

YDP SA PRESENTS
SAQA X AWS X MICROSOFT X COMPTIA

YDP SA SHORT COURSES CERTIFICATION EXTENSION PACK
2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. COVER	26. AI FLUENCY CERTIFICATE
2. OVERVIEW	27. AZ-900 + AZ-104
3. OUR CORE FOUNDATION	28. AI-901 AZURE AI FUNDAMENTALS
4. THE GLOBAL EDGE	29. MS-900 (RETIRED)
5. FIRST THINGS FIRST	30. AB-900 AI WORKPLACE FUNDAMENTALS
6. WHAT IS COMPTIA?	31. DP-900 AZURE DATA FUNDAMENTALS
7. COMPTIA CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS	32. SC-900 SECURITY, COMPLIANCE & IDENTITY
8. COMPTIA COURSE INTRODUCTIONS	33. AI-102 AZURE AI ENGINEER (RETIRING)
9. ITF+	34. AI-103 AZURE AI APP & AGENT DEVELOPER
10. A+ CYBER	35. DP-100 AZURE DATA SCIENTIST
11. SECAI+	36. AZ-500 AZURE SECURITY ENGINEER (RETIRING)
12. NETWORK+	37. SC-500 CLOUD & AI SECURITY ENGINEER
13. SECURITY+	38. MICROSOFT CERTIFICATION PATHWAY TABLE
14. CYSA+	39. AWS CERTIFICATIONS INTRODUCTION
15. SERVER+	40. AWS CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS
16. PROJECT+	41. AWS COURSE INTRODUCTIONS
17. PENTEST+	42. AWS CERTIFIED AI PRACTITIONER
18. AI FOR SALES ESSENTIALS	43. AWS SOLUTIONS ARCHITECT ASSOCIATE
19. AI FOR MARKETING ESSENTIALS	44. AWS DEVELOPER ASSOCIATE
20. AI AGENT ESSENTIALS	43 AWS SOLUTIONS ARCHITECT ASSOCIATE
21. AI HELP DESK ESSENTIALS	
22. COMPTIA CERTIFICATION PATHWAY TABLE	
23. MICROSOFT CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS INTRO	
24. MICROSOFT CERTIFICATION UPDATES	
25. MICROSOFT COURSE INTRODUCTIONS	

ALL PAGE NUMERS ARE HYPERLINKED FOR QUICK REDIRECTON. SIMPLY C;ICK ON THEM
TAP ON THE LOGO TOP RIGHT HAND TO QUICK ITERATE BACK HERE





- [46. AWS MACHINE LEARNING ENGINEER ASSOCIATE](#)
- [47. AWS CERTIFICATION PATHWAY TABLE](#)
- [48. SYNERGY: COMPTIA TO SAQA](#)
- [49. SYNERGY: MICROSOFT TO SAQA](#)
- [50. SYNERGY: AWS TO SAQA](#)
- [51. SYNERGY: COMPTIA + MICROSOFT + AWS TO SAQA](#)
- [52. FLEXIBLE STUDENT PATHWAYS](#)
- [53. THE UNIFIED CERTIFICATION STRATEGY](#)
- [54. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & JOB READINESS FRAMEWORK](#)
- [55. EXIT PLANS \(EMPLOYMENT/SME DEVELOPMENT\)](#)
- [56. CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: INTRODUCTION](#)
- [57. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ROLES](#)
- [58. AI-INTEGRATED ROLES](#)
- [59. CLOUD COMPUTING ROLES](#)
- [60. CYBERSECURITY ROLES](#)
- [61. THE SKILLS THAT MATTER MOST IN 2026](#)
- [62. SOUTH AFRICA IT SALARY TRENDS](#)
- [63. WHY YDP SA CONTINUOUSLY UPDATES ITS COURSES](#)
- [64. CALL TO ACTION](#)
- [65. CAREER AWARENESS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH \(MUT\)](#)
- [66. MUT ICT SKILLS PROGRAMME DETAILS](#)
- [67. UJ DEVLAND SOWETO HUB](#)
- [68. THE YDP SA E-LEARNING LMS](#)
- [69. PLATFORM FEATURES & BOOKING SYSTEM](#)
- [70. BADGES TO OBTAIN](#)
- [71. VIRTUAL EVENTS & HYBRID BOOKING](#)
- [72. SKILLABLE LABS PARTNERSHIP](#)
- [73. BENEFITS OF JOINING US](#)
- [74. BROWSE OUR PLATFORM](#)
- [75. FOR THE PEOPLE](#)
- [76. ONBOARDING PROCESS \(10-STEP FRAMEWORK DETAILED\)](#)
- [77. CLOSING STATEMENT](#)
- [78. CONTACT DETAILS](#)
- [79. YDP SA STORE MERCH](#)
- [80. TS & CS](#)
- [81. COMPANY PROFILE](#)
- [82. FOR THE PEOPLE \(END\)](#)



OVERVIEW & WHAT'S NEW

This proposal outlines the strategic expansion of the Youth Development Project SA (PTY) LTD (YDP SA) Short Courses programme to include globally recognised CompTIA, Microsoft, and, new in 2026, Amazon Web Services (AWS) certifications as complementary credentials to our four core, mandatory QCTO SAQA Occupational Certificates, in collaboration with Mzingisi2Success (M2Success).

In this 2026 edition, we proudly introduce AWS certification pathways, CompTIA Expansion Series certifications (SecAI+), updated Microsoft credentials (AI-103 Azure AI App & Agent Developer Associate, SC-500 Cloud & AI Security Engineer Associate, and more), and a suite of CompTIA AI Essentials courses to ensure our graduates are future-fit for the AI-driven economy.

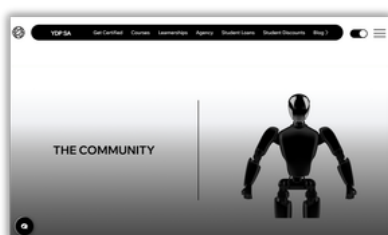
The Vision: To create the most employable graduates in South Africa by providing a multi-qualification model: a nationally recognised SAQA qualification paired with globally demanded industry certifications.

The Strategy: Students will enroll in one of four foundational SAQA courses. Upon this mandatory foundation, they can choose to enhance their specialisation with a curated suite of CompTIA certifications (trained by accredited CompTIA CTT+ trainers), a key Microsoft certification (trained by accredited MCTs), or the new AWS certification pathway, building a portfolio that spans vendor-neutral, Azure, and AWS cloud ecosystems.

This integrated approach ensures graduates and professionals are not only locally qualified but also globally competitive across the world's most in-demand technology platforms, directly addressing the skills gap and maximising return on investment for all stakeholders.

Now, let's discuss the curated pathway options in detail, ensuring the relevant courses are strategically aligned to every student. Seminars will be hosted to address these to your database so all students know what is expected and what route they should take prior to their long-term career plans.

Accreditation No: 07-QCTO/SDPO10325195523022/07/0036 / ACC/2022/07/0036



ALL ACCREDITATIONS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST. SIMPLY CONTACT INFO@YDPSA.COM AND REF: ACCREDITATION REQUESTS



OUR CORE FOUNDATION

SAQA OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES

We are launching training for the SAQA Accreditations second semester this year in the following fields:

- Occupational Certificate: **Data Science Practitioner** (NQF L5)
- Occupational Certificate: **Cybersecurity Analyst** (NQF L5)
- Occupational Certificate: **Cloud Administrator** (NQF L4)
- Occupational Certificate: **Artificial Intelligence Software Developer** (NQF L5)

Accreditation No: 07-QCTO/SDPO10325195523022/07/0036

These courses provide the comprehensive, curriculum-based knowledge and practical work experience required by the South African workforce. We also have labs so you are job ready with industry-standard tools and technologies such as Azure, Splunk SIEM tools, AWS tools, Copilot and more.



[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE SAQA ACCREDITED ICT CERTIFICATES IN THE IMAGE ABOVE TO VIEW MORE](#)



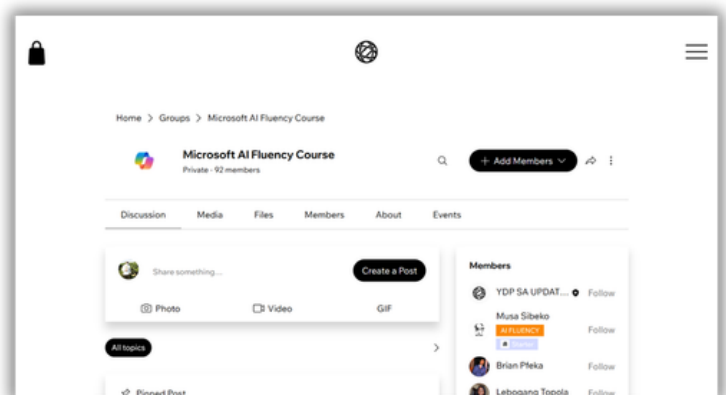
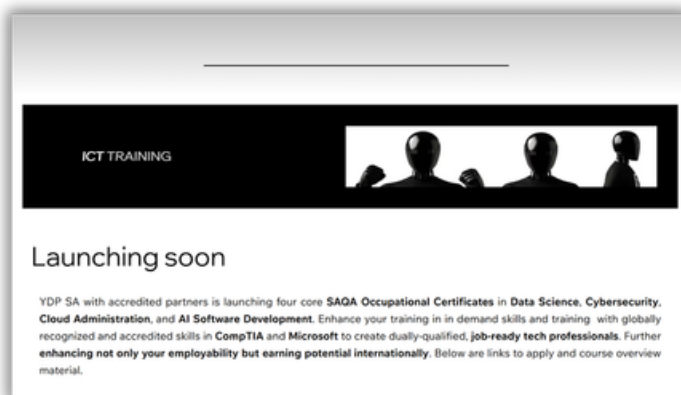
THE GLOBAL EDGE

INTRODUCING COMPTIA, MICROSOFT & AWS PATHWAYS

To future-proof our graduates, we have integrated three world-class certification pathways that align with our SAQA courses:

- **The AWS Pathway (NEW):** Master the world's largest cloud platform with certifications from foundational AI knowledge to advanced security and machine learning engineering.
- **The CompTIA Pathway:** The global standard for vendor-neutral IT skills and certifications, from core fundamentals to advanced cybersecurity and AI security.
- **The Microsoft Pathway:** The definitive certification for the globally dominant Microsoft Azure cloud, AI, and modern workplace ecosystem.

Candidates have the freedom to choose their path to global specialisation, adding a **CompTIA** stack, the **Microsoft certification**, or the **AWS** certification to their core **SAQA qualification** or **combining** all three for the ultimate multi-cloud, multi-vendor portfolio.





FIRST THINGS FIRST

The technology landscape has transformed. AI, cloud, cybersecurity, and data science are no longer separate fields – they are interconnected, and the demand for skills across all three is surging.

There is no single “best” certification or career pathway. The best certification is the one that aligns with your chosen career path and future goals. This entire project exists to help you understand various ICT career paths with us and to build that personalised collection of credentials, whether you aim to become an AI-augmented business analyst, a multi-cloud security architect, AI Agent Specialist, or a data-driven marketing leader. We will take you there and beyond.

Research consistently shows that professionals who anchor their learning in a clear purpose – mastering a skill to render a service that solves a real-world problem – advance significantly faster and report greater career satisfaction. In contrast, the vast majority of workers across all industries get this integral piece wrong, chasing titles and certificates without a pragmatic plan for applying them, which leads to burnout and stagnation. Read more on how to master any skill in our blog [***'How to Master Any Skill or Profession: Harnessing the Power of Purpose, Emotion, and Memory'***](#) authored by the YDP SA Founding Director – [Sakhiwo Dlalisa](#). This article will contextualize the foundations on skill mastery and the importance of purpose driven motives in skills development and mastery.

Tenacity in the right stack, driven by purpose, turns certifications into career-defining leverage. By understanding how CompTIA, Microsoft, and AWS credentials map to real roles – and by combining them into a tailored, purpose-built stack – you don't just become qualified; you become the most comprehensively skilled, employment-ready professional in the market.

CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS



"THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT THE FUTURE IS TO INVENT IT."
— ALAN KAY



THE COMPTIA ADVANTAGE

INDUSTRY-BACKED IT SKILLS

What is CompTIA?

The **Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)** is the leading provider of vendor-neutral IT certifications in the world. **CompTIA** certifications validate the foundational, **hands-on skills** that IT professionals need to succeed in any technological environment.

Why CompTIA?

- **Globally Recognised:** The industry standard for launching and advancing IT careers worldwide.
- **Vendor-Neutral:** Teaches principles that apply across all technologies, not just one vendor's products.
- **Career-Focused:** Certifications are designed to match specific IT job roles and career progression.
- **Trusted by Employers:** Used by employers as a benchmark for hiring and promotion.



LET'S TALK ABOUT
CompTIA

LET'S LEARN ABOUT SOME OF THE **COMPTIA** COURSES. WHAT ARE THEY FOR AND WHY THEY ARE **IMPORTANT**? THESE ARE THE SELECTED COURSES OUR COMPTIA CERTIFIED TRAINERS (CTT+) AND ITQ ACCREDITED INSTRUCTORS WILL BE TRAINING THAT WILL BE TRAINED IN PREPARATION FOR YOUR EXAMS AND CAREER





COMPTIA CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS

TRAINING DELIVERED BY ACCREDITED COMPTIA CTT+ TRAINERS

Our CompTIA offering, delivered in partnership with accredited providers, is structured into clear career pathways. In 2026 we have expanded the pathways to include a dedicated AI Essentials Series and the new Expansion Series certification, ensuring our students are prepared for the AI-driven future.

CORE SKILLS PATHWAY

- ITF+
- a+ Cyber (foundational cybersecurity ramp into Security+)

INFRASTRUCTURE PATHWAY

- Network+
- Server+
- Cloud+

CYBERSECURITY PATHWAY

- Security+
- CySA+
- PenTest+
- SecAI+ (Expansion Series – Advanced Security & AI Security Practitioner)

AI ESSENTIALS SERIES (new pathway)

- AI for Marketing Essentials
- AI for Sales Essentials
- AI Agent Essentials

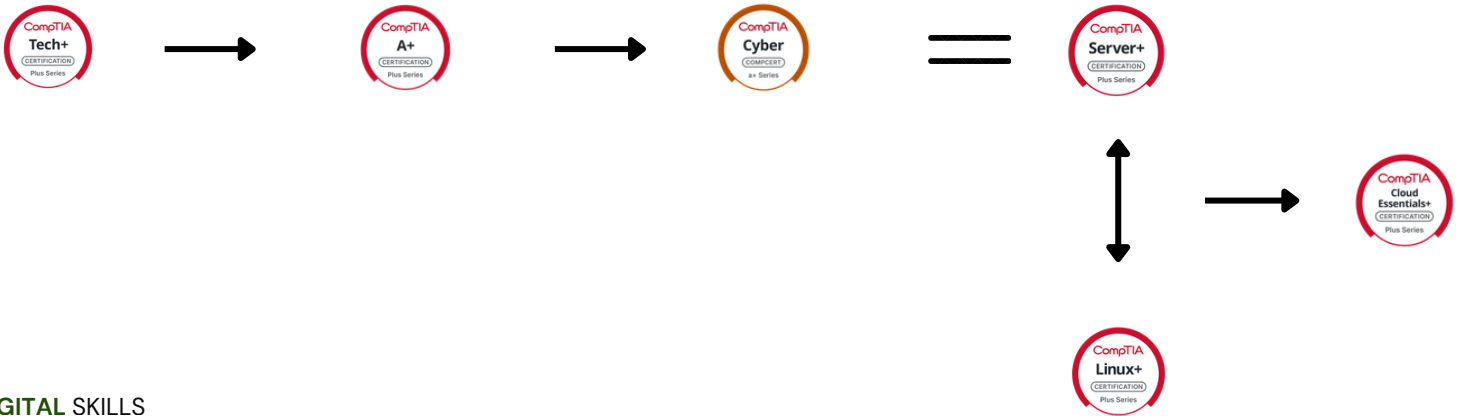


CompTIA

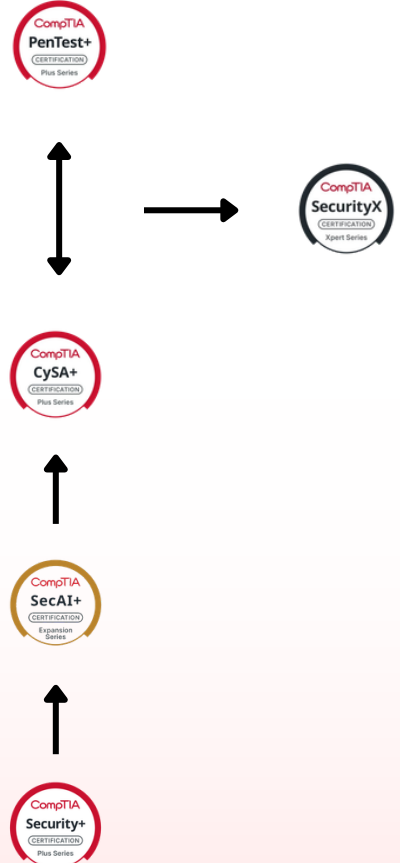
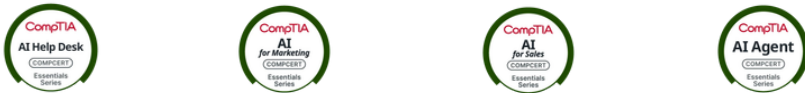
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CORE SKILLS CERTIFICATIONS

INFRASTRUCTURE PATHWAY



AI DIGITAL SKILLS



CYBERSECURITY PATHWAY

COMPTIA ITF+ (IT FUNDAMENTALS)



This course establishes a foundational understanding of IT concepts, terminology, infrastructure, applications, and software development.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Builds essential digital literacy for beginners and career-changers.
- Creates a baseline understanding before pursuing advanced technical certifications.
- Helps individuals make informed decisions about pursuing a career in IT.

IMPORTANT STATS

- 90% of individuals who earn ITF+ report increased confidence in their IT knowledge (CompTIA).
- Foundational IT skills are required for 82% of middle-skill occupations (Burning Glass Technologies).
- Serves as a recommended prerequisite for the CompTIA A+ certification.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- IT Support Specialist
- Sales Associate
- Marketing Associate
- Customer Service Representative
- Administrative Assistant
- Academic Advisor
- Retail Operations Staff
- Small Business Owner

COMPTIA A+ CYBER



Start your cybersecurity journey with the CompTIA a+ Cyber course, a beginner-friendly, fast-track program designed to help you build the foundational knowledge you need to confidently begin training for the industry-recognized CompTIA Security+ certification. With no prior experience required, this course is the perfect first step for you to take toward a rewarding career in cybersecurity.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Bridges the gap for learners with no prior cybersecurity experience before tackling Security+ training.
- Provides hands-on experience through real-world scenarios and virtual machine labs.
- Builds confidence and foundational knowledge for entry into the cybersecurity field.

IMPORTANT STATS

- 31 hours of self-paced training with 24 instructional videos and 29 live labs.
- 110 practice questions and 11 assessments to reinforce learning.
- Designed as the recommended on-ramp to the globally recognised Security+ certification.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Aspiring
- Cybersecurity Professional
- Entry-Level IT Support (Security-Focused)
- Career Changer Exploring Cybersecurity
- Student Building Foundational Security Knowledge

COMPTIA SecAI+



CompTIA SecAI+ is the first certification in the CompTIA Expansion Series, designed to help you secure, govern, and responsibly integrate artificial intelligence into your cybersecurity operations. You'll build the skills to defend AI systems, meet global compliance expectations, and use AI to enhance threat detection, automation, and innovation.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Security+, CySA+, or PenTest+ (or equivalent) recommended as prerequisites.
- Addresses the rapid rise of AI-driven security threats and the urgent need for professionals who can defend AI systems.
- Validates both defensive AI security and the use of AI tools to automate security operations
- One of the fastest-growing certification domains globally as AI security spending surges.

IMPORTANT STATS

- **Recommended experience:** 3–4 years in IT and 2+ years hands-on cybersecurity
- Network+ certified professionals report a 15% average salary increase (CompTIA).
- 86% of hiring managers indicate Network+ certification is a trusted credential (CompTIA).
- Networking skills are critical for over 50% of all IT infrastructure roles.
- Security+, CySA+, or PenTest+ (or equivalent) recommended as prerequisites.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Security Analyst (AI-Specialized)
- Cloud Security Engineer
- SOC Analyst
- Penetration Tester / Security Consultant
- Senior Systems Administrator
- Data Scientist / ML Engineer (Security-Focused)
- DevSecOps / CI/CD Engineer
- Risk & Compliance Officer
- Military Cyber Operations Specialist

COMPTIA NETWORK+



This certification validates the essential skills needed to design, configure, manage, and troubleshoot wired and wireless networks.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Develops the core knowledge of network services and operations.
- Ensures professionals can create and maintain resilient networks.
- Provides a vendor-neutral foundation for networking concepts and technologies.

IMPORTANT STATS

- Network+ certified professionals report a 15% average salary increase (CompTIA).
- 86% of hiring managers indicate Network+ certification is a trusted credential (CompTIA).
- Networking skills are critical for over 50% of all IT infrastructure roles.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Network Administrator
- System Engineer
- Network Support Specialist
- IT Consultant
- Help Desk Technician
- Network Field Engineer
- IS Consultant
- Network Analyst

COMPTIA SECURITY+



This certification validates the baseline skills necessary to perform core security functions and pursue an IT security career. (Recommended prerequisite: CompTIA a+ Cyber for those with no prior IT experience.)

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Establishes the core knowledge required for any cybersecurity role.
- Covers the most essential principles for risk management and mitigation.
- Globally trusted, and compliant with ISO 17024 standards.

IMPORTANT STATS

- Security+ is approved by the US DoD to meet directive 8140/8570.01-M requirements.
- More than 2.3 million Security+ certifications have been issued globally (CompTIA).
- Cybersecurity jobs are projected to grow 35% over the next 10 years (U.S. BLS).

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Security Administrator
- Systems Administrator
- Helpdesk Manager
- Network Engineer
- Security Consultant
- IT Auditor
- Security Engineer
- Vulnerability Analyst

COMPTIA CYSA+ (CYBERSECURITY ANALYST)



This intermediate certification focuses on behavioural analytics to identify and combat malware and advanced persistent threats (APTs).

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Validates the ability to proactively defend and continuously monitor an organisation.
- Focuses on security analytics and the application of threat detection tools.
- Bridges the gap between entry-level security knowledge and advanced skills.

IMPORTANT STATS

- CySA+ meets the ISO 17024 standard and is approved by the US DoD.
- 96% of CySA+ certified professionals can effectively identify and combat threats (CompTIA).
- The demand for cybersecurity analysts is among the fastest-growing in the tech sector.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Cybersecurity Analyst
- Threat Intelligence Analyst
- Security Operations Center (SOC) Analyst
- Vulnerability Analyst
- Security Specialist
- Cyber Threat Hunter
- IT Security Manager
- Information Security Analyst

COMPTIA SECURITYX (ADVANCED SECURITY PRACTITIONER)



Formally known as CASP this advanced-level certification is for cybersecurity professionals who design and implement security solutions.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Validates expertise in enterprise security, risk analysis, and architecture.
- Certifies the highest level of operational skill and judgement.
- Designed for professionals who lead and architect security solutions.

IMPORTANT STATS

- SecurityX is the only performance-based certification for advanced practitioners (CompTIA).
- It is approved by the US DoD for IAT Level III, IAM Level II, and IASAE Level II.
- Professionals with SecurityX report an average salary 15% higher than their peers.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Security Architect
- Senior Security Engineer
- SOC Manager
- Security Analyst
- Chief Information Security Officer (CISO)
- Cyber Risk Manager
- Security Consultant
- Technical Lead Analyst

COMPTIA SERVER+



This certification validates the hands-on skills needed to install, manage, and troubleshoot servers in data centers, on-premise, and in hybrid environments.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Certifies the advanced technical skills required for server administration and support.
- Focuses on server hardware, virtualization, storage, and security, regardless of vendor.
- Ensures professionals can maintain and optimize critical server infrastructure.

IMPORTANT STATS

- 86% of employers believe certifications like Server+ help close the IT skills gap (CompTIA).
- Server+ certified professionals are 30% more likely to be employed in infrastructure roles.
- Over 70% of organizations maintain on-premise server rooms, requiring these skills.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Server Administrator
- Data Center Technician
- IT Infrastructure Manager
- Systems Administrator
- Field Service Engineer
- Network Administrator
- Cloud Engineer
- Technical Support Analyst

COMPTIA PROJECT+



This certification validates the knowledge and skills required to manage small-to-medium-sized projects.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Covers the entire project lifecycle from initiation to closure.
- Provides essential project management skills for IT and non-IT professionals.
- Focuses on business, interpersonal, and project management skills.

IMPORTANT STATS

- 82% of high-performing organisations employ certified project managers (CompTIA).
- Project+ certified professionals are 30% more likely to meet project goals (CompTIA).
- Project management skills are required for 60% of all senior IT roles.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Project Manager
- Business Analyst
- IT Manager
- Team Lead
- Project Coordinator
- Marketing Manager
- Operations Manager
- Product Owner

COMPTIA PENTEST+



This certification validates the knowledge and skills required to plan, scope, and manage vulnerability assessments and penetration tests.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Certifies hands-on ability to perform penetration testing and vulnerability management.
- Focuses on simulating cyberattacks to identify and exploit vulnerabilities.
- Ensures professionals can effectively report on findings and recommend mitigations.

IMPORTANT STATS

- PenTest+ is approved by the US DoD to meet directive 8140/8570.01-M requirements.
- 89% of PenTest+ certified professionals feel more confident in their offensive security skills (CompTIA).
- The demand for penetration testers is expected to grow by 32% over the next decade (U.S. BLS).

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Penetration Tester
- Vulnerability Tester
- Security Analyst (Offensive Security)
- Vulnerability Assessment Analyst
- Network Security Operations
- Application Security Developer
- Cloud Penetration Tester
- Red Team Operator

COMPTIA AI FOR SALES ESSENTIALS



CompTIA AI for Sales Essentials teaches you to leverage generative AI to improve every stage of the sales cycle. You'll learn how to research buyers, personalise messaging, automate prospecting, prepare for meetings, and analyse calls with AI-driven insights. Strengthen your sales performance with hands-on, scenario-based practice and earn a CompTIA CompCert to validate your abilities.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Tailored for B2B sales environments — research, outreach, meeting preparation, and account growth.
- Addresses the gap: AI tools are present in organisations but often underused or used without role-specific guidance.

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- Ideal for sales professionals at any level – SDRs, account executives, and managers. No prior AI experience required.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- **AI-driven Buyer & Market Research:** Gather, summarise, and analyse information from public sources; uncover buyer pain points and competitive insights.
- **Personalise Outreach & Messaging:** Draft, edit, and refine personalised outbound messages across channels; tailor talk tracks to each buyer's role and context.
- **Automate Prospecting & Lead Management:** Use AI to score and prioritise leads, organise pipelines, and generate sequenced follow-up messages.
- **Prepare & Analyse Sales Meetings:** Create pre-meeting briefs, suggested questions, and rapport-building insights; summarise call transcripts; generate CRM-ready notes.
- **Co-develop Strategies & Proposals:** Brainstorm and refine solution ideas; translate product features into client-focused language; prepare competitive differentiators.
- **Develop Account Growth Strategies:** Identify upsell and cross-sell opportunities; generate targeted outreach using AI insights.
- **Build Sales Skills Through AI Coaching:** Role-play sales scenarios; practice objection handling; receive AI-generated insights and personalised coaching.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Sales Development Representative (SDR)
- Account Executive
- Sales Manager
- Business Development Manager
- CRM Administrator
- Inside Sales Representative
- Client Success Manager
- Technical Sales Specialist

COMPTIA AI FOR MARKETING ESSENTIALS



AI for Marketing Essentials is a hands-on, scenario-driven course that teaches you how to use generative AI tools across real marketing work, including campaign ideation, content development, audience analysis, workflow automation, and reporting.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- 82% of companies report growing expectations for AI to deliver value, yet 79% have backtracked to human-centered solutions after AI failed to meet objectives. Role-specific training bridges this gap.
- A net 94% of organisations are likely to invest in AI-specific training this year.

WHAT IS A COMPTIA COMPCERT?

- A CompTIA CompCert is a Certificate of Competency that focuses on the development and achievement of specific skills, rather than centering on a job role. It serves as proof of skill competency and provides an additional layer of validity for third parties, such as employers or clients. Backed by the trusted CompTIA brand, these certificates are valuable for professionals looking to enhance their resumes and showcase their expertise.

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- Ideal for digital, content, communications, advertising, and analytics professionals at any level. No prior AI experience required

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- **AI-driven Market & Audience Research:** Synthesize competitor, customer, and industry data; refine segments, ICPs, and buyer insights.
- **AI-assisted Content Strategy & Planning:** Brainstorm campaign concepts, identify whitespace, develop content calendars and channel recommendations.
- **Generative AI Written Content Production:** Draft, refine, translate, and localise marketing copy; repurpose content for SEO and brand voice.
- **Generative AI Visual & Multimedia Production:** Create or edit images, graphics, and videos using text-to-image and AI media tools.
- **AI-driven Personalisation & Experience Optimization:** Develop segment-specific messages and recommendations.
- **AI-enabled Campaign Automation & Management:** Design multi-step campaign workflows with AI guidance.
- **AI-powered Analytics & Reporting:** Transform raw marketing data into insights, visualisations, and executive summaries.
- **AI-driven SEO Research & Optimization:** Generate keyword strategies, metadata, and SEO content at scale.
- **AI-assisted Social Content & Engagement:** Create, optimise, and repurpose social posts, captions, and hashtags.
- **Prompt Engineering & Ethical AI Use:** Design effective prompts; implement governance practices including sourcing, fact-checking, and privacy safeguards.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Digital Marketing Specialist
- Content Marketing Manager
- Communications Officer
- Advertising Executive
- SEO Specialist
- Social Media Manager
- Brand Strategist
- Marketing Analyst

COMPTIA AI AGENT ESSENTIALS



CompTIA AI Agent Essentials is a hands-on course for non-technical and lightly technical professionals who need to work confidently with AI agents. Learn to identify the right use cases, translate work into agent workflows, manage tools and memory with guardrails, and evaluate results — then practice in CompTIA’s proprietary Agent Simulator and validate your skills with a CompTIA CompCert.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- As AI agents become embedded across enterprise tools and workflows, a broad segment of the workforce will need the ability to understand agentic systems.
- Focuses on agentic thinking: how agent-based systems differ from traditional chatbots and automations; how autonomy and tool use change responsibilities and risks.

SKILLS YOU’LL LEARN

- **Understand AI Agents & Identify Appropriate Use Cases:** Learn what AI agents are; identify when an agentic approach adds value.
- **Translate Work into Agent Workflows:** Break real-world tasks into structured workflows that agents can execute.
- **Control Agent Behaviour & Actions:** Guide agent behaviour through context, instructions, and tool access.
- **Manage Agent Memory & Knowledge:** Decide what information agents should store, retrieve, or discard.
- **Design Safe, Secure Agents with Human Oversight:** Apply guardrails; restrict tool access using least-privilege principles; insert human review at critical stages.
- **Test, Evaluate & Monitor Agent Performance:** Evaluate agent outputs; diagnose issues; monitor behaviour; communicate uncertainty or failures — reinforced through hands-on practice in CompTIA’s proprietary Agent Simulator with personalised feedback

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Product Manager
- Operations Analyst
- IT Support Specialist
- Business Analyst
- Project Manager
- Knowledge Worker
- Manager evaluating AI-enabled tools
- Teams that evaluate, approve, or collaborate with AI agent systems

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

No prior AI experience required. Accessible to anyone interested in understanding how AI agents function

COMPTIA AI HELP DESK ESSENTIALS



CompTIA AI Help Desk Essentials is a hands-on, scenario-driven course that teaches IT support professionals how to use generative AI to streamline ticket resolution, reduce time-to-resolution, and improve end-user satisfaction. Learn to triage incoming requests, draft clear and accurate responses, summarise support interactions, and identify appropriate escalation paths using AI assistance. Strengthen your service desk capabilities with real-world practice and earn a CompTIA CompCert to validate your AI-enabled support skills.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- IT support roles are among the functions most exposed to AI augmentation; 78% of ICT roles now include AI technical skills.
- Organisations adopting AI in their service desks report up to 35% reduction in mean time to resolution (MTTR) and significant improvements in first-contact resolution rates.
- Addresses the urgent need for help desk professionals who can effectively collaborate with AI tools rather than being replaced by them.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- **AI-assisted Ticket Triage & Prioritisation:** Use AI to categorise, rank, and route incoming support requests based on urgency, impact, and patterns in ticket data.
- **Generative AI Response Drafting:** Create clear, accurate, and user-friendly responses to common IT issues; translate technical explanations into plain language for end-users.
- **AI-powered Troubleshooting Support:** Leverage AI to suggest diagnostic steps, surface relevant knowledge base articles, and propose solutions based on historical ticket data.
- **Interaction Summarisation & Handover:** Summarise chat and call transcripts into CRM-ready notes; generate structured handover documentation for escalations.
- **Knowledge Base Curation with AI:** Identify gaps in existing documentation; use AI to draft and update help articles, FAQs, and self-service content.
- **Escalation Identification & Routing:** Determine when AI-suggested solutions are insufficient and identify the correct escalation path with supporting context.
- **Prompt Engineering for IT Support:** Design effective prompts for help desk scenarios; implement verification and fact-checking before delivering AI-assisted responses to end-users.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Help Desk Technician
- Service Desk Analyst
- IT Support Specialist
- Desktop Support Technician
- Technical Support Representative
- IT Service Management (ITSM) Coordinator
- Incident Management Analyst

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

Ideal for help desk technicians, service desk analysts, IT support specialists, and desktop support professionals at any level. No prior AI experience required



COMPTIA CERTIFICATION PATHWAY (ENTRY → EXPERT)

CERTIFICATION	LEVEL	RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE
ITF+	Entry	None. Total beginners.
a+ Cyber	Entry	None. Perfect first step into cybersecurity.
AI for Marketing Essentials	Entry	None. Ideal for marketing, content, and communications professionals.
AI for Sales Essentials	Entry	None. Ideal for SDRs, account executives, and sales managers.
AI Help Desk Essentials	Entry	None. Ideal for service desk and support professionals.
AI Agent Essentials	Entry	None. For anyone working alongside or evaluating AI agents.
Security+	Intermediate	a+ Cyber or equivalent baseline IT knowledge recommended.
Network+	Intermediate	ITF+ or equivalent foundational IT knowledge.
Server+	Intermediate	CompTIA A+ or equivalent hands-on IT experience.
Project+	Intermediate	1+ years of project coordination or business experience.
Cloud Essentials+	Intermediate	Basic business or IT background.
CySA+	Pro	2+ years in security or Security+ plus hands-on experience.
PenTest+	Pro	2+ years in security or CySA+ knowledge recommended.
SecAI+	Pro	3–4 years in IT, 2+ years in cybersecurity.



LET'S TALK ABOUT



LET'S LEARN ABOUT SOME OF THE **MICROSOFT** COURSES. WHAT ARE THEY FOR AND WHY THEY ARE **IMPORTANT**?
THESE ARE THE SELECTED COURSES OUR **MICROSOFT CERTIFIED TRAINERS (MCT)** THAT WILL BE TRAINING IN
PREPARATION FOR YOUR EXAMS AND CAREER



MICROSOFT CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS

TRAINING DELIVERED BY ACCREDITED MICROSOFT CERTIFIED TRAINERS

Let's learn about the Microsoft Certifications. What they are for and why they are important?

CORE SKILLS CERTIFICATION

- AI Fluency Certificate

INFRASTRUCTURE PATHWAY

- AZ-900 → AZ-104

CYBERSECURITY PATHWAY

- SC-900 → SC-500

MODERN WORK PATHWAY

- MS-900 (retired) → AB-900 (AI Workplace Fundamentals – coming soon)



CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS

TRAINING DELIVERED IN COLLABORATION WITH MICROSOFT LEARN + YDP SA'S EXTENDED LMS

All members are strongly encouraged to begin with the [AI Fluency course](#) as a foundation of how our Groups work on a basic level and to attain an additional certificate of completion for a limited time. Access to the [Microsoft AI Fluency group](#) is **free**. Please note that the labs are currently being developed and will be live June 2026 and will be live June 2026.

Important **Microsoft** Certification Updates for 2026:

- **AI-900 (Azure AI Fundamentals)** will retire on **30 June 2026** and be replaced by **AI-901**. We recommend candidates take AI-900 before retirement or wait for AI-901 materials.
- **AI-102 (Azure AI Engineer Associate)** retires on **30 June 2026**, replaced by **AI-103 (Azure AI App & Agent Developer Associate)**.
- **AZ-500 (Azure Security Engineer)** is being phased out and replaced by **SC-500 (Cloud and AI Security Engineer Associate)**.
- **MS-900 (Microsoft 365 Fundamentals)** retired on **31 December 2025**. Transition path: **AB-900 AI Workplace Fundamentals**.





LET'S LEARN ABOUT THE **MICROSOFT CERTIFICATIONS**. WHAT ARE THEY FOR AND WHY THEY ARE **IMPORTANT?**

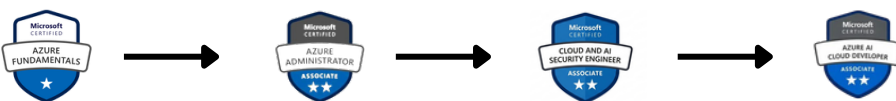
DATA & AI PATHWAY



CORE SKILLS CERTIFICATIONS



CLOUD & INFRASTRUCTURE PATHWAY



AI PATHWAY



AI FLUENCY CERTIFICATE



The Microsoft AI Fluency Course is an entry-level, non-technical program that enables professionals to understand, interpret, and communicate AI concepts effectively.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Encourages ethical and responsible AI use
- Enhances cross-functional collaboration (IT, HR, Finance, Legal)
- Required for company-wide digital transformation readiness

IMPORTANT STATS

- 84% of executives believe AI Fluency is essential across business teams (Microsoft, 2025)
- 2x faster AI adoption in organisations with an AI-literate workforce
- 60% of AI transformation projects fail due to communication breakdowns

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Marketing Manager
- Human Resource Officer
- Legal Advisor
- Sales Team Lead
- Product Manager
- Financial Analyst
- Supply Chain Coordinator
- Healthcare Administrator
- Supply Chain Coordinator
- Healthcare Administrator
- School Principal / Academic Planner
- Project Manager
- Customer Success Lead
- Retail Operations Manager
- Policy Analyst
- Startup Founder
- NGO Program Coordinator

MICROSOFT AZURE FUNDAMENTALS AZ-900 + AZURE ADMINISTRATOR



This comprehensive Azure Fundamentals (AZ-900) + Azure Administrator (AZ-104) combo provides complete Azure proficiency – from foundational cloud concepts to hands-on administration skills, preparing you for end-to-end cloud management roles. Courses may be taken separately.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Complete Learning Path: Start with fundamentals (AZ-900) and progress to advanced administration (AZ-104).
- Career-Ready Skills: Combines theoretical knowledge with practical implementation abilities
- Cost-Effective: Bundled training at a reduced price compared to separate certifications
- Accelerated Growth: 92% of hiring managers prefer candidates with both foundational and administrative Azure knowledge with Average salary ranging \$85,000 – \$120,000 for combo-certified professionals

IMPORTANT STATS

- Cloud concepts and Azure core services (AZ900).
- Azure pricing, SLAs, and lifecycle (AZ900).
- Security, privacy, compliance, and trust (AZ900).
- Azure governance and management tools (AZ900).
- Manage Azure identities and governance (AZ-104)
- Implement and manage storage solutions (AZ-104)
- Deploy and maintain Azure compute resources (AZ-104)
- Configure and manage virtual networking (AZ-104)
- Monitor and maintain Azure resources (AZ-104)

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Azure Cloud Administrator
- Cloud Infrastructure Engineer
- Azure Support Engineer
- Junior Cloud Architect
- IT Systems Administrator (Azure)
- DevOps Support Engineer
- Cloud Security Administrator
- Cloud Operations Specialist



MICROSOFT AZURE AI FUNDAMENTALS AI-901

This course introduces foundational AI concepts and services within Microsoft Azure, including machine learning, computer vision, natural language processing, and responsible AI. It is designed for individuals seeking to understand how AI is implemented and used in real-world solutions. **PS: AI-900 will retire 30 June 2026 and be replaced by AI-901.**

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Develops essential AI literacy for business and tech professionals
- Helps non-technical learners understand AI use cases and ethics
- Builds a strong foundation for advanced AI certifications and careers

IMPORTANT STATS

- AI market expected to reach \$500+ billion by 2027
- Over 90% of modern businesses are exploring AI adoption
- Microsoft Azure AI services are used by more than 95% of Fortune 500 companies.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Business Analyst
- Data Analyst (Entry-Level)
- Marketing Analyst
- AI Enthusiast
- Technical Recruiter
- Customer Insights Specialist
- Operations Analyst
- Sales Specialist (AI/Cloud Solutions)
- IT Support Specialist
- Junior AI Consultant
- Innovation Coordinator
- Product Owner (Tech Solutions)

MICROSOFT 365 FUNDAMENTALS MS-900



This course focuses on core Microsoft 365 concepts such as productivity apps, collaboration tools, cloud concepts, and security fundamentals. **(Retired 31 December 2025) Replaced with AB-900**

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Strengthens digital fluency in cloud productivity tools
- Essential for remote and hybrid workforce environments
- Provides practical know-how for everyday office operations

IMPORTANT STATS

- Microsoft 365 has over 300 million active users worldwide
- 70% of businesses improved team productivity post-M365 implementation
- Remote jobs requiring Microsoft 365 experience have risen 500% post-COVID

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Helpdesk Analyst
- Cloud Support Intern
- Office Administrator
- IT Clerk
- Collaboration Tools Specialist
- Junior HRIS Analyst
- Internal Comms Assistant
- Project Support Officer
- Procurement Assistant
- Virtual Assistant
- Customer Support Rep
- Tech Onboarding Trainer
- Team Coordinator
- Remote Office Manager
- School Admin Assistant



AB-900 AI WORKPLACE FUNDAMENTALS

This entry-level certification validates your ability to work productively with AI-powered tools in the modern workplace, with a particular focus on Microsoft 365 Copilot and responsible AI practices. It is designed for non-technical knowledge workers who need to demonstrate AI-enabled workplace fluency.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Acts as the new foundational credential for AI-integrated productivity, replacing the retired MS-900.
- Equips professionals to confidently use Microsoft Copilot in daily applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Teams
- Emphasises responsible AI use, enterprise data protection, and verification of AI-generated outputs – skills now expected of all desk-based employees.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- Microsoft Copilot fluency across Microsoft 365 applications
- Effective prompting skills for workplace tasks
- Verification and fact-checking of AI-generated content
- Responsible AI principles and ethical use
- Enterprise data protection and compliance considerations when using AI tools
- App-specific workflows: using Copilot in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, and more

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- No prior AI or technical experience required. Designed for non-technical, desk-based knowledge workers with access to Microsoft Copilot in their organisation's Microsoft 365 environment.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Office Administrator
- Executive Assistant
- Project Coordinator
- Marketing Coordinator
- Sales Support Specialist
- HR Administrator
- Finance Clerk
- Customer Service Representative
- Any desk-based knowledge worker using Microsoft 365

MICROSOFT AZURE DATA FUNDAMENTALS DP-900



This course introduces core data concepts and services in Microsoft Azure, covering relational and non-relational data, analytics workloads, and database fundamentals. It is designed for individuals beginning their journey in data-related roles and Azure technologies.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Strengthens understanding of core data principles across cloud environments
- Prepares learners for roles involving data handling, reporting, and analysis
- Provides foundational knowledge required for advanced data certifications and roles

IMPORTANT STATS

- Over 2.5 quintillion bytes of data are created daily worldwide
- Azure SQL is used by thousands of global businesses for critical operations
- Data-driven roles are among the fastest growing job categories globally

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Data Analyst (Entry-Level)
- Junior Database Administrator
- Reporting Analyst
- IT Support (Data-Focused)
- Business Intelligence Assistant
- Market Research Analyst Technical Assistant (Analytics Projects)
- Cloud Support Intern (Data Track)
- Operations Analyst
- Junior Data Engineer
- Product Support Officer
- Sales Operations Assistant

MICROSOFT SECURITY, COMPLIANCE & IDENTITY FUNDAMENTALS SC-900



This course introduces fundamental concepts of cybersecurity, compliance, and identity protection in Microsoft cloud services.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Encourages best practices in cybersecurity from day one
- Provides an accessible entry point into GRC and infosec careers
- Aligns with zero-trust security strategies adopted by modern businesses

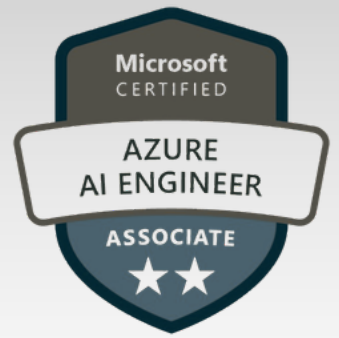
IMPORTANT STATS

- 83% of organizations faced at least one security breach in 2024
- Zero-trust adoption is now the global enterprise standard
- Demand for entry-level cyber professionals is outpacing supply by 2:1

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Cybersecurity Intern
- SOC Trainee
- IT Auditor (junior)
- Risk and Compliance Clerk
- GRC Assistant
- Identity & Access Analyst (entry)
- Helpdesk Security Support
- Security Awareness Facilitator
- Desktop Support Technician
- Financial Compliance Analyst
- Legal Risk Clerk
- Cloud Security Assistant
- Network Operations Intern
- Endpoint Security Operator
- Data Governance Assistant

MICROSOFT AZURE AI ENGINEER ASSOCIATE AI-102



This advanced course equips learners with the skills to build, manage, and deploy AI-powered applications using Azure Cognitive Services and Azure Machine Learning. **Set to retire on June 30, 2026.**

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Prepares professionals for the most in-demand AI implementation roles
- Covers real-world AI development, including NLP, vision, and bots
- Enables certified professionals to lead AI transformation projects

IMPORTANT STATS

- Azure AI Engineer salaries average US \$106,896 (Skillssoft, 2025)
- AI engineering roles are growing 4x faster than other tech roles
- Over 40% of R&D budgets are being reallocated to AI in large enterprises

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- AI Engineer
- Machine Learning Developer
- Bot Developer
- Computer Vision Specialist
- NLP Engineer
- Azure AI Solution Architect
- RPA Developer
- MLOps Engineer
- Data Scientist (AI)
- Cognitive Services Developer
- Chatbot Engineer
- Gen-AI Engineer
- AI Software Consultant
- AI Product Developer
- AI DevOps Engineer

MICROSOFT AZURE AI APP & AGENT DEVELOPER ASSOCIATE AI-103



This associate-level certification validates your expertise in building, managing, and deploying AI-powered applications and agents using Microsoft Foundry and Azure AI services.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Replaces the retiring AI-102 (Azure AI Engineer Associate) as the definitive associate-level AI certification.
- Covers modern AI engineering: planning and managing Azure AI solutions, implementing generative AI and agentic solutions, computer vision, text analysis, and information extraction. Aligns with the industry shift toward agentic AI systems.

SKILLS MEASURED

- Plan and manage Azure AI solutions
- Implement generative AI and agentic solutions
- Implement computer vision solutions
- Implement text analysis solutions
- Implement information extraction solutions

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Azure AI Cloud Developer
- Cloud AI Engineer
- AI Solution Developer
- DevOps Engineer (AI-Specialized)
- Cloud Application Developer

MICROSOFT AZURE DATA SCIENTIST ASSOCIATE DP-100



This course prepares learners to train, validate, and deploy machine learning models using Azure Machine Learning and data science best practices.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- A cornerstone certification for data science and AI careers
- Empowers learners to create predictive business models
- Bridges the gap between data insights and business decisions

IMPORTANT STATS

- Average salary for certified data scientists is US \$84,040
- 90% of companies prefer hiring data scientists with formal certification
- Predictive analytics reduces decision-making time by up to 80%

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Data Scientist
- ML Model Builder
- BI Developer
- Applied Statistician
- Analytics Consultant
- Forecasting Analyst
- AI Researcher
- Quantitative Analyst
- Data Strategy Associate
- Financial Modelling Analyst
- Fraud Detection Analyst
- Supply Chain Data Specialist
- Health Data Analyst
- Credit Risk Analyst
- HR Data Analyst

MICROSOFT AZURE SECURITY ENGINEER ASSOCIATE AZ-500



This certification teaches the implementation of security controls, threat protection, and identity management in Azure-based environments. **Will retire August 31, 2026.**
Replaced with SC-500.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Critical for protecting sensitive data and infrastructure in the cloud
- Aligns with high-demand cybersecurity frameworks and practices
- Trusted by top firms for enterprise-level security architecture

IMPORTANT STATS

- Cloud security jobs are among the top 5 highest-paying IT careers
- Certified teams see 56% less unplanned downtime
- Organizations without Azure-secure frameworks face higher average breach losses.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Cloud Security Engineer
- SOC Analyst
- DevSecOps Engineer
- Threat Detection Specialist
- Cloud Risk Analyst
- Identity and Access Administrator
- Penetration Tester (cloud)
- Incident Responder
- Secure Cloud Configurator
- Vulnerability Analyst
- Governance and Compliance Officer
- Security Automation Engineer
- Endpoint Protection Manager
- Security Operations Support
- Azure Security Admin

MICROSOFT CLOUD & AI SECURITY ENGINEER SC-500



This certification validates your ability to design and implement secure environments for building and running AI solutions – extending cloud security to cover AI model protection.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Replaces the retiring AZ-500 certification with a modern focus on both cloud security AND AI workload protection.
- Covers security best practices to protect AI models, data, and workflows using cloud-native security controls, event-driven AI pipelines, secret management, and distributed observability

IMPORTANT STATS

- Cloud security jobs are among the top 5 highest-paying IT careers
- Certified teams see 56% less unplanned downtime
- Organizations without Azure-secure frameworks face higher average breach losses.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Cloud Security Engineer
- SOC Analyst
- DevSecOps Engineer
- Threat Detection Specialist
- Cloud Risk Analyst
- Identity and Access Administrator
- Penetration Tester (cloud)
- Incident Responder
- Secure Cloud Configurator
- Vulnerability Analyst
- Governance and Compliance Officer
- Security Automation Engineer
- Endpoint Protection Manager
- Security Operations Support
- Azure Security Admin



MICROSOFT CERTIFICATION PATHWAY (FUNDAMENTALS → EXPERT)

CERTIFICATION	LEVEL	RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE
AI Fluency Certificate	Entry / Fundamentals	None. Non-technical program.
AZ-900: Azure Fundamentals	Entry / Fundamentals	None. Non-technical learners welcome.
AI-900 / AI-901: Azure AI Fundamentals	Entry / Fundamentals	None. Beginners in AI and cloud.
DP-900: Azure Data Fundamentals	Entry / Fundamentals	None. Beginners in data.
SC-900: Security, Compliance & Identity Fundamentals	Entry / Fundamentals	None. Beginners in cybersecurity.
AZ-104: Azure Administrator	Intermediate / Associate	1+ years of cloud or on-premises IT admin.
AI-103: Azure AI App & Agent Developer	Intermediate / Associate	1+ years with Python and Azure; AI/ML basics.
AI-200: Azure AI Cloud Developer	Intermediate / Associate	1+ years with Azure and AI workloads.
DP-100: Azure Data Scientist	Intermediate / Associate	1+ years with Azure ML and data science.
SC-500: Cloud & AI Security Engineer	Intermediate / Associate	1+ years with Azure security. Replaces AZ-500.
AZ-305: Azure Solutions Architect	Pro	3+ years in cloud admin or architecture.
SC-100: Cybersecurity Architect	Pro	3+ years in security and Azure; advanced SC-500 skills.



LET'S TALK ABOUT



LET'S LEARN ABOUT SOME OF THE **AWS** COURSES. WHAT ARE THEY FOR AND WHY THEY ARE **IMPORTANT**? THESE ARE THE SELECTED COURSES OUR **AWS AUTHORIZED INSTRUCTORS (AAIS)** THAT WILL BE TRAINING IN PREPARATION FOR YOUR EXAMS AND CAREER





AWS CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS

TRAINED BY AWS AUTHORIZED INSTRUCTORS (AIs)

Why AWS?

- **Global Leader:** AWS holds approximately 30% of the global cloud market share, followed by Microsoft Azure at 20% and Google Cloud at 13%.
- **Deep South African Roots:** AWS has been in South Africa since 2004, when it opened its first development centre in Cape Town — where engineers created Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), revolutionising how businesses globally access cloud computing capacity.
- **Massive Local Investment:** AWS has invested an estimated ZAR 15.6 billion since 2018 and will invest an additional ZAR 30.4 billion by 2029, contributing an estimated R80 billion to South Africa's GDP.
- AWS opened Africa's first AWS Region in Cape Town in 2020 and has trained over 200,000 South Africans on cloud skills.

CORE SKILLS CERTIFICATION

- AWS AI Practitioner

ASSOCIATE

- AWS ML Engineer Associate → AWS Solutions Architect Associate → AWS Developer Associate

SPECIALTY

- AWS Security Specialty



LET'S LEARN ABOUT THE **AWS CERTIFICATIONS**. WHAT ARE THEY FOR AND WHY THEY ARE **IMPORTANT**?

CORE SKILLS CERTIFICATIONS



DATA & AI PATHWAY



CLOUD & INFRASTRUCTURE PATHWAY



AI PATHWAY



AWS CERTIFIED AI PRACTITIONER



This foundational certification validates your knowledge of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and generative AI concepts and use cases on AWS. It is designed for professionals who want to demonstrate AI literacy without needing to write code or build AI solutions themselves.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Employers are willing to pay 43% more for sales and marketing professionals with AI skills and 41% more for finance professionals with AI skills.
- Companies are scrambling to find people who know how to use AI safely and effectively, this cert signals you can add value with AI without exposing the business to unnecessary risk.
- Demand for AI-literate candidates has exceeded available supply, making this a strong entry credential for non-technical and cross-functional professionals.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- Understand fundamental AI, ML, and generative AI concepts and terminology
- Identify appropriate use cases for AI and ML on AWS
- Recognise AWS AI/ML services and their applications (Amazon SageMaker, Amazon Bedrock, Amazon Q, Amazon Rekognition, Amazon Polly, etc.)
- Explain the ML development lifecycle, from data preparation to model deployment
- Apply responsible AI principles and recognise potential biases
- Understand prompt engineering basics and how foundation models work

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- No prior IT or cloud experience required. AWS recommends about six months of exposure to AI and ML on their platform.
- Ideal for business analysts, IT support, marketing professionals, product or project managers, line-of-business managers, and sales professionals.
- If you are new to IT and AWS Cloud, start with AWS Cloud Practitioner Essentials first.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Business Analyst
- Marketing Professional
- Product Manager
- IT Support Specialist
- Junior AI Consultant
- Sales Specialist (AI/Cloud Solutions)

AWS CERTIFIED SOLUTIONS ARCHITECT – ASSOCIATE



This certification validates your ability to design cost-optimised, resilient, and high-performing architectures using AWS services. It is the most demanded certification in the cloud computing industry.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- The certification is valid for three years and can increase earning potential and enhance job security for cloud professionals.
- Prior cloud or strong on-premises IT experience is recommended – this is not an entry-level certification.
- Covers the AWS Well-Architected Framework, providing a structured approach to designing secure, reliable, and cost-optimised cloud workloads

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- Design secure architectures using IAM, encryption, and network security controls
- Design resilient architectures that recover from failure and scale with demand
- Design high-performing architectures using compute, storage, networking, and database services
- Design cost-optimised architectures by selecting appropriate pricing models and resource types
- Apply the AWS Well-Architected Framework to real-world scenarios

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- At least one year of hands-on experience designing cloud solutions on AWS.
- Hands-on experience using compute, networking, storage, and database AWS services.
- Strong on-premises IT experience and understanding of mapping on-premises to cloud is also acceptable.
- For cloud newcomers: start with AWS Cloud Practitioner before attempting this certification.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Solutions Architect
- Cloud Architect
- Cloud Engineer
- IT Infrastructure Manager
- Systems Administrator (Cloud)

AWS CERTIFIED DEVELOPER – ASSOCIATE



This certification validates your proficiency in developing, deploying, and debugging cloud-based applications using AWS, and showcases your knowledge of core AWS services and basic AWS architecture best practices.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Potential employers highly value this recognition, with recruiters often prioritising AWS certifications when scouting for IT talent.
- Certified individuals report increased confidence and credibility with technical IT/cloud colleagues and customers.
- In 2025, an AWS certified developer salary in South Africa is forecast at R52,605/month on average.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- Develop and deploy applications using AWS SDKs, APIs, and CLI
- Implement serverless applications with AWS Lambda, API Gateway, and Step Functions
- Integrate AWS managed services (DynamoDB, S3, SQS, SNS, EventBridge) into applications
- Implement authentication and authorisation using Amazon Cognito and IAM
- Write code that interacts with AWS services using best practices for security and performance
- Troubleshoot and debug cloud-native applications using CloudWatch and X-Ray

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- One or more years of prior hands-on experience developing and maintaining applications using AWS services.
- Candidates without any IT work experience should first earn the AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner for foundational cloud knowledge.
- General IT skills recommended alongside experience with at least one high-level programming language.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Software Developer (AWS)
- Cloud Developer
- DevOps Engineer
- Application Developer
- Backend Developer

AWS CERTIFIED SECURITY

– SPECIALTY



This specialty-level certification validates your ability to design, deploy, and manage robust security solutions on AWS. The exam was refreshed in December 2025 (SCS-CO3) and now includes generative AI security content.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- One of AWS's most challenging certifications, typically recommended for professionals with 3–5 years of experience securing cloud solutions.
- Identity and Access Management is now the single heaviest domain (20%), reflecting the reality that identity is the new perimeter in cloud security.
- The new SCS-CO3 exam also covers generative AI security, threat detection, incident response, infrastructure security, and governance.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- Design and implement identity and access management solutions at scale
- Implement detective controls using AWS CloudTrail, AWS Config, GuardDuty, and Security Hub
- Automate security monitoring, alerting, and incident response
- Apply infrastructure security controls including network firewalls, WAF, and DDoS protection
- Secure data at rest and in transit using encryption, KMS, and certificate management

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- At least five years of IT security experience in designing and implementing security solutions, plus two years of hands-on experience securing AWS workloads.
- Competency gained from two or more years of production deployment experience using AWS security services and features.
- AWS Associate-level certification and solid security fundamentals are recommended prerequisites.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- Cloud Security Engineer
- Security Architect (AWS)
- DevSecOps Engineer
- Threat Detection Specialist
- Cloud Risk Analyst
- Penetration Tester (Cloud)
- Incident Responder

AWS CERTIFIED MACHINE LEARNING ENGINEER – ASSOCIATE



This role-based certification validates your technical ability to implement ML workloads in production and operationalise them on AWS. It is designed for professionals who work with Amazon SageMaker and other AWS ML services.

WHY IT MATTERS?

- Demand for AI and Machine Learning Specialists is expected to grow by 40%, yet 70% of North American IT leaders report the greatest difficulty filling AI/ML specialist roles.
- Boosts career profile and credibility, positioning you for in-demand machine learning job roles in the AWS Cloud.
- Particularly beneficial for backend software developers, DevOps engineers, data engineers, MLOps engineers, and data scientists.

SKILLS YOU'LL LEARN

- Build, train, and tune ML models using Amazon SageMaker
- Prepare and transform data for machine learning using AWS data services
- Implement feature engineering and model training pipelines
- Deploy ML models for inference with high availability and scalability
- Monitor model performance and detect drift in production
- Automate MLOps workflows with CI/CD pipelines for ML
- Apply security and governance best practices to ML deployments

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE

- At least 1 year of experience in machine learning engineering or a related field and 1 year of hands-on experience with AWS services.
- At least 1 year of experience using Amazon SageMaker and other AWS services for ML engineering.
- For deeper ML expertise, AWS recommends the AWS Certified Machine Learning – Specialty certification, which is more suitable for individuals with 2 or more years of experience developing, architecting, and running ML workloads on AWS.

SOME PROFESSIONS IT APPLIES TO

- ML Engineer
- MLOps Engineer
- Data Engineer
- Backend Software Developer
- DevOps Engineer (ML-Focused)
- Data Scientist



AWS CERTIFICATION PATHWAY (FOUNDATIONAL → SPECIALTY)

CERTIFICATION	LEVEL	RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE
AWS Certified AI Practitioner	Entry / Foundational	None (6 months of AWS AI/ML exposure recommended).
AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate	Intermediate / Associate	1+ year designing solutions on AWS.
AWS Certified Developer – Associate	Intermediate / Associate	1+ year developing applications on AWS.
AWS Certified Machine Learning Engineer – Associate	Intermediate / Associate	1+ year using SageMaker and AWS ML services.
AWS Certified Security – Specialty	Expert / Specialty	5+ years IT security, 2+ years securing AWS workloads.



SYNERGY IN LEARNING

MAPPING COMPTIA TO SAQA COURSES

SAQA OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (MANDATORY)	RECOMMENDED COMPTIA ADD-ONS	CAREER OUTCOME
Cybersecurity Analyst (NQF 5)	a+ Cyber, Security+, CySA+, SecAI+	A graduate qualified to South African standards and equipped with a globally recognised cybersecurity skills stack, from fundamentals to AI-security practitioner.
Cloud Administrator (NQF 4)	ITF+, a+ Cyber, Network+, Server+	A professional skilled in both local cloud principles and the global gold-standard for IT infrastructure support and networking.
Data Science Practitioner (NQF 5)	Project+, Cloud Essentials+, AI for Marketing Essentials	An analyst with not only data skills but also the project management and cloud business acumen to lead data-driven initiatives.
AI Software Developer (NQF 5)	Project+, AI Agent Essentials, SecAI+	Project+, AI Agent Essentials, SecAI+





SYNERGY IN LEARNING

MAPPING MICROSOFT TO SAQA COURSES

SAQA OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (MANDATORY)	RECOMMENDED MICROSOFT ADD-ONS	CAREER OUTCOME
Cybersecurity Analyst (NQF 5)	SC-900, SC-500	A security professional certified in both South African standards and Microsoft's modern cloud and AI security solutions.
Cloud Administrator (NQF 4)	AZ-900, AZ-104	An administrator qualified to manage both on-premise infrastructure and Microsoft Azure cloud environments.
Data Science Practitioner (NQF 5)	DP-900, DP-100	A data expert skilled in fundamental data concepts and advanced data science on the Microsoft Azure platform.
AI Software Developer (NQF 5)	AI-900/AI-901, AI-103	A developer certified to build and deploy AI apps and agents using Microsoft Foundry and Azure AI services.





SYNERGY IN LEARNING

MAPPING AWS TO SAQA COURSES

SAQA OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (MANDATORY)	RECOMMENDED AWS ADD-ONS	ULTIMATE CAREER OUTCOME
Cybersecurity Analyst (NQF 5)	AWS Certified Security – Specialty	A cybersecurity analyst credentialed to South African standards, equipped with advanced AWS security expertise to protect cloud workloads, identity systems, and AI environments.
Cloud Administrator (NQF 4)	AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate	An administrator qualified to design, deploy, and manage resilient, cost-optimised AWS cloud architectures alongside on-premise infrastructure.
Data Science Practitioner (NQF 5)	AWS Certified Machine Learning Engineer – Associate	A data science professional who can operationalise machine learning models on AWS, bridging local analytics training with globally in-demand MLOps skills.
AI Software Developer (NQF 5)	AWS Certified AI Practitioner	A developer who builds AI solutions and can demonstrate foundational AI/ML knowledge on the world's leading cloud platform, enhancing credibility with employers and clients.





SYNERGY IN LEARNING

MAPPING (COMPTIA + MICROSOFT + AWS) TO SAQA COURSES

SAQA OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE (MANDATORY)	RECOMMENDED POWER COMBO ADD-ONS	ULTIMATE CAREER OUTCOME
Cybersecurity Analyst (NQF 5)	CompTIA Security+ + Microsoft SC-500 + AWS Security Specialty	A cybersecurity analyst with vendor-neutral CompTIA fundamentals, Microsoft cloud & AI security skills, AND AWS security expertise – the ultimate security portfolio.
Cloud Administrator (NQF 4)	CompTIA Network+/ Server+ + Microsoft AZ-104 + AWS Solutions Architect Associate	A multi-cloud infrastructure specialist who understands universal networking principles and can expertly manage both Azure AND AWS environments.
Data Science Practitioner (NQF 5)	CompTIA Data+ + Microsoft DP-100 + AWS ML Engineer Associate	A data team lead who can manage analytics projects, build advanced ML models on Azure, AND operationalise ML workloads on AWS.
AI Software Developer (NQF 5)	CompTIA AI Agent Essentials + Microsoft AI-103 + AWS AI Practitioner	An AI solution architect who understands AI agent workflows, can build AI apps on Azure, and has foundational AI literacy on AWS – the complete AI developer stack.





FLEXIBLE STUDENT PATHWAYS

SAQA ONLY VS. COMBO PACKAGES

We offer unparalleled flexibility to meet diverse needs and budgets.

Option 1: SAQA Occupational Certificate Only

- The foundational, national **SAQA** qualification.
- Ideal for students seeking a focused, nationally recognised credential.
- Offers better affordability.

Option 2: The Combo (SAQA + Selected Global Certs)

- The Recommended Pathway. Students enroll in their chosen SAQA Occupational Certificate and can add a curated suite of CompTIA certifications OR the key Microsoft certifications OR AWS certifications at a bundled package price.
- This creates the ultimate career portfolio: Local Accreditation + Global Certification.
- **Key Differentiator:** Candidates choose a single vendor pathway or mix vendors to specialise in.

Option 3: The Premium Combo (SAQA + Both Global Certs)

- The Ultimate Pathway. Students enroll in their chosen SAQA Occupational Certificate and can add certifications from two or all three vendors (CompTIA + Microsoft + AWS) at a bundled package price.
- This creates the ultimate career portfolio: Local Accreditation + Multi-Vendor Global Certification.
- **Key Differentiator:** Candidates get both vendor-neutral and vendor-specific certifications across multiple cloud platforms.





THE UNIFIED CERTIFICATION STRATEGY

WHY THIS INTEGRATED APPROACH CREATES UNBEATABLE GRADUATES:

- **Foundation + Specialization:** SAQA provides the foundational knowledge, while CompTIA, Microsoft, and AWS provide specialised, hands-on skills.
- **Vendor-Neutral + Vendor-Specific:** CompTIA ensures broad understanding across all technologies; Microsoft provides deep expertise in the Azure ecosystem; AWS provides mastery of the world's largest cloud platform.
- **Theory + Practice:** The SAQA qualification covers theoretical concepts, while global certifications validate practical, job-ready skills.
- **Local + Global:** Graduates receive both nationally recognised credentials AND internationally portable certifications across three of the world's most respected technology vendors.
- **Now + Future:** AI Essentials and Expansion Series certifications ensure graduates are prepared for the AI-driven future

This unified approach ensures our graduates are not just qualified — they are the most comprehensively skilled and employment-ready IT professionals in the market.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND JOB READINESS FRAMEWORK

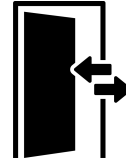
ROADMAP

Our proven 10-step framework is enhanced with global certification preparation:

- Candidate Accumulation via Social Platforms & Partner Institutions.
- Centralised Onboarding onto our LMS and Community.
- Weekly Progress Tracking against both SAQA and CompTIA/Microsoft/AWS syllabi.
- Clear Academic Logistics Roadmap with integrated certification exam dates.
- Weekly SDR-Led Q&A Sessions now covering both SAQA curriculum and global certification topics.
- Collaborative Online Peer Community with dedicated channels for CompTIA, Microsoft, and AWS study groups.
- Personalised Learning Plans that include certification goal-setting.
- Bi-Weekly Skills Assessments using practice exams for both SAQA and global credentials.
- Job Readiness Initiatives where global certifications are highlighted on CVs and LinkedIn profiles.
- Potential Job Placements with partners who specifically value multi-qualified candidates.



EXIT PLANS (EMPLOYMENT/SME DEVELOPMENT)



Phase 1: Pre-Exit Preparation:

- Establish clear graduation benchmarks for students before job placement.
- Require a minimum score on the final skills assessment.
- Mandate successful completion of a capstone project or real-world simulation.
- Finalize all job readiness assets, including a polished CV and optimized LinkedIn profile.
- Deliver an advanced "Career Launch" module covering salary negotiation and success strategies for the first 90 days of a new job.

Phase 2: Formal Exit & Placement:

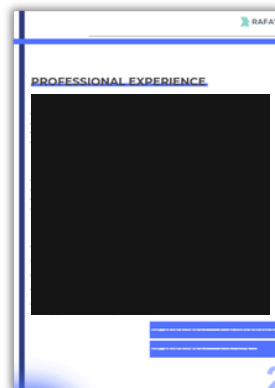
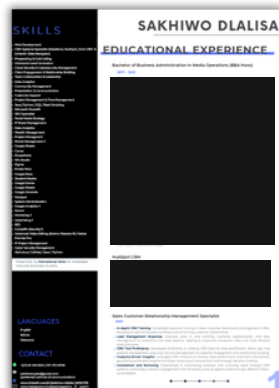
- Implement a tiered placement system for graduates.
- Offer direct hire into full-time roles with partner companies.
- Provide a paid apprenticeship pathway with a high potential for conversion to a permanent role.
- Conduct a structured program exit interview with each graduate upon job acceptance.
- Gather detailed feedback on the program's strengths and weaknesses for continuous improvement.

Phase 3: Post-Placement & Alumni Engagement:

- Alumni network onboarding (LinkedIn, Teams).
- Mentor check-ins at 30, 90, 180 days.
- Advanced training discounts & referral programs.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

- Monthly progress reports
- Quarterly impact reports
- Final completion report with certification & employment data



As part of the Job Readiness Agency framework, we will also include CV Enhancements for Students & professionals to best prepare them for work. This service will be free for all our self-funded and sponsored students.



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE FOR ICT ROLES



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAYS

The technology landscape is undergoing the most significant transformation in decades. **Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, and Data Science** are converging to create entirely new job categories while fundamentally reshaping traditional IT roles. Understanding how these fields interconnect, and which certifications map to which career stages is essential for anyone building a career in technology today.

Please note that the list of certifications are case specific to the training we will provide training for this year on the YDP SA E-learning LMS. An additional comprehensive complete Pro-Career guideline from other certifying bodies such as NVIDIA, ISC2, EC-Council, SANS and more will be presented via an upcoming blog launching soon on the YDP SA – BLOG channel.

Why This Matters Now

- Global cybersecurity workforce gap: 4.8 million professionals needed in 2025, up 19% year-on-year. Today 86% of organisations experienced at least one data breach in 2024, with 28% experiencing five or more.
- In South Africa: Organisations reported 2,374 security compromise incidents (data breaches) in the 2024-25 financial year – averaging 198 notifications per month. Since April 2025, organisations have reported 1,947 data compromises. SA companies now face an average of 1,450 cyberattacks per week – up 4% year on year.
- AI skills demand in South Africa has surged 352% since 2019, with a 77% year-on-year increase in the first half of 2025 alone.
- Cloud adoption in Africa: Cloud computing leads adoption at 61%, followed by AI at 55%, analytics at 44%, and cybersecurity at 44%
- PwC's 2025 Global AI Jobs Barometer: AI-skilled workers command a 56% wage premium – double the previous year. Jobs requiring AI skills grew 7.5% even as total job postings fell 11.3%.
- 78% of ICT roles now include AI technical skills.
- Microsoft reports more than 60% of local South African businesses struggle to hire skilled cloud and cybersecurity professionals.
- The World Economic Forum projects 170 million new jobs globally by 2030 in AI, data analytics, and software development.



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAYS

- 93% of global employers plan to increase hiring from Africa over the next year. 62.9% of international companies are already hiring remote workers from Africa, particularly in ICT and finance.
- There Is No Best Certificate. There Is Only the Best Collection of Certificates for YOU.
- The industry is forever changing — and so must the skills development facilities that train for it. At YDP SA, we continuously update the courses we provision to ensure all training meets industry demands at all times. The rapid shift in AI, Cloud, Cybersecurity, and Data is not a trend, it is a permanent restructuring of the technology workforce.



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ROLES

AI is no longer a niche specialisation — it is embedded in every technology domain. Dedicated AI roles are among the fastest-growing and highest-paying in the industry. PS: these are foundational. Additional skills may be required.

Entry-Level AI Roles (0–2 years experience)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Junior AI Consultant	AI-900/AI-901, AWS AI Practitioner	R25,000–R40,000/month
AI Enthusiast / Data Annotation Specialist	AI Fluency, AI for Marketing/Sales Essentials	R20,000–R35,000/month
Junior ML Developer	AI-900, AWS AI Practitioner	R30,000–R50,000/month

Intermediate AI Roles (2–5 years experience)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
AI Engineer	AI-103, AI-200	R55,000–R85,000/month
ML Engineer	AWS ML Engineer Associate, DP-100	R50,000–R80,000/month
AI App Developer	AI-103, AWS Developer Associate	R50,000–R75,000/month
NLP Engineer	AI-103	R55,000–R85,000/month



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

Senior/Expert AI Roles (5+ years experience)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
AI Solution Architect	AI-103, AI-200, AWS Solutions Architect	R90,000–R140,000/month
Gen-AI Engineer	AI-103, SecAI+	R95,000–R150,000/month
Chief AI Officer / Head of AI	Multi-vendor AI certs, MBA	R120,000–R200,000+/month
MLOps Engineer	AWS ML Engineer, DP-100	R85,000–R130,000/month

Senior/Expert AI Roles (5+ years experience)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
AI Transformation Lead	Multi AI Essentials, Management certs	R100,000–R160,000/month
AI Ethics & Governance Officer	SecAI+, SC-900	R90,000–R140,000/month



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAY 2: AI-INTEGRATED ROLES

AI skills are now essential for professionals who are not traditional developers. These roles use AI to enhance existing functions. PS: these are foundational. Additional skills may be required.

Entry-Level AI Roles (0–2 years experience)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
AI-Savvy Marketing Coordinator	AI for Marketing Essentials	R18,000–R30,000/month
AI-Enabled Sales Rep / SDR	AI for Sales Essentials	R18,000–R35,000/month (+ commission)
AI Support Specialist	AI Agent Essentials, AI Fluency	R20,000–R35,000/month

Intermediate AI Roles (2–5 years experience)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Digital Marketing Manager (AI)	AI for Marketing Essentials, Project+	R45,000–R70,000/month
Sales Operations Manager (AI)	AI for Sales Essentials, Cloud Essentials+	R50,000–R80,000/month
AI Product Manager	AI Agent Essentials, Project+	R60,000–R95,000/month
Business Analyst (AI-Enabled)	AB-730, DP-900, AWS AI Practitioner	R45,000–R70,000/month



**CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE FOR
CLOUD COMPUTING ROLES**



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAYS

Cloud computing is the backbone of digital transformation. With Microsoft investing ZAR 5.4 billion in South African cloud and AI infrastructure by 2027 building on R20.4 billion already invested in enterprise-grade data centres in Johannesburg and Cape Town and AWS committing an estimated R80 billion to South Africa's GDP through investments by 2029, cloud skills are among the most bankable in the market.

The South African data centre market was valued at USD 2.16 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach USD 3.40 billion by 2030. Microsoft's ZAR 5.4bn investment will specifically expand hyperscale cloud and AI infrastructure, and the company has committed to paying for 50,000 young South Africans' certification exams in high-demand digital skills.

Entry-Level Cloud Roles (0–2 years)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Junior Cloud Administrator	AZ-900, AZ-104, AWS Solutions Architect Associate	R25,000–R45,000/month
Cloud Support Specialist	AZ-900, AZ-104, SC-500, AWS AI Practitioner	R22,000–R38,000/month
IT Support (Cloud-Focused)	CompTIA a+ Cyber, AZ-900, AZ-104	R20,000–R35,000/month



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAYS

Intermediate Cloud Roles (2–5 years)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Cloud Engineer	AZ-104, AWS Solutions Architect Associate	R50,000–R80,000/month
Cloud Administrator	AZ-104, Cloud+, AWS Solutions Architect Associate	R45,000–R75,000/month
DevOps Engineer	AZ-104, AWS Developer Associate	R55,000–R85,000/month
Cloud Security Engineer	SC-500, AWS Security Specialty, AZ-104, SecAI+	R60,000–R95,000/month

Senior Cloud Roles (5+ years)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Cloud Architect	AZ-305, AWS Solutions Architect Pro	R95,000–R150,000/month
Multi-Cloud Solutions Architect	AWS Solutions Architect, AZ-305	R100,000–R160,000/month
Head of Cloud Infrastructure	Multi-cloud certs, Management	R120,000–R200,000+/month



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: CYBERSECURITY ROLES



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAY 4: CYBERSECURITY ROLES

Cybersecurity demand in South Africa has risen 188% over the past three years for specialist roles. The ICT sector had an estimated 318,000 jobs in 2024 with a vacancy rate of 27.2%. South Africa faces a critical shortage of ICT specialists – demand up from 14% in 2024 to 22% in 2025. The deficit of qualified professionals in cybersecurity, AI, data analytics, and software development is estimated at 20,000 to 70,000.

Entry-Level Security Roles (0-2 years)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Junior Cybersecurity Analyst	a+ Cyber, Security+	R25,000–R45,000/month
SOC Analyst (Tier 1)	Security+, CySA+	R30,000–R50,000/month
Cybersecurity Intern	a+ Cyber, Security+	R15,000–R25,000/month

Intermediate Security Roles (2–5 years)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Cybersecurity Analyst	CySA+, Security+, SC-900	R50,000–R80,000/month
Penetration Tester	PenTest+, Security+	R55,000–R90,000/month
Cloud Security Engineer	SC-500, AWS Security Specialty	R60,000–R95,000/month
SOC Analyst (Tier 2)	CySA+, SecAI+, SC-500	R55,000–R85,000/month
Security Consultant	PenTest+, SecAI+	R60,000–R100,000/month



CAREER PATHWAYS IN IT: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

CAREER PATHWAYS

Senior Security Roles (5+ years)

ROLE	KEY CERTS	EXPECTED SALARY (SA)
Security Architect	SecAI+, AWS Security, SC-500	R100,000–R160,000/month
SOC Manager	S+, CySA+, SecAI+, Management	R95,000–R140,000/month
CISO (Chief Information Security Officer)	Multi-domain security certs	R130,000–R250,000+/month
Cyber Risk Manager	SecAI+, SC-500	R55,000–R85,000/R90,000–R140,000/month



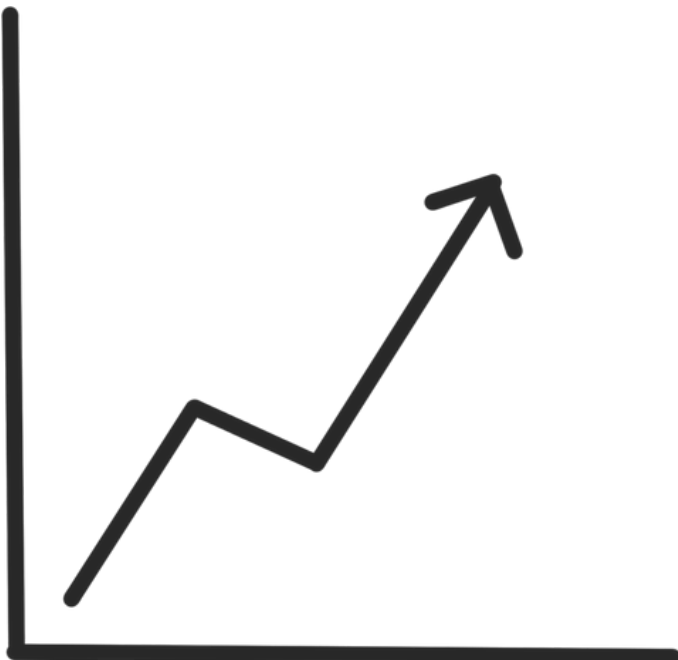
ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR THE NEW IT ERA & SALARY TRENDS



THE SKILLS THAT MATTER MOST IN 2026 AND BEYOND

The Skills That Matter Most in 2026 and Beyond

- **AI Literacy & Application:** 78% of ICT roles now include AI technical skills. This is no longer optional.
- **Cloud Architecture & Administration:** Cloud adoption in Africa at 61% and accelerating at 35% annually.
- **Cybersecurity Operations:** Global workforce gap of 4.8 million; SA demand up 188%.
- **Data Analytics & Science:** 2.5 quintillion bytes of data created daily; data-driven roles among fastest-growing globally.
- **AI Agent & Workflow Design:** Agentic AI is the next frontier; understanding AI agents will be as fundamental as understanding spreadsheets.
- **Multi-Cloud Proficiency:** Organisations increasingly use multiple cloud providers; professionals who can navigate AWS, Azure, and GCP command premium salaries.





SOUTH AFRICA IT SALARY TRENDS AT A GLANCE

EXPERIENCE LEVEL	TYPICAL ROLES	SALARY RANGE (MONTHLY)
Entry (0–2 years)	Junior Developer, IT Support, SOC Tier 1, Cloud Support	R20,000–R45,000
Intermediate (2-5 years)	Cloud Engineer, Cybersecurity Analyst, AI Engineer, DevOps	R45,000–R90,000
Senior (5–8 years)	Security Architect, Cloud Architect, Senior AI Engineer	R85,000–R150,000
Expert/Leadership (8+ years)	Security Architect, Cloud Architect, Senior AI Engineer	R120,000–R250,000+





WHY YDP SA CONTINUOUSLY UPDATES ITS COURSE OFFERINGS

Why YDP SA Continuously Updates Its Course Offerings

The technology industry evolves at unprecedented speed. Skills that were cutting-edge three years ago are now baseline expectations. The rapid shift in AI and Cloud means:

- AI-related job postings in SA grew 77% in H1 2025 alone.
- Skills sought by employers are changing 66% faster in occupations most exposed to AI.
- The global cloud market surged to USD 106.9 billion in Q3 2025, growing 28% YoY.

YDP SA's commitment is to continuously scan the horizon, updating certifications and training pathways so that every graduate meets and exceeds current industry demands. The best time to invest in your skills is now.



YOUR JOURNEY TO A GLOBAL TECH CAREER STARTS HERE

You've seen the pathways. Now, it's time to take the first step toward becoming a dual-certified, world-class IT professional.

We are now accepting applications for our 2026 intake!

Here is the CTA



APPLY NOW

Secure your future by applying for your chosen SAQA Occupational Certificate (Optional). Upon this foundation, you will select your global specialisation: the CompTIA Pathway, the Microsoft Pathway, the AWS Pathway or the Premium Combo of both. All applications can be done via our [Skills Development page](#). Look for the **Apply here button**.



PREPARE FOR SUCCESS

Get ready to build an unbeatable career portfolio. We will host career pathway seminars with industry experts to guide you as well as designated training with our facility partners or privately for courses that can not be conducted with them. We will share success stories, and prepare you for the high-demand world of tech.

PROMOTE

Spread the word to your network about this unparalleled opportunity to get nationally qualified and globally certified. Let's build South Africa's next generation of tech talent, together.



ICT SHORT SKILLS TRAINING AT MUT

YDP SA and **MUT** have formalised their collaboration through a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), governed by MUT's Enterprise Development (EnDev) Programme and Third Stream Income Policy. Under this framework, the two entities jointly deliver certification-aligned short learning programmes in Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Computing (Azure), Data Science, and Cybersecurity – all mapped to industry demand and global standards including Microsoft Learn pathways, CompTIA, and AWS certifications.

The programme matrix spans foundational to associate-level credentials – such as AI Fluency, AB-900 (AI Workplace Fundamentals), Security, Compliance & Identity (SC-900), Azure AI App & Agent Developer Associate (AI-103), Azure Data Scientist Associate (DP-100), and Microsoft Cloud & AI Security Engineer (SC-500) – with NQF alignment up to Level 5.

Delivery blends self-paced digital learning via YDP SA's LMS with live online coaching, mentorship, project-based assessments, and exam readiness support and Job Placement initiatives. Co-branded MUT-YDP SA certificates of completion are issued alongside vendor certifications for successful candidates.

Crucially, this MoU enables both entities to **host private cohort-based programmes (on-site at MUT facilities) as well as fully online intakes**, maximising reach and flexibility.

This collaboration ensures that learners from the surrounding KwaZulu natal township including those requiring financial support via MUT's Institutional Advancement division gain not only awareness but an actionable, certified pathway into the digital economy.

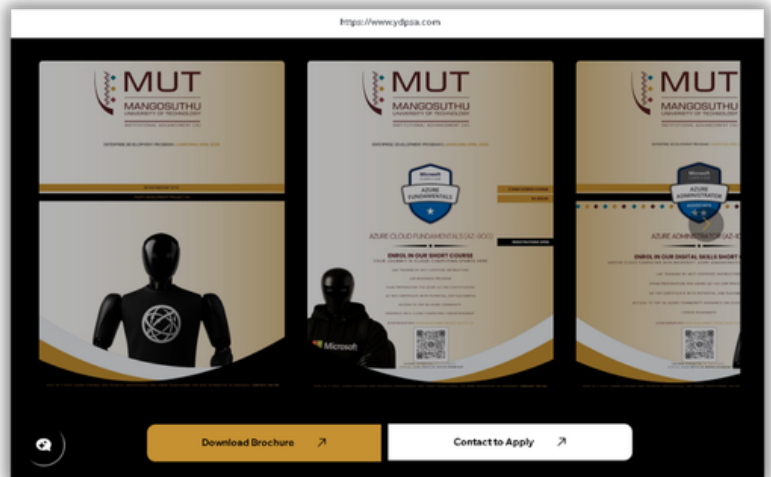




YDP SA X MANGOSUTHU UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (MUT)

PS: These are self-funded that come with training , potential WIL opportunities and Job Placements for entry-level IT roles. This is separate from the sponsored programs. Potential sponsorship will be applied As and when.

Course	ICT SKILLS
Format	Hybrid (online + in-person labs at MUT, Umlazi). Distant learners welcome to apply
Launch date	May 16, 2026
Who can apply	Anyone with relevant qualification from matric level
Cost	Self-funded (details in Skills Development page)
Registration link	ydp.com/skills-development . Click ‘Contact to Apply’.



Placement tiers:

- Portentail Direct employment opportunities
- Hosting partner for events, training and orientations.





REPLICATING THE MODEL AT UJ DEVLAND, SOWETO

Our vision is to establish a hub for 4IR skills training, events, and career awareness in Soweto's Devland campus. This will create a direct pipeline for Gauteng (Soweto's) youth into the opportunities created by YDP SA and the broader ICT skills development and Job placement opportunities for ICT grads and professionals.

This hub will expose young people to the same SAQA, CompTIA, Microsoft, and AWS training roadmaps and connecting them directly to YDP SA's self-funded and funded training tracks.

Together, the Umlazi and Soweto hubs form a scalable dual-campus blueprint for reaching underserved youth in South Africa's major population centers, transforming career awareness into real, certified employability.



THE YDP SA E-LEARNNG LMS



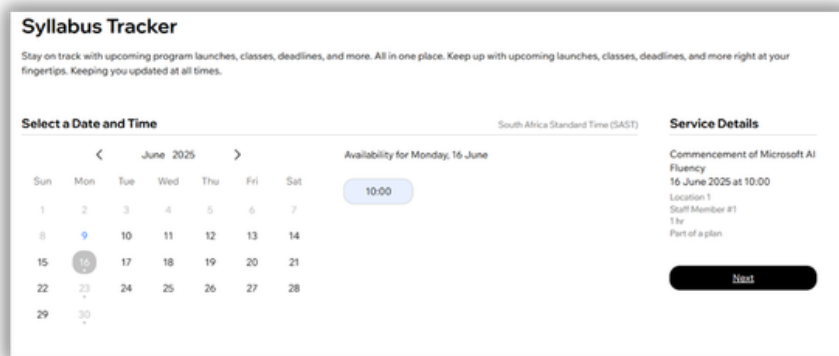
IN THE MIDST OF EVERY CRISES, LIES GREAT OPPORTUNITY
-ALBERT EINSTEIN



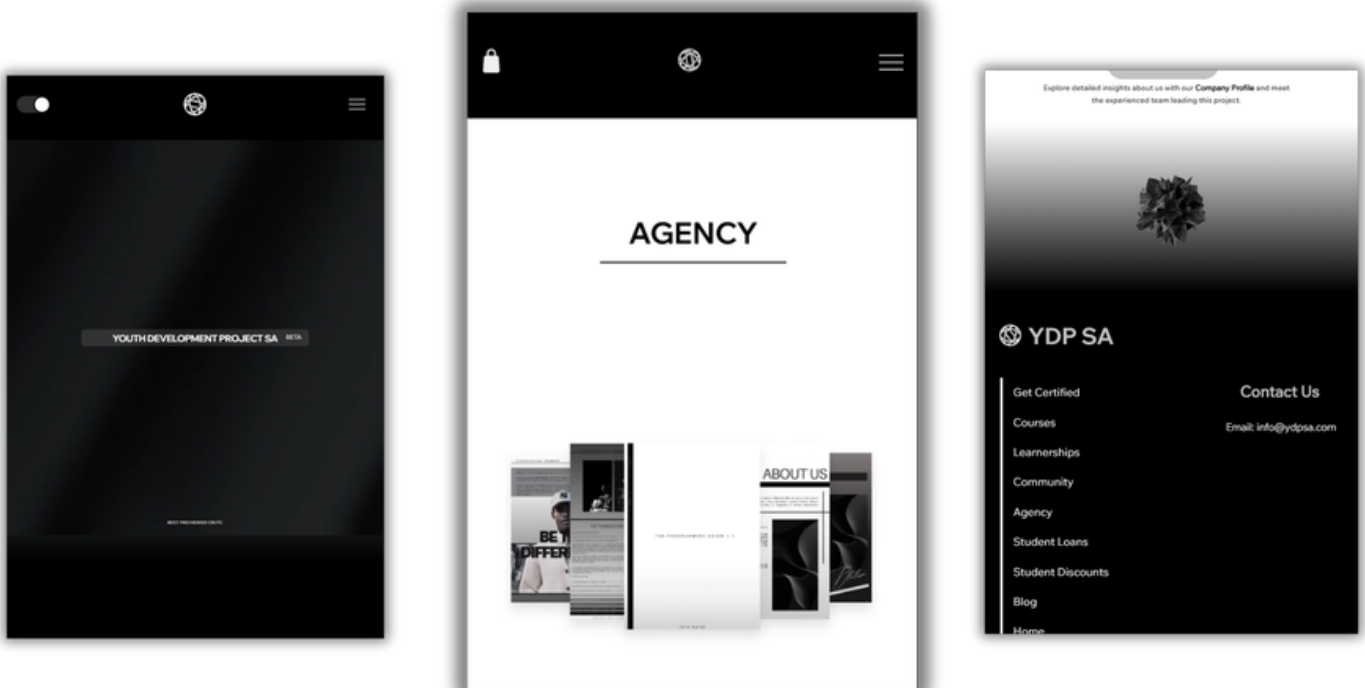
E-LEARNING PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AUTOMATION

Our system automatically handles:

- Program scheduling and calendar management
- Email/SMS reminders to all participants and stakeholders
- Progress tracking and reporting
- Certificate generation and distribution
- Attendance monitoring and follow-up communications
- Resource distribution and updates



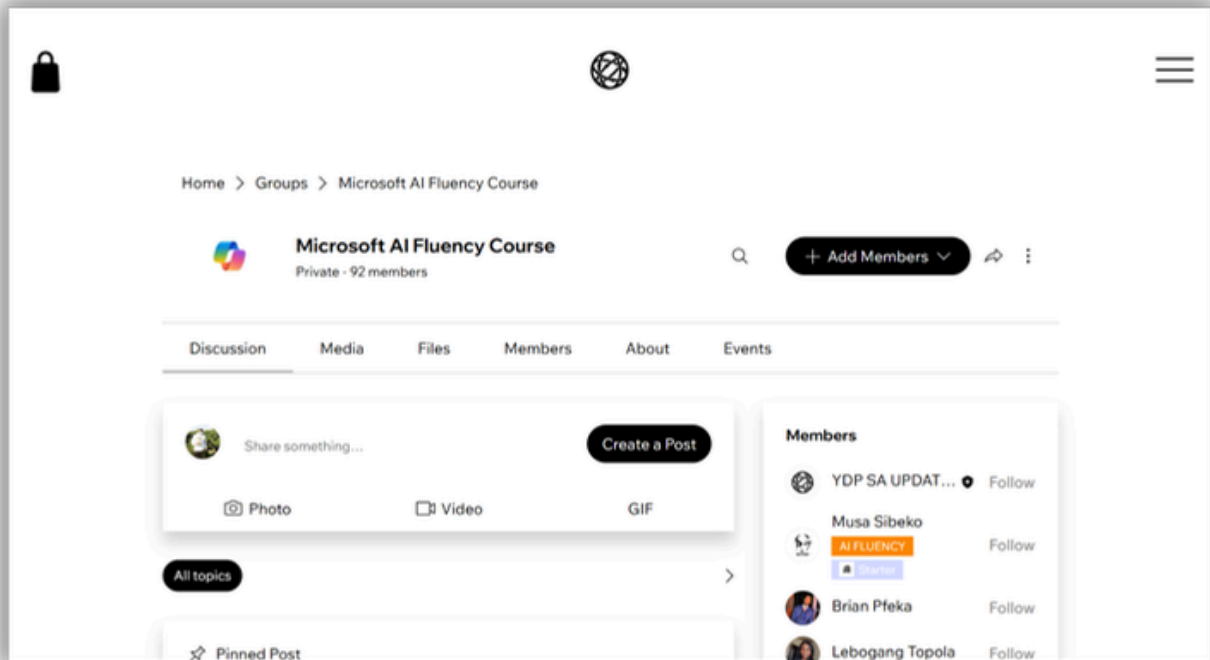
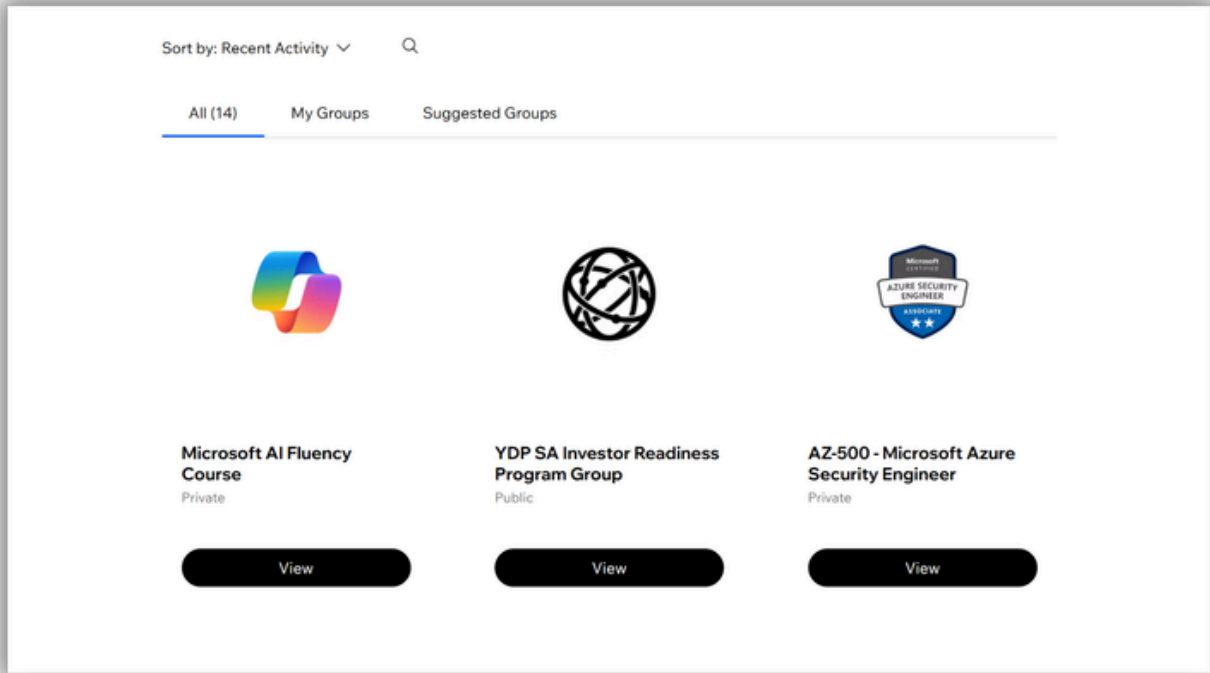
OUR SYSTEM HAS A POWERFUL BOOKING SYSTEM TO ENSURE ALL MEMBERS KEEP TRACK OF TIME AND LESSONS TO ENSURE NO ONE MISSES A LESSON AND ALL ATTENDEES ARE ACCOUNTED FOR



THE YDP SA PLATFORM WAS SINGLE HANDEDLY BUILT BY THE FOUNDER TO ENSURE IT ADDRESSES INDUSTRY DEMANDS IN EVERY COHORT. IN OUR UNWAVERED ABILITIES TO DELIVER SCALABLE SOFTWARE ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS FOR MAXIMIZED VALUE.



YDP SA | TRAINING PAGE



WE COLLECTIVELY HAVE WELL OVER **20 GROUPS** ACROSS OUR SOCIALS TO ENSURE WE **EXTEND EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT TAILORED COMMUNICATION** AT ALL TIMES.THESE GROUPS ALSO **PAVE A SETTING FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT** AND ESTABLISHMENT OF STUDY GROUPS.



→  **VIRTUAL EVENTS & HYBRID LEARNING MANAGEMENT BOOKING SYSTEM.**

This feature allows the organisation to host and manage events, from guest lectures to full e-learning classes, in a hybrid or fully virtual format. It includes live streaming, recording, and interactive tools to engage both on-site and remote attendees, including remote and disabled learners.

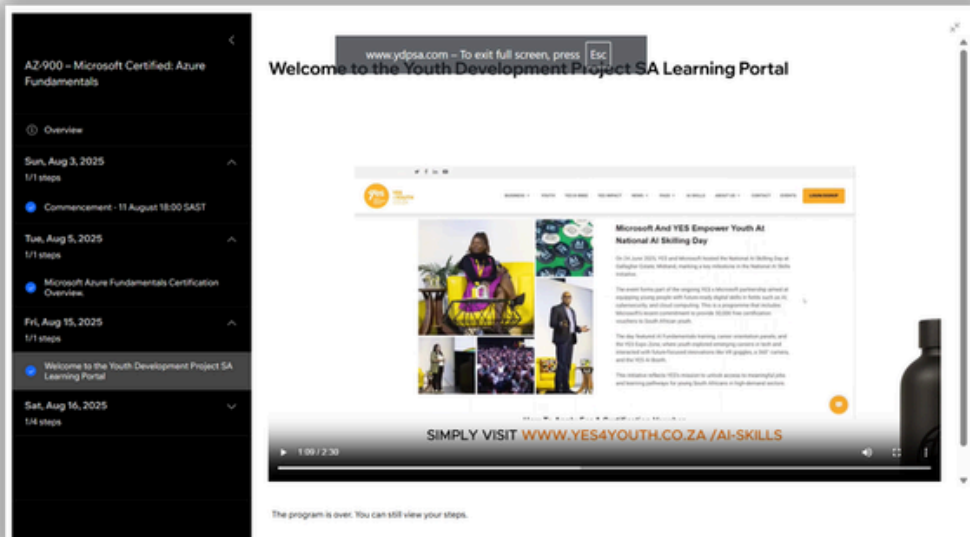
Use Case: A guest speaker from industry can address students across multiple campuses simultaneously via live / recorded stream, with remote students asking questions in real-time through a moderated Q&A. Candidates can also ask questions in pre-recorded programs that will be sent to relevant instructors.

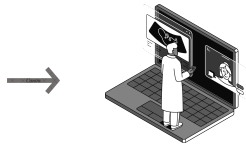
Key Benefits:

- Expands reach beyond physical campus limits.
- Recorded sessions for later review.
- Interactive tools for engagement (polls, Q&A).
- Accessible for students with disabilities.
- Improved SEO for all stakeholders.
- A dedicated groups page that synergizes all lessons with powerful and efficient navigation systems to ensure all stakeholders can find lessons, share insights to boost engagement, and more.
- Recorded lessons ensures no one misses an event.
- Multi-Booking and attendance tracking system presented in a form of a calendar.
- Gamified systems to boost productivity and engagement.

Direct Outcomes:

- Creates a more inclusive learning environment.
- Enriches education with diverse expert voices.
- Provides flexibility for diverse student needs.
- Builds a valuable archive of knowledge.
- Enhances the college's reputation for innovation.





VIRTUAL EVENTS & HYBRID LEARNING MANAGEMENT BOOKING SYSTEM.

A key reason for high unemployment among ICT graduates is the disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. We address this by integrating a world-class experiential learning platform.

Through our partnership with Skillable, every learner receives annual access to a library of over 1,300 hands-on labs in critical ICT fields, including:

- **Cybersecurity & Cyber Ranges:** Simulated attack and defend scenarios
- **Cloud & DevOps:** Real-world configurations on Azure and AWS
- **Data Science & AI:** Hands-on projects using Jupyter Notebooks and Azure AI services
- **Software Development:** Full-stack development environments

These labs allow learners to “learn by doing” in a risk-free environment, using the same tools they will encounter in the workplace. The cost (R4,285.79 per learner per year) is included in the training budget and integrated into the YDP SA e-learning platform, enabling live progress reporting and skill validation.

A full document will be attached for extensive review.



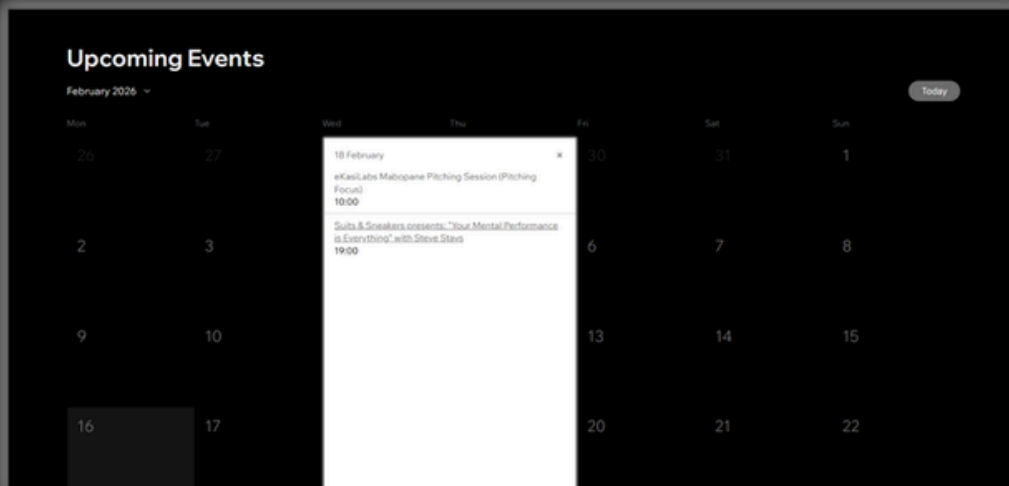
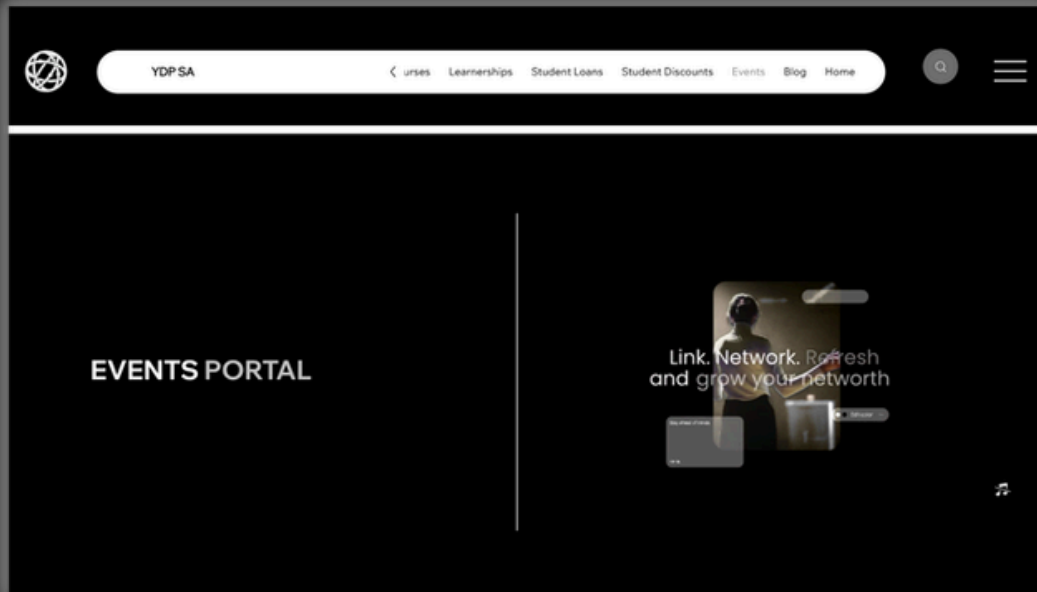


BENEFITS OF JOINING US

- Access to collaborative engaging support learning system.
- Access to potential promotions and sponsorships / learnerships and WIL.
- Higher chances of passing your certification and certification & certificate exams.
- Sponsored exam voucher navigation.
- Access to badges.
- Increased chances to Job Placements opportunities (Active from June 15 / 2026).
- Group study sessions to mitigate procrastination.
- Access to centralized syllabus tracker to boost productivity and planning.
- Access to community for help.
- Labs for real world experience for hands on training with real systems
- We make studying fun and impactful with Badges & vibrant communities.
- Enhanced chances for employment with internationally accredited certifications.
- Networking opportunities candidates.
- Informed insights in groups for future opportunities.
- Access to booking for training services by certified skills development representatives.

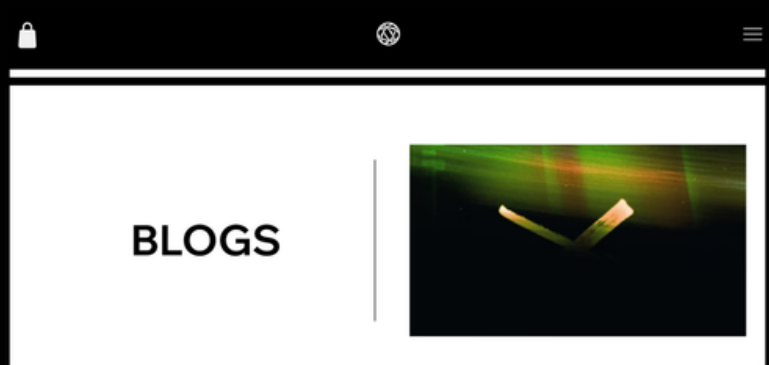
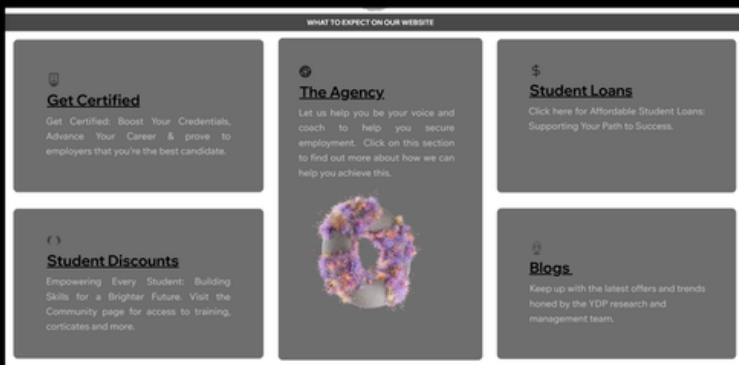


[TAP HERE TO GET A LOOK AND FEEL OF HOW WE MARKET OUR LMS STRUCTURE](#)



BUILD TO HELP LEADERS NETWORK, COLLABORATE AND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCALE IN THE PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE. LIVE 02.17.2026

FEEL FREE TO BROWSE OUR PLATFORM DESIGNED TO BE THE GATEWAY FOR ALL STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS LOOKING TO UPSKILL THEMSELVES: WWW.YDPSA.COM



FOR THE PEOPLE



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND JOB READINESS FRAMEWORK



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND JOB READINESS FRAMEWORK

STEP 1: CANDIDATE ACCUMULATION VIA SOCIAL PLATFORMS

Target students, graduates, and professionals strategically. In most cases opt for students in groups to fair better numbers.

STEP 2: CENTRALIZED ONBOARDING SYSTEM

We developed a centralized onboarding system using our CRM (DBMS) to efficiently register and categorize students based on their skill level, goals, and readiness. This ensures every student is accounted for and their progress is tracked from day one.

STEP 3: WEEKLY PROGRESS TRACKING DASHBOARDS

We implemented real-time dashboards and weekly progress check-ins that allow team leaders to monitor engagement, identify challenges early, and offer tailored support to keep everyone aligned with the group's objectives.

STEP 4: CLEAR ACADEMIC LOGISTICS ROADMAP

We created a clear and structured roadmap that outlines learning modules, group session schedules, objectives, and deadlines. This helps all students stay on track and removes any confusion about the logistics of the academic process.

STEP 5: WEEKLY SDR-LED MICROSOFT Q&A SESSIONS

Our qualified SDR leads weekly Q&A sessions focused on Microsoft products, CRM tools, and SDR best practices. These sessions ensure students get the clarity and technical support they need to remain confident and competent throughout the program. Please note this step is reserved at a separate fee that is priced per session.

STEP 6: COLLABORATIVE ONLINE PEER COMMUNITY

We built a vibrant online community using collaboration platforms like Teams or Zoom where students interact, ask questions, form study groups, and support one another. This makes learning more enjoyable and encourages teamwork.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND JOB READINESS FRAMEWORK

STEP 7: PERSONALIZED LEARNING PLANS AND MENTORSHIP

We assigned team leaders and mentors to students to guide them through personalized development plans. These plans are aligned with individual career aspirations and provide consistent motivation and direction.

STEP 8: BI-WEEKLY SKILLS ASSESSMENTS AND FEEDBACK

We will conduct practical skill assessments and give constructive feedback every week. This approach allows us to track development, celebrate progress, and make necessary adjustments to maximize student success.

STEP 9: JOB READINESS INITIATIVES

We run intensive initiatives focused on building real-world job readiness skills like CV preparation, LinkedIn optimization, personal branding, and mock interviews. These equip students to stand out in a competitive job market.

STEP 10: POTENTIAL JOB PLACEMENTS

With our extensive B2B network, we collaborate closely to place the right talent in meaningful jobs and actively combat the pressing issue of youth unemployment. Through potential partnerships such as with Microsoft. We aim to equip young professionals with cutting-edge, in-demand skills in areas like AI, cloud computing, and cybersecurity, empowering them to add real value to forward-thinking companies.



THE COMPLETE IT EDUCATION ECOSYSTEM

We Have Built More Than a Programme, We've Created a Comprehensive IT Career Launchpad for students.

By merging **SAQA's** nationally recognised qualifications with **CompTIA's** vendor-neutral certifications and **Microsoft's** industry-leading credentials, we deliver what your students and institution needs:

A complete educational ecosystem that guarantees employability.

- **For Students:** The freedom to choose their specialization path while building an unbeatable portfolio of credentials.
- **For Employers:** A guaranteed pipeline of talent that possesses both theoretical depth and practical, verified skills across multiple platforms.
- **For Partners:** A wide array of solutions for developing world-class IT talent that drives measurable ROI and impact.

This isn't just another training programme. It's the future of EdTech – comprehensive, flexible, and globally competitive, ensuring your students are not only locally but internationally accredited.

Our call to action remains: Let us formally launch this integrated model and begin developing the most sought-after IT professionals our country has ever seen.

The future of South African tech talent starts here. Let's build it together.



CONTACT DETAILS

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: INFO@YDPSA.COM

SALES ENQUIRIES: SALES@YDPSA.COM

[COMPANY LINKEDIN \(NEW\): YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SA](#)

[WEBSITE: WWW.YDPSA.COM](http://WWW.YDPSA.COM)

[WHATSAPP COMMUNITY: THE PROGRAMMERS UNION](#)

YDP SA PRESENTS

YDP SA STORE - MERCH | COMING SOON



COMING SOON

YDP SA PRESENTS



[TAP THE ICON TO VIEW OUR LINKEDIN](#)



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT THE ABOUT US PAGE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE COMPANY PROFILE

T'S & C'S APPLY



YDPSA

About Us

Agency

Skill Development

Training Community

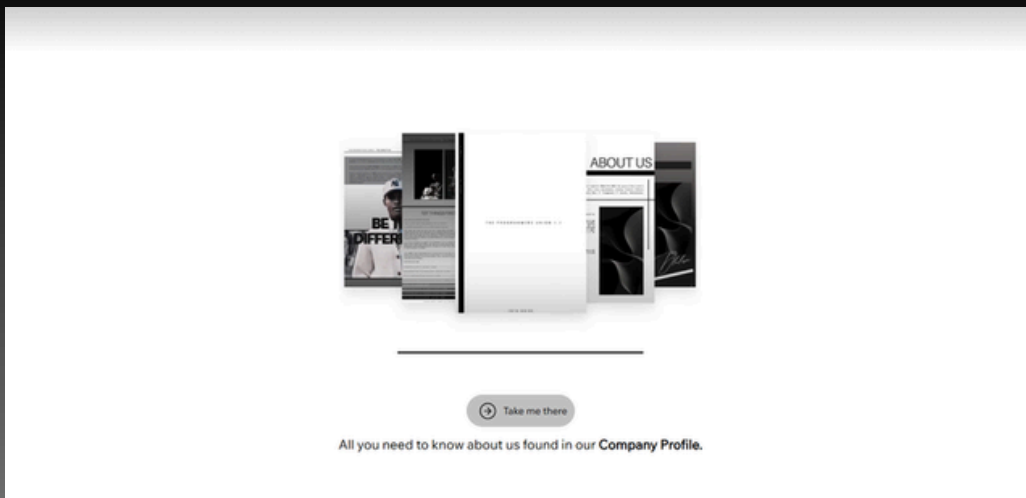
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ABOUT US



STEP 1: VISIT [YDPSA.COM/ABOUT-US](https://ydpsa.com/about-us)

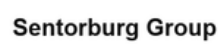


STEP 2: SCROLL DOWN AND SELECT THE 'TAKE ME THERE BUTTON'



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SA (PTY) LTD

SOME COMPANIES WE WORKED WITH





FOR THE PEOPLE