

# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

## Contest Description

Edmonton Expo Centre, Edmonton

May 6 & 7, 2026

EVENT: IT and Network Support	LEVEL: Post-Secondary
START TIME: <b>May 6:</b> 8:00 am <b>May 7:</b> 8:00 am	LOCATION: Hall E, Edmonton EXPO Centre, Edmonton
DURATION: Two Days	WORLDSKILLS TRADE #: 39

*Please Note: This document is subject to change as competition information is updated. Competitors are responsible for staying up to date with the most recent information. Check the footer for last updated date. Changes will be highlighted in yellow.*

## CONTEST INTRODUCTION

Competitors will demonstrate their knowledge and skills in PC maintenance, network setup, and support functions while reflecting real-world environments and expectations.

## SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO BE TESTED:

- **Scenario Design (Basic Architecture):** Developing network and server topology to meet simple business and technical requirements, including:
  - Two-site network topology
  - Redundant server topology
  - Redundant Active Directory (AD) Forest design
  - Redundant Network design
- **Implementation:** Setting up network and server infrastructure based on design recommendations, ensuring proper documentation and compliance with technical specifications.
- **Service Implementation:** Deploying and hardening services such as file sharing, DHCP, DNS, Active Directory (AD), Group Policy Objects (GPOs), and network security elements to ensure secure and efficient system operation.
- **Troubleshooting:** Identifying, documenting, and resolving a variety of issues across Network, Windows, and Linux systems. Scenarios will include varying levels of complexity.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 1. Scenario Design (Basic Architecture) – 30%

Competitors will design a two-site, business-ready network and server infrastructure to meet provided requirements, emphasizing scalability, security, and operational resilience.



**RICOH**

# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

## a. Network Topology

Competitors must propose a logical network topology. This includes determining how routers, switches, and end devices (servers, desktops) interconnect as well as considering key areas like:

- i. Layer 2 and Layer 3 Service Placement (Gateway placement, STP Considerations, Routed access layer)
- ii. Segmentation (ACLs, VLANs, Trunk vs Access Ports, PVLANS)
- iii. Redundancy (Port Aggregation (PAGP, LACP), FHRP Protocols (HSRP, VRRP))
- iv. Network Security (Best Practice Implementation, ACLs, Device Hardening, VPN (IPsec), Protocols, Zone-based firewall concepts)
- v. Routing Protocols (OSPF, EIGRP.)

## b. Server Topology

Competitors must propose a logical server topology. This includes determining the roles each server will fulfill, how servers interact with each other, and overall placement within the network. Consider key areas like:

### i. Windows Servers

1. Domain Controllers (Primary, Secondary, and Additional Servers)
2. File Services
3. Application Servers (e.g., Web, Database)
4. Core Services (e.g., AD, Certificate Services, DNS, DHCP, NPS, DFS)

### ii. Linux Servers

1. Core Services (e.g., DNS, DHCP, LDAP)
2. Web Services (Apache, Nginx)
3. AD Integration
4. Centralized logging

### iii. Server Roles & Responsibilities

1. Role separation for security and performance

### iv. High Availability & Redundancy

1. Disaster recovery considerations

## c. Active Directory (AD) Forest Design

Competitors must propose an Active Directory (AD) Forest design. This includes structuring the forest, domains, and organizational units (OUs) in a way that aligns with the competition's business scenario. Key considerations include:

### i. Forest & Domain Structure

1. Single or multiple domains
2. Naming conventions (e.g., contoso.local)
3. FSMO role placement justification

### ii. Organizational Units (OUs)

1. Hierarchy design (e.g., by department, function)
2. Delegation of administration

# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

### iii. User & Group Management

1. Account provisioning (naming standards, password policies)
2. Role-based access control (RBAC)
3. AGDLP or AGIDLP

### iv. Additional Services Integration

1. DNS integration with AD
2. Certificate Services (if applicable)
3. Network Policy Services NPS (if applicable)

### d. Security

Competitors must propose a security plan. This includes detailing both network-level and host-level defenses, as well as following best practices for system hardening. Competitors should consider:

#### i. Host-Based Security

1. Windows Firewall, Linux iptables/ufw
2. Least-privilege user permissions and file/folder access controls

#### ii. Network Security

1. Access Control Lists (ACLs) on routers/switches
2. Device hardening (SSH vs. Telnet, disabling unused services, etc.)
3. VPN or encryption protocols (IPsec, SSL/TLS) where applicable

#### iii. Group Policy & Configuration Management

1. GPO enforcement of business requirements such as: password policies, software restrictions, hardware storage control (USB).

#### iv. Secure Protocols & Hardening Standards

1. Implementing secure versions of common services (HTTPS, SSH)
2. Following industry best practices (Microsoft and Cisco Best Practices)
3. Mandatory SMB signing or encryption

## 2. Implementation (Network & Server Infrastructure) – 15%

After finalizing the design, competitors will **build** the foundation of their design (network and infrastructure elements) using VMware Workstation VMs. (See supplied software section below for details). The emphasis is on **core connectivity** and **base installations**.

### a. Network Infrastructure

- i. **Switch Configuration:** VLAN creation, access/trunk ports, base device configuration
- ii. **Router Configuration:** IP addresses on interfaces, routing, and base device configuration
- iii. **Addressing:** Implementing the IP addressing scheme.
- iv. **Documenting** all relevant settings (server names, IP addresses, roles).

### b. Server Infrastructure

- i. **Windows Server 2019 (Core & Desktop Experience) Installation**
- ii. **Ubuntu Server LTS** Installation
- iii. **Basic OS Configuration** (network settings, hostname)

# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

- iv. **Provisioning roles** as described in the design (e.g., installing AD DS role on Windows Server if designated as a domain controller)
- v. Documenting all relevant settings (server names, IP addresses, roles).

### 3. Implementation of Services – 30%

In this section, competitors will configure essential infrastructure services and apply best-practice security measures. The exact services required may include:

#### a. Core Windows Services

- i. **Active Directory Domain Services (ADDS):** Creating and managing user accounts, groups, OUs, group policies
- ii. **DNS & DHCP:** Ensuring name resolution and dynamic IP allocation throughout the network
- iii. **File & Print Services:** Implementing file shares, NTFS permissions, and share permissions
- iv. **Group Policy**
  - 1. Controlling security settings, software installation policies, and other system behaviors.
  - 2. Enforcing password policies and desktop environment configurations.
- v. **Certificate Services**
  - 1. Installing and configuring a Certificate Authority (CA).
  - 2. Generating and managing certificates for secure communication (e.g., HTTPS, IPsec).
- vi. **Network Policy Server (NPS)**
  - 1. Centralizing network authentication, authorization, and accounting (AAA).
  - 2. Implementing RADIUS policies for remote or wireless access, 802.1x authentication, and VLAN assignment.

#### b. Linux-Based Services

- i. **LDAP Integration** (if specified) or local user/group administration
- ii. **Package Management & Repositories** (e.g., apt on Ubuntu)
- iii. **Web Server (Apache or Nginx)**, FTP/SFTP, or Email Routing (Postfix) as scenario demands
- iv. **File Sharing with Samba:**
  - 1. Integrating Linux file services with Windows-based clients and Active Directory (if applicable).
  - 2. Managing shared folders, permissions, and authentication for cross-platform access.
- v. **Backup Solutions:** Configuring backup utilities or scripts to periodically back up data

#### c. Security & Hardening

##### i. Routing & VPN

- 1. Configure routing protocols and establish secure site-to-site or end-to-end tunnels with IPsec.
- 2. Encrypt traffic where necessary to safeguard data in transit.



# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

## ii. RADIUS & 802.1x

1. Integrate AAA (Authentication, Authorization, and Accounting) via RADIUS (e.g., NPS) for network devices.
2. Implement 802.1x for port-based network access control.

## iii. Certificates

1. Enforce secure protocols (e.g., HTTPS, SMTPS, SSH) with certificates issued by an internal CA.
2. Manage certificate lifecycles, including issuance, renewal, and revocation.
3. Implement certificate auto-enrollment

## iv. General Service Hardening

1. Limit unnecessary services and implement firewalls (e.g., Windows Firewall, iptables, ufw).
2. Apply the principle of least privilege to policies and permissions across all systems.
3. Enable centralized logs and alerts for critical events.

## v. Firewall & Access Controls

1. Configure Windows Firewall, Linux iptables/ufw, or Cisco ACLs to restrict traffic to only what is necessary.
2. Document explicit allow or deny rules

## vi. Securing Services

1. Utilizing secure protocols and services. (Eg. SSH, HTTPS).

## vii. Permissions & Ownership

1. Validate that all services or shares adhere to least-privilege principles.

## d. Automation & Maintenance

- i. Scheduling maintenance tasks (Eg. Backups, best practice must be followed including error handling)
- ii. Scripting to automate business processes (Eg. AD Account creation)

## 4. Troubleshooting – 25%

To replicate real-world conditions, the competition will include intentional misconfigurations or failures across networking, Windows, and Linux systems. Competitors must identify and correct these issues.

- a. Competitors must systematically troubleshoot, document their findings, and resolve each scenario
- b. When multiple solutions exist, best-practice or most direct fixes are preferred (e.g., re-enabling a specific firewall rule vs. creating a broad new one)
- c. Partial credit awarded for correct diagnosis.

All competitors must always exhibit workplace safety procedures and conduct themselves professionally.



# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

## EQUIPMENT & MATERIALS

### Equipment and Materials Competitors Must Supply:

Writing and documentation utilities.	Pencil or Pens
--------------------------------------	----------------

### Equipment and Materials Supplied by Committee:

Computer Workstations	Computer Accessories (I.e. Mouse & Keyboard)
-----------------------	--

### Supplied Software:

Latest Ubuntu Server & Desktop LTS	Windows Server 2019 or Server 2022
Windows 10	VMWare Workstation or Player
Putty	Packet Tracer
Cisco Images (IOS/IOS XE, etc.)	GNS3

## JUDGING CRITERIA

- Competitor's ability to properly configure Windows, Linux, and networking systems in a virtual environment.
- Proper installation of operating system and application software.
- Demonstration of network connectivity and system administration.
- Competence in configuring the router, switch, and firewalls where required.
- Safely utilize trade tools and display of proper methodology.
- Neatness of work area and space management.
- Neat and proper documentation of PC inventory and configuration settings.
- Tie-Breaking Procedure:
  - Highest Scenario Design Score: If two or more competitors tie in total points, the higher Scenario Design section score determines the winner.
  - Highest Troubleshooting Score: If a tie still remains, the higher Troubleshooting section score determines the winner.

## Evaluation Breakdown

- Scenario Design – 30%
- Network and Server Infrastructure Implementation - 15%
- Service Implementation – 30%
- Troubleshooting – 25%

## CLOTHING REQUIREMENT

Appropriate casual work clothing must be worn to compete. All clothing must be neat and clean and free of rips and tears. Casual wear such as shorts will not be permitted.



# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

## SAFETY

The health, safety and welfare of all individuals involved with Skills Canada Alberta are of vital importance. Safety is a condition of participation with Skills Canada Alberta and shall not be sacrificed for the sake of expediency. At the discretion of the judges and technical committees, any competitor can be denied the right to participate should they not have the required proper safety equipment and/or act in an unsafe manner that can cause harm to themselves or others.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Skills Canada Alberta Regional and Provincial Rules and Regulations

[Regional and Provincial Rules and Regulations](#)

### Skillz & Thrillz Podcast

Check out our podcast – Skillz & Thrillz: Alberta's Trade & Tech Youth Podcast. Our talented alumni share tips and tricks on how to succeed in competitions and your career! Their insights can help you prepare for your Skills journey, and who knows, you might just be a future guest! <https://skillsalberta.com/student-resources/skillz-thrillz-albertas-trade-tech-youth-podcast/>

### Test Project change at the Competition

Where a Test Project has been circulated to competitors in advance, the PTC can change the project up to a maximum of 30% of the work content for the competition.

### Lunch

Lunch for competitors will be provided by Skills Canada Alberta.

### Parking & Venue Maps

Parking is FREE for all attendees.

Attendees **MUST** register for FREE parking by clicking the below link. Attendees can pre-register their vehicle at anytime prior to the PSCC or register onsite at the PSCC.

<https://www.offstreet.io/events/CBLHM7U1>

<http://edmontonexpocentre.com/attend/parking/>

### Opening Ceremonies / Competitor Registration

Opening Ceremonies for the PSCC will take place on Tuesday May 6, 2025, at 6:00 pm in Hall D of the Edmonton EXPO Centre. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome to attend. It is important to note that competitor registration will open immediately following the Opening Ceremonies.



**RICOH**

# 2026 Provincial Skills Canada Competition

## Awards Ceremony

The Awards Ceremony will take place on Thursday May 8, 2025, at 6:30 pm in Hall D of the Edmonton EXPO Centre. Admission is free and everyone is welcome to attend. The Awards Ceremony will be shown live at <http://skillsalberta.com/>

## Team Alberta Information

Team Alberta will be selected at the PSCC Awards Ceremony. Gold medalists will then be eligible to participate at the Skills Canada National Competition (SCNC) on May 28- May 31, 2025, in Regina, SK. It is recommended that competitors review the SCNC contest description to be familiar with the national contest description and project at <https://www.skillscompetencescanada.com/en/calendars/category/skills-canada-national-competition/>

During the PSCC Awards Ceremony on Thursday May 8, 2025, gold medalists will be given their Team Alberta information package and will confirm their participation in the SCNC. Students must be present at the Awards Ceremony to claim their position on Team Alberta. If the Gold medalist is not able to attend SCNC, the next top ranking individual will be asked to participate. If a student is not able to attend the Awards Ceremony a letter confirming the student's interest in Team Alberta participation must be emailed to [javierad@skillsalberta.com](mailto:javierad@skillsalberta.com) prior to the start of competition on May 7, 2025.

**Please prepare your students in advance to accept a position on Team Alberta and review how your school will support their participation.**

Please see this link for additional Team Alberta information: <https://skillsalberta.com/team-alberta/>

## Questions?

Please contact Mike Sury [MikeS@SkillAlberta.com](mailto:MikeS@SkillAlberta.com)

## Committee Members:

Gerald Chung (Chair)
Shan Kampen
Damien Miller
Peter Estephan
Mehrshad Sahebsara



**RICOH**