

FIT Program Transition

INTRODUCTION

The Focus on Information Technology Program (FIT) was originally developed by the Information and Communications Technology Council in collaboration with the IT industry sector and educators. This development was in response to a pending skills shortage for entry-level employees in IT related occupations such as help-desk specialists, technical support specialists, and network support specialists.

THE ORIGINAL PROGRAM

The content of the original FIT program consisted of the following components:



Computers and Networking focuses on: common desktop software application programs; resolving software-related problems; and maintaining, repairing and configuring PC hardware and simple network systems;



Database Technology focuses on: how IT database software can help an organization achieve its goals and become more productive; and understanding the concepts involved in designing, using and accessing home- and small-business databases; and



Security and Privacy Networking focuses on: the fundamentals of hardware and software configurations needed to provide a secure IT environment; analyzing PCs and home networks for security threats; and taking corrective action to overcome any networking vulnerabilities.



THE NEED FOR REVIEW OF THE FIT PROGRAM

In 2011-12, ICTC completed a review of the FIT program. This review, using the IT industry and educators, resulted in a significant revision to the program producing the FIT Competencies and Concentrations Framework.

FIT STANDARDS AND REVISIONS

The FIT Competencies and Concentrations Framework has been designed by ICTC to introduce students in secondary school to the basic work and digital literacy competencies that most people will need in the 21st Century. The FIT competencies and concentrations framework was developed in collaboration with the ICT industry and educators.

The framework has two levels: General Business and Technical Competencies and Specialized Concentrations. General business competencies help develop students' abilities to work in all types of organizations in a business-like manner, while general technical competencies introduce students to the full range of ICT occupations and how they support/facilitate all types of organizations in achieving their goals.

Acquiring these fundamental competencies in secondary school will be beneficial to all students, no matter what they choose to do in their future academic and working careers.

Students who have acquired the general FIT business and technical competencies may then choose to explore one of four FIT Concentrations and their related competencies in their secondary school education. Each concentration focuses on a specific type of ICT work and requires a different learning pathway i.e. selection of provincial courses. Each prepares a student for a variety of post-secondary options and co-op, internship or work experience opportunities related to a different cluster of IT work. There is some overlap between the concentrations, but each also requires the development of a unique combination of business and technical competencies as follows:

Business and Information Analysis. Students develop competencies to work as a business, systems or information analyst or architect. This concentration focuses on helping students to combine enhanced business competencies with technical skills to analyze business needs and problems and propose solutions that incorporate technology effectively.

Software Design and Development. Students deepen their technology skills, especially in the areas of solution design, internet development, integration, programming and data base development. This concentration focuses on guiding students to use their technical competencies to develop applications and systems to help solve real world problems.

Network and Operations Support. Students develop their skills in running the technical and communications platforms that are central to the operations of most organizations. This concentration focuses on guiding students to operate mission-critical hardware and software, solve real time problems and develop solutions to connect customers, employees, suppliers and others to an organization's products and services.

Interactive Media. Students learn to work in the rapidly growing online world, including web design and development, social and mobile media, interactive games and e-commerce. This concentration helps students synthesize business, technology, and artistic skills to address the important new opportunities organizations are facing in the online world.

FIT STANDARDS & REVISIONS CONTINUED...

The competencies developed in the FIT program can be used by students to acquire a FIT certificate from ICTC, acquire other industry certifications in specialized technical areas, go on to further business or technical studies in ICT or an ICT-related field (e.g., health informatics) at a college or university, obtain co-op work, and demonstrate their competencies to potential employers for summer or part-time work.

TRANSITION OF THE PROGRAM

ICTC has completed an alignment document for most of the provinces in Canada, comparing each provincial curriculum with the revised FIT competencies. As might be expected, due to varying times for provincial curriculum revisions in technology, computer science and business, a number of the provinces have significant gaps in the alignment. While ICTC recognizes that the recently completed revised FIT program is more relevant to today's needs

It is hoped that each province will use the competency framework and include the competencies identified by industry as it updates its curriculum, thus making the revised FIT program possible in that province at a later date.

ABOUT ICTC



The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) is a centre of expertise in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) research, policy development and workforce solutions. ICTC enables industries to maintain a competitive advantage in a global market and develop Canada's future skilled and innovative talent.

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