

 SAIT + PAPER LEAF

# A user-centric approach to program exploration

How we transformed the student experience on [sait.ca](https://www.sait.ca)

# Who we are



Our collaboration is focused on engaging with students to significantly enhance their online experience.



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A photograph of the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) campus. In the foreground, a modern glass and steel building, identified as the 'SAIT Polytechnic Parking Garage', features a prominent glass staircase. The background shows a large, historic brick building with Gothic-style architecture, including a central tower and multiple flags flying. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with light clouds, and green trees and grass are visible in the mid-ground.

# About SAIT

The **Southern Alberta Institute of Technology** in Calgary specializes in practical education, offering degrees, diplomas, certificates, apprenticeship training, and continuing education.

# The project

**Objective:** Identify user-centric enhancements for [sait.ca](http://sait.ca) to improve students' ability to discover programs, gather and understand information that matters to them, and apply.



**you**

**≠**

**user**

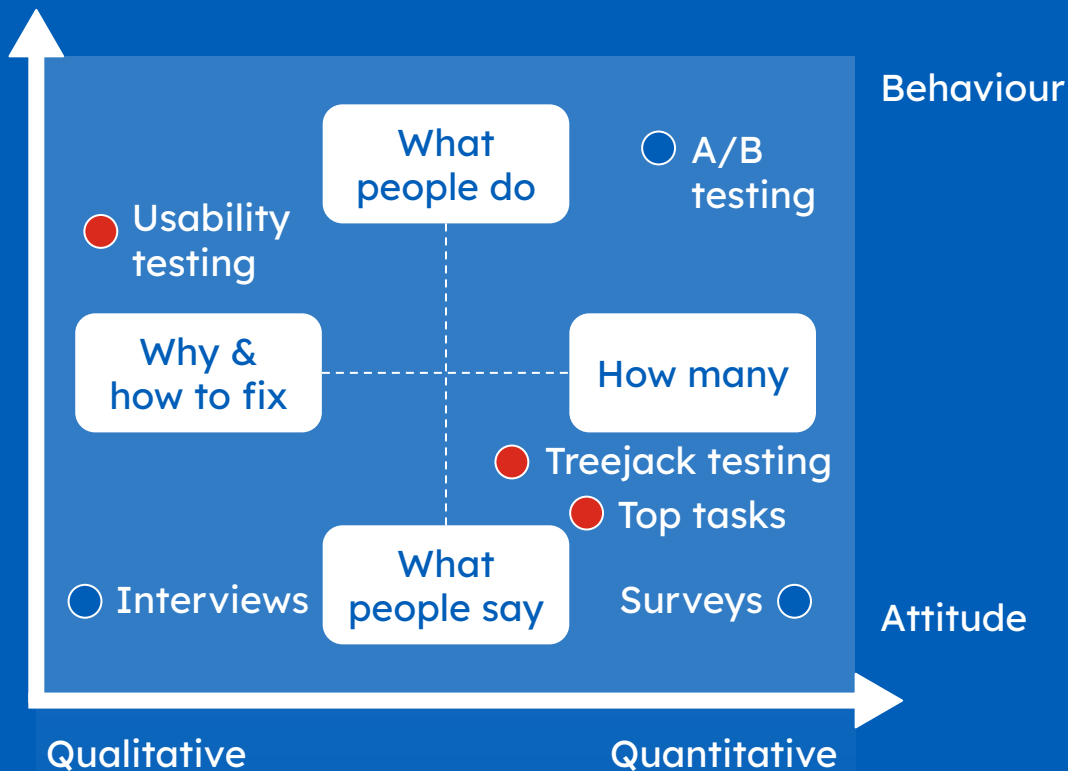
# Research

Usability testing

Top task sort

Content audit

Treejack testing



Behaviour

○ A/B testing

● Usability testing

What people do

Why & how to fix

How many

● Treejack testing

● Top tasks

○ Interviews

What people say

○ Surveys

Attitude

Qualitative

Quantitative

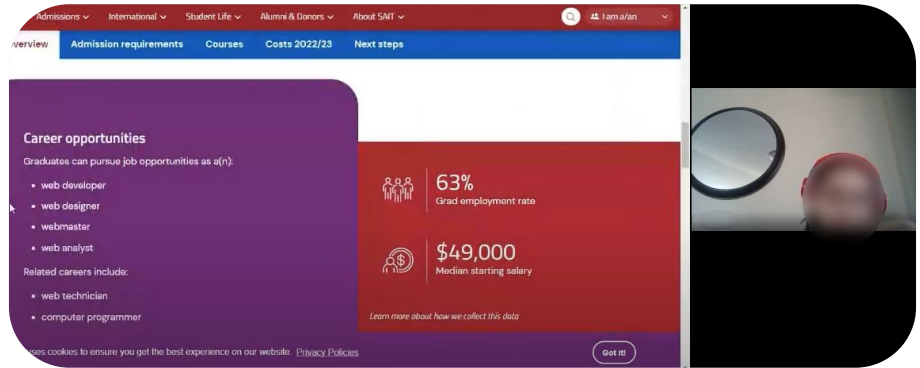
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Content audit

Treejack testing



Usability tests evaluate a product's effectiveness by observing real users performing tasks and recording their feedback to identify issues and improvements.

-  3 to 5 users / per group
-  1 hr sessions, 6-10 scenarios
-  Any video conferencing platform like Teams or Google Meet

# Research

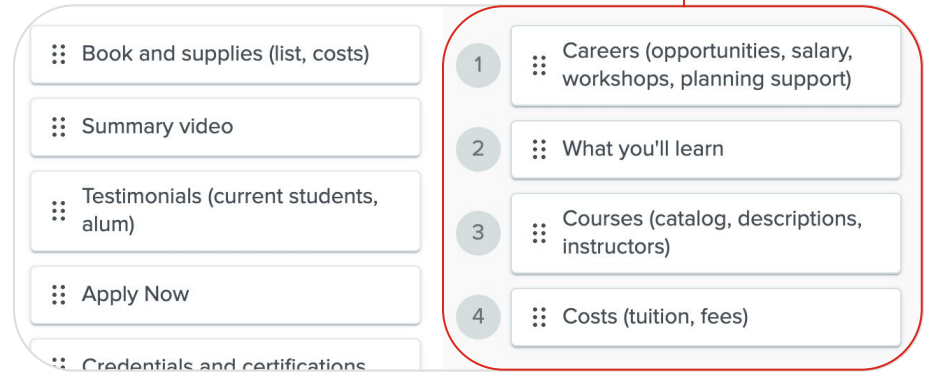
Usability testing

Top task sort




Content audit

Treejack testing

Top results from our test



Top task is a research method that involves getting users to rank the tasks that are most important to them. This data can help us reliably form a customer-centric sitemap or page hierarchy.

-  50+ users
-  10 minute survey, 6-10 scenarios
-  Survey Monkey or Optimal Workshop



# Research

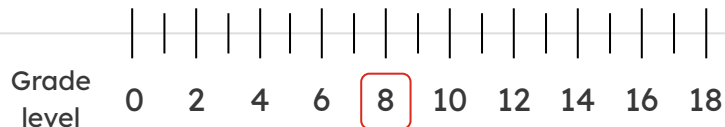
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## Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level



Aim for an 8th grade reading level or lower.

Content audits are an assessment used to gain a deeper understanding of the quality of content being provided to users and the structure of content.

### Criteria can include:

- Comprehension
- ROT (redundant, outdated, trivial)
- Consistency
- Discoverability
- Key messaging

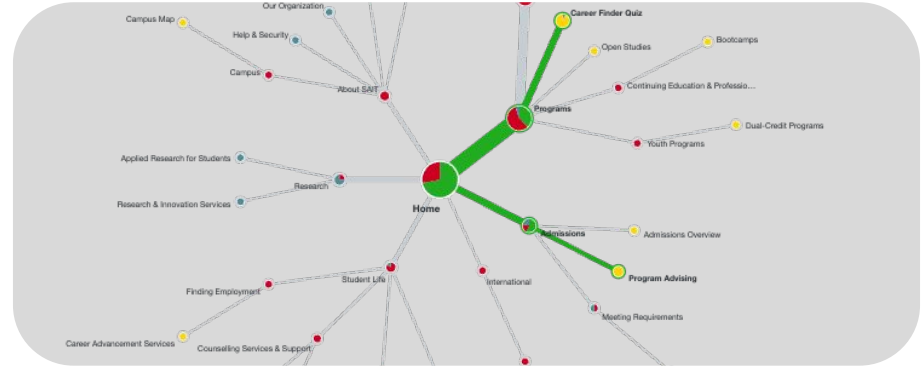
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Usability testing




Top task sort

Content audit

Treejack testing



Treejack testing assesses the effectiveness of your site structure and menu, revealing how easily users find information and where they get lost on a website.

-  50+ users
-  10 min survey, 6-10 scenarios
-  Optimal Workshop

# Research summary

1

**Navigation lacked a clear hierarchy.**

2

**Overwhelming and hard to scan content.**

3

**Programs were cumbersome to explore and compare.**

4

**Program pages had hidden and hard to access content.**

5

**Unclear steps to apply.**

6

**Experience not optimized for a mobile device.**

Before

# Navigation

“There are so many options in the main menu that you don’t know what you’re trying to find.” Jordan, Apprentice

The screenshot shows the SAIT website's main navigation menu. The SAIT logo is in the top left, and a search icon is in the top right. The navigation bar is dark red with white text for menu items: Programs, Admissions, International, Student Life, Alumni & Donors, and About SAIT. A dropdown menu is open under 'Programs', showing a list of program categories. Callouts point to specific areas: 'Overwhelming mega menu' points to the entire dropdown; 'Nondescript and misleading labels' points to the category headers; 'Didn't represent actual hierarchy' points to the 'All Upgrading & Open Studies' link. Below the menu is a search bar and a 'View all programs & courses' link.

SAIT Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

Login

I am a/an

Programs

- Browse Programs & Courses
- Browse Areas of Interest
- Apprenticeships & Trades
- Apply now >

UPGRADING & OPEN STUDIES

- Academic Upgrading
- Indigenous Pathways Program
- English Language Foundations
- Open Studies
- All Upgrading & Open Studies >

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Corporate Training
- Continuing Education
- Micro-Credentials
- Bootcamps
- Continuing Education & Professional Studies >

YOUTH PROGRAMS

- Dual-Credit Programs
- Digital Youth Programs
- High School Youth Foundations Programs
- Summer Camps (registration now open)
- All Youth Programs >

Search sait.ca

View all programs & courses >

Nondescript and misleading labels

Overwhelming mega menu

Didn't represent actual hierarchy

After

# Navigation

Direct links to user-focused landing pages

The image shows a screenshot of the SAIT website's navigation menu. The top navigation bar includes the SAIT logo, a list of user groups (Alumni, Donors, Employers and Industry, Teachers and Counsellors, Parents and Supports), a Log In button, and a search box. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with categories: Programs and Courses, Admissions, Tuition and Financial Aid, International, Student Life, and About SAIT. A dropdown menu is open under 'Programs and Courses', listing various program areas. Two callout boxes highlight specific features: one points to the 'All Programs' link, and another points to the 'Graphic and Media Arts' link. A third callout box points to the 'Find a Program' link in the dropdown menu.

SAIT

Alumni ▾ Donors ▾ Employers and Industry ▾ Teachers and Counsellors ▾ Parents and Supports

Log In ▾ Search

Programs and Courses ^ Admissions ▾ Tuition and Financial Aid ▾ International ▾ Student Life ▾ About SAIT ▾

Find a Program > All Programs

Get Help Choosing a Program > Business and Leadership

Apprenticeship and Trades > Construction and Trades

Academic Upgrading Energy and Environment

English Language Foundations Engineering Technologies

Indigenous Pathways Program Food and Hospitality

Open Studies Graphic and Media Arts

Continuing Education and Professional Studies > Health and Medical

Manufacturing and Automation

Simplified menu that represents the site hierarchy

Added areas of interest directly to the dropdown

SAIT's newest degree major

Explore our Bachelor of Business Administration – FinTech Major

[Learn more >](#)

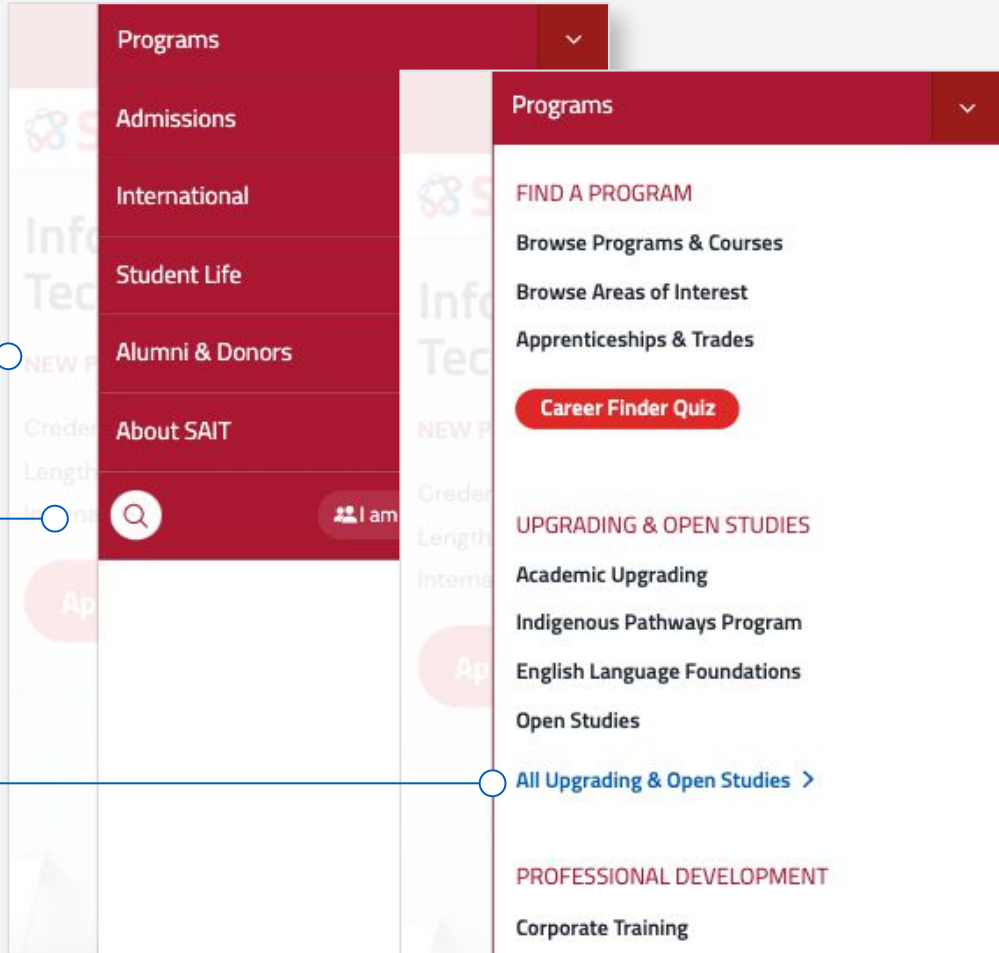
Before

# Navigation

Challenging to close

Multiple steps to access search

Long scroll to access pages



Programs

FIND A PROGRAM

Browse Programs & Courses

Browse Areas of Interest

Apprenticeships & Trades

Career Finder Quiz

UPGRADING & OPEN STUDIES

Academic Upgrading

Indigenous Pathways Program

English Language Foundations

Open Studies

All Upgrading & Open Studies >

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Corporate Training

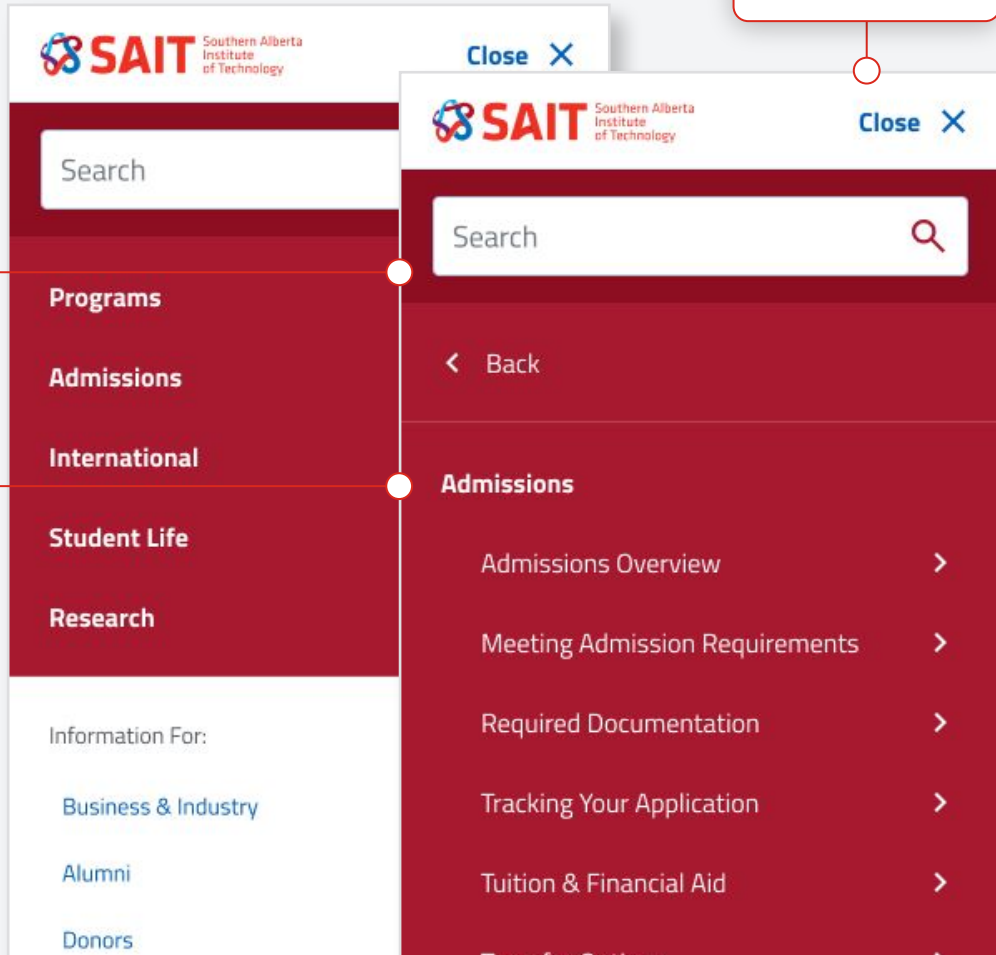
After

# Navigation

Easy access to search

Multi-level navigation, reducing need for scroll

Easy to close



Before

# Navigation

The screenshot shows a website header with a dark red background. On the left is the SAIT logo. To its right is a horizontal navigation menu with the following items: 'Programs & Courses', 'Admissions', 'Student Life', 'Alumni & Donors', and 'About SAIT'. On the far right of the header are 'Login' and a search icon. Below the header is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Student Life > Office of the Registrar'. The main content area has a large red banner with the text 'Office of the Registrar'. Below this is a white box containing the text: 'The Office of the Registrar is committed to informing and assisting our current and future students from initial inquiry through to graduation and employment.' Below the text are two white boxes with blue and red accents. The first box is titled 'Popular links' and contains two items: '> Important dates' and '> Commonly used forms'. The second box is titled 'Online support' and contains the text 'Get support 24/7 through our FreshDesk knowledge base.' and a 'Learn more >' button. A blue callout box with a white border points to the navigation menu and contains the text 'Doesn't represent actual hierarchy'.

Home > Student Life > Office of the Registrar

## Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar is committed to informing and assisting our current and future students from initial inquiry through to graduation and employment.

### Popular links

- > Important dates
- > Commonly used forms

### Online support

Get support 24/7 through our FreshDesk knowledge base.

[Learn more >](#)

Doesn't represent actual hierarchy



After

# Navigation

Simplified menu that represents the site hierarchy and gives access to all pages within a section



SAIT accepts payment in one of four **online** methods:

- credit card\*\*
- online banking through your financial institution
- PayMyTuition (for international students to pay in your home currency)
- CIBC International Student Pay.

**SAIT does not accept over-the-phone or in-person payments at this time.**

Review each payment method carefully to ensure you pay early enough for funds to arrive before your [tuition deadline](#).

\*\* Beginning July 30, 2020, a 2.5% service fee will be charged on all credit card payments and a 1.5% service fee will be added to all Visa Debit and MasterCard Debit transactions. These service fees are non-refundable.

- Pay with credit card or debit**
- Pay through online banking**
- Pay with PayMyTuition (for international students to pay in your home currency)**

### Tuition and Financial Aid

- Paying Your Tuition**
- Tuition and Fees
- Domestic Tuition and Fee Table
- International Tuition and Fee Table
- Paying Your Tuition Deposit
- Payment Options**
- Supplemental Fees
- Financial Advising
- Foundational Learning Assistance Program
- Refunds
- Student Loans

Before

# Program search

No “at a glance” program details

“If I were trying to hone in on something specific I don't know I would use this.” Faye, Older Student

The screenshot shows the SAIT website's program search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Programs, Admissions, International, Student Life, Alumni & Donors, and About SAIT. Below this is a search bar with the text "Search by Keyword" and a search icon. To the right of the search bar, there is a callout box that says "Easily missed filters". Below the search bar, there are filter options for "Area of Interest (All)", "Delivery (All)", "Credential (All)", and "Status (All)". The main content area displays a list of programs with columns for program name, delivery mode, credential, and status. A callout box points to the first program, "Academic Upgrading", with the text "No 'at a glance' program details".

Program Name	Delivery	Credential	Status
Academic Upgrading	Multiple	Course	Open
Accounting	Multiple	Certificate	Open
Administrative Information Management	On-Campus Day	Diploma	Open
Advanced Care Paramedic	Multiple	Diploma	Waitlisted
Agricultural Equipment Technician	On-Campus Day	Journeyperson	Ongoing
Aircraft Maintenance Engineers Technology	On-Campus Day	Diploma	Waitlisted
Aircraft Structures Technician	On-Campus Day	Certificate	Open
Appliance Service Technician	On-Campus Day	Journeyperson	Ongoing
Applied Product Management	Online (Evening/Weekend)	Micro-Credential	Open
Applied Product Marketing	Online	Certificate of	Open

After

# Program search

Program details pulled to the forefront

Easy access to filters

## Information and Records Management

[Show Details](#)

 Certificate  Not open to international applicants

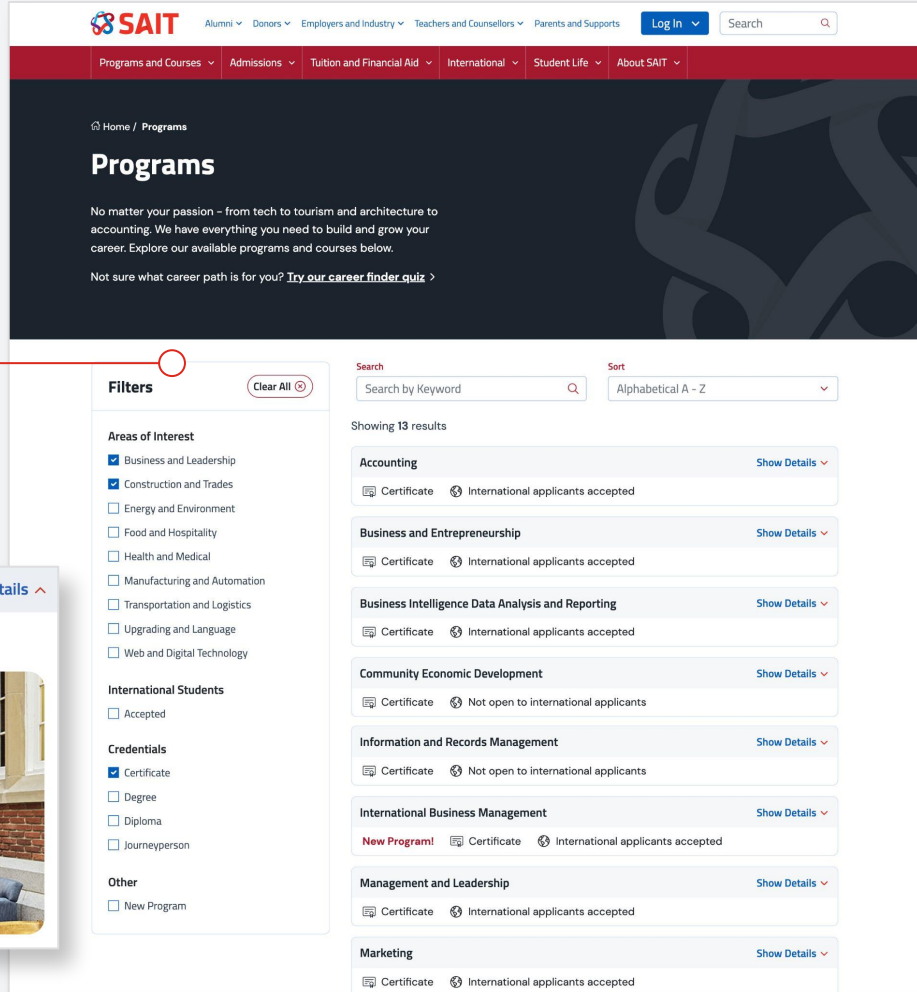
This program will enable you to learn the current industry standards and the best practices of information and records management from industry professionals.

**Program Length:** 30 weeks

**Campus:** Online

**Faculty:** School of Business

[View Program](#)



SAIT Alumni Donors Employers and Industry Teachers and Counsellors Parents and Supports Log In Search

Programs and Courses Admissions Tuition and Financial Aid International Student Life About SAIT

Home / Programs

## Programs

No matter your passion – from tech to tourism and architecture to accounting. We have everything you need to build and grow your career. Explore our available programs and courses below.

Not sure what career path is for you? [Try our career finder quiz](#)

Search Sort

Search by Keyword Alphabetical A - Z

Showing 13 results

- Accounting** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate International applicants accepted
- Business and Entrepreneurship** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate International applicants accepted
- Business Intelligence Data Analysis and Reporting** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate International applicants accepted
- Community Economic Development** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate Not open to international applicants
- Information and Records Management** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate Not open to international applicants
- International Business Management** [Show Details](#)
  - New Program!** Certificate International applicants accepted
- Management and Leadership** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate International applicants accepted
- Marketing** [Show Details](#)
  - Certificate International applicants accepted

**Filters** [Clear All](#)

**Areas of Interest**

- Business and Leadership
- Construction and Trades
- Energy and Environment
- Food and Hospitality
- Health and Medical
- Manufacturing and Automation
- Transportation and Logistics
- Upgrading and Language
- Web and Digital Technology

**International Students**

- Accepted

**Credentials**

- Certificate
- Degree
- Diploma
- Journeyperson

**Other**

- New Program

Before

# Program pages

No linear content flow

Key information is inaccessible, hidden behind tabs and the mobile menu.

SAIT Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

Recently Viewed Programs Login

Programs Admissions International Student Life Alumni & Donors About SAIT

Home > Programs and Courses > Information Technology Services

## Information Technology Services

**NEW PROGRAM!**

Credential: Diploma  
Length: 2 years  
International Students: Accepted

[Apply now](#)

### Available Intakes

Spring 2023 Fall 2023 Winter 2024

**Start date**  
May 08, 2023

**Delivery options for domestic students**  
Blended Open

[View international student delivery options](#)

**UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSION**

There are no events scheduled for this program. Please visit the link below to see all upcoming and on-demand information sessions.

[Upcoming information sessions >](#)

**Overview**

## Overview

Get hands-on, action-based training in information technology systems, support and management while you develop a broad knowledge of IT, cloud services, information security and emerging technologies to drive business value.

Become an Information Technology professional and play a critical role in today's tech-driven economy helping end-users work effectively with

After

# Program pages

Improved content hierarchy and scannability

SAIT Alumni Donors Employers and Industry Teachers and Counsellors Parents and Supports Log In Search

Programs and Courses Admissions Tuition and Financial Aid International Student Life About SAIT

Home / Programs and Courses

## Information Technology Services

Credential: Diploma ⓘ  
Program length: 2 years ⓘ  
Location: Blended (Main Campus) ⓘ  
International applicants: Accepted PGWP eligible ⓘ  
Faculty: School for Advanced Digital Technology

### Overview

Our Information Technology Services program offers you a comprehensive and action-based education that equips you with the skills, knowledge and expertise needed to excel in the dynamic field of IT services and support.

Our program provides you with hands-on training and a broad understanding of computers and information technology systems, support and management, ensuring you are well-prepared to meet the ever-growing demands of the tech sector. Our industry-supported curriculum is designed in collaboration with industry experts, ensuring you learn the most relevant and up-to-date skills.

In this program, you will:

- develop comprehensive IT knowledge based on your understanding of IT fundamentals, cloud services, information security, and emerging technologies
- develop the expertise to drive business value through your IT solutions
- master network administration, maintenance and troubleshooting skills, enabling you to support an organization's IT infrastructure effectively
- learn to identify cloud technologies and solutions to meet diverse business requirements

After some experience, you may progress to network or server administration, reporting analyst, technical lead or business or cybersecurity analyst.

#### On this page:

- » Overview
- Careers and opportunities
- Courses
- Admission requirements
- Transfer agreements
- Available intakes
- Costs
- Application process
- Information sessions
- Stories and news

Apply

⊕ Traits, skills and aptitudes

Clear scroll nav and "Apply" action that follows the user

After

# Program pages

## Courses

The Information Technology Services diploma requires 60 credits (20 courses) to complete.

The program spans two years, with two semesters each year.

[View classes by semester](#)

### Required courses

Course		Credits
CMPH 209 - Introduction to Hardware	<a href="#">Show details</a>	3
COMM 238 - Technical Communications I	<a href="#">Show details</a>	3
CPNT 219 - Introduction to Networks	<a href="#">Show details</a>	3
CPNT 224 - Switching and Routing Essentials	<a href="#">Show details</a>	3
CPNT 300 - Enterprise Networking, Security and Automation	<a href="#">Show details</a>	3

## Careers and opportunities

Our graduates may work in the following occupations. Some careers require additional experience and education.

### Potential careers:

- Computer and Information Systems Managers
- Data Scientists
- Cybersecurity Specialists
- Business Systems Specialists



Computer and Information Systems Managers

### Top Skills

Project Management Leadership Management  
Communication Management  
Operations

Calgary  National

Added a career widget

Pulled in course information

+ more!

# Key results: Program-level

**27%**

**decrease in  
bounce rate**

**30s**

**increase time  
on page**

**5x**

**increase in “Apply  
now” clicks**

# Key results: Overall website

**89%**

**decrease in  
bounce rate**

**80%**

**increase in  
engagement  
rate**

**17%**

**increase in total  
users clicking  
“Apply now”**

**+ Enrolment is up!**



# Let's recap

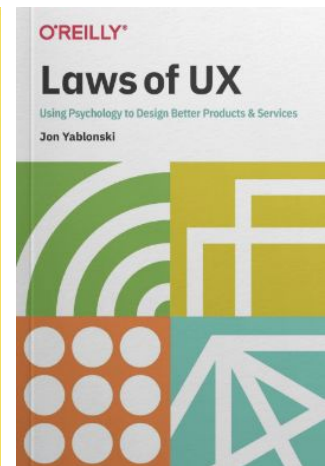
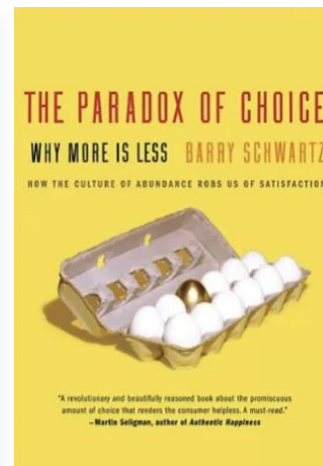
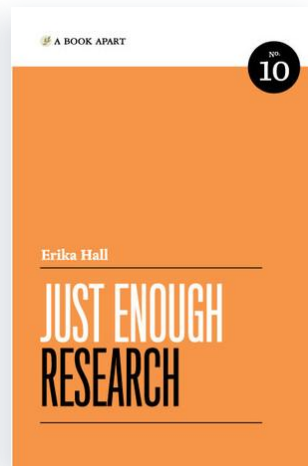
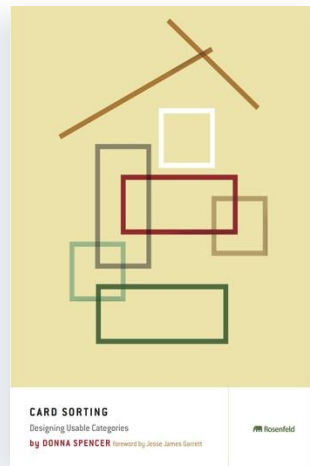
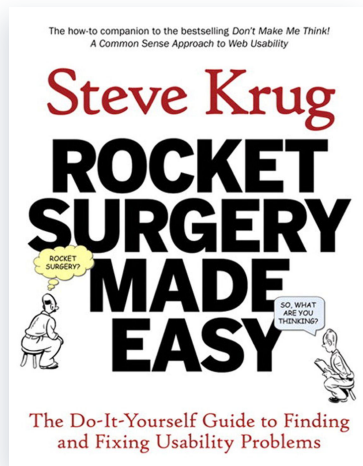
We showed you the proof, now let's chat about the **key takeaways.**

- 1 Adopt a user-centric approach.**
- 2 Conduct regular user research.**
- 3 Involve stakeholders early & often.**
- 4 Keep learning!**

# Helpful resources



# Helpful resources



# Thank you!

Scan this for a copy of  
this presentation.



**Nicole  
Ingwersen**



**Jonathon  
Olenick**



**Anne  
Brown**

