Developing as a teacher of computing
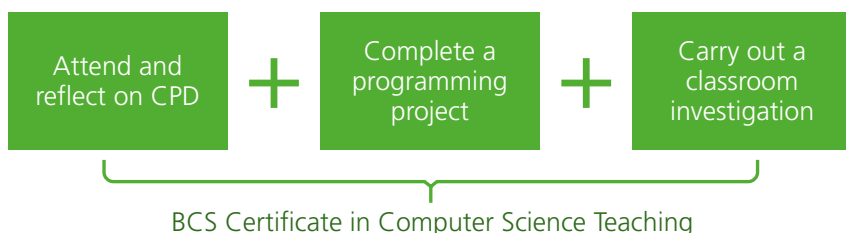
There are a number of ways in which you can develop your expertise as a teacher of computing.

BCS Certificate in Computer Science Teaching

The BCS Certificate provides teachers with professional recognition that they are competent teachers of the computer science elements of computing. It is accredited by BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT.

The BCS Certificate is a roll-on, roll-off programme that teachers can join at any time. It is evidence-based certification, whereby teachers gather evidence from their own teaching and professional development to demonstrate three areas of competence:

- Ability to take responsibility for their ongoing professional development by participating in and reflecting on CPD.

- Technical subject-knowledge skills appropriate to teaching in either primary or secondary schools.

- Ability to develop and extend their pedagogical content skills in computer science in a reflective manner.

Teachers who have completed Microsoft's Software Development Fundamentals MTA (www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/exam-98-361.aspx) can claim an exemption from the programming project, as can teachers who have a recent computer science-related degree that includes a final-year software project.

The BCS Certificate in CST is open to all qualified teachers who are currently teaching computing.

On enrolment, you will be assigned to an e-assessor and given access to the Certificate Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The VLE offers guidance on completing the three separate parts of the Certificate and facilitates contact between you and your e-assessor. You will receive feedback on proposals for projects and drafts of your work; the assessment model is based on formative feedback being an important aspect of learning. You have one year to complete and submit your work.

The Certificate is valid for five years and, after this time you can renew your Certificate. The renewal process ensures the currency and credibility of the Certificate as a professional qualification. The Certificate offers you a professional, rather than an academic, accreditation. However, completing it may be a stepping-stone to a Master's degree or another academic qualification.

More information can be found at computingatschool.org.uk/certificate.

Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science

You can register your school with the Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science (NoE). By doing this, your school is saying, loud and clear, that:

- Computing, as a subject, is important.

- Computing, as a subject, is part of the school development plan.

- Our staff has access to suitable training.

The NoE is coordinated by Computing At School (CAS) working in collaboration with the British Computing Society (BCS) Academy, and is supported by the Department for Education, the awarding bodies, the Council of Professors and Heads of Computing (CPHC), Microsoft and Google. You can find out more information about registering your school with the Network of Excellence at www.computingatschool.org.uk/index.php?id=member-schools.

You could also register your school as a Lead School within the Network of Excellence, if you are willing and able to make time to support colleagues in other schools. You can find out about the benefits of being a Lead School at www.computingatschool.org.uk/index.php?id=noe-lead-schools.

Master Teacher

CAS Master Teachers deliver local CPD and play a vital role in developing computing provision in schools across the country.

If you can answer 'yes' to the following questions then the Master Teacher programme is for you!

- Are you a primary or secondary teacher in a state maintained school?

- Would you like funding to develop your skills and knowledge of computing in the new National Curriculum?

- Are you an experienced teacher with 'good with outstanding' or 'outstanding' teaching seen in your recent lesson observations?

- Can you confidently engage with your peers in a professional environment?

- Do you have the ability to design and deliver practical and interactive workshops for teachers with appropriate course material?

- Do you have a passion about sharing best practice in teaching and learning?

If you have insufficient subject knowledge to teach computing at the key stage(s) you are trained to teach, then you can become a Level 1 (Trainee) Master Teacher. You can find out more information here: www.computingatschool.org.uk/index.php?id=noe-master-teachers-level-one.

If or when you have sufficient subject knowledge and experience then you can become a Level 2 Master Teacher. More information about how to apply can be found here: www.computingatschool.org.uk/index.php?id=noe-master-teachers-level-two.