Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Summary report of the 2019 ATAR course examination:
Computer Science

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2019	410	6
2018	469	9
2017	389	6
2016	444	19

Examination score distribution–Written
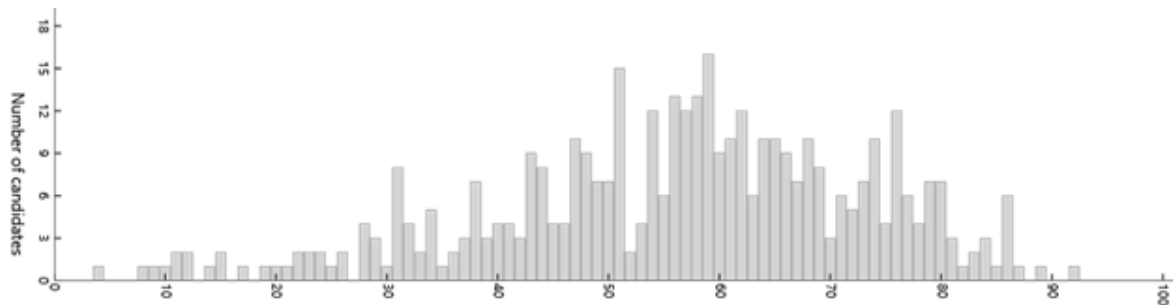
Summary

The Computer Science examination contained two sections. Section One: Short answer and Section Two: Extended answer. A Source Booklet accompanied the paper and provided information required to answer Questions 22–25.

Attempted by 410 candidates   Mean 56.05%   Max 92.25% Min 3.91%

Section means were:
Section One: Short answer   Mean 57.74%
Attempted by 410 candidates   Mean 23.10(/40)   Max 38.70   Min 3.26
Section Two: Extended answer   Mean 55.18%
Attempted by 408 candidates   Mean 33.11(/60)   Max 54.55   Min 1.49

General comments

The examination was slightly more challenging compared to recent papers as evidenced by the lower mean and maximum scores. The examination provided top students with the opportunity to achieve high scores and discriminated well across the range of candidate performance.

Advice for candidates

- Read questions carefully and ensure that you address the requirements of questions.
- Examination technique should include checking the mark allocation for each question, as this is a strong indicator to the level of detail that is required in an answer.
- Examine the marking keys from past examination papers, which will provide guidance regarding the depth of responses and how marks are allocated.

Advice for teachers
- Ensure that candidates are familiar with all aspects of the syllabus.
- Require candidates to write algorithms in both pseudocode and the programming language of their choice.
- Ensure candidates understand the level required for written responses to questions with different verbs (e.g. list versus describe versus explain).
- Show candidates how to create network diagrams from problem statements.

Comments on specific sections and questions
Section One: Short answer (92 Marks)
Overall, this section was done well by candidates. Question 9 was completed particularly well, however, Questions 3, 6 and 10 did challenge many candidates. Most candidates engaged successfully with the different modality of Question 14.

Section Two: Extended answer (121 Marks)
The scenario seemed to be more challenging, given that the mean score was lower than previous examinations. The programming question, which required candidates to write pseudocode, proved to be a discriminator. Candidates attempted most of the questions, with Question 24(d) having the lowest attempt rate.