

Certification Success Story

Switching from plugs to processors

Five years ago, Alan Storey was working as a qualified electrical designer and then given extra responsibilities for IT systems by his employer. Today, with CompTIA industry certifications under his belt and working toward a BSc in network systems, electrical engineering could be on the back-burner.

Since 2000, Alan Storey has worked at Cruickshanks Ltd – a manufacturer of electrical substations. An electrical designer by trade, he was asked to become involved in the company's IT systems by his employer as an additional responsibility. Now playing two roles, Alan wanted to make sure he was proficient

at both jobs and recognised the need to increase his understanding about modern business computing.

Alan enrolled at the University of Sunderland and has worked part-time for three years towards a foundation degree in IT networking. The modules studied

prepared Alan to take and pass industry certification exams including CompTIA's A+ (understand and support computing hardware and software) and Server+ (server troubleshooting and maintenance).

CompTIA's qualifications are accepted around the world as a standard for best practice in core IT skills. Candidates who earn them demonstrate mastery of common industry computing standards. CompTIA boasts 22,000 members worldwide. It can call on their help to build certifications from scratch, ensuring they remain relevant to modern businesses.

Becoming CompTIA certified provides Alan with business computing skills to a recognised global standard that will allow him to handle his current role and ensure future employers can quickly recognise his technical competency. As CompTIA certifications are also recognised by Microsoft, becoming CompTIA certified has helped Alan become a certified Microsoft Systems Administrator.

"These qualifications have already helped me do my job more effectively," claims Alan. "Weekly IT review meetings used to be a real challenge for me but now I have the



About CompTIA

CompTIA is a global trade association representing the business interests of the information technology industry. For more than 22 years CompTIA has provided research, networking and partnering opportunities to its 20,000 members in 102 countries. The association is involved in developing standards and best practices, and influencing the political, economic and educational arenas that impact IT worldwide.

College Overview:

The University of Sunderland is a modern vibrant University located in the North-East of England with high standards of teaching and research and a growing reputation as the University for enterprise, employment and opportunity. With stunning coastline and breathtaking countryside nearby as well as all the nightlife, leisure and cultural opportunities you'd expect from a major city, it is hardly surprising that the University of Sunderland has recently been named as "best student experience in England".

The School of Technology is a large school within the University, with over 2000 students. It has one of the most modern and best-equipped computing environments in the UK and a wide range of automotive technology and engineering facilities.

The University has been in the forefront of embedding higher level IT skills into Higher Education programmes equipping our students with a combination of technical skills, academic knowledge and transferable skills that are highly regarded by employers.



challenge for me but now I have the confidence to talk with authority and provide suggestions backed up with real technical understanding. Troubleshooting at the physical layer of the network is also much more effective now that I have a greater knowledge of diagnostics and computing problem-solving." Becoming certified has also shown Alan that employers clearly understand the value of industry qualifications. "With industry certifications behind me I have received positive approaches from several employers. I was sceptical about the value of certifying before I started the course, but I can see now that employers recognise this is a minimum requirement."

Rob Warrender, principal lecturer at the University of Sunderland believes CompTIA certifications offer benefits to the university as well as its students. "We have a real mix of capabilities to deal with when people walk through the door. Some have a very good understanding of computing technology and others know nothing at all. Certifications like CompTIA A+ are a very good way of ensuring everyone reaches a common level of understanding. It allows us to set a course benchmark from which everyone can proceed with their learning."

Having qualified at foundation degree level, Alan Storey is now working towards a BSc in network systems. He hopes to increase his responsibilities at Cruickshanks for IT administration while enhancing his skills and CV to help him cope with the ever-changing working environment.



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