BCS Professional Examinations

Your route to a career in IT with professional, internationally recognised qualifications

PROSPECTUS 2007 | 08

BCS

Welcome

BCS President's Introduction

Dear Prospective Student,

I am delighted to introduce the **BCS Professional Examinations 2007/08 prospectus**.

As the chartered professional body for Information Technology (IT) professionals with members in over 100 countries, BCS offers world class academic qualifications to those seeking a career in IT or recognition of their IT expertise, regardless of their economic circumstances.

Since 1969, our Professional Examinations have set the highest standard of professionalism within the industry. The three levels of qualification **(Certificate in IT, Diploma in IT and Professional Graduate Diploma in IT)** remain relevant to the needs of the evolving IT community through regular syllabus updates. The modular course structure offers a flexible approach to study that allows you to progress at your own pace, yet the qualifications remain rigorous and challenging to meet the demands of employers and academics alike.

BCS Professional Examinations have earned an international reputation as the "gold standard" set of IT qualifications. Passing the Professional Graduate Diploma in IT (and project) not only provides successful candidates with the opportunity for postgraduate study, but also with the eligibility to apply for BCS professional membership, allowing you to use the letters MBCS after your name.

You are very welcome to contact us in advance of your commitment to study to discuss your academic needs.

I very much hope that we shall be able to welcome you as a student in the near future.

With best wishes,

Professor Nigel Shadbolt
BCS President 2006/07

"BCS is now playing a key role in raising professional standards and establishing the IT agenda for the nation."

His Royal Highness
The Duke of Kent, KG

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1.

Who Are We?

Formed in 1957, the British Computer Society (BCS) is the industry body for IT professionals and a Chartered Engineering Institution.

With a membership of over 60,000 IT professionals, and with members in over 100 countries around the world, BCS is the leading professional and learned Society in the field of computing and information systems.

BCS was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1984. Its objectives are to promote the study and practice of computing and to advance knowledge of and education in IT for the benefit of the public. BCS is also a registered charity.

BCS

- Publishes a range of practical books, reports and journals
- Offers qualifications for everyone from complete beginners to IT professionals
- Supports individual members and organisations with continuing professional development
- Provides a comprehensive regional and specialist interest group network
- Advances knowledge by providing lectures and stimulating debate at all levels
- Promotes standards for the industry and acts as the independent voice of IT to government

About BCS Professional Examinations

BCS Professional Examinations were established in 1969 and are the essential qualifications for a career in computing and IT.

Setting the Standard for IT Professionalism

As the chartered professional body for IT professionals, BCS qualifications are QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) accredited and set the highest standard of best practice.

Internationally Recognised Qualifications

BCS is the only Chartered Engineering Institution for IT professionals which can award an internationally recognised professional qualification.

Relevant to Industry

The examinations have been developed in consultation with employers to meet the demands and evolving needs of the IT community. They are constantly updated to acknowledge both practical and academic experience.

Flexible Modular Course Structure

The modular structure offers three levels of qualification (Certificate in IT, Diploma in IT and Professional Graduate Diploma in IT), allowing you to demonstrate your expertise at your chosen level. Courses are also available in a variety of formats, including part-time and self-study.

Excellent Support

BCS is committed to high quality course provision. We have registered course providers in countries throughout the world, all of whom adhere to a strict code of practice to ensure candidates' rights are protected so that they have the best possible chance of success with our examinations.

Route to Study at UK Universities

At their highest level, the examinations are examined to the academic level of a UK university honours degree. Passing the Professional Graduate Diploma in IT level (and project) provides successful candidates with the opportunity for postgraduate study in an IT/computer science related subject at UK universities.

A Pathway to BCS Professional Membership

Graduating at the Professional Graduate Diploma in IT level (and project) provides candidates with the eligibility to apply for BCS Membership (MBCS).

2.

Why Us?

Taking a BCS Professional Examination helps you develop a career in IT. Our qualifications are recognised by many UK universities as a route to postgraduate study and by many organisations as a sign of commitment to the IT profession.

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Postgraduate Study

Your Next Step Forward...

Successful completion of the highest level of BCS Professional Examinations gives you a route to postgraduate study.

The universities listed below recognise the BCS Professional Graduate Diploma in IT (incorporating a pass at the associated Professional Project) as an acceptable qualification for entry* on to an MSc course in an IT/computer science related subject.

- University of Aberdeen
- University of Abertay Dundee
- University of Wales, Aberystwyth
- Anglia Ruskin University
- University of Wales, Bangor
- University of Bedforshire
- University of Birmingham
- University of Central England in Birmingham
- University of Bolton
- Bournemouth University
- University of Brighton
- Cardiff University
- University of Chester
- De Montfort University
- University of East Anglia
- University of East London
- University of Gloucestershire
- University of Greenwich
- Heriot Watt University
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Huddersfield
- University of Hull
- University of Kent
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of Leeds
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- University of Leicester
- University of Lincoln
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Birkbeck College (University of London)
- Loughborough University
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- University of Manchester
- Middlesex University
- Newcastle University
- Northumbria University
- Nottingham Trent University
- University of Plymouth
- Robert Gordon University
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Southampton Solent University
- University of Surrey
- University of Teeside
- Thames Valley University
- University of Ulster
- University of West of England
- University of Westminster
- University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

* Acceptance on to a university course is not automatic and is subject to the applicant satisfying the university's own entrance regulations. Some courses may be oversubscribed. For an up to date list of universities, please refer to www.bcs.org/exams

Employers

The three levels of BCS Professional Examinations and associated projects have been developed in consultation with an employers' panel to ensure they meet the demands and evolving needs of the IT community. Industry representatives from organisations such as The Ministry of Defence, Royal Mail, Vodafone, Halifax, Royal SunAlliance and Barclays were among those represented.

The benefits to employers to sponsor staff to take BCS Professional Examinations (or to employ those with the qualification) are clear. Essentially, it is a guarantee of excellence for employers. Employers can be confident that employees know not only what they are doing, but how and why. The syllabi closely reflects the requirements of typical IT occupations and puts greater emphasis on business and management issues.

The modular structure of the course gives employees the flexibility to study in a time frame that suits them and ensures that they can fulfil their normal work commitments.

"I felt that the exams offered by the BCS were the best option. As I was an IT professional, I felt that undertaking the professional exams would show my commitment and interest in IT."

Susan Hunter Salisbury District Council (Local Government, UK)

Notes for Parents

Information technology (IT) is everywhere! It is integrated in our society from the microwaves and televisions in our homes and the mobile phones we use daily, to the computers in our offices and the cash registers in our shops. IT professionals across the world enable businesses to function by managing information for governments, banks, large organisations, schools, hospitals and retail outlets.

Demand for IT staff is booming with the average wage for an IT professional in the UK now at £32,965 *. BCS Professional Examinations are internationally recognised qualifications that will provide students with the best possible foundation for a prosperous career in IT. We want your children to succeed in a fast-moving industry of opportunities. We work in partnership with industry, academics and the wider IT community to ensure our qualifications provide students with the highest possible standard of education and employability in today's market.

* Source:
Computer Weekly/SSL salary survey 2007

Careers

As the industry body for Information Technology (IT) professionals, the requirement for professional competence and appropriate standards is at the heart of what BCS is about.

The IT industry has a unique skills standard called the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA). It describes the typical roles in IT and the skills needed to fulfil them. From information security to service level management, you can discover what each role entails. BCS offers end-users free access to SFIA to encourage appropriate skills development of IT professionals.
www.bcs.org/sfia

A more detailed version of the standard, called SFIAplus, contains the SFIA framework of IT skills plus detailed training and development resources to provide the most established and widely adopted IT skills, training and development model reflecting current industry needs.
All BCS Professional Examinations are mapped into the SFIAplus standard. BCS provides free access to SFIAplus to all members.
www.bcs.org/sfiaplus

SFIAplus3

3.

How You Can Study

BCS is committed to providing excellent support for candidates. We have registered course providers in countries throughout the world, all of whom adhere to a strict code of practice to ensure candidates' rights are protected so that they have the best possible chance of success with our examinations. Courses are also available in a variety of formats, including part-time and self-study.

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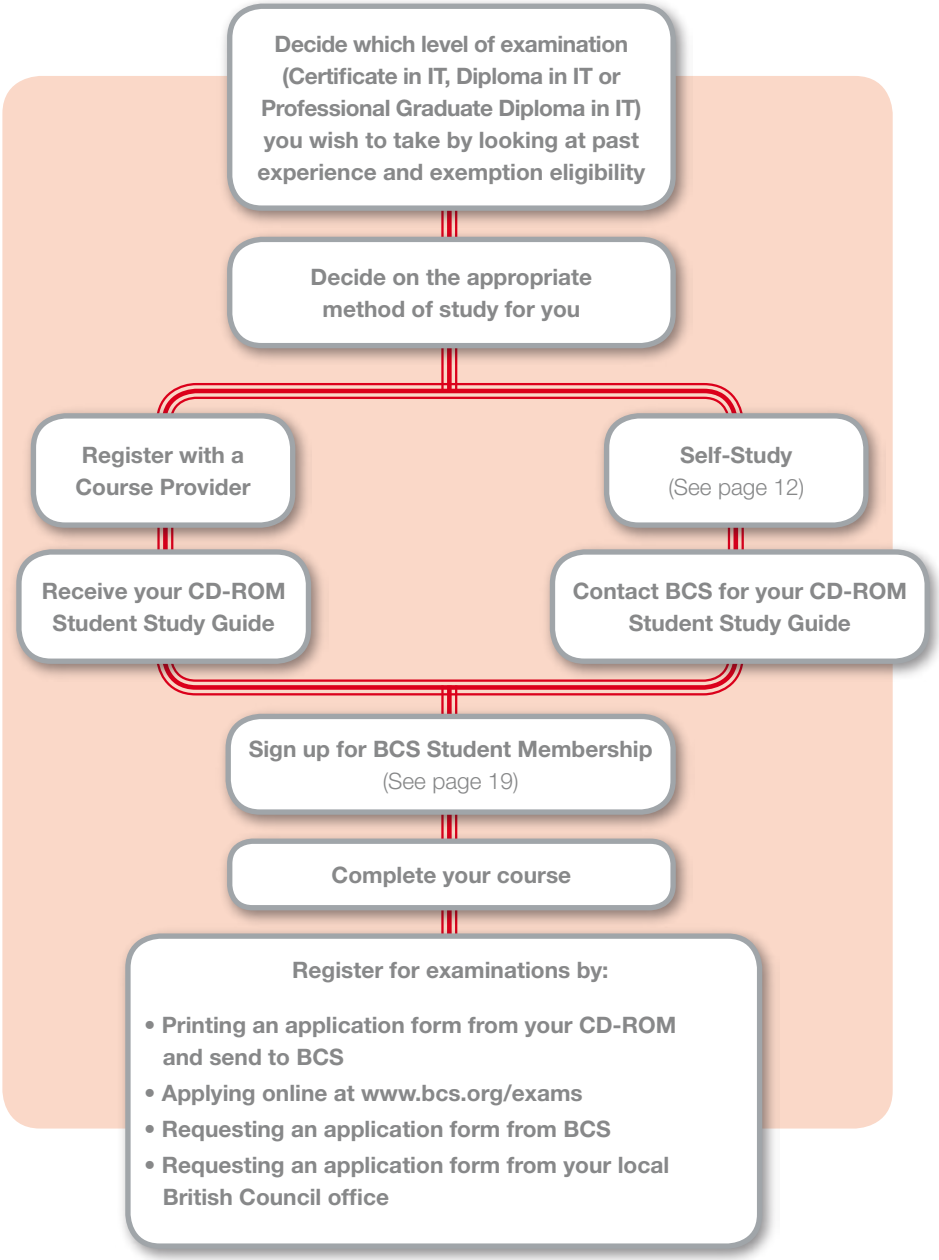
How To Enrol


Decide which level of examination (Certificate in IT, Diploma in IT or Professional Graduate Diploma in IT) you wish to take by looking at past experience and exemption eligibility
Decide on the appropriate method of study for you
Register with a Course Provider
Self-Study
(See page 12)
Receive your CD-ROM Student Study Guide
Contact BCS for your CD-ROM Student Study Guide
Sign up for BCS Student Membership
(See page 19)
Complete your course
Register for examinations by:
• Printing an application form from your CD-ROM and send to BCS
• Applying online at www.bcs.org/exams
• Requesting an application form from BCS
• Requesting an application form from your local British Council office

Self-Study

An alternative route to completing BCS Professional Examinations is to self-study. This flexible option allows you to progress through the course at a time and pace that suits you, without the need to attend classes with a course provider. Simply complete the course yourself and then contact BCS directly to enter the examinations when you are ready.

To assist students BCS provides full access to detailed syllabi and many other learning materials through our website, including:

- Past papers and examiner reports
- Timetables
- Reading lists (discounted books available for BCS Student Members)
- Advice on exam techniques

Before beginning your self-study, BCS recommends applying for BCS Student Membership to receive benefits that will assist you in your learning. BCS Student Membership is compulsory for examination entry.

Self-study is a worthwhile option to consider for some students. However, BCS recommends completing the Professional Examinations with the help of a course provider, whenever possible.

Course Providers

BCS Professional Examinations has **accredited** and **registered** course providers across the world. The map below shows the countries in which these course providers are located.

Registered course providers (entry-level) are committed to a code of practice which requires them to ensure that students are treated fairly and are properly informed about the examinations.

Accredited course providers (higher-level) have become registered and then had their course provision successfully assessed by BCS examiners.

Please visit **www.bcs.org/exams** for an up-to-date list of all accredited and registered course providers within the countries shown.

1 UK	5 Nigeria	9 Papua New Guinea	13 UAE
2 Ireland	6 Mauritius	10 Singapore	14 Sudan
3 Malta	7 India	11 Hong Kong	
4 Ghana	8 Sri Lanka	12 Pakistan	

4.

The Course

Overview

There are three levels of examination: **Certificate in IT, Diploma in IT and Professional Graduate Diploma (PGD) in IT**, which cover a wide range of IT topics acknowledging your practical experience and academic ability.

At their highest level (PGD), the qualification is equivalent to the academic level of a UK university honours degree and all three levels of BCS Professional Examinations are accredited by the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority).

For all three levels there are no formal academic entry requirements. However, before beginning any level of Professional Examinations, BCS recommends that you are educated to UK GCE A-Level standard and are at least 19 years old.

You are able to begin the examinations at any of the three levels. However, the level at which you begin will only be awarded provided that you have passed or been exempt from the previous level(s).

Examination sittings are held twice a year in **October** and **April**. This applies to all modules, unless otherwise stated.

Certificate in IT

Diploma in IT

Professional Graduate Diploma in IT

Certificate in IT

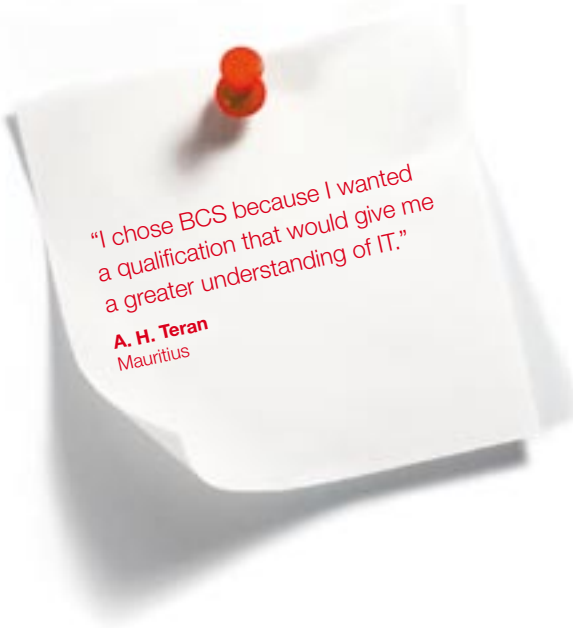
The foundation level of BCS Professional Examinations is the academic equivalent to Year 1 of a UK university honours degree and is recognised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as Level 4.

The Certificate in IT focuses on the following core modules:

- Information Systems
- Software Development
- Computer & Network Technology

BCS recommends a minimum of 200 hours study per module and the course culminates in a 2 hour written examination focusing on all three core modules.

Completion of the Certificate in IT level means you are eligible to apply for BCS Associate Membership (AMBCS).



Diploma in IT

The Diploma in IT level (incorporating Diploma project) of BCS Professional Examinations is the academic equivalent to Year 2 of a UK university honours degree and is recognised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as Level 5.

By beginning the Diploma in IT level BCS assumes knowledge of the Certificate in IT level modules (or exemption) and focuses on the following:

- Professional Issues in Information Systems Practice (Core Module)
- Computer Networks
- Database Systems
- IT Project Management
- Object Orientated Programming
- Systems Analysis
- Principles of Internet Technologies (April only)
- IT Service Management (April only)
- Software Engineering 1 (April only)
- Systems Design (April only)
- Principles of User Interface Design (April only)
- The Internet and World Wide Web (April only – Last ever exam April 2008)
- Computer Architecture (April only – Last ever exam April 2008)

BCS recommends a minimum of 225 hours study per module. The course culminates in a 2 hour written examination focusing on the one core module and another 2 hour written exam allowing you to focus on three optional modules of your choice.

Completion of the Diploma examination level means you are eligible to apply for BCS Membership (MBCS) if you have 3 years' experience as an IT professional.

Professional Project

In order to finish the Diploma in IT level candidates must complete a project with a recommended minimum study time of 200 hours.

Successful completion of the project and examination enables you to apply for selected degree courses with UK universities and means you are eligible to apply for BCS Membership (MBCS) if you have 2 years' experience as an IT professional.

Please note: If advancing to the Professional Graduate Diploma in IT level, candidates are not required to complete a Professional Project at this level.

Professional Graduate Diploma in IT

The Professional Graduate Diploma in IT level (incorporating PGD project) of BCS Professional Examinations is the academic equivalent to a UK university honours degree and is recognised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as Level 6.

By beginning the Professional Graduate Diploma level course BCS assumes knowledge of the Certificate in IT and appropriate Diploma level modules (or exemption) and focuses on the following:

- Advanced Database Management Systems
- Management Information Systems
- Software Engineering 2
- Computer Services Management
- Distributed and Parallel Systems (April only)
- Knowledge Based Systems (April only)
- Network Information Systems (April only)
- Programming Paradigms (April only)
- Realising the User Interface (April only)
- System Design Methods (April only)
- Web Engineering (April only)
- User Interface Design (April only – Last ever exam April 2008)
- World Wide Web – Beyond the Basics (April only – Last ever exam April 2008)

BCS recommends a minimum of 250 hours study per module. The course culminates in a 3 hour written examination focusing on four modules of your choice. Please be aware that practical experience is required to answer some parts of the examination. Completion of the Professional Project is also required at this level.

Completion of the Professional Graduate Diploma examination level means you are eligible to apply for BCS Membership (MBCS) if you have 2 years' experience as an IT professional.

Professional Project

In order to finish the Professional Graduate Diploma in IT level candidates must complete a project. Recommended minimum study time of 300 hours.

Successful completion of the project and examination enables you to apply for selected postgraduate courses with UK universities (see page 7) and means you are eligible to apply for BCS Membership (MBCS).

5.

What Else You Need To Know

This prospectus has attempted to give you an overview of what to expect from studying BCS Professional Examinations. However, there are other aspects, such as BCS Student Membership, awards, graduations and examination fees, which we feel deserve further explanation.

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BCS Student Membership

Your route to becoming a Chartered IT Professional

Membership of BCS will underline and support your status as an IT practitioner of the highest integrity. BCS is the leading professional body for IT in the UK and we are committed to supporting you in your career.

Student membership is an essential pre-requisite for completing BCS Professional Examinations.

Annual student membership	**£20**
Entire course fee **(Maximum 5 year duration)**	**£30**

You will be eligible for preferential rates on upgrading your membership if you are a resident of the following countries: Mauritius, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan. Following graduation, students in the UK also receive reduced subscription rates on Professional Membership.

Being a BCS Student Member not only demonstrates your commitment to both your own and the IT community's professional development, but by joining BCS you will gain access to a wide range of benefits and services that can help you at every stage of your career.

Online Services:

- Weekly eBCS and monthly eBCS student electronic newsletters are an invaluable source of information that helps keep you up to date with IT news, latest gadget reviews, upcoming events, seminars and job opportunities.
- Books 24/7 is a range of 200 IT and business related eBooks. This includes the full contents of premium reference books, reports and white papers from industry publishers.
- Three Forrester IT Research Reports a month are available to download for FREE from our website, along with access to our full back catalogue of reports.
- Access to EBSCO databases - a range of academic journals and magazines on the subject of IT.

Student Membership Continued

Career Services:

- FREE access to SFIAplus, the industry leading standard for the IT profession, which explains the necessary skills and training required to achieve a wide range of IT jobs.
- BCSRECRUIT.COM is our very own recruitment site which lets you find out about all the latest job opportunities, including online CV writing and interview techniques - available from Autumn 2007.

Networking Opportunities:

- BCS have 40 UK branches and 15 international sections holding regular events and seminars available for you to join.
- All members under the age of 35 can join the Young Professionals Group (YPG).

Exclusive BCS Member Offers:

- 6 editions a year of IT Now, the BCS magazine.
- Custom PC subscription offer.
- Discounts from leading IT publishers, including *The Computer Journal*, *VNU* and the *ACM digital library*.
- Big saving on a wide range of software.

To find out more about BCS and the benefits of Student Membership visit:

www.bcs.org/students

Key Dates

There will be two examination periods during the coming year:
October 2007 and April 2008.

The key dates for you to be aware of are:

October 2007 Examination Period

• **Closing date for examination entry**	15th August 2007
• **Closing date for professional projects entry**	31st August 2007*
• **Examination period**	12th – 18th October 2007
• **Results release date**	7th February 2008

April 2008 Examination Period

• **Closing date for examination entry**	15th January 2008
• **Closing date for professional projects entry**	28th January 2008*
• **Examination period**	TBC
• **Results release date**	7th August 2008

* If in Mauritius, please contact the local BCS office to confirm date.

Please visit **www.bcs.org/exams** for any updates.

Fees

Fees are:

- Paid to BCS when you are ready to take the examination.
- Valid from 1st May 2007 to 30th April 2008.

Please note: All BCS Professional Examinations applicants must apply for BCS Membership, if not already a BCS member before entering for an examination. **(See page 19)**

Written Examination Entry	
Certificate in IT (fee per module)	**£37**
Diploma in IT (fee per module)	**£42**
Professional Graduate Diploma in IT (fee per module)	**£79**
Exam venue surcharge (if applicable, for non standard venues (fee per candidate)	**£50**

Professional Project Submission	
Diploma in IT	**£64**
Professional Graduate Diploma in IT (fee per module)	**£92**

Professional Graduate Diploma in IT by Dissertation	
Submission of abstract	**£79**
Submission of dissertation (fee per module)	**£212**

Other fees	
Individual module/ Professional Project certificate (issued on request)	**£25**
Late entry / venue change	**£30**
Examination re-arrangement (less than 6 weeks prior to exam)	**£30**
Appeal or remarking (fee returned if upheld)	**£62**

Awards and Graduations

Your graduation day is an important milestone in your career. It is the culmination of all your hard work and hours of study and is the single most important date in the BCS academic calendar.

It is the time when our staff, honorary BCS officers and distinguished guests from government and industry can gather with you and your guests to celebrate your academic achievement.

BCS organises prestigious graduation events in key locations throughout the world together with awards for top candidate performance.

The 2007 graduation ceremonies:

Mauritius	20th October
Sri Lanka	18th November
UK	26th November

6.

Events and Conferences

Throughout the year BCS Professional Examinations will have a presence at many events, conferences and exhibitions worldwide. We are currently scheduled for:

UK

• Graduation Ceremony	26th November 2007

Sri Lanka

• Adyapana Career Fair	5th to 7th October 2007
• Graduation Ceremony	18th November 2007
• BCS Annual Computing Seminar	November 2007

Mauritius

• Graduation Ceremony	20th October 2007
• BCS Annual Computing Seminar	March 2008
• International Career Guidance Fair	May 2008

For an updated list and for more information about upcoming events please visit **www.bcs.org/exams**

7.

Contact Details

For further information about BCS Professional Examinations: visit our website **www.bcs.org/exams**; contact your local course provider or BCS office.

UK / Worldwide

First Floor, Block D, North Star House
North Star Avenue, Swindon
Wiltshire, SN2 1FA
United Kingdom

(+44) 01793 417424
examenq@hq.bcs.org.uk

Mauritius

Mr Mohamed Iqbal Boolaky FBCS CITP
14a Ganachaud Lane
Castel – Eau Coulee
Mauritius

(+230) 686 7427
iqbal.boolaky@hq.bcs.org.uk

Sri Lanka

Ms Niranjala Weerasinghe BA (Col) MBCS
3 Maitland Crescent
Colombo 7
Sri Lanka

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Fax: 020 8983 4286
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T: 00971 4355 1559
F: 00971 4355 1474
E: btec@eim.ae

Since 1996 BTEC approved by Ministry of Education has been providing World Class Education to overseas and home students in the areas of Business Administration and Information Technology through strategic alliance with accredited centres of Portsmouth, Wales and Halifax Universities as well as with globally recognized awarding bodies i.e. City & Guilds, Scottish Qualifications Authority, NCC Education and Cambridge International Examinations. We offer qualifications ranging from foundation diploma to masters degree.

As the registered course provider of British Computer Society, we offer the following BCS Qualifications:

- Certificate in IT
- Diploma in IT
- Professional Graduate Diploma in IT

We offer a rainbow of Student Services, the most important and sought after one is our job placement assistance!

To Apply Online please visit www.btec.ae

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Tel: 020 7539 3747
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29 Thomas Street
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bcl
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- Accounting
- English Language
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BCL provides quality education at affordable tuition fees for a range of academic, professional and vocational qualifications in Business Management, Travel Tourism and Hospitality Management, Information Technology, Accounting and English language.
Our courses programmes lead to recognised qualifications by UK awarding bodies such as ABE, ACCA, BCS, OCR and Edexcel. These qualifications facilitate progression towards undergraduate and postgraduate degree studies at leading universities in the UK.
Classrooms and computer labs are well equipped with modern teaching facilities and personal computers with broadband internet connection.
We are accredited/registered providers for the British Computer Society Certificate and Diploma courses programmes.
Prospective students are welcome to visit the college to see for themselves and discuss with our staff their further academic development.
For further information please visit our website www.bcluk.co.uk
Boston College of London
15 Leeland Road, West Ealing
London W13 9HH
Phone: 020 8810 1588 Fax: 020 8810 0848 Email: info@bcluk.co.uk
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