

Specialist High Skills Major

What is a Specialist High Skills Major?

A Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a type of specialized Ministry of Education approved program. A SHSM allows students to focus their knowledge and skills towards a certain economic sector. Students obtain certification recognized in those sectors, as they work towards meeting the requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Students who graduate with a SHSM designation on their diploma are prepared for success in a particular sector and in the postsecondary designation of their choice, whether it is apprenticeship training, college programs, university programs, or the workplace.

Every SHSM Includes Five Components

- 1) A package of required credits including:
 - 4 'major' credits for courses that provide knowledge and skills closely related to the sector of specialization;
 - 2 – 4 other required Ontario Curriculum credits particular to the SHSM's economic sector
 - 2 cooperative education credits
- 2) Compulsory certifications in a particular sector which are identified in each SHSM framework.
- 3) Experiential learning that could include job shadowing, job twinning, and work experience.
- 4) Use of the Ontario Skills Passport (OSP) to document the demonstration of essential skills and work habits.
- 5) 'Reach Ahead' opportunities to allow students to experience learning in their intended postsecondary destination, which can range from a day of attendance at a college, a university, or a workplace to completion of a dual credit, and/or Level 1 Apprenticeship in-school training.

How will the Specialist High Skills Major Benefit Students?

- A SHSM allows a student to experience a range of customized, career-focused learning opportunities in a specific sector. It enables a student to take courses in an area of interest related to a particular sector while working towards an OSSD.
- The focused learning experience of a SHSM program gives students the opportunity to explore, identify, and refine career goals and make informed decisions related to postsecondary education goals.
- The experiential learning opportunities provided in a SHSM enable students to refine their skills and improve their work habits, gain confidence in their ability to succeed, and see the connections between their studies, the real world, and their future careers. Students are also able to begin to establish relationships and networks in their chosen fields.
- Students who graduate with a SHSM can look forward to improved prospects after secondary school. The SHSM framework and content is becoming more recognized and supported by the economic sector, apprenticeship and training programs, colleges and universities.



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Health & Wellness: Fitness at North Dundas District High School



FAST (Fitness Activity Specialist Training) is a new program being offered to students of North Dundas District High School who are interested in pursuing a career in the health and wellness sector. This Specialist High Skills Major is a multi-pathway program based on a strong in-school physical education component, plus well-established community partnerships,

sector recognized certifications and reach ahead experiences. Students will have the opportunity to explore careers in the fields of Kinesiology, Physical Education, Recreation Leadership and Health Education. The employment opportunities in these fields are diverse and varied. They include nursing, medicine, personal training, fitness management, occupational therapy, sports and programming consultant, self employment, and many more.

Experiential Learning and Reach Ahead Opportunities

Students will participate in practical learning experiences including cooperative education, job shadowing, and job twinning to complement the skills learned in the Physical and Health Education Program. Students will be given opportunities to explore health and wellness careers and post-secondary programs through organized field trips such as touring fitness and medical facilities, taking YMCA workshops and classes or interviewing professionals. Students will receive certifications that will include Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Infection Control, Standard First Aid, and WHMIS. In addition, students may complete their YMCA Fitness Leadership: Basic Theory, Level 1 Coaching, and more.



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