



Network Systems Specialist

**Fast-Track Certificate Program
School for Advanced Digital Technology**

What is Fast-Track?

- Short, compressed training programs
- Class is typically made up of people changing or enhancing their careers
- Full credit certificate program
- Small class size



Network Systems Specialist (NSS)

- 24 weeks of classes + 8 week work practicum
- Areas of study:
 - IT Essentials – hardware & operating systems
 - CCNA Routing & Switching (Cisco Certified Network Associate)
 - Linux Installation and Administration
 - Cloud and Server Administration
 - Network Resilience and Scalability
 - Virtualized Infrastructure
 - Network Security
 - Network Design & Implementation Project



What is it like in class?

Workload

- Courses are block scheduled – you will study one course at a time with 6-7 hours on a single topic each day
- Homework – plan to be active and engaged for 2-3 hours/night (on average). Expect to do assigned work, extra labs, self-learning, group projects and career networking.
- Classes consist of both lectures and hands-on labs
- Skills are reinforced through project work. Students work in groups to design and build an application for a client. Plan for substantial evening and weekend commitments related to the project.
- Grades are earned course-by-course and are based on both tests and practical assessments

Teamwork and Soft Skills

- Group projects are a part of the curriculum in order to help you develop your non-technical skills
- The projects are technical in nature but will allow you to build your teamwork, communication, conflict resolution and public speaking skills
- Remember that everything in the IT industry is team-based and involves working with people. The stronger your soft skills are the better your career trajectory

Attendance and Punctuality

- Class hours:
 - Monday to Friday: 8:00am – 5:00pm
 - One hour for lunch plus morning and afternoon coffee break
 - Instructors typically finish teaching around 3:00-3:30pm. Students are expected to continue working on labs/homework after the instructor finishes.
- We expect professional and respectful behaviour in the classroom
- Be in class on time, every day and all day (treat this like a job)

Textbooks

- Some vendor specific textbooks included
- Expect a mixture of resources (e-Books, online materials)
- Library- many online textbooks collections for your reference

Technology

- This is a bring your own device program with a **power-user hardware and software requirement**. See the specific requirements on our computers and laptops [page](#).

*****Computers that fail to meet the program's requirements will impact a student's ability to complete their coursework and will effect their learning experience.**

The Credential



To earn the SAIT certificate

- You must pass every course
- You must complete a practicum
- You must have a minimum 2.0 CGPA (Average for all courses studied at SAIT)
- A 2.0 represents a C letter grade or 63-66%

Letter Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
Grade Points	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0*	0.0

* Minimal Pass

- Your academic status is your responsibility



Industry Certifications

- The focus of the program is job related training. Certifications are recommended but not required
- Cost of writing certification exams is not included in tuition
- You should pursue certification exams that are required by industry for the roles you want

The Practicum



8 Week Work Practicum

- It is the final course in the program to be completed after the academic classes
- It is your responsibility to find your own practicum
- Position could be paid or unpaid
- Position could be an 8 week practicum or the first 8 weeks of an employment opportunity
- SAIT Resources:
 - SAIT Career Advancement Services (advisors, seminars & job posting board)
 - Career Planning sessions
 - School for Advanced Digital Technology, Work Integrated Learning Coordinator
- Graduate employment statistics can be found online at www.sait.ca. Search “graduate employment”.

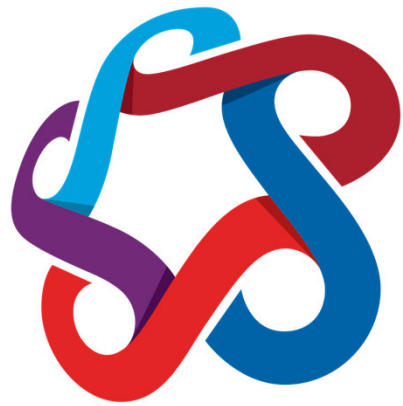


International Students: Co-Op Work Permit

- You MUST have a Co-Op Work Permit prior to starting your practicum
- You can apply for a Co-Op Work Permit online in Canada using your MyCIC account
- You must:
 - Have a valid study permit
 - Have a letter from the International Centre confirming that you have a practicum to complete
- Your Co-Op Work permit cannot be used under any circumstances for any other type of off-campus work

Where can you start looking?

- www.workopolis.com
- www.monster.ca
- www.eluta.ca
- <https://www.indeed.ca>
- <https://worxica.com/>
- www.alis.alberta.ca
- <http://www.working.com/calgary>
- www.calgary.ca (The City of Calgary-Careers)
- <https://ca.linkedin.com>



SAIT

Are you ready for Fast-Track?

Complete this self-assessment to
find out ...

Do you know what you are getting into?

1. Do you know what to expect in your program (content, workload, intensity, hours, etc.)?
 - **Yes** **No**
2. Have you attended a Fast-Track Student-for-a-Day appointment or Information Session?
 - **Yes** **No**
3. Have you talked to people doing the job that interests you?
 - **Yes** **No**
4. Do you know what technical skills are needed for the job that you want?
 - **Yes** **No**
5. Have you compared that list of skills to those taught in the program?
 - **Yes** **No**
6. Do you have the basic skills to do well in your program (math, language, keyboarding, etc.)?
 - **Yes** **No**

If your answer is 'no' to any of these questions:

- Read the program and course descriptions at www.sait.ca
- Attend a Fast-Track Student-for-a-Day appointment or an Information Session
- Research the IT job market both online and through informational interviews



Are you ready for a career in IT?

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1. Are you curious about new technologies? | Yes | No |
| 2. Do you read about technology, e.g. news & IT related blogs/journals? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you participate in any IT forums or user groups? | Yes | No |
| 4. Have you completed any online IT tutorials to build your skills? | Yes | No |
| 5. Do you like to figure out problems and troubleshoot? | Yes | No |
| 6. Are you prepared to never stop learning? | Yes | No |
| 7. Do you work well in a team/collaborative environment? | Yes | No |

If your answer is 'no' to any of these questions:

- Research the IT job market both online and through informational interviews
- Research general IT and employment trends
 - Information and Communications Technology Council - www.ictc-ctic.ca
 - Alberta Learning Information Service - www.alis.alberta.ca
- Use your personal network to contact people who are doing the work that interests you. Take them for coffee and have questions prepared ahead of time. Example: "What do you like about your work? What do you dislike? What advice do you have someone interested in this field? What technical skills and certifications are required?"



Online tutorials to get you started

If you are NEW to IT, or your skills are out of date, we strongly recommend you complete some continuing education classes or online tutorials prior to starting the program to set yourself up for success.

- **Calgary Public Library – online courses** <https://calgarylibrary.ca/read-learn-and-explore/digital-library/gale-courses/>
- **Codecademy** <http://www.Codecademy.com>
- **Coursera** <http://www.coursera.org>
- **EdX** <https://www.edx.org/>
- **Udemy** <https://www.udemy.com/>
- **W3Schools** <http://www.w3schools.com>
- **Free Code Camp** <https://www.freecodecamp.org/>
- **Linked In Learning** (available through Calgary Public Library or to SAIT students)

Many of these tutorials are free or have a nominal charge.



Do you have good study habits?

- I manage my time well and use a schedule for classes, studying, and other tasks. **Yes** **No**
- I have specific goals for each day, week, month, and semester. **Yes** **No**
- I take responsibility for my academic performance. **Yes** **No**
- I am a hands-on learner. **Yes** **No**
- I take advantage of labs and extra practice material. **Yes** **No**
- I know how to study effectively and efficiently. **Yes** **No**
- I feel motivated to do my best at school. **Yes** **No**

The **Lamb Learner Success Centre** offers learning strategy support and workshops for free to SAIT students. Workshop topics include: time management, reading skills, memory strategies, note-taking skills, and how to prepare for and write exams.

The PREP 100 course (which is available to incoming SAIT students) is an independent learning course that we recommend you complete online before your program starts.



Do you have competing responsibilities?

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| • My program will be a priority until I graduate. | Yes | No |
| • I know how to balance school with other commitments. | Yes | No |
| • I am prepared to handle many things at once. | Yes | No |
| • I take care of my health. | Yes | No |
| • I have enough money to pay for school expenses and support myself/my family. | Yes | No |
| • I have a financial backup plan for emergencies (e.g. car breaking down). | Yes | No |
| • I know where to get assistance. | Yes | No |
| • I have a backup daycare plan in place in case of illness or school PD days. | Yes | No |
| • I have talked with my family about the workload and time commitment. | Yes | No |
| • I have support from my family for reallocation of household chores and childcare. | Yes | No |

If you answered NO to any of these questions, do your best to address these concerns so you are ready focus on your learning once classes start.



Now is the time to think about how being a full-time Fast-Track student will affect many aspects of your life.

Arrange the support you will need to succeed in your studies and successfully launch your career.

Thank you!

