# COMPONENTS OF THE SHSM

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A1.1 Overview: Components of an SHSM

Each SHSM consists of five required components:

1. **Bundled credits**
   A defined bundle of credits consisting of eight to 10 Grade 11 and Grade 12 credits, including cooperative education

2. **Certification and training**
   Sector-recognized certifications and training courses and programs

3. **Experiential learning and career exploration activities**
   Experiential learning and career exploration activities within the sector

4. **Reach ahead experiences**
   Learning experiences connected with the student’s postsecondary plans

5. **Essential Skills and work habits**
   Development of Essential Skills and work habits required in the sector, recorded using the tools in the Ontario Skills Passport (OSP)

In this section of the binder, you will find a comprehensive description of the five required components for all SHSMs.

**POLICY**
- Schools must offer an SHSM in all four pathways: apprenticeship training, college, university and workplace.
- Students must successfully complete all five required components to earn the SHSM designation on their diploma.
- No substitutions for any of the required components are permitted; however, school boards may add to the SHSM’s components to reflect a local emphasis.

**INSIGHT**
The requirements of each SHSM are unique and geared to a specific sector. The design of all SHSMs, however, follows this model and includes all five components. The specific requirements of each SHSM are detailed in Section A3: Sectors.
**Why five components?**
The five required components are designed to give students a rich and varied range of curriculum-based and experiential learning experiences, as a foundation for making a successful transition to their chosen postsecondary education or training program or occupation in the workplace.

**How were the components designed?**
These components were designed to ensure that each SHSM provides a quality program that postsecondary educational and employer partners value and that opens doors for graduates. The components were developed in consultation with representatives of business and industry sectors, unions, sector councils and associations, postsecondary and other educational institutions, training organizations, school boards, and other ministries.

**What do graduates receive?**
Students who complete the requirements for the OSSD and for the SHSM will receive an OSSD with a “Specialist High Skills Major” embossed red seal on it. Credits earned towards the SHSM are indicated on the Provincial Report Card, and completion of the SHSM is recorded on the Ontario Student Transcript (OST). In addition, students receive an SHSM Record outlining their achievement in the five required components.
A1.2 Bundled Credits

Each SHSM requires completion of a bundle of eight to 10 Grade 11 and Grade 12 credits.

The bundle consists of:
• four major credits
• two to four other required credits
• two cooperative education credits.

**How are credits organized?**
The credits in the bundle provide students with technical knowledge and skills particular to, and valued by, the SHSM sector. Therefore, the required credits for each SHSM will vary, depending on:
• the specific sector of each SHSM program
• the student’s chosen pathway to one of four postsecondary options – apprenticeship training, college, university, or the workplace – within each SHSM.

**Major Credits**

Each SHSM includes four major credits – two Grade 11 courses and two Grade 12 courses – that enable students to build a foundation of sector-focused knowledge and skills before entering a postsecondary destination.

These credits are specific to the destination and may be:
• Ontario curriculum credits
• ministry-approved locally developed credits (LDCs)
• ministry-approved credits for learning acquired outside the Ontario curriculum, such as dual credits.
**Are there opportunities for specialization?**

An SHSM can be designed to focus on a specific area within the given sector – for example, the SHSM–Business can focus on entrepreneurship, marketing, accounting, or some other area of business. This focus is achieved through the selection of the four major credits in the bundle. Depending on local circumstances, boards may elect to offer one or more variants of the SHSM in a given sector, each with a particular area of focus. Where a choice of focus areas is offered, students are able to select one.

**Other Required Credits**

In addition to the four major credits, each SHSM student must complete two, three, or four other required credits from the Ontario curriculum.

For each of these other required credits, the teachers of these courses incorporate a minimum of six hours of learning that contextualizes the subjects’ curriculum expectations to the SHSM sector.

**How do CLAs benefit students?**

CLAs enable adaptation using sector-specific content, to meet one or more curriculum expectations. CLAs in the other required credits make the course content authentic, relevant, and enable students to connect their learning to their SHSM sector.

**How are CLAs delivered?**

CLAs can be delivered in a wide variety of ways:

- to an entire class, some of which are SHSM students (recommended)
- to an entire class, all of which are SHSM students
- to individual or small groups of SHSM students within an existing class
- to individual SHSM students, through e-learning or independent study.

**TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

Visit the Ontario SHSM e-Community website at http://community.elearningontario.ca or the OERB website at http://resources.elearningontario.ca for examples of CLAs created by educators across Ontario.

**SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE**

Before the CLA is developed or delivered to the students, it is beneficial to have the teachers of the other required credits familiarize themselves with the sector-specific knowledge and skills of the SHSM major credits.

For example, in a Construction SHSM, the math teacher might visit the courses’ home building site to observe the application of mathematical principles in the calculation of the rise, run, and length of roof rafters.

By contextualizing courses, teachers of the other required credits, such as English or mathematics, gain insight into the relationship between their subject and the sector and can then help the SHSM student make connections between course work and their sector.
**Do CLAs require approval?**

The CLA’s posted to the OERB and SHSM e-Community websites are reviewed and approved by the ministry prior to posting. A CLA template has been provided in Section C: Resources, to help you develop a CLA to obtain ministry approval. CLA’s developed by teachers for use with their students should follow the same guidelines as those submitted to the ministry for approval.

**Cooperative Education Credits**

Cooperative education courses provide authentic learning experiences in a workplace setting that enable students to refine, extend, apply, and practise the sector-specific knowledge and skills acquired in the bundle of credits.

**How many credits are required?**

Each SHSM pathway requires that students complete a minimum of two credits in cooperative education in a work placement in the sector. These credits must be tied back to the courses in the bundle of credits or to the Career Studies or Civics course. The Grade 10 Career Studies course can serve as the related course for the two cooperative education credits required in all SHSM programs. Either the Career Studies or Civics course can serve as the related course for the two cooperative education credits required for the SHSM sectors of Non-profit, Environment, and Justice, Community Safety and Emergency Services. More than two credits are recommended if the student’s timetable permits.
A1.3 Certification and Training

All SHSMs require six or seven sector-recognized certifications that have been identified through extensive sector consultations. They include:

- three or four compulsory certifications or training courses/programs (e.g., first aid, CPR)
- the required number of remaining certifications, which are selected from a list of elective certifications or training courses/programs.

**POLICY**

The identified certifications and training courses/programs are specific to each SHSM. Boards and schools offering an SHSM may not:

- substitute other programs for the listed certifications and training
- reduce the number of certifications and training programs/courses.

School boards and schools may, however, provide opportunities for students to earn additional certifications and complete additional training. This enables boards and schools to customize their programs to reflect a local focus.

**How do students benefit?**

This component of the SHSM enables students to acquire the knowledge and skills related to safe work habits and sector-specific training. In addition, students with sector-recognized certifications and training have an advantage when entering the workforce.

**What delivery criteria should be followed?**

Certification and training courses/programs must:

- be delivered by a certified trainer – a person recognized by the certification provider or by the sector as an authority (this requirement does not apply to the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System [WHMIS])
- include an assessment and evaluation component
- include, wherever possible, documentation such as a certificate or other proof of completion for the student’s portfolio and the student’s SHSM Record, which will indicate the title of each certification earned or training course/program completed
- be recorded and include documentation of the number of hours involved, and the date the certification/training was completed.

**FIND IT!**

The requirements for certification and training recognized and recommended by the sector are described for each SHSM in Section A3: Sectors.
**What forms of delivery might be considered?**
The following table illustrates the factors schools and boards may want to consider in selecting a certification delivery model.

**Certification and Training: Delivery Models**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Model</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry delivered</td>
<td>• Is current • Is sector recognized • Allows for a hands-on component • Provides exposure to the sector • Provides authentic learning</td>
<td>• May be expensive • May present a scheduling challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online training</td>
<td>• Is accessible • Can be completed any time, during the day, night, or weekends • Requires little supervision • Can be cost-effective</td>
<td>• Lacks a hands-on component • May not have accommodations for learners with special needs • May be expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-delivered by industry/education partner and secondary school</td>
<td>• Can be differentiated according to learner needs • Fosters partnerships</td>
<td>• Requires coordination and scheduling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train the Trainer (teacher is certified to deliver the certification or training program)</td>
<td>• Is cost-effective • Is sustainable and builds capacity • Is more easily embedded in curriculum delivery • Allows for a hands-on component • Is easy to schedule • Can be differentiated according to learner needs</td>
<td>• Lacks sector exposure when no sector representative participates in the certification • May not be perceived as genuine or current by students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A1.4 Experiential Learning and Career Exploration

The SHSM experiential learning and career exploration requirement consists of planned learning activities that take place outside the traditional classroom setting. Experiential learning may take a variety of forms, including:

- career exploration activities
- job shadowing
- job twinning
- work experience
- virtual work experience.

**POLICY**

Although cooperative education is also a form of experiential learning, students must participate in additional experiential learning and career exploration activities in order to meet the SHSM requirements. Experiential learning activities cannot also be counted toward hours of community service required for graduation.

**How do students benefit?**

Experiential learning and career exploration activities give students opportunities to explore, observe, participate in, and reflect on a variety of sector-specific experiences and careers. These activities also enable students enrolled in the SHSM to find out about the opportunities available in careers that interest them.

**TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

The following resources are available on the ministry website:

- **Workplace safety coverage**: Policy/Program Memorandum No. 76A, September 27, 2000 – www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/76a.html
- **Minimum age to work in and visit Ontario workplaces**: SHSM Guide section of the Ministry of Education website – www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/specialist.html
What placement criteria should be followed?
Experiential learning placements for students must be arranged by the school and must meet the following requirements if the experience exceeds one day:

- A teacher must assess a placement before the student is assigned to it to ensure that the placement offers a positive learning environment and a safe workplace.
- The student must have Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage through the ministry or the workplace.

What forms of experiential learning might be considered?
The following table summarizes the forms of experiential learning and related programs you may want to consider:

Forms of Experiential Learning and Career Exploration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration activities</td>
<td>Activities that allow students to explore career opportunities through work-site tours, career conferences or competitions (e.g., Skills Canada), simulation activities (e.g., Junior Achievement), and contact with a career mentor</td>
<td>Preparation for every activity, including learning expectations, activity protocols, and health and safety. Opportunity for students to reflect on the activity. Completed field-trip form and transportation agreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE
Experiential learning and career exploration activities could include the following:

- participation in a technological skills competition
- one-on-one observation of a cooperative education student in a placement in the sector (example of job twinning)
- a day-long observation of a person working in the sector (example of job shadowing)
- a one- or two-week work experience with a member of an industry association or a professional in the sector (example of work experience)
- a career talk by a local sector representative
- attendance at a career fair or a conference hosted by the sector
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job shadowing</strong></td>
<td>One on one <strong>observation</strong> of a worker at a place of employment.</td>
<td>Teacher selection of an appropriate placement in a safe work environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-half to one day (in some cases up to three days)</td>
<td>Preparation for the placement, including review of learning expectations, activity protocols, and health and safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May be incorporated into any credit course</td>
<td>Opportunity for students to reflect on the experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counts towards the experiential learning component required for an SHSM</td>
<td>Completed field-trip form and transportation agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WSIB coverage if placement is more than one day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job twinning</strong></td>
<td>One on one <strong>observation</strong> of a cooperative education student at his or her placement</td>
<td>Pairing of a student with a cooperative education student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-half to one day</td>
<td>Preparation for the placement, including review of learning expectations, activity protocols, and health and safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May be incorporated into any credit course</td>
<td>Opportunity for students to reflect on the experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counts towards the experiential learning component required for an SHSM</td>
<td>Completed field-trip form and transportation agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work experience/virtual</strong></td>
<td>A planned learning opportunity that provides students with relatively short-term work experience. Virtual work experience is facilitated through the use of communications technology from the school.</td>
<td>Placement assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>work experience</strong></td>
<td>One to four weeks</td>
<td>Pre-placement instruction addressing job-readiness skills, placement expectations, and health and safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity for students to reflect on the experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Development of a learning plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WSIB coverage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students pursuing an SHSM must have opportunities for “reach ahead” experiences connected with their postsecondary plans.

**What are reach ahead experiences?**

These experiences enable Grade 11 and 12 students to gain confidence in their ability to be successful, refine skills and work habits, and make informed choices about future careers and next steps. Reach ahead opportunities could include:

- interviewing an employee in the field of work the SHSM student is considering
- visiting an approved apprenticeship delivery agent to investigate a program of interest to the SHSM student
- interviewing a college or university student enrolled in a program of interest to the SHSM student
- attending a number of college or university classes in the student’s area of interest
- attending a conference or workshop held by the sector
- completing a dual credit course, which counts for credit towards both the OSSD and a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, or Level 1 apprenticeship (dual credit courses are ministry funded and subject to separate approval policies and procedures).
A1.6 Development of Essential Skills and Work Habits

SHSM programs help students develop the Essential Skills and work habits that will prepare them for lifelong success, using the OSP as a planning and documentation tool.

What is the OSP?
The OSP is a free, bilingual, Web-based resource that provides clear descriptions of the Essential Skills and work habits important for work, learning, and daily living.

What are Essential Skills?
Essential Skills are the generic skills used in virtually all occupations and many aspects of daily life. They enable people to perform tasks required in their jobs and to participate fully in the workplace and the community. Essential Skills provide the foundation for learning other skills, such as technical skills and job- or workplace-specific skills, and they help people adjust to change. The OSP also includes important work habits such as working safely, working as part of a team, reliability, and initiative.

The Essential Skills and work habits described in the OSP are illustrated in the table below.

The Ontario Skills Passport: Essential Skills and Work Habits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Skills</th>
<th>Work Habits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Text</td>
<td>Working safely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Use</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Use</td>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Working independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>Self-advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money Math</td>
<td>Customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling or Budgeting and Accounting</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement and Calculation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerical Estimation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Task Planning and Organizing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding Information</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The OSP provides sample tasks for each Essential Skill and work habit – in work, learning, and everyday life contexts – and details how workers use Essential Skills on the job. The OSP Action Plan for Learners is a planning tool that identifies the key OSP resources to help students build confidence and competence and make connections between their studies at school and their prospective careers.

**How is the OSP used in an SHSM?**

Students use the OSP to learn about Essential Skills and work habits, occupation-related tasks, and careers relevant to the SHSM. Teachers provide students with opportunities to use the OSP to assess, practise, and build their Essential Skills and work habits and gather evidence of their demonstration of them during the SHSM experience.

**The OSP in cooperative education programs**

Students beginning an SHSM cooperative education program will create an OSP Work Plan related to their goals, interests, and particular SHSM sector. The student’s work placement supervisor is encouraged to assess and record the Essential Skills and work habits demonstrated by the student, using the OSP documentation tools.

**INSIGHT**

- Sector representatives consulted on the development of the SHSMs emphasized the importance of the Essential Skills and work habits.
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has identified and validated the Essential Skills described in the OSP. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities co-sponsor the OSP.
- Essential Skills and work habits are transferable from school to work or to further education or training, as well as from job to job and sector to sector.

**TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

Visit the OSP website at http://skills.edu.gov.on.ca to find all the resources described in this section of the binder, including:

- OSP Action Plan for Learners
- OSP Work Plan
- OSP Tracker
- Essential Skills and work habits reference sheets
- Many other tools and resources.
The OSP in experiential learning and career exploration

The OSP can also be used effectively in conjunction with experiential learning and career exploration activities. For example, students can use the Essential Skills and work habits reference sheets, videos, and occupational profiles and self-assessment tools to learn about Essential Skills and work habits and see how they are used in everyday life and on the job in careers relevant to the SHSM. These activities give students opportunities to explore, observe, participate in, and reflect on a variety of sector-specific experiences and careers. They also enable students to increase their awareness of and develop the Essential Skills and work habits required in the sector. An experiential learning assignment or task could require students to identify examples of how the Essential Skills are applied in specific trades and administrative and management occupations – for example, the Essential Skills used by an agricultural equipment mechanic, greenhouse operator, or veterinarian in an agricultural business.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE

A skills-based résumé is beneficial for students in preparation for interviews and meetings with employers. Such a résumé would clearly indicate their attainment of Essential Skills and work habits. Students can also use the OSP Tracker to plan opportunities for skills development during high school and after graduation.

About Occupations

Although SHSM programs are sector specific, many different occupations are available within any given sector. Examples of occupations within each specific sector are provided in the SHSM program descriptions in Section 7: Sectors, sorted by the type of postsecondary education or training the occupation would normally require, and including National Occupation Codes (NOCs). The National Occupational Classification is a system that describes and classifies all occupations in Canada using the four-digit NOCs.

This system and the codes are the authoritative source for occupational information in Canada. Entering one of these four-digit codes in the “Quick Search” box in the left-hand menu on the National Occupational Classification website (www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC-CNP) results in occupational information related to that career.

For more information on occupations:
- go to the OSP website at http://skills.edu.gov.on.ca
- click on “Occupations and Tasks” in the navigation bar
- select “Sorted by NOC” and “Next”
- click on the “Sample Workplace Tasks” checkmark for one of the occupations to view a description of the occupation, an overview of the Essential Skills required in the occupation, a list of sample tasks for the occupation, and assessment tools and other career and employment information related to the occupation.
A2 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

A2.1 Recording Student Progress

A2-3
A2.1 Recording Student Progress

Tracking and documenting are essential to ensure that students’ achievement of the SHSM components are recorded in an accurate and timely manner. Students’ SHSM achievement is recorded in the following official documents:

**Provincial Report Card:** The section of the Provincial Report Card titled “Completion of Requirements for Graduation” records and tracks the required bundle of credits and identifies the sector for the SHSM.

**Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD):** Students who have successfully completed the requirements for an SHSM and an OSSD will be awarded an OSSD with an embossed red SHSM seal. Returning graduate students are not eligible to obtain a second diploma. For students earning the SHSM designation after graduation, the OST and SHSM Record will document this successful completion.

**Ontario Student Transcript (OST):** When a student has successfully completed a credit in the SHSM program, the credit is denoted on the student’s OST with an “H” in the “Notes” column. As well, the name of the SHSM (e.g., “Specialist High Skills Major–Manufacturing”) will be entered in the box labelled “Specialized Program” in the bottom section of the OST once the student has earned the SHSM.

**SHSM Record:** Students graduating with an SHSM designation on their diploma will also receive an SHSM Record, which provides details regarding their achievement of the five required components – the bundled credits, certifications and training courses/programs, experiential learning and career exploration activities, reach ahead experiences, and use of the OSP to document their demonstration of Essential Skills and work habits. The SHSM Record is given to students upon graduation, and a copy is filed in the student’s Ontario Student Record (OSR).

**What happens when a student leaves the program, board, or school?**

When a student opts out of the SHSM, transfers to another school, or graduates without completing all the components, a copy of the SHSM Record with the notation “partially completed” shows the requirements completed to date. This is filed in the student’s OSR and is forwarded to the new school if applicable. In the event that a student has not achieved all the required components of the SHSM at graduation, the SHSM Record becomes a useful document, as it demonstrates his or her achievement of the SHSM components.