

What is CTS?

Career and Technology Studies (CTS), an optional program for secondary schools, is designed to help Alberta students:

- develop skills they can apply in daily living, now and in the future
- make effective career choices
- prepare for entry into the workplace or further learning opportunities.

In each CTS course, students are expected to demonstrate these basic competencies:

- managing learning
- managing resources
- problem solving and innovation
- communicating effectively
- working with others
- demonstrating responsibility.

In CTS courses, students explore career areas and obtain learning and employability skills through education programs and work experience. Work experience for CTS students also may include job shadowing and mentoring.

Implemented in 1997, this innovative and flexible curriculum is structured in a way that increases the ability of schools to offer programs that are relevant to their students' needs. The structure of CTS also helps schools to make efficient use of school and community resources.

CTS

For more information

- Visit www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bysubject/cts.
- Call the program manager, Career and Technology Studies, Alberta Education, telephone **780-427-2984** (toll free within Alberta by dialing **310-0000** followed by the **area code and telephone number**).
- If you are an employee of a school/school board, please contact the CTS program coordinator for your jurisdiction.

Career & Technology Studies

CTS



2006

Who takes CTS?

In 2004–2005, approximately 90 percent of Alberta senior high school graduates earned 6 or more credits in CTS courses. In the same year, students awarded an Alberta High School Diploma earned an average of 118 credits in total, with 18 credits in CTS courses.

Plans for the future

Alberta Education announced a plan to review and refocus the CTS program in the fall of 2004.

The vision for a refocused CTS program is:

- a more focused program of studies based on credible learner career pathways
- updated printed and digital resources that support focused learning experiences in career fields
- enhanced access to CTS programming through classroom, online, off-campus and other combined approaches to instruction
- sustainable in-service and professional development for CTS teachers, counsellors and administrators.

Career pathways will provide an umbrella framework for restructuring existing and new 1-credit CTS courses around 4 to 8 career clusters (rather than the existing 22 CTS strands). Input received during consultation clearly indicated support for focused learning experiences to be of an exploratory nature during junior high school (4 career clusters) and to become more specific and of a preparatory nature at the senior high school level (8 career clusters) to help students move smoothly through school to further education and satisfying work.

One of the principle changes being planned is to replace the current 22 CTS strands with the following “career clusters”:

Junior High

- Arts and Culture
- Science and Technology
- Business
- Human Services

Senior High

- Business, Administration and Finance (NOC #1)
- Natural and Applied Science (NOC #2)
- Health and Human Services (NOC #3 and 4)
- Arts and Communication (NOC #5)
- Tourism, Sales and Service (NOC #6)
- Construction and Transportation (NOC #7)
- Agriculture, Forestry, Oil and Gas (NOC #8)
- Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities (NOC #9)

(NOC – National Occupational Classification)

Why make changes?

Since the world of work is continually changing, career-oriented programs such as CTS also need to change. Predictions are that in the future most Albertans may have approximately 25 different jobs during their careers. These jobs could be in up to five different sectors of the economy, and workers may often be asked to take on a variety of concurrent roles. In addition, workers may need to deal with planned and unplanned gaps in their employment. The bottom line: workers of the future need to be prepared to make numerous transitions into, within and across the learning system and the world of work.

Concerns have also been expressed that some CTS strands are no longer enabling students to benefit from today’s technologies as they prepare for further study and the workplace.

Other activities and conditions that have contributed to the decision to review and refocus the CTS program are:

- Alberta Education’s work to implement Learner Career Pathways is having a direct impact on CTS.
 - The ongoing work of the CTS unit continuously calls for change (evergreening), as do recent changes in other secondary programs and courses.
 - Recommendations for changes to CTS are included in the report of the Alberta Commission on Learning.
 - Current and emerging career opportunities are creating a need for a refocused program.

