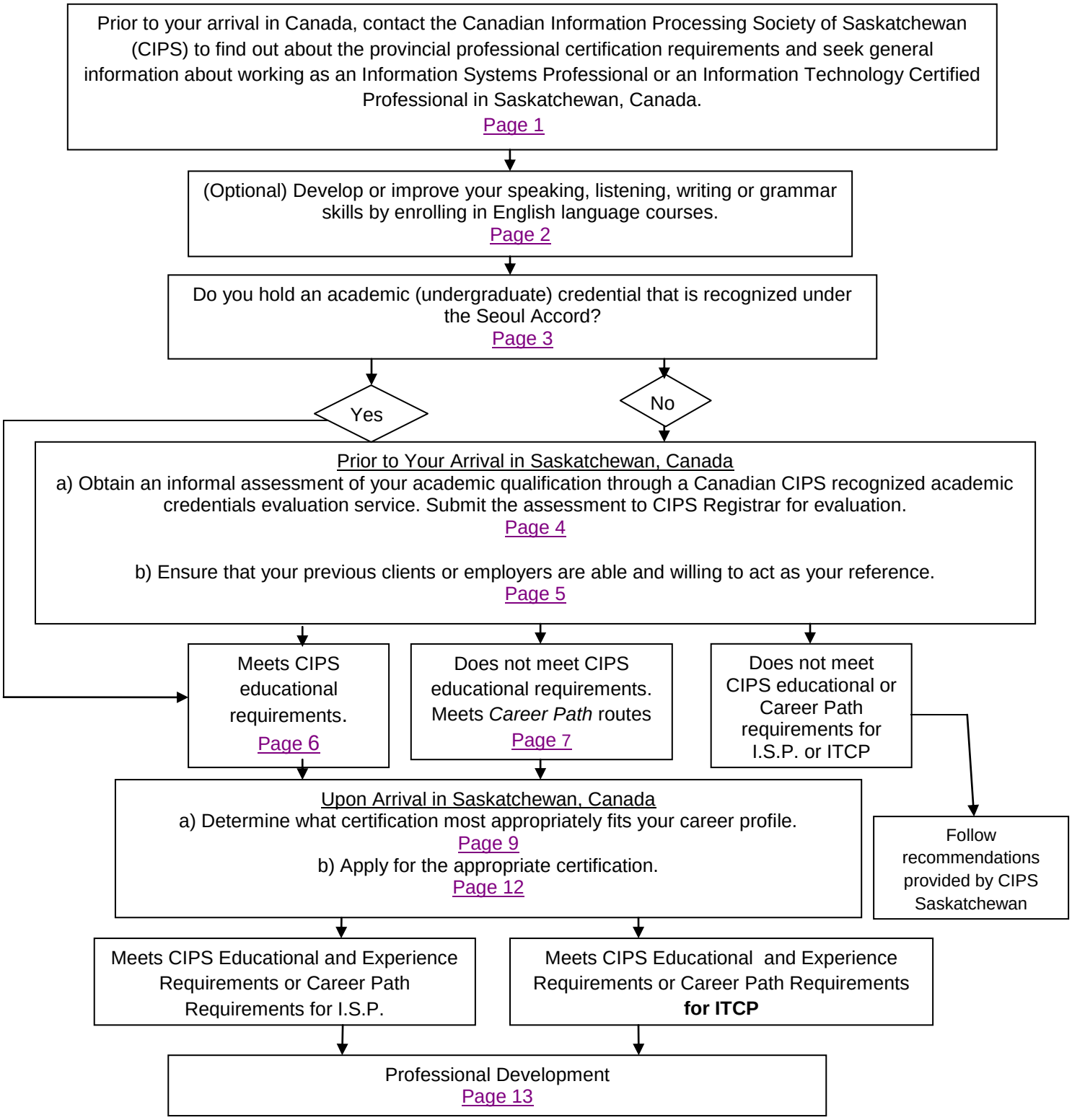
I.S.P. (INFORMATION SYSTEMS PROFESSIONAL) & ITCP (INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL)

Last Updated: March 2010



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PROCESS MAP FOR INTERNATIONALLY -TRAINED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRACTITIONERS WISHING TO WORK IN SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA

This PROCESS MAP will provide internationally-trained Information Technology professionals with details about the most efficient pathway to obtain professional certification by the Canadian Information Processing Society (CIPS) of Saskatchewan. This process map is meant as a guide only, but is based on the experience of many Information Technology professionals who have been through the registration process.

Prior to your arrival in Canada, contact the Canadian Information Processing Society of Saskatchewan to inquire about the provincial certification requirements and seek general information about being an Information Systems Professional (I.S.P.) or an Information Technology Certified Professional (ITCP) – www.cips.ca

When deciding to settle in Saskatchewan, it is important to contact CIPS Saskatchewan to find out the steps that are required to become certified in the province. Before leaving your home country, contact CIPS Saskatchewan to find out about the provincial certification requirements and seek general information about being an IT professional in Saskatchewan.

You may write to CIPS Saskatchewan to inquire about the requirements and costs for certification, registration, and the recommended procedure for an informal academic assessment prior to your arrival in Saskatchewan, Canada.

Be sure to ask specifically for information on what parts of the process you can do or start before you leave your home country. For example, you may need to:

- Prepare or obtain documents from your home professional association body or educational institution;
- Obtain and complete forms that are available online;
- Obtain personal or work references;
- Begin necessary educational assessments; or
- Begin applications to programs or examinations.

CIPS Saskatchewan
Box 20073
Cornwall Center RPO
Regina, SK, Canada S4P 4J7
Email: Saskatchewan@cips.ca
Website: http://local.cips.ca/saskatchewan

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(Optional) Develop or improve your speaking, listening, writing or grammar skills by enrolling in English language courses

Although you are not required to pass a language proficiency examination for membership in the CIPS of Saskatchewan, working in the Information Technology field does require excellent language skills. Most businesses require you to communicate fluently orally and in writing, and be able to present complex technical information to both technical and non-technical audiences. Knowledge of English or French is a strong asset.

You may wish to develop or improve your English skills by enrolling in English language courses before you come or after you arrive in Saskatchewan. For more information on how you can improve your English skills, visit:
http://www.saskimmigrationcanada.ca/learning-english

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Do you hold academic (undergraduate) credentials that are recognized under the Seoul Accord?

CIPS will recognize undergraduate computing programs accredited by members of the Seoul Accord (www.seoulaccord.org) as equivalent for the purposes of professional certification.

Signatories to the Accord include South Korea, United States, Australia, United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and Canada. The agencies in these countries have chosen to work together to assist the mobility of Computing and IT-related professionals holding suitable qualifications and to improve the quality of tertiary-level Computing and IT-related education.

Individuals applying for CIPS certification under the Seoul Accord may be eligible for advanced standing.

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Comprehensive Evaluation Report

CIPS Saskatchewan requires that applicants who completed their post-secondary IT relevant education at an institution outside North America and whose education does not fall under the Seoul Accord must have their educational transcripts officially translated (if the transcript is in a language other than English or French) and must submit a course-by-course analysis and a statement of equivalency from a recognized Canadian academic credential assessment service.

Following is a website link which provides more information regarding equivalency assessment agencies: http://www.cicic.ca/415/credential-assessment-services.canada

The comprehensive report normally takes a minimum of seven weeks to complete. The cost associated with the review differs depending on the agency used.

All pre-assessment and official applications are processed by the CIPS Office of the Registrar. The comprehensive evaluation report should be send to the CIPS Office of the Registrar (certification@cips.ca) for an informal pre-assessment.

Click to return to diagram

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Previous clients or employers to act as your reference

Certification application references must be able to comment on your competence and confirm your work history over the last 24 months as documented by you in the application. The referee(s) should be at a similar or higher professional level to you and cannot be someone who reports to you or who is a family member.

The reference information should be supplied via a letter (on company letterhead) and include your job title, a detailed job description and precise dates of employment or client relationship. Letters of appointment or contracts are not accepted.
CIPS reserves the right to contact employers/clients to verify information.

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Education or Career Path Assessment

The CIPS professional certification criteria are based on either a combination of relevant post-secondary education plus years of professional experience or on a *Career Path* route.

CIPS accreditation is a non-governmental autonomous process for assessment of educational programs against industry accepted standards. A full listing of CIPS accredited programs can be found at http://www.cips.ca/accredited.

For more information on the professional experience requirement visit: http://www.cips.ca/isp?q=ispCriteria and http://www.cips.ca/itcproutes for the ITCP.

*Programs from privately-funded educational institutions need to meet the following minimum criteria:

1. Only Canadian baccalaureate (Bachelor) degrees will be considered.
2. The baccalaureate degree needs to have received official provincial/territorial government accreditation. The baccalaureate program needs to be a minimum of 3 academic years in length (or equivalent to six full course load terms).
3. The C.I.S./C.I.T. specific course content of a program needs to be a minimum of 60% over three academic years.
4. Transfer credits must be from an educational institution that has comparable or mutually acceptable standards and requirements.

Click to return to diagram

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Career Path Routes

CIPS certification offers entry routes for applicants who do not hold a relevant computing degree or diploma and are based on an assessment of an applicant's practical experience.

For I.S.P. Applicants

The *Established IT Professionals* Route (see www.cips.ca/EstablishedITProfessionals) provides a competency-based review and assessment methodology and allows applicants to demonstrate mastery against the CIPS Body of Knowledge (BOK http://www.cips.ca/bok).

The principles that apply to this route are:

- A point-based scoring system linked to competency levels is used to measure mastery of the Body Of Knowledge (BOK).
- A minimum BOK Competency Score (BCS) of 21 points is required, with a minimum of Level 2 (3 points) in the core of the BOK (the professional issues in IT) and additional 18 points (minimum) from at least 6 technical areas of the BOK need to be achieved.
- An overall familiarity with the CIPS BOK areas.

For ITCP Applicants

The IT Industry Leader Route

The *IT Industry Leader* Route is designed to facilitate the application and review process for individuals who have a level of professional competence above the minimum required for those applying under the post-secondary education plus experience entry routes. The review and assessment methodology is based on a defined career path.

The IT Industry Leader entry route is directed specifically for senior IT professionals who hold a non-IT university degree, but possess the required experience to practice in the field. Individuals who are interested in this entry route must have a level of professional competence above the minimum requirements and hold a senior executive level position in a large firm.

Click to return to diagram

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The Information Technology (IT) Industry Leader application route is available to professionals who:

- Already have an established career in IT (generally not less than 12 years);
- Are responsible for IT strategies, resources, and operations at the organizational level; and
- Are sponsored by existing I.S.P. holders who are able to guarantee their professional competence and integrity.

For the full IT Industry Leader criteria visit: http://www.cips.ca/ITCPITLeader

The Established Academic Route

The Established Academic entry route is designed to facilitate the application and review process for individuals who have a level of professional competence above the minimum required for those applying under the *post-secondary education plus experience* entry routes. The review and assessment methodology is based on a defined career path.

This application route is available to professionals who:

- Have a full-time academic position in a Computer Science (CS), Software Engineering (SE) Information Systems (IS) (or equivalent) department at a recognized University (or equivalent);
- Hold the rank of Associate Professor or higher, or are eligible to hold this rank;
- Are established in her/his field, both as a teacher and as a researcher, and who will have contributed some service to her/his discipline and/or profession.

For the full Established Academic criteria visit: http://www.cips.ca/ITCPacademicRoute

Click to return to diagram

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Determine which certification most appropriately fits your career profile

CIPS offers professional recognition at two levels – the Information Systems Professional (I.S.P.) and the Information Technology Certified Professional (ITCP). The following chart outlines the key differences and commonalities between the two designations.

I.S.P.		ITCP
Canada's first professional IT standard created in 1989	**Purpose**	Canada's first and only internationally recognized professional IT standard - IP3™ accredited in 2008
Demonstrated mastery of the CIPS Body of Knowledge (BOK) Capability to work at SFIA* Level 4	**Eligibility**	Demonstrated mastery of the CIPS Body of Knowledge (BOK) Capability to work at SFIA* Level 5 Competence in one or more specialization (at SFIA Level 5) Demonstrated understanding of the strategic nature of IT and how it applies to the business model
Commitment to Code of Ethics Adhere to Risk Management Guidelines Personal and Professional Responsibility and Accountability Commitment to ongoing professional development	**Professionalism**	Commitment to Code of Ethics Adhere to Risk Management Guidelines Personal and Professional Responsibility and Accountability Commitment to ongoing professional development

** Skills Framework for the Information Age - see http://www.sfia.org.uk/*

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CIPS uses the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA – www.sfia.org.uk) to determine an applicant's competence, skills, knowledge and level of responsibility and autonomy. The following is a list of SFIA Level 4, 5, and 6 responsibility levels. It will provide you with a tool to assess which designation most appropriately fits your current professional status. Level 4 pertains to the I.S.P., levels 5 and 6 pertain to the ITCP.

SFIA Level 4 – I.S.P.	SFIA Level 5 ITCP	SFIA Level 6 ITCP
Autonomy Works under general direction within a clear framework of accountability. Exercises substantial personal responsibility and autonomy. Plans own work to meet given objectives and processes. **Influence** Influences team and specialist peers internally. Influences customers at account level and suppliers. Has some responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of resources. Participates in external activities related to own specialization. Makes decisions which influence the success of projects and team objectives.	**Autonomy** Works under broad direction. Full accountability for own technical work or project/supervisory responsibilities. Receives assignments in the form of objectives. Establishes own milestones, team objectives and delegates assignments. Work is often self-initiated. **Influence** Influences organization, customers, suppliers and peers within industry on contribution of specialization. Significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of resources. Decisions impact on success of assigned projects, such as results, deadlines and budget. Develops business relationships with customers.	**Autonomy** Has defined authority and responsibility for a significant area of work, including technical, financial and quality aspects. Establishes organizational objectives and delegates responsibilities. Is accountable for actions and decisions taken by self and subordinates. **Influence** Influences policy formation on the contribution of own specialization to business objectives. Influences a significant part of own organization and influences customers/suppliers and industry at senior management level. Makes decisions which impact the work of employing organizations, achievement of organizational objectives and financial performance. Develops high-level relationships with customers, suppliers and industry leaders.

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Complexity Performs a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities, in a variety of contexts.	**Complexity** Challenging range - variety of complex technical or professional work activities. Work requires application of fundamental principles in a wide and often unpredictable range of contexts. Understands relationship between specialization and wider customer/organizational requirements.	**Complexity** Performs highly complex work activities covering technical, financial and quality aspects. Contributes to the formulation of IT strategy. Creatively applies a wide range of technical and/or management principles.
Business skills Selects appropriately from applicable standards, methods, tools and applications. Demonstrates an analytical and systematic approach to problem solving. Communicates fluently orally and in writing, and can present complex technical information to both technical and non-technical audiences. Facilitates collaboration between stakeholders who share common objectives. Plans, schedules and monitors work to meet time and quality targets and in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures. Rapidly absorbs new technical information and applies it effectively. Has a good appreciation of the wider field of information systems, their use in relevant employment areas and how they relate to the business activities of the employer or client. Maintains an awareness of developing technologies and their application and takes some responsibility for personal development.	**Business skills** Advises on the available standards, methods, tools and applications in own area of specialization and can make correct choices from alternatives. Can analyze, diagnose, design, plan, execute and evaluate work to time, cost and quality targets. Communicates effectively, formally and informally, with colleagues, subordinates and customers. Demonstrates leadership. Clear understanding of the relationship between own area of responsibility/specialization to the employing organization and takes customer requirements into account when making proposals. Takes initiative to keep skills up to date. Maintains awareness of developments in the industry. Can analyze user requirements and advise users on scope and options for operational improvement. Demonstrates creativity and innovation in applying IT solutions for the benefit of the user.	**Business skills** Absorbs complex technical information and communicates effectively at all levels to both technical and non-technical audiences. Assesses and evaluates risk. Understands the implications of new technologies. Demonstrates clear leadership and the ability to influence and persuade. Has a broad understanding of all aspects of IT and deep understanding of own specialization(s). Understands and communicates the role and impact of IT in the employing organization and promotes compliance with relevant legislation. Takes the initiative to keep both own and subordinates' skills up to date and to maintain an awareness of developments in the IT industry.

The minimum years of professional experience requirements varies depending on which routes the applicant uses. For more information on the professional experience requirement, visit the website at: http://www.cips.ca/isp?q=ispCriteria and http://www.cips.ca/itcproutes for the ITCP.

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Apply for Professional Membership

Apply for either the I.S.P. (see http://www.cips.ca/applications) or the ITCP (see http://www.cips.ca/ITCPapplication). There is a requirement to obtain and maintain CIPS Saskatchewan membership in order to use the certification. One can apply for certification without CIPS membership, however when the application has been approved you will be required to subscribe to CIPS Saskatchewan membership.

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Continued Professional Development Program

To retain certified membership status, members must maintain their professional currency in IT. Averaged over three years, they must obtain a minimum of 300 education credits and at least 3,000 hours have to be spent on IT professional-level activities. Work experience must be at least 60% IT-related.

The full re certification guidelines are available on the CIPS website: http://www.cips.ca

Learning credits have been designed to provide a great deal of flexibility within the re-certification guidelines to allow one to achieve the minimum requirement.

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