



## Specialist High Skills Major Fact Sheet

The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program, which is part of the Ministry of Education's Student Success initiative in the province of Ontario, has been introduced to offer province-wide specialized programs in specific ministry-identified sectors to support the success of all students. The SHSM Program has a number of required components, designed to give students a "leg-up" to pursue post-secondary opportunities in each of the identified sectors, valuing all four destinations; apprenticeship, college, university and the workplace. The components are as follows:

- **Bundled Credits:** Each SHSM program offers students a bundle of 9 - 11 credits, including:
  - 4 "major" credits in the identified sector; 2 in Grade 11 and 2 in Grade 12
  - 2 or 3 supporting credits in English, math or science that will be delivered in the context of that sector
- **Contextualized Learning Activities:** Supporting credits, such as English, math, science or business include units and other opportunities for SHSM students to learn in the context of the sector of their program
  - i.e. a student taking a SHSM Construction program completes a unit in their math course determining the proper measurements to build a construction project
- **Certifications and Awareness Training:** Sector-recognized certifications related to the major and selected from a list, both generic and specific, to support the sector (i.e. WHMIS, First Aid, CAD / CAM Training)
- **Experiential Learning Opportunities:**
  - Job-shadowing, job-twinning, and work experience
  - Minimum of 2 cooperative education credits linked to the major
  - Field trips, other workplace experiences for students to explore careers related to that sector
- Documentation of Essential Skills and Work Habits through the **Ontario Skills Passport**
- **Reach Ahead Experiences:** Within the student's chosen post-secondary destination, ranging from a few hours to full courses (i.e. dual credit programs)
- Clearly valuing and providing a **pathway to all four post-secondary destinations**, apprenticeship, college, university and work

### SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJOR PROGRAMS IN HALTON

Arts and Culture; Business; Construction; Energy; Environment; Health & Wellness; Horticulture & Landscaping; Hospitality & Tourism; Information & Communications Technology; Justice, Community Safety and Emergency Services; Manufacturing; Non-Profit; Sports and Transportation

**For more information on Specialist High Skills Major programs visit [schooltocareer.ca](http://schooltocareer.ca) or <http://www.hdsb.ca/Pathways/Pages/Home.aspx>**

# Pathways Program Application Checklist

Your Guidance Counsellor or Pathways Key Contact can help to provide you with the information.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ OEN: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Pathway: Apprenticeship / College / University / Workplace

Pathways Program: \_\_\_\_\_ SHSM ☐ OYAP ☐

Program Lead Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Month / Year

Name of your school's Pathways Key Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☐ Register for the program on [www.OnSORTS.ca](http://www.OnSORTS.ca). You will need your OEN and birth date. (You can do this yourself, with your Pathways Key Contact, Guidance Counsellor or Program Lead teacher.)
  - ☐ Get the application package from your school's Pathways Key Contact person, or download it from [www.schooltocareer.ca](http://www.schooltocareer.ca).
  - ☐ See your Guidance counsellor or Pathways Key Contact to book an interview through OnSORTS
  - ☐ Get a credit counselling summary and attendance profile from your Pathways Key Contact or Guidance Counsellor.
  - ☐ Prepare a cover letter, résumé and reference page, according to the instructions in the application package.
  - ☐ Attend the interview with the Program Lead Teacher – take your cover letter, résumé, references, credit counselling summary and attendance profile with you. You may also want to bring a parent or guardian with you to your interview.
  - ☐ Once accepted to the program, make an appointment with your guidance counsellor to discuss your course selections and timetable.

## **Important Notes:**

- You can check your program status on [www.OnSORTS.ca](http://www.OnSORTS.ca) at any time.
- There may be additional costs involved for your program (e.g. uniform, personal hand tools, etc.). Program Lead teachers can provide information regarding additional costs and financial aid, if needed.

# Cover Letter

The cover letter will accompany your résumé, which you will take to the interview for your Pathways program. The purpose of the cover letter is to tell the Program Lead teacher why you are interested in their program, to outline aspects of your interests, experience, skills and education as they relate to the program, and to demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively in writing. Pay careful attention to spelling and grammar, and be sure to have someone look it over for you. You can use My Blueprint to assist you with this. You can log in to [www.myblueprint.ca](http://www.myblueprint.ca) with your school log in.

The format of a cover letter should be like a formal business letter. **Use the guidelines and example that follow to help you prepare your cover letter:**

## **Header:**

Your personal information can be formatted to look exactly like the top of your résumé, or you can put your return address at the top, as in a business letter (see example that follows). After your address, press “enter” 2 times, and then type the date. Press “enter” 5 times and then put the name and address of the Program Lead teacher (school address). Press “enter” 2 times and then write the Salutation: Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. (write the name of the Program Lead teacher). (If you don't know the name of the Program Lead teacher, you can find this out from the Pathways Contact at your school.) Press “enter” 2 times, and then start your first paragraph.

## **Paragraph 1: The Opening**

- State the name of the program in which you are interested, and how you learned about it
- Explain why you are interested in the program, including some or all of the following:
  - Your long-term education and career goals
  - What advantage(s) you think the program will provide to you. In other words, how you feel you will benefit from the program
  - What you find most interesting about the program, or think you will enjoy the most.

## **Paragraph 2: The Sales Pitch**

- Market yourself! This is your chance to tell the teacher what you have to offer, including some or all of the following:
  - Describe your skills and abilities and match them to the program
  - Describe your personal strengths
  - Identify any related courses you have taken
  - Tell them about the positive activities, programs or volunteer work in which you are or have been involved

## **Paragraph 3: The closing**

- Summarize why you think you would be an excellent candidate for the program
- Thank the Program Lead teacher for considering your application

Finish with “Sincerely”, press “enter” 5 times, then type your full first and last name. In the space between “Sincerely” and your typed name, write your signature. Please see the next page for a sample cover letter.

## Sample Cover Letter

John Cook  
5555 Thompson Road  
Milton, ON  
L7T 4EZ

September 8, 2012

Mrs. M. Buffet  
Craig Kielburger Secondary School  
1151 Ferguson Ave.  
Milton, ON  
L9T 7V8

Dear Mrs. Buffet

I am very pleased to apply to the Hospitality and Tourism Specialist High Skills Major Program. I heard about the program at the assembly last week. I enjoy cooking and think the SHSM program will help me to learn more about it. I also think it will help me to decide if a career as a chef is a good choice for me.

So far, I have taken cooking classes in grades 9 and 10 and I really enjoyed them. I would also like to try baking. I am very good at doing many different things at once, which is important in the kitchen. I also follow instructions really well. I work really well with other people and am a very hard worker, so I think I would make a good member of a kitchen team.

I feel that my interests, personality and work ethic make me an excellent candidate for the Hospitality and Tourism Specialist High Skills Major program. I think I would enjoy all of the additional activities and experiences, as well as the courses. Thank you for considering me for the program.

Sincerely,

(add handwritten signature here)

John Cook

# Résumé

- Your résumé is a chance to make a very good first impression.
- The sample format below is recommended, in order to highlight your strengths and experiences. There is no absolutely “correct” way to do a résumé. However, it should always be customized, or changed, for the particular position for which you are applying.
- In all cases, it is extremely important to make sure it is error free – have someone proofread it for you.
- Try to keep it to one page.
- Be sure that you have an email address that is professional.
- You can use My Blueprint to assist you with this. You can log in to [www.myblueprint.ca](http://www.myblueprint.ca) with your school log in.

Please see the sample résumé template below to help you to create your own résumé

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Name  
Address  
City, Province  
Postal Code  
Phone/cell number  
Email address

**Objective:**     *state your career objective*

**Strengths:** or **Skills:**

- *List 3 – 5 strengths or skills that you possess, in bullet form.*
- *Try to choose things that would be important for success in the specific program or career area such as computer skills, good communication skills, use of trade-specific equipment, problem solving ability, teamwork, etc*

**Work Experience:**

- *List your work experiences in reverse chronological order: i.e. put the most recent first.*
- *Describe the duties you performed, using past tense verbs (use present tense only for current work).*
- *You can include both paid and unpaid work in this section, or you can include a separate section for any volunteer work you may also want to highlight.*

**Accomplishments:**

- *List any certifications, honours or qualifications you have*

**Education:**

Year                      Name of School, current grade

**Interests:**

- *List several of the types of activities you enjoy in your free time (sports, hobbies, etc.)*

# Sample Résumé

John Cook  
655 Dairy Road  
Milton, ON  
L9T 4Z7  
905-555-5555  
[John.cook112@gmail.com](mailto:John.cook112@gmail.com)

**Objective:** To learn more about the hospitality industry with the hope of pursuing a career as a chef

**Strengths:**

- Excellent team player
- Hard-worker
- Good multi-tasker
- Fast learner

**Work Experience:**

2011-present	McDonald's – Milton, Ontario <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare food</li><li>• Take customer orders</li><li>• Clean restaurant</li></ul>
2009-2010	Childcare <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 regular customers</li><li>• Ensured that the children were safe at all times</li><li>• Prepared meals and fed children</li><li>• Ensured that the routine set out by the parents was followed</li></ul>
2009	Milton Fair <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sold and served refreshments</li></ul>

**Accomplishments:**

2011	St John's Ambulance First Aid Certification
2011-2012	Honour Roll at E. C. Drury High School, Grade 9
2011	Piano – Grade 5, Royal Conservatory of Music

**Education:**

2012-2013	Craig Kielburger Secondary School, Grade 10
2011-2012	E.C. Drury High School, Grade 9

**Interests:** Snowboarding, reading, cooking

## References

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pathways Program: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide 3 references. Ask each Referee to sign the form and include a short comment of one or two sentences reflecting on why they would recommend you for the program.**

Referee's Name (print)	Referee's signature	Position	Contact number or email
1.			
Comment:			
2.			
Comment:			
3.			
Comment:			

# Pathways Program Overview - Sample Timetable

Type of Program: OYAP      SHSM      Specialty Program

Name of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Runs (*circle as appropriate*):  
 Grade 10: Semester 1 and/or Semester 2  
 Grade 11: Semester 1 and/or Semester 2  
 Grade 12: Semester 1 and/or Semester 2

**SAMPLE TIMETABLE:**      **LEGEND** \* courses that MUST occur at the Program School  
 # courses that will are only offered in the periods  
 \$ courses that include a CLA

## Grade 11:

Semester 1	Semester 2	SUMMER
P0:	P0:	
P1:	P1:	
P2:	P2:	
P3:	P3:	
P4:	P4:	
P5:	P5:	
P6:	P6:	

## Grade 12:

Semester 1	Semester 2	SUMMER
P0:	P0:	
P1:	P1:	
P2:	P2:	
P3:	P3:	
P4:	P4:	
P5:	P5:	
P6:	P6:	

Possible Experiential Learning Opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_