video (TV programmes or films)
Digitise	Converting an analogue quality into a digital one. Digitising a picture breaks it into dots and each dot (or pixel) is given a digital value for brightness and colour, e.g. using a scanner or a digital still camera
Directory	An area on backing storage where files may be stored (also called a folder on some systems)
Documentation	A detailed explanation of how a program works – made up of a user guide and a technical guide
Download software – freeware, shareware, commercial	A file which is received via a network, such as a software update
DVD-Recordable (DVD-R)	DVD-R is a write once medium. DVD-R operates in a similar manner to CD-R, with recordable disks containing a layer of dye
DVD-Rewriteable (DVD-RW)	DVD-Rewriteable is similar to DVD-R, but can be written to and erased many times over

DVD-ROM	An optical storage medium, similar to CD-ROM, but of a much higher backing storage capacity, which can hold video data
Dynamic data linkage	A change to the data in one file is automatically carried out to the same data in another file
E-commerce	A method of doing business over a network such as the Internet
EFTPOS	Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale – a way of paying for goods using a bank card instead of cash
Electronic funds transfer (EFT)	Automatically moving money from one account to another using a computer system where no cash changes hands
Electronic mail	Is sending messages from one computer to another over a network
E-mail	Electronic mail is sending message from one computer to another over network
Embedded systems	An embedded system is a tiny computer inside another, larger piece of equipment, like a washing machine, a car or a mobile phone
Encryption	Processing a message so that it can't be understood by anyone who is not authorised to use it – putting data into a code or scrambling data
End effector	The part on the end of a robot arm which is specialised to carry out a particular task, like spraying paint. Also called a tool
Engineer	A person who maintains or repairs a computer system
Error reporting	A message from the operating system of a computer to the user to let them know if an error has occurred
Evaluation	Evaluation involves reviewing your solution against suitable criteria, such as, does your program solve the problem?
Facsimile (fax) machine	A machine that scans a document and changes it into a signal that can be sent along a telephone line. The document is printed on another fax machine somewhere else
Facsimile (fax) modem	A modem that can send messages to a fax machine or another computer with a fax modem
Feedback	The signal which a sensor sends back to the computer. The computer makes a decision based on the feedback
Field	A single item of data stored in a record
Field	A single item of data stored in a record
Field types (numeric, text, graphic, data, time)	The type of data which is to be stored in a field. You may need to set up the field types when you create a new database
File	Information held on backing storage or in memory. Files may hold data or programs
File	Information held on backing storage or in memory. Files may hold data or programs
File ancestry	A system for keeping backups of files using generations of files like grandparent, parent and child
File management	A part of the operating system. The filing system deals with how the files are held on backing storage. It controls the processes involved in saving or loading a particular file from disk

File server	A computer on a local area network which holds files which can be accessed by the users
File transfer – attachment	Sending a file over the Internet alongside an e-mail message
File	A set of records
File	A set of records
Floppy disk	A plastic disk coated with magnetic material used as a backing storage medium
Folder	An area on backing storage where files may be stored (also called a directory on some systems)
Footer	An area at the bottom of every page of a document. The footer usually contains the page number
Formatting (a disk)	Laying down tracks and sectors on a disk. It is also called initialising
Formula	A calculation involving one or more cell references in a spreadsheet
Fraud	Taking money/good which do not belong to you.
Freeware	Freeware is totally free software, which you may use on any number of computer systems without paying any money
Gigabyte (Gb)	One thousand and twenty-four Megabytes (1024 x 1024 x 1024 bytes)
GIGO	Garbage In Garbage Out – if a mistake is made in the input to a computer system, the output will also have mistakes in it
Grammar check	Checking the grammar in a document
Graphic	A picture or a chart on a computer screen
Graphical User Interface (GUI)	An interface which enables the user to work with icons and a mouse, e.g. a WIMP interface
Graphics card	A graphics card is a device which controls the quality of output on a monitor
Graphics package	A piece of software used for the production of, or editing, graphics
Graphics tablet	An input device which allows free drawing using a hand held pointer on a board
Hacking	Illegally interfering with information stored on a computer system
Handwriting recognition	A system for computer input which involves writing on a touch sensitive screen using a pen or stylus
Hard copy	A printed copy of your work, usually on paper
Hard disk	A backing storage device made up of metal disks coated with a magnetic material. It is sealed against dust and dirt
Hardware	The physical parts or devices which make up a computer system
Hazardous environment	A dangerous location for humans to work in.
Header	An area at the top of every page of a document. A book header may show the chapter number
Headset	An output device used in virtual reality
Hierarchical filing system	A filing system which has multiple directories
High level instructions	Instructions written in a high level language
High level language	A computer language with instructions written in normal or everyday language

Hotspot	A hotspot is a special area on a web page which is normally visible when viewed in a browser – the mouse pointer changes when it is moved over a hotspot
HTML	HyperText Markup Language – the language used to write web pages
Human Computer Interface (HCI)	The way in which the computer and the user communicate
Hyperlink	Hyperlinks are links between World Wide Web pages, documents or files. They are activated by clicking on text, which acts as a button, or on a particular area of the screen like a graphic
Icons	Symbols or pictures on a screen – part of a graphical user interface
Identify and rectify	Finding and fixing mistakes in a computer program
Implementation	Implementation is changing the program design into instructions that the computer can understand and the production of internal documentation
Import	To bring in data from one file into another, sometimes between two different types of packages
Industrial automation	Replacement of human workers with robots.
Initial costs	The cost of buying and setting up a computerised system. Also called capital costs
Initial costs	The cost of buying and setting up a computerised system. Also called capital costs
Inkjet printer	A printer which forms images using dots produced by tiny jets of ink
Input	To enter data that needs to be processed
Input device	A device which allows data to be entered, like a keyboard or a mouse
Insert	To put new information in
Integer	A whole number, with no fractional part or decimal point
Integrated package	A piece of software made up of separate parts which can share data. Each part has a similar HCI
Intelligent robots	Robots which are programmed to behave as though they had a form of intelligence
Interactive processing	A way of using a computer in which the operator's instructions are processed continuously, like a conversation
Interactive system	A system which carries out interactive processing
Interface	Part of a computer system that allows different devices to communicate with the processor by compensating for any differences in their operation
Internet	The Internet is a wide area network spanning the globe. It can be thought of as many different, smaller networks connected together
Internet ready computer	A computer system with an internal modem and suitable communications software such as a browser and an e-mail client program

Internet Service Provider (ISP)	An Internet Service Provider is a company that provides the host computer, which the user can connect to by dialling in. The host computer manages the communications, and also stores data such as electronic mail, web pages and files for its subscribers. This host computer is connected to the Internet and subscribers can communicate with other computers on the Internet
Interpreter	A translator program which is part of the systems software of a computer. An interpreter changes the high level language into machine code one instruction at a time
IPO	An abbreviation for input, process, output
ISP	An abbreviation for Internet Service Provider
Joystick	An input device consisting of a handle and one or more buttons usually used for controlling a game
Justification	A way of arranging text on screen or on hard copy. Justification may be left, right, centred or full. Same as alignment
Key field	A field used to uniquely identify a record in a database
Keyboard	An input device consisting of a set of buttons or keys marked with characters
Keyboard shortcuts	A combination of keys that can be used instead of having to select an item from a menu
Keyword	A word which is used to search for an item in a database
Kilobyte (Kb)	One thousand and twenty-four bytes (1024 bytes)
Knowledge system	A system which contains rules and facts about a particular topic
Laptop computer	A portable computer which folds and has an LCD screen and keyboard in a single unit. It is powered from batteries and may be operated while travelling
Laser printer	A type of printer which produces a high quality image of both text and graphics
Length check	The data must be within a certain number of characters.
Light guide	A line painted on a factory floor that an autonomous guided vehicle can be programmed to follow
Light pen	An input device which is used to scan bar codes or to input data to a screen
Liquid Crystal Display (LCD)	A type of flat screen display which is used in calculators, palmtop and laptop computers because of its low power consumption and light weight
Local Area Network (LAN)	A network confined to a single room or building
Log on	The way of identifying the user to a computer system (or to a network)
Logic error	A mistake which causes your program to produce an unexpected result, for example, using an incorrect formula
Loudspeakers	Output devices which allow sound to be produced
Machine code	The processor's own language made up of binary numbers (0 and 1 only)
Magnetic guides	A cable buried in a factory floor which an autonomous guided vehicle can be programmed to follow
Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR)	An input process which can read characters written in magnetic ink

Magnetic stripe	A narrow band of magnetic material on which data is held. You can see a magnetic stripe on the back of a credit card
Magnetic tape	Plastic tape coated with a magnetic material used as a backing storage medium
Mail merge	The process of automatically loading personal details from a separate mailing list and placing them into the correct places in a standard letter
Mail shots	Letters prepared by mail merge and sent out to individuals on a mailing list – also called direct mail or junk mail
Mailbox	A place where electronic mail is stored while waiting to be read or downloaded
Main memory	The memory in a computer system, linked to the processor
Main memory size	The number of storage locations available in a computer system
Mainframe computer	A computer system that can process a very large amount of data at high speed
Mainframe computer	A computer system that can process a very large amount of data at high speed
Maintenance	Maintenance involves changing the program, for example, to improve it by making it work better, or adding extra features
Mark sense card	A card with lines drawn on it to indicate one or more choices
MAXIMUM(..)	A function used to find the maximum value in a range
Medium	An object upon which software and data may be held, such as a CD-ROM
Megabyte (Mb)	One thousand and twenty-four Kilobytes (1024 Kb)
Memory management	Part of the operating systems which controls where programs and data are placed in the main memory of the computer
Menu	A list on the screen from which choices may be made by the user
Menu driven software	Software which needs the user to make choices from a menu to make it work
Microphone	An input device which allows sound to be put into a computer system
Microprocessor	The processor of a microcomputer
MINIMUM(..)	A function used to find the minimum value in a range
Mobile robot	A robot that can move around the floor
Modem	A device used to connect a computer system to a telephone line. Modem is short for MODulator-DEModulator
Modern factory	A factory with both robots and human workers which works efficiently.
Monitor	A monitor is an output device, which accepts a video signal directly from a computer and displays the output on a screen. A visual display unit (or VDU) is made up of a monitor and a keyboard. The screen is the part of the monitor or VDU, which displays the output

Motor	Part of a robot or automated system which can help it to move
Mouse	An input device with a ball underneath and one or more buttons – used to control a pointer on screen
Multi-access	More than one person using a mainframe computer system at the same time
Multimedia	The presentation of information by a computer system using graphics, animation, sound and text
Multi-programming	More than one program running on a computer system at once
Multi-user database	A database that may be accessed by many users at the same time
Netiquette	A way of behaving when connected to the Internet or sending e-mail messages
Network	Two or more computers joined together so that data can be transferred between them
Network interface card	A device which allows a computer system to be connected to a local area network
Network manager	The person in charge of the network. He or she will be responsible for all of the computer systems attached to the company network
Notebook computer	A portable computer which folds and has an LCD screen and keyboard in a single unit. It is powered from batteries and may be operated while travelling
Number	Data consisting of numbers which may have fractions or a decimal point
Off-line	Not connected to a remote computer system or a network
On-line	Connected to a remote computer system or a network
On-line help	Help which is available in the form of information screens when using a computer program
Online banking	The ability to transfer money via the Internet.
Online shopping	The ability to do your shopping via the Internet
On-line tutorial	A series of guided lessons on how to use a computer program
Open loop	A control system which does not involve feedback
Operating system	Programs which control the operation of a computer system. Part of the systems software
Optical Character Recognition (OCR)	Characters can be read in automatically from a page of text
Optical storage	A form of non-magnetic storage, e.g. CD-ROM, which uses tiny holes called pits
Output	Data passed out of a computer system
Output	Data passed out of a computer system
Output device	A device which displays data from a computer system on a monitor or a printer
Package	A computer program and its associated documentation
Palmtop	A hand held computer. A palmtop computer has an LCD screen but may not have a keyboard. A pen is used for input on the screen
Paper, screen	Forms of data output
Password	A secret code that you use to gain access to private information on a computer system or to log on to a network

Peripheral	Any device that may be attached to a computer system for input, output or backing storage
Photographic	A type of data produced by a digital still camera. A bit-mapped graphic image
Physical and software security	To stop un-authorized access via encryption, password or lock, etc..
Pixel	Stands for picture element. A tiny dot used to make up a picture on the screen
Plotter	An output device which draws on paper using pens. Used mainly for CAD
Point Of Sale (POS)	A computer terminal or 'till' in a shop where the goods change hands
Pointer	A shape displayed on screen which is used to select from a menu usually controlled by a mouse or trackpad
Portability of software	When programs written on one computer system may be used on a different computer system with minimal alteration
Print file	To obtain a hard copy
Printer	An output device which produces hard copy usually on paper. Examples are ink jet, and laser
Printer driver	A program which takes the codes in a document and translates them into the appropriate code for the printer in use. A type of device driver
Problem description	The problem you are given to solve described in your own words
Procedure	A sub-program which is identified by name, like take_in_numbers or display_results
Processor	The part of a computer which carries out the process
Program	A list of instructions which tell the processor what to do
Program listing	A hard copy or a screen display of the instructions which make up a computer program
Programmable	The ability to program/change/alter a device.
Programmer	A person who writes computer programs
Prompt	A phrase which appears on screen to ask the user for input
Pseudocode	A way of representing the design of a program using ordinary language
Pull-down menu	A menu on a WIMP system which may be operated by using a mouse pointer and button
RAM	Random access memory – a set of microchips that stores data temporarily. The data is lost when the computer is switched off
Random Access Memory (RAM)	A set of microchips that stores data temporarily. The data is lost when the computer is switched off
Random/direct access	Being able to locate a data item straight away, whether it is stored on disk or in main memory
Random/direct access	Being able to locate a data item straight away, whether it is stored on disk or in main memory
Range check	Data within a required set of numbers/letters, i.e. A-Z, 0-9, etc..
Read Only Memory (ROM)	One or more microchips that stores data permanently. The data is not lost when the computer is switched off
Real time	A system which responds immediately to input

Real time	A system which responds immediately to input
Record	A data structure with one or more fields of information
Record	A data structure with one or more fields of information
Registers	Memory locations inside a processor
Relative reference	When a formula in a spreadsheet is changed relative to its position, during copying or replication
Reliability of data link	A data link is reliable if it is not likely to be affected by interference which may change the signal
Remote data entry	When data is input from a terminal at some distance from the host computer
Repetitive tasks	The ability to produce the same job repeatedly to the same specification/quality.
Replacement costs	The cost of replacing worn out/used parts.
Replicate	Copy
Resolution (dpi)	The amount of detail which can be shown on a screen (or a hard copy) – measured in dots per inch (dpi)
Resource allocation	When the operating system allows a program to have access to a particular piece of hardware
Re-training	Giving jobless workers another skill
Re-writable optical disk	A type of non-magnetic storage such as CD-RW
Robot	A device which can carry out repetitive tasks under the control of a computer program
ROM	Read Only Memory – one or more microchips that stores data permanently. The data is not lost when the computer is switched off.
ROM and RAM	Two types of main memory in a computer system
ROM software	Software which is distributed or stored on read only memory
Rotate graphic	To turn a graphic around
Routine	A programming instruction which carries out a particular task
Rows	Horizontal parts of a spreadsheet
RTF	Rich Text format – a standard file format for the transfer of data between application packages
Running costs	The cost of using a computer system – includes electricity, paper, ink, toner, maintenance
Safety precautions	Making sure all workers are safe from any danger.
Sale of customer lists	Selling lists of names and addresses to other companies.
Sample run	A hard copy or a screen display of the (input and) output from a computer program
Scale graphic	Change the size of a graphic by enlarging or reducing
Scanner	An input device which allows printed text or graphics to be displayed on the screen. May be used with OCR software
Screen	The screen is the part of a monitor or VDU, which displays the output
Screen layout	The way a program looks on a monitor screen
Scrolling	Moving the display on the screen by using the cursor keys, mouse or trackpad
Search and replace	A feature of a General Purpose Package which allows a word to be replaced automatically throughout a document. May be global or selective

Search engine	A search engine is a special site on the World Wide web, which is designed to help you find information
Searching	Looking for an item using a database program and perhaps one or more keywords
Security (passwords, encryption, physical)	Methods of making sure that data is private or that only authorised people can see the data
Sensors	A device which detects something and provides input to a computer system. A temperature sensor is an example
Sequence	The order in which a set of instructions is carried out in which a set of data is stored on backing storage
Sequential access	Reading a set of records in the same order as they were originally stored
Sequential access	Reading a set of records in the same order as they were originally stored
Shareware	Shareware is not free, apart from a short trial period, during which you are allowed to evaluate the software
Simulation	A computer program used to model a real life situation
Single entry multiple use	Entering data only once on a central computer and making the data available to different users
Smart card	A smart card has its own processor, and is able to store much more information than fits on a magnetic stripe
Software	The programs that the hardware of the computer runs
Software development process	Analysis, design, implementation. Testing, documentation, evaluation and maintenance
Software upgrade	Obtaining a more recent version of software, by downloading or installing from disk
Sort on more than one field	A complex sort
Sort on one field	A simple sort
Sorting	Putting a list of items into order, for example numeric or alphabetic
Sound card – Input	In order to input sound into a computer the sound must be changed from analogue into digital. The sound card carries out the analogue to digital conversion in a process called sampling
Sound card – Output	In order to output sound from a computer the sound must be changed from digital to analogue. The sound card carries out the digital to analogue conversion
Specialised input device	An input device which is adapted for a particular purpose, such as use by a disabled person or for virtual reality
Specialised output device	An output device which is adapted for a particular purpose, such as use by a disabled person or for virtual reality
Speed (rpm)	The rate at which a printer can print, measured in pages per minute (ppm)
Speed of access	
Spelling check	A feature of a General Purpose Package which compares the words in a document with the words in its dictionary and offers alternatives
Spreadsheet	A program which divides the screen into rows and columns. Cells in a spreadsheet can contain text, numbers or formulas
Staff costs	The cost of employing staff

Standard file formats	A way of storing data so that it can be understood by, and transferred between, a number of different application packages
Standard letter	A general letter with spaces for personal details (such as a person's name). Used in mail shots
Standard paragraph	A piece of text (held on backing storage) that you can combine with others like it to make up a complete document
Static linkage	A change to the data in one file will not affect the same data in other files
Stationary robot	A robot that cannot move around the floor
Storage location	A place in a computer's memory where an item of data may be held
Stored program	A set of instructions which is held in a computer's memory
Structure chart	A way of representing the design of a program using boxes linked by lines
Structure diagram	A diagram made up of different shaped boxes containing text and linked by lines. It is usually used to explain the structure of a computer program
SUM(..)	A function used to find the total of a range of values
Syntax error	A mistake in a programming instruction – for example PRIN instead of PRINT
System	A computer system
System error	A mistake in the computer's operating system program which may stop the computer working
Systems analysis	Examining a method of working
Systems analyst	A person who examines a method of working and decides the best way of doing it using a computer system
Systems software	A set of programs which control the operating of a computer system
Table	A table of made up of data arranged in columns and rows, like a spreadsheet, and data is placed in cells
Tablet PC	A flat computer with a large touch sensitive LCD screen as the main input device. It is powered from batteries and may be operated while travelling
Tabulation	A method of producing tables in a word processed document by using the TAB character
Teletext	Pages of information transmitted with a television signal which may be received by a suitable television set or a computer and adaptor. A one-way system only
Teleworking	Working from home and communicating with your employer or workplace by using electronic mail
Template	A template is a ready-made blank document, with placeholders for items like text and graphics. Using a template can speed up the creation of a document, because much of the page layout has already been done for you
Terabyte (Tb)	One thousand and twenty-four Gigabytes
Terminal	A piece of hardware consisting of a keyboard and a screen. A 'dumb' terminal does not have a processor
Test data	Data used to test a computer program to find out if it gives the correct results

Testing	Checking whether or nor a computer program works as intended
Text	Characters or symbols displayed on a screen or printed as hard copy on a printer
Text messaging	Text messaging is a method of electronic communication using a mobile phone
Thin Film Transistor (TFT)	A type of Liquid Crystal Display screen used for high quality output
Tools	Devices which may be attached to the end of a robot arm (also known as end effectors)
Touch sensitive screen	A screen with sensitive areas on it. The user presses particular areas to input into the computer, such as a palmtop
Trackball	An input device with a ball which is turned by hand, moving a cursor on a screen around. Works like an upside-down mouse
Trackpad	A flat touch sensitive area used instead of a mouse to control a pointer
Translation	Changing a program from one computer language to another, usually from a high level language into machine code
Transmission media	The media used to transmit data, for example, copper wire or optical fibre
Update	For example, adding new data to a file
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USB Flash Drive	A solid state storage device made up of Flash ROM. It connect to the computer via the USB interface
User friendliness	Programs that are easy to learn to use and help you understand as you are using them are called user-friendly programs
User friendly	An interactive computer system which helps the user by giving clear prompts, menus and help screens when needed
User identity	Your name or a code which identifies you to a network. Usually used with a password
Utility	A program which helps you perform a task such as delete a file, format a disk
Validation	Checking that the data is sensible. A range check is a way of validating data
Values	Numeric data in a spreadsheet cell
Verification	Checking that data has been entered correctly. Entering the same data twice is a way of verifying data
Video	A type of data – movies
Video conferencing	Video conferencing is the use of communications links to conduct meetings between people who are geographically separated
Virtual reality	Reproducing the outside world digitally within a computer system and displaying it to the user in such a way that allows them to interact with it. Users use data gloves and a headset
Virus	A 'rogue' program which can spread though computer systems and may damage files

Visual display unit (VDU)	An output device consisting of a monitor and a keyboard. May be used as a terminal
Voice output	Speech produced by a computer system usually by special software and a loudspeaker
Voice recognition	Software which can recognise speech input by the user via a microphone
Web page	A single page of information on a web site
Webcam	A webcam is a small digital camera, which is attached to a computer and positioned on or beside the computer's monitor in order to capture images which may be transmitted across a network. Webcams make applications like video conferencing possible
Wide Area Network (WAN)	A network which covers a large geographical area like a country
WIMP environment	Windows, Icon, Mouse, Pointer
Window	Areas of the screen set aside for a particular purpose such as displaying files or documents
Wireless	A method or way of transmitting data without using a physical connection, e.g. radio waves or infrared
Wizard	A wizard is a feature of a package that helps you to step through the process of document creation
Word	The number of bits a computer can process in a single operation
Word processor	A program used for writing and editing text
Word-wrap	Text formatting used in a word processor which stops words at the end of one line being split over two lines (it moves partially completed words to the start of a new line)
World Wide Web (WWW)	The World Wide Web (WWW) is a collection of information held in multimedia form on the Internet
WYSIWYG	Stands for 'What You See Is What You Get'. When what you seen on a screen is exactly the same as the way it will be printed