



Standards and qualifications

e-skills UK ensures that IT qualifications and learning meet employer needs and are world class in terms of quality, relevance and flexibility.

Together with employers, awarding bodies and others, e-skills UK has developed a national strategy that will simplify the UK's training landscape and put employer and individual needs at the heart of qualifications and learning.

› The need for change

To make the most of technology, the people who work in and with IT need to have the right skills. They also need to be able to develop and build on these skills as technology and business needs change.

Our research tells us that, over the next decade, everyone involved with technology – including technology professionals, business leaders and the everyday users of IT – will need skills at increasingly advanced levels.

This requires access to high quality training and development. However, over time the UK's qualifications and learning landscape has become complex and fragmented, with an often inconsistent approach to language and definitions. This can make it difficult for employers and individuals to understand what is available and whether it meets their needs.

› Facts to consider

- The majority of the UK's working population works with or in IT. This includes about 1.1 million IT professionals, four million business managers who need to understand what technology could mean for their business, and 22 million people (77% of the UK's 28 million strong workforce) who use IT in their everyday jobs.
- The IT professional workforce is highly qualified, with over half holding a degree level qualification or above. Development needs are therefore generally focused on higher level skills training.

› e-skills UK action

As the custodian of the National Occupational Standards for IT (what people who work in or with IT need to be able to do), e-skills UK is ideally placed to lead a far reaching reform of IT qualifications and learning.

The qualifications and learning strategy for IT professionals and IT users is the result of extensive consultation and collaboration. It is based on our exhaustive 2008 research into the IT and Telecoms skills and employment landscape, *IT & Telecoms Insights 2008* (see separate flyer), and the newly updated National Occupational Standards.

The strategy recognises that IT is a global sector and that qualifications and learning need to reflect the ever increasing pace of technological change and evolving employer needs.



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e-skills UK is now working with awarding bodies, universities, training providers and others to implement the strategy and ensure that:

- Courses and qualifications meet the latest employer needs and standards in terms of content and relevance.
- IT vendor qualifications and employers' own training are recognised and included in qualifications frameworks.
- Access to learning better reflects workplace needs. For example, more university-level short courses for IT professionals and more flexible and tailored content for IT users.

e-skills UK's work to reform the qualifications landscape for IT professionals includes the e-skills Professional Programme, a reformed Apprenticeship programme and the new National Skills Academy for IT (see separate flyers).

The work led by e-skills UK to reform the qualifications landscape for IT users has led to the introduction of the innovative ITQ qualification framework (see separate flyer).

➤ **For more information** www.e-skills.com/sqis

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e-skills UK is the Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology, rated 'outstanding' in the relicensing of Sector Skills Councils in 2009. We work on behalf of employers to ensure the UK has the technology skills it needs to succeed in a global digital economy.

➤ **Rated Outstanding**

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