

## Annual Report 2024/2025 – Member Society Report template

*The purpose of this template is to provide guidance on what can be included in the report, and to achieve some degree of consistency in the various reports.*

*If any of the items listed are not relevant, then leave them out. At the same time if there is anything you would like to add, that is also okay.*

**Please indicate here whether your Member Society is willing to authorise all (or part of) this report to be published on the IFIP Website. As a **default** we will assume that you allow the report to be published.**

Yes  No

**The report should be at least 1 page, but not longer than 5 pages.**

### BCS The Chartered Institute for IT, United Kingdom

#### Overview of Society

##### Society's vision/mission statement

Our purpose is rooted in our Royal Charter: "To promote and advance the education and practice of computing for the benefit of the public".

Our vision is for everyone in society to benefit from good IT; they need a profession that will champion and deliver access to the right technology, knowledge and skills required for all of us to be resilient and thrive in our digital world.

That vision requires a diverse and inclusive IT profession that truly represents all the needs of society. It needs to be plentiful in talent and demanding of itself the highest standards of professional competence, ethical thinking and practice. Only then can it truly make IT good, for everyone.

We are the UK's professional body for computing, with a global relevance and impact. We help make IT good for society through the incredible work and support of our members, volunteers, staff, partners and like-minded organisations who share our vision.

The BCS and the whole computing community in the UK were saddened to learn of the passing of Dame Stephanie Shirley CH, a Distinguished Fellow of BCS in August 2025. Dame Shirley was a pioneering entrepreneur and philanthropist and founded one of the UK's first all-woman software firms in 1962, transforming the tech landscape and championing flexible work and gender equality.

She joined BCS as a student member in 1957 and later became its first female President (1989–90), before being awarded a Distinguished Fellowship in 2021. Her lifelong impact, in both IT innovation and philanthropy, epitomises the values BCS stands for. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her family and all whose lives she inspired.

#### Link to Website

<https://www.bcs.org>

#### Which Technical Committee Working Groups do your members participate in?

There are UK representatives on all but three of the IFIP Technical Committees (TC2, TC6 and TC10), although there are representatives from the UK in the working groups in those technical committees. One of the Technical Committees currently has a UK chair, TC3, Education. A colleague from the UK is currently vice chair for TC9, ICT and Society.

In addition, Max Bramer, a member of BCS acts as honorary secretary for IFIP Board and an ex officio member, although Max will be stepping down following the September 2024 General Assembly, although he has remained in post until 2025 GA..

Currently, there is no official process involving the BCS in the selection or election of colleagues from the UK to be the UK representative on the Technical Committees, although this remains something we are in the process of actioning. The purpose is to ensure a clear and fair process for representation, but also to ensure that work from the Technical Committees is fed back into the BCS committee structure and vice versa. This will be a key action for 2025/2026.

Colleagues in TC3 have been actively involved in the IFIP Task Force "Sustaining relevant digital inclusive education for young people (5-18 years of age)"

Details of the outputs from the task force are available in the TC3 report to IFIP.

### **Key activities this year**

#### **Celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being granted a Royal Charter**

Our Royal Charter, granted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1984, is the foundation on which our objectives as an Institute are formed. 2024 marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of holding a Royal Charter, and as such this period has seen us position with renewed confidence, as a professional body, to execute our mission to the public benefit.

As well as events to mark and celebrate key milestones in our anniversary year, we also convened chartered institutions across the UK to establish the inaugural Chartered Week – a week-long celebration by people and organisations of the importance of standards, competence and ethics across society today. The inaugural theme, *Celebrating Trusted Professionals*, enabled an opportunity to recognise registered professionals whose work and commitment help strengthen public confidence in their sectors. Alongside BCS, more than 40 other chartered institutions took place in celebrating professionals and running themed activity during the week.

The Institute has used its anniversary year to revise its Chartered standard to remain relevant with the needs of industry and employers, introducing refreshed criteria around depth and breadth of technical knowledge and skills alongside technical competence and professional behaviours.

#### **Researching use of AI in school learning environments**

The Institute continues to thought lead in the adoption and advancement of artificial intelligence. As part of its ongoing activity in this space it surveyed over 5,000 teachers across 2,000 secondary schools in England to understand how AI is being adopted to assist teaching and assessment of student work.

Its findings found that the majority of teachers (64%) are not using tools professionally, including 19% who were 'not interested' in using AI anytime in the future. 41% stated their school did not

have an agreed approach to AI, and a further 17% did not know if any policy existed. Other interesting insights revealed that only a third of teachers using AI for lesson preparation had 'admitted it' to leadership, suggesting it is regarded as 'cheating' for teachers as well as students.

BCS has been using the insights from its research to push hard on the UK's education system to recommend that understanding of AI is made a significant part of teacher training and headteacher leadership qualification, alongside wider digital literacy programmes.

The Institute believes AI presents an opportunity for teachers to transform their work and lives of their students, from saving time on lesson plans, to personalising learning for each young person. But to achieve this, teachers need better training and guidance to grow in confidence with AI, make sure it is used fairly and that it doesn't create greater disadvantage in the education system.

### **Use of computer evidence in UK courts**

The Institute has long called for a review of how computer evidence is used in the UK legal system. The Post Office Horizon scandal in the UK highlighted the dangers of unquestioningly accepting the output of IT systems as reliable evidence. Today there remains a legal presumption in the UK that computers work correctly and software-generated evidence is accurate unless there is evidence to the contrary.

Following continued calls by the Institute for review, the Institute welcomed an announcement in January that the use of computer evidence in court is to be finally reviewed by the Ministry of Justice.

The Institute was pleased to present evidence and recommendations to the Ministry of Justice's call for evidence later in the year.

### **Continued influence on how the UK can transform society with ethics, education and equity in technology**

The Institute has continued to influence and lead calls for three key tech priorities to be firmly embedded in the UK government's policies and plans:

1. Anyone with a significant role in IT should prove their accountability by being professionally registered. This includes leaders who use technology in critical national infrastructure like health, defence and other public services.
2. Every child and adult must have access to a world class computing and digital literacy education; we need qualifications that reflect this.
3. Closing the diversity gap in information technology can solve many of its issues around trust, bias and safety – over 500,000 women are 'missing' from the profession in the UK.

In its continued presentation of these priorities, BCS has been widely sharing its view that UK government has a unique opportunity to take a positive view of AI and high stakes technologies, making sure they transform the lives of everyone in the UK.

It continues to present its case that by setting high standards for those who direct and develop computing in areas like health, security and other vital public services, the UK can be an example to the world.

## Events

BCS continues to run a wide and varied event programme, delivering over 400 events per year through our network of branches, international sections and special interest groups. Our full calendar of events can be accessed at <https://www.bcs.org/events/>

## Professional Development

BCS continues to support the professional development of its members and the wider community of students, apprentices and professionals. In the last year it has awarded more than 25,000 professional certifications and more than 30,000 digital literacy exams. It has also assessed more than 30,000 digital apprentices since 2017.

## Projects

Our activities are aligned to four strategic pillars.

- **Membership** - We promote and support the growing and diverse community of IT and digital professionals committed to making IT good for society
- **Inspiration** – We influence and improve computing education in all its forms to improve opportunities for young people, society and the economy
- **Progression** – We provide opportunities for learning and development to support people’s career progression and raise standards of competence in our profession
- **Influence** – We tackle the big issues facing our digital lives, connecting industry, education and government to shape and bring about impactful change on society and our profession

## Social Responsibility

The BCS Code of Conduct serves as a unique and powerful endorsement of somebody’s integrity and as a code of ethics for IT professionals. Observed by every BCS member, it defines the characteristics we share as practitioners serious about building a responsible computing profession.

BCS members show their commitment to working in the public interest - they accept their professional duty. It's the very foundation of our profession, built upon every day by the competence, integrity and diversity of our members.

The BCS Codes of Conduct and Ethics align with the IFIP Code of Ethics

## Thought leadership

BCS thought leadership and policy seeks to debate, promote and uphold the highest ethical standards and practices in a rapidly changing digital landscape. We are an influential voice in the tech sector, listened to by government, industry, and the wider society.

Discover more by browsing our articles, opinion and research here: <https://www.bcs.org/articles-opinion-and-research/>

## Policy and influence, including Government engagement/projects

BCS policy continues to seek to uphold the highest ethical standards and practices in a rapidly

changing digital landscape. We continue to be an influential voice in the UK tech sector, listened to by government, industry, and wider society.

Our activity is supported by a particular focus in key domains for our profession and wider society:

### **Artificial intelligence (AI)**

The Institute wants to see the creation of a diverse ethical AI workforce, as we believe this is central to reducing machine learning bias. This continues to take on urgency with the continued developments in generative AI, machine learning and large language models.

### **Cyber security**

As the professional body for information technology we are committed to making the digital world secure for everyone and the Institute is working with a range of agencies nationally and internationally to address cybersecurity challenges.

### **Education**

We support the teaching of rigorous and relevant computer science across the academic spectrum, from primary schools to universities. The uptake of Computer Science GCSE, A-Level and degree is increasing and it is also worth noting that there has been significant movement on balancing gender diversity in Computer Science Education.

### **Health and care**

Digital health is undergoing rapid change. The Institute remains committed to supporting the establishment of regulated professional standards in this sector.

Examples of some of the underpinning consultations and research that have supported our policy and influence in this last period are below. More information and a full list at

<https://www.bcs.org/policy-and-influence/consultations-and-research/>

- Response to the Ministry of Justice call for evidence in the user of evidence generated by software in criminal proceedings
- Response to NHS proposals to regulate NHS managers
- Response to the security of candidates, MPs and elections inquiry
- Response to the government's AI Opportunities Action Plan – Creating the UK's AI profession
- Department for Science, Innovation and Technology's consultation on AI Management Essentials Tool
- Response to the new Skills England autumn engagement
- Response to the NHS 'Help build a Health Service fit for the future NHS'
- Retaining students in UK Computer Science Higher Education
- Response to the UK Industrial Strategy open consultation
- Evidence to the Computing Curriculum and Assessment Review

**Professor Alastair Irons, FBCS, CITP, BCS Vice President (Academic)**

August 2025