



Academic Qualification & Industry Certification: Integrating education with practice

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Business Computing programmes offer hands-on degrees and diplomas. We give our students a well-rounded academic basis from which to move into industry. They do face a particular hurdle though. It has been said that some employers, particularly in New Zealand, express reluctance to employ students without industry experience.

Industry certification, on the other hand, suggests that a graduate has competence in using the products of the certifying company. This is no guarantee that the graduate will have the flexibility, or depth of knowledge, to update their skills to cope with changing technological or business requirements.

In bringing these two sides of the coin together, many Polytechnics and Institutes of Technology (ITPs) are now looking at ways of offering academic qualifications that also provide our students with industry certification.

Novell started their CNI certification programme in 1986. In the early 1990's they added CNE & CNA qualifications. Other companies have followed suit, most notably Microsoft and Cisco. Just as there is a wide variety of certification programmes, there is also a wide variety of ways these programmes operate. Each philosophy interacts with academic qualifications in different ways.

The stage is education. The actors are vendors, software publishers, training providers, and customers. (Did someone mention the Government?) We are educators with a practical and technical orientation, and we have close ties to industry. This poster introduces the multi-billion dollar international business that is industry certification, and shows how we, as educators fit in.