An Introduction to the Information Technology Curriculum Framework
Stage 6 Syllabus in the New HSC

The *Information Technology Curriculum Framework Stage 6 Syllabus* replaces the current Information Technology Board Endorsed Course and TAFE-delivered HSC Content Endorsed Courses in this industry area. It is for implementation in 2000 and will be first examined in 2001.

Part A of the syllabus provides descriptions of course requirements, assessment advice and specifications for the optional HSC examination.

Part B of the syllabus (to be supplied separately) contains the units of competency for the Information Technology Curriculum Framework. The units of competency are transcribed directly from the Information Technology Training Package. Accompanying each unit of competency is an additional section entitled *HSC Requirements and Advice*. This section:

- prescribes the scope of learning that is expected from Stage 6 students
- identifies key terms and concepts
- provides guidance on delivery strategies and on possible teaching and learning resources.

Schools and colleges will be advised on how to obtain Part B of the syllabus, the support document and the competency record book.

*What is an industry curriculum framework?*

Industry curriculum frameworks have been developed to provide students with the opportunity to gain credit towards the NSW Higher School Certificate and credit towards national vocational qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Industry curriculum frameworks are based on national training packages. They define how units of competency drawn from training packages are arranged into vocational education and training (VET) courses for the purpose of gaining unit credit for the HSC. Wherever possible, VET courses in industry curriculum frameworks are aligned to national AQF VET qualifications.
What is similar to current courses?

The Information Technology Curriculum Framework, like the Information Technology Board Endorsed Course, is based on the Information Technology Training Package.

What are the overall improvements?

The Information Technology Curriculum Framework provides students with a wider variety of options and the opportunity to gain higher qualifications than the Information Technology Board Endorsed Course. Other improvements include:

- assessing student achievement and reporting directly against the units of competency
- potential for completion of Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II
- a course structure that facilitates delivery by schools, TAFE and other Registered Training Organisations
- a range of course structures providing Preliminary and/or HSC unit credit
- an optional HSC Examination that will allow students to include Information Technology (240 indicative hours) in the calculation of their UAI.

Aim

The Information Technology Curriculum Framework has been developed in response to the needs of the industry and to provide training and education opportunities for the full range of HSC students. Students will be able to acquire a range of technical, personal and organisational skills valued both within and beyond the workplace. They will also acquire foundation skills and knowledge related to functional areas within the information technology industry. Through study in this subject students will gain experience that can be applied to a range of contexts including work, study and leisure and which can be used in making informed career choices.

Courses structures and outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course (indicative hours)</th>
<th>Potential AQF outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology 120</td>
<td>Statement of Attainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Technology 180</td>
<td>Statement of Attainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Technology 240</td>
<td>Certificate II and/or Statement of Attainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Technology Specialisation Studies 60 (extension)</td>
<td>Certificate II and/or Statement of Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology Specialisation Studies 120 (extension)</td>
<td>Certificate II and/or Statement of Attainment</td>
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Unit values and delivery patterns

A unit of study for the HSC comprises 60 indicative hours of course time. Because the courses within the framework are not divided into Preliminary and HSC components, courses may be counted as either Preliminary units or HSC units, provided that a student’s overall pattern of study meets HSC requirements. For example, Information Technology (120 indicative hours) may be counted as 2 Preliminary units only, as 2 HSC units only or as 1 Preliminary unit and 1 HSC unit. Under the
provisions of HSC Pathways, students may be entered for Preliminary and HSC units of study in the same calendar year.

Content and outcomes

An industry curriculum framework for the Higher School Certificate describes the range of units of competency that have been identified as being suitable for the purposes of the Higher School Certificate. A course within an industry framework describes how the available units of competency must be arranged to gain unit credit towards the award of the Higher School Certificate.

The qualifications within the Information Technology Training Package are based on and comply with the content and structural rules of the Information Technology Competency Standards.

Course requirements

Units of competency drawn from the Information Technology Training Package determine the content and define the outcomes of learning for courses within the framework.

For the purposes of the Higher School Certificate, courses have been described in terms of their indicative duration as 120, 180, 240, or 60 (for extension courses only) indicative hours courses.

Work placement is a mandatory course requirement. The following work placement requirements apply to each course within the curriculum framework:

- Information Technology (240 indicative hours) requires a minimum of 70 hours in a workplace
- Information Technology (180 indicative hours) requires a minimum 49 hours (7 working days) in a workplace
- Information Technology (120 indicative hours) requires a minimum of 35 hours in a workplace
- Information Technology Specialisation Studies (120 indicative hours) requires a minimum of 35 hours in a workplace
- Information Technology Specialisation Studies (60 indicative hours) requires a minimum of 14 hours (2 working days) in a workplace.

Under some circumstances, a simulated work environment may be used to fulfil part of the work placement requirements.

Assessment

The courses within the Information Technology Curriculum Framework are competency based courses. The Board of Studies and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) require that a competency based approach to assessment be used and that a record be held by the Registered Training Organisation of the competencies achieved. Schools and colleges will be required to report to the Board on the units of competency achieved.

To achieve an AQF Certificate or Statement of Attainment, a student or worker must be assessed as competent according to the requirements set out in the Information Technology Training Package. A qualified assessor, under the auspices of the Registered Training Organisation that is to issue the qualification, must conduct the assessment.

The HSC Examination for Information Technology (240 indicative hours) is optional. It will consist of a 2 hour written paper. Students will indicate during Year 12 whether they intend to attempt the examination. The examination is independent of the competency assessment undertaken during the course and has no impact on a student’s eligibility for AQF qualifications.
What will be needed to teach this subject?

- *Information Technology Curriculum Framework Stage 6 Syllabus* Part A
- *Information Technology Curriculum Framework Stage 6 Syllabus* Part B
- Competency Record Book (student log) for students
- Examination Supplement (the sample examination and marking guidelines).

Specific advice and details on matters such as teacher qualifications and resource requirements will be detailed in the *Industry Curriculum Framework Information Package*. This publication will be provided to schools by their relevant school authority.

Current resources available in schools will continue to be useful; however, some adjustment will need to occur in how they are used.

A further subject specific document is being developed by the Board of Studies for distribution later in the year. This will assist teachers with the implementation of the revised syllabuses.

A list of a number of resources will be placed on the Board’s website, [http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au).

Cross-sectoral professional development workshops (Department of Education and Training, Catholic Education Commission and members of the Association of Independent Schools) for Information Technology Stage 6 will be held. Venues and dates for these workshops have been published on the New HSC website — [http://www.newhsc.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.newhsc.schools.nsw.edu.au) — and distributed to schools. The materials from the workshops will be available on this website.

*CURRICULUM SUPPORT for Teaching in Vocational Education 7–12* — a publication distributed each term by the Department of Education and Training — will carry an HSC supplement.

*Assessment and Reporting Bulletin* — published each term as a joint venture of the Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools — will build on principles outlined in Board of Studies’ newsletters and assessment support materials.