

ICITP

INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED
IT PROFESSIONALS

**INSTITUTE OF
CHARTERED
IT PROFESSIONALS**

Elevating IT Professionalism



AI ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE

CLOUD
COMPUTING

CYBER
SECURITY

DATA
ANALYTICS

WHITE PAPER

ICITP CANDIDACY PROGRAMME

Bridging the Gap Between Education
and Real Workplace Competence



DEVELOPING
PROFESSIONALS



BUILDING
COMPETENCE



STRENGTHENING
INDUSTRY



MENTORSHIP



EXPERIENCE



COMPETENCE



PROFESSIONAL
RECOGNITION



BUILDING A SKILLED, COMPETENT AND FUTURE-READY SOUTH AFRICA



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ICITP CANDIDACY PROGRAMME

Bridging the Gap Between Education
and Real Workplace Competence



WHITE PAPER



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



South Africa continues to face a significant challenge in developing work-ready professionals despite substantial investments in education, training, and qualifications. Employers consistently report that graduates often possess theoretical knowledge but lack the practical workplace skills, professional behaviours, and real-world experience required to contribute effectively from day one.



The Institute of Chartered IT Professionals (ICITP) Candidacy Programme has been developed to address this challenge by creating a structured pathway that combines professional development, workplace exposure, mentorship, practical experience, and competency-based learning.



Unlike traditional academic programmes that primarily focus on acquiring theoretical knowledge, the ICITP Candidacy Programme develops competent, employable, and industry-ready professionals capable of performing effectively in modern organisations.



The framework encourages collaboration among employers, mentors, professional bodies, and candidates, fostering a shared purpose that motivates all stakeholders to build practical capability and support professional growth.



The NQF Act empowers SAQA to recognise professional bodies and register professional designations on the NQF.



COLLABORATION

Employers, mentors, professional bodies and candidates working together.



DEVELOPMENT

Building practical capability and professional growth.



COMPETENCE

Transforming knowledge into workplace competence.



RECOGNITION

Pathways to recognised professional designations.

A STRUCTURED PATHWAY TO PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS



LEARNING

Build strong foundations



WORKPLACE EXPOSURE

Apply knowledge in real settings



MENTORSHIP

Guidance from experienced professionals



COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

Build skills, confidence and capability



PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION

Achieve recognition and advance your career



The ICITP Candidacy Programme bridges the gap between education and professional practice—equipping candidates with the experience, skills and behaviours that industry demands.

TRANSFORMING POTENTIAL. DELIVERING IMPACT.



For Candidates

Real experience.
Professional growth.
Brighter futures.



For Employers

Work-ready talent.
Stronger teams.
Better results.



For Industry

Stronger capability.
Higher standards.
Sustainable growth.



For South Africa

A skilled workforce.
A competitive economy.
A better future for all.

**DEVELOPING
PROFESSIONALS.
BUILDING
COMPETENCE.
STRENGTHENING
INDUSTRY.**



Together, we are building a pipeline of competent, ethical and industry-ready IT professionals for South Africa's digital future.

PROFESSIONAL BODIES CREATE CANDIDACY PROGRAMMES

Structured pathways that develop competent, confident and industry-ready professionals.



BEYOND LEARNING – BUILDING PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE



PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Developing confidence, leadership potential and a strong professional mindset.



INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT

Ensuring candidates are prepared for real industry needs and future opportunities.



NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Connecting candidates with professionals, peers and industry leaders.



CAREER ACCELERATION

Creating momentum for faster progress and long-term career success.



PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

Building credibility and visibility on the pathway to recognised professional status.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS – PROVEN BY LEADING PROFESSIONAL BODIES

This is exactly how organisations such as:

ENGINEERING COUNCIL
OF SOUTH AFRICA

Candidate Engineer



SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE
OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Trainee Accountant



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR
THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

Candidate Architect



These organisations have historically implemented structured professional development pathways that combine learning, experience, mentorship and assessment leading to professional designation.



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MICT SETA and ICITP are working together to professionalise the South African ICT sector and address the Information Technology critical & scarce skills gap.

KEY AREAS OF COLLABORATION (SAQA REGISTERED)



PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Internationally benchmarked and NQF-aligned qualifications.



RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Recognising existing competence and workplace learning.



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES (PLP)

Structured learning leading to professional designations.



CANDIDACY PROGRAMMES

Workplace-based pathways to build competence and professional readiness.



BUILDING CAPACITY TO DRIVE INDUSTRY ADOPTION



ICITP has initiated the training of Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) on the principles, implementation, and benefits of Candidacy Programmes.

Launched in partnership with MICT SETA and its registered SDFs, with further roll-out planned with other SETAs to support broader national uptake.



PIVOTAL – A WHOLE-OF-SECTOR LEARNING APPROACH

P



PROFESSIONAL

I



VOCATIONAL

V



TECHNICAL

O



ACADEMIC

T



LEARNING

A

Programmes leading to qualifications or part-qualifications on the NQF.

Professional Learning Programmes (PLP) result in professional designations registered on the NQF as contemplated in the Skills Development Act.

EXPERIENCE. MENTORSHIP. COMPETENCE. CAREERS TRANSFORMED.

When candidates participate in a combination of structured workplace experience, mentorship and competency development, they gain confidence, advance their careers and contribute meaningfully to industry and society.



Developing
Professionals



Building
Competence



Strengthening
Industry

Together, building a skilled, competitive and inclusive South African economy.



THE SKILLS CHALLENGE FACING SOUTH AFRICA

Across industries, organisations are experiencing increasing difficulty in sourcing professionals who possess both technical knowledge and workplace competence.



EMPLOYERS FREQUENTLY IDENTIFY GAPS IN:



CANDIDACY PROGRAMMES ARE THE SOLUTION

They bridge the gap between education and professional practice by providing structured workplace experience, mentorship and competency development.



**BETTER SKILLS.
STRONGER PROFESSIONALS.
STRONGER SOUTH AFRICA.**

This is where candidacy programmes become critical for industry, individuals and the future of our economy.

WHY WORKPLACE LEARNING MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

The modern workplace evolves faster than traditional education systems.



Professionals must adapt rapidly. ICITP Candidacy Programme equips candidates with up-to-date skills aligned with these industry shifts.

RESEARCH SHOWS COMPETENCE IS DEVELOPED THROUGH A COMBINATION OF:



COMPETENCE IS DEVELOPED THROUGH EXPERIENCE, NOT EDUCATION ALONE.

Candidates who work on real projects, engage with clients, solve workplace challenges and receive structured mentorship develop greater professional readiness and impact.



WHAT IS A CANDIDACY PROGRAMME?

A candidacy programme is a structured professional development pathway designed to transform learners, graduates, and emerging professionals into competent practitioners through workplace-based learning and professional mentorship.



THE ICITP CANDIDACY PROGRAMME COMBINES:



1

STRUCTURED LEARNING

Candidates participate in structured learning programmes aligned to industry requirements, occupational competencies, and professional standards.

Programmes are customised to address specific organisational skills needs and are designed around real-world workplace environments.



2

WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

Candidates gain practical experience within real business environments.



3

PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP

Experienced practitioners guide and support candidate development.



4

COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

Candidates demonstrate practical skills and professional behaviours.



5

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION PATHWAYS

Candidates progress toward recognised professional designations.



The emphasis is on demonstrating **competence** and **industry readiness**, helping candidates feel respected and motivated as they progress toward recognised professional designations.

THE ICITP APPROACH

The Institute of Chartered IT Professionals believes that true professional capability is developed through a combination of knowledge, skills, experience, and professional conduct.

The ICITP Candidacy Programme, therefore, focuses on:

1



LEARNING BY DOING

Candidates develop competence through active participation in workplace activities rather than passive classroom attendance.



2



INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

Candidates gain experience in authentic workplace environments, learning organisational processes, stakeholder management, business operations, and professional expectations.



3



PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP

Candidates are supported by experienced practitioners who transfer practical knowledge, professional insights, and industry experience.



4



COMPETENCY-BASED DEVELOPMENT

Progress is measured through demonstrated competence rather than theoretical knowledge alone.



5



PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Candidates begin building their professional reputation and career pathways from the outset of their development journey.



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Structured Pathways.
Real Experience.
Recognised Professionals.

“ Candidacy programmes transform potential into professional capability and opportunity. ”

BUILDING SOUTH AFRICA'S FUTURE WORKFORCE

South Africa's economic growth depends on developing professionals who can contribute effectively in increasingly complex workplaces.

 Employers require more than qualified individuals. They require **professionals** who can:



Solve problems



Apply technology effectively



Deliver results



Demonstrate accountability



Work collaboratively



Operate ethically



Adapt to change



Add value from the start



The ICITP Candidacy Programme provides a practical mechanism for developing these capabilities through structured workplace learning and professional development.



HOW ORGANISATIONS CAN GET INVOLVED

Organisations can participate in several ways:



WORKPLACE HOSTS

Provide workplace opportunities where candidates can gain practical experience.



MENTORSHIP PARTNERS

Provide experienced professionals who can guide candidate development.



CORPORATE SPONSORS

Support candidate development through bursaries, grants, or workplace programmes.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Align candidacy programmes with organisational workforce planning and talent development initiatives.



INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Collaborate with ICITP to build sector-specific professional development pathways.



01



02



03



04



05



**TOGETHER,
WE BUILD TALENT.
WE BUILD FUTURES.**

Partner with ICITP to develop a skilled, competent and ethical workforce that drives innovation, productivity and South Africa's future.

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BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS

Invest in talent today. Build your future.

Employers play a critical role in developing South Africa's future workforce. Participation in the ICITP Candidacy Programme offers significant benefits:



ACCESS TO EMERGING TALENT
Organisations gain access to motivated candidates who are actively developing industry-relevant skills.



REDUCED RECRUITMENT RISK
Employers can assess candidates' capabilities in the workplace before making long-term employment decisions.



FUTURE SKILLS PIPELINE
The programme enables organisations to develop talent aligned to their specific business requirements.



IMPROVED WORKFORCE READINESS
Candidates arrive with structured support, mentorship, and development frameworks already in place.



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
Employers contribute to the development of ethical, competent, and accountable professionals.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS
Participate in support of organisational WSP objectives and transformation initiatives. It also meets the BEE scorecard and SDL (Skills Development Level) Objectives for organisations.



INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY
Workplace-ready professionals require less remediation and onboarding support.



**STRONGER TALENT.
STRONGER ORGANISATIONS.
STRONGER SOUTH AFRICA.**

By investing in candidacy, employers build capability, drive performance, and shape the professionals of tomorrow.

BENEFITS FOR CANDIDATES

Experience. Grow. Succeed.

For candidates, the programme offers a powerful alternative to traditional learning pathways.



REAL WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE
Gain hands-on experience in real business environments.



INDUSTRY EXPOSURE
Understand industry practices, operations and expectations.



PROFESSIONAL MENTORING
Learn from experienced professionals who guide your growth.



CAREER GUIDANCE
Receive guidance to help you make informed career decisions.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Build practical, in-demand skills that employers are looking for.



PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT
Build a portfolio of work and achievements.



PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING
Connect with industry professionals and peers.



INCREASED EMPLOYABILITY
Become job-ready and stand out in the job market.



PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION PATHWAYS
Work towards recognised professional designations.



ENHANCED CAREER PROGRESSION
Better opportunities for growth and career advancement.



**EXPERIENCE TODAY.
COMPETENCE TOMORROW.
SUCCESS ALWAYS.**

Candidates gain practical experience that employers value most.



The ICITP Candidacy Programme transforms potential into professional excellence through experience, mentorship and structured development.

IN CLOSING



The future of professional development lies not in qualifications alone, but in the ability to transform knowledge into workplace competence.



The ICITP Candidacy Programme bridges the gap between education and employment by combining workplace experience, mentorship, competency development, and professional standards into a single structured pathway.



By investing in candidacy, organisations are not simply supporting training initiatives; they are actively developing the next generation of competent, ethical, and industry-ready professionals.



Together, industry, professional bodies, mentors, and employers can create a stronger workforce, improve employability, and build a more competitive South African economy.



**TOGETHER, WE BUILD
POSSIBILITIES.**

**TOGETHER, WE SHAPE
THE FUTURE.**



THE ICITP CANDIDACY PROGRAMME DELIVERS:



**WORKPLACE
EXPERIENCE**



**PROFESSIONAL
MENTORSHIP**



**COMPETENCY
DEVELOPMENT**



**PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS**



**RECOGNISED
DESIGNATIONS**



**CAREER
ADVANCEMENT**

LEARN MORE

To explore partnership opportunities, workplace hosting, sponsorship, or candidate participation opportunities, contact the Institute of Chartered IT Professionals (ICITP).



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