

IT SECURITY SKILLS, LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS PROPOSAL

1. Introduction

The National Skills Academy for IT is an employer-led partnership whose mission is to promote excellence in IT learning and development. One of the strategic objectives of the Academy is to establish a database of current high quality qualification and learning provision. Additionally the Academy is seeking to identify, prioritise and commission new learning to continue to best fulfil employers needs. To support this the Academy will engage in research to identify 'hot spots' for new learning informed by private and public sector employers.

IT security training is identified by employers and backed by e-skills UK LMI research as an important area for skills development. The Academy is undertaking an assessment of IT Security qualifications available focussing initially on the vendor and Professional qualifications in this area.

Further development work is required to bring IT skills in line with those required by employers and to retain this balance over the next 3 years and into the future. IT Security needs have been identified as one of the area requiring review and development of new training. This identified need aligns with business need for a short term provision and longer term strategic learning development in the area of IT Security.

2. Opportunity

The opportunity on which the Academy is focused is to:

- Identifying high quality learning and qualifications in IT Security which are valued by the sector, and making it easy to access them and understand what they cover.
- Aggregate skills demand and generate new, employer-led, cost-effective IT Security learning options and provide the basis for future sustainability.
- Enable the use of professional standards to link the skills needed in IT Security for specific job roles and career progression to the most appropriate training.
- Enable individuals to record their skills and training, and link their specific skills needs to relevant training options.

The Academy is developing approaches to listing and recognising existing learning provision, through the following:

IT Coursematch

Enable easy identification of high quality courses and qualifications, and easy understanding of coverage against IT Professional Standards

IT Professional Profile

Enable easy identification of training to meet an individual's specific skills needs

Enable certification of skills against professional standards

New learning solutions

Establish new, high quality cost effective training provision to meet market needs

IT Academy Course Approval

Approve sector valued courses from Academy Partners, validated against IT Professional Standards

IT Academy Partner Approval

Approve a network of high quality education and training providers

3. Proposed activities to develop new IT Security training provision

The Academy aims to research and synthesise requirements for new IT security training and develop high quality, industry-backed courses and development programmes to respond to this growing area of need. To maintain the highest quality standards, the new learning will be commissioned using a learning outcomes specification developed to reflect requirements for content and delivery. Only Approved Partners of the IT Academy are awarded licenses to deliver IT Academy Learning Solutions.

A profiling tool will also be tested to record and register IT Security skills profiles.

The Academy will aggregate cross-sector needs to define new training options which will be delivered cost effectively by the Academy's Approved Partners. The key tasks are identified below and set out in the plan that follows.

1. Identify the scope for the new learning needs in IT Security
2. Review the provision across private and HE
3. Undertake a gap analysis for new development units
4. Complete research to gather requirements
5. Develop the learning specification for new development units (including content and delivery)
6. Commission new learning development
7. Pilot test and approve new learning
8. Deploy training

4. Proposed Plan

The plan below outlines the activities and timescales required in order to complete a comprehensive review of IT Security learning and qualification, training needs, and gap analysis in provision. A further aim is to investigate and prioritise employer needs and commission new provision to meet short and longer term needs of employers leading to sustainable provision.

Themes	Milestone	Action	Timescale
Standards And Qualifications	1. IT Professional Standards On-line	Further develop IT Professional Standards to reflect IT Security needs	January 2011
Existing Provision	2. Create database of existing provision	Academy is developing a database of qualifications and private provision. Invite employer input to complete.	March 2011
New Provision	3. Secure security industry support	Establish support from employers for an employer forum and their help in completing the database of qualifications and learning.	February 2011
	4. Commission research to understand employer IT Security learning needs	A research project (6 month) to be commissioned to investigate employer needs and fulfilment for IT Security learning and qualifications	February 2011
	5. Commence diagnostic audits of employers current and future skills needs	Academy will undertake a series of questionnaires and interviews to investigate employers current and future IT Security training needs	March 2011
	6. Investigate other sources of information	An investigation of other sources (e.g. govt security initiatives, HE) will supplement the commissioned research	March 2011
	7. Undertake gap analysis of qualification and learning coverage	Review the coverage of IT Security qualifications and courses (private and HE) to the IT Professional Standards	March 2011
	8. Interim Review outputs of all research	Review the interim research outcomes to propose the new learning content and delivery architecture	May 2011
	9. Full Review outputs of all research	Review the research outcomes to propose the new learning content and delivery architecture	August 2011
	10. Commission new learning	The Academy will translate the requirements into learning specifications and will work with a network of selected providers	August 2011
	11. Record IT Security skills profile	Testing the Academy profiling tool for recording security skills	August 2011
	12. Develop new training provision	The Academy will select the providers to develop new learning units and work with them to design, develop and implement new learning provision	September 2011
	13. Pilot testing complete	The Academy will undertake user testing for the new IT Security learning	December 2011
	14. New learning approved	The Academy will approve the new learning through the Training Quality Panel	January 2012
	15. Deliver and exploit new learning	The Academy will begin to make available new learning through appropriate provider channels	February 2012

End of document

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