



Cisco Networking Academy Evolution **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – Cisco Academies**

These frequently asked questions are meant to assist academies who are participating in the Academy Evolution pilot.

NAVIGATION Each section title below is *linked* to the content relevant to that topic in this document. Hold the Control key while clicking on a link to be directed to the content, or hit CTRL+F to search for a particular word or phrase.

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1. TRANSITION

a. How is the Cisco Networking Academy program changing?

Over the past 12 years, Cisco Networking Academy has grown to over 10,000 academies and has touched the lives of 4 million students, with 1 million students engaged in learning this year! Cisco Networking Academy must keep up with the times and prepare for the future generation of learners. The program is moving from a tiered instructor training and support model to a **global resource network** made up of public and private sector organizations offering a variety of resources to academies, instructors and students.

Within this new model, Cisco will provide academy community members with the following guidelines and benefits:

- clear membership participation, qualifications, policies and guidelines, and minimum standards for operation
- clearly defined and articulated Cisco Networking Academy membership benefits, privileges and rules
- a combination of technology and program enhancements designed to help academies thrive and enable students to meet their goals
- complimentary Academy Maintenance to academies and Instructor Training Centers for assistance with technical questions, access to tools, and free OS updates for hands-on labs
- heightened collaboration and innovation among Cisco, educational institutions and individual members

b. How will these changes benefit academies and the ecosystem?

Specific benefits will vary depending on the role each member plays in the Academy community, but at a high level, the benefits are:

- **Membership**--access to a world-class quality education program, discounts on lab equipment, global support desk, and much more
- **More Choices for Support**--access to a global network of highly knowledgeable educational support institutions
- **Up-to-Date Technology**--access to collaborative technology, including a new web interface containing a wealth of information and easy-to-use tools
- **Instructor Training**--open access to highly skilled providers of instructor training, ongoing instructor professional development (IPD), and no-cost instructional resources
- **Collaboration and Ongoing Improvement**--visibility into an Academy's own success metrics, and an opportunity to share best practices with the worldwide Academy community
- **Recognition**--potential to be formally, publicly recognized by Cisco, education leaders, and the Academy community

c. What new program and technology features can an Academy expect from Academy Evolution?

- New member roles and names
- Opportunity to choose an Academy Support Center, Instructor Training Center, and NetAcad Resource Partner that can best meet an Academy's needs
- New online Membership Agreements aligned with new policies and guidelines
- New Instructor Trainer qualification process led by Cisco
- More ongoing IPD resources and virtual events
- New easy-to-use tool for Academies to calculate the value of their investment
- New community portal

This is only the first stage of the planned improvements. Cisco will post new developments on the web to keep community members updated and help them prepare for future improvements.

1. ROLES

a. What are the new institutions, roles and responsibilities?

- **Cisco Academy:** An organization that teaches students necessary ICT and networking principles and skills, using the Cisco Networking Academy curricula and tools, in an effort to improve student career and economic opportunities.
- **Academy Support Center:** These institutions will provide baseline support to Academies in order to promote their success and sustainability. Every Academy will be required to be affiliated with an Academy Support Center, and though this relationship will be designated for the Academy initially, after migration the Academy will be able to select the appropriate Academy Support Center to meet its needs.
- **Instructor Training Centers:** These centers will offer initial instructor training and may also offer ongoing instructor professional development opportunities. Academies and instructors are free to choose an Instructor Training Center that meets its needs, and are no longer required to go to a specific training center.
- **NetAcad Resource Program:** This program will recognize non-traditional services outside those normally provided by Academy Support Centers and Instructor Training Centers. Each Academy may select any NetAcad Resource Partner that meets its needs and offers services in its area.

b. What are the requirements and activities for an Academy Support Center?

i. What can academies expect from Academy Support Centers?

The role of an Academy Support Center(ASC) is to promote the sustainability and success of its aligned Cisco Academies through the provision of baseline support. This is done by on-boarding new Cisco Academies; localizing and disseminating all critical communications; building awareness and offering training around available and updated resources and tools from Cisco, academy partners and other members; and assisting academies that directly request support. Academy Support Centers also contribute proactively to online community discussion boards to help connect members to available resources and the latest program information, as well as encourage academies to share best practices and engage in student success, curriculum and operational discussions.

Academy Support Centers must commit to offering all of the following baseline services:

1. **On-boarding New Academies and Members**
 - a. Align with academies to provide support
 - b. Assist academies with finding training and setting up their classroom, including ordering equipment
 - c. Provide Administrator Orientation to the Academy Contact and Academy Success Lead(s)
 - d. Assist academies with navigating Academy Connection and the “New Home Experience”
2. **Ongoing Support for Academies and Members**
 - a. Be a resource expert, assisting academies with finding available information resources and tools
 - b. Localize critical operational communications from Cisco (example: communication about changes to the voucher program)
 - c. Help academies understand and utilize new tools, such as the Academy Success Dashboard
 - d. Assist academies with the yearly Membership Agreement renewal process
 - e. Encourage usage of survey tools

- f. Showcase best practices with your academies
- g. Encourage community usage within your regional area

Note: Academy Support Centers may offer other services in addition to the baseline services listed above.

ii. Is it mandatory that an Academy select an Academy Support Center?

Yes, an Academy must be aligned to an Academy Support Center.

iii. Can an Academy Support Center charge support fees to academies?

Yes, Academy Support Centers may choose to charge for services.

iv. Can an academy change its Academy Support Center?

During the transition, Academies will be assigned an Academy Support Center based on geography and/or prior relationships. However, an Academy can change its Academy Support Center by contacting the Global Support Desk through Academy Connection after the transition is complete.

v. What if an academy wishes to become an Academy Support Center?

Refer to the Membership Guide for the requirements and process to become an Academy Support Center and contact your Area Academy Manager.

c. What is the role of an Instructor Training Center?

An Instructor Training Center (ITC) provides training for and qualifies new instructors. An Instructor Training Center also provides new instructors with technical support for one year after their initial training.

i. What if an academy wants to become an Instructor Training Center?

Refer to the Membership Guide for the requirements and process to become an Instructor Training Center and contact your Area Academy Manager.

ii. What if I am an instructor and want to be an Instructor Trainer?

Refer to the Membership Guide for the requirements and process to become an Instructor Trainer.

iii. What new instructor professional development benefits will be available?

Cisco Networking Academy is developing a more organized, holistic approach to instructor professional development (IPD) by tailoring IPD to the diverse needs of the entire instructor life-cycle: mentoring, delivery options, technical topics, education methods, etc. Instructors will be able to create their own guided IPD pathway from among different options for greater self-determination.

d. How do I participate in these new roles?

An Academy may consider participating in new roles as long as they first comply with the requirements necessary to sustain a successful Cisco Academy. If an Academy then wants to occupy another role, the Academy may refer to the Membership Guide for the requirements and process for each institution.

i. What new opportunities are there for CATCs, Regional Academies, Local Academies, councils, and associations?

It is up to each CATC, RA, LA, and other community members, along with their Cisco Area Academy Manager and/or Cisco Regional Manager, to decide which new of the new participation opportunities match their interests and capabilities. There are multiple ways for current institutions to successfully participate, learn and collaborate within the community. Several tools will be available to help transition community members, and help them make the best choice for themselves and for future student success.

ii. What will happen to the existing national initiatives that are handled by some CATCs/Regional Academies in different regions? Under which entity will those initiatives be placed, especially when those CATCs are doing both training and quality?

Each initiative is unique, so there is no single answer to this question. Each region will need to define these specifics as part of their regional transition plan.

3. MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENTS

a. Why is Cisco asking academy members to sign Membership Agreements?

Signing a Membership Agreement will:

- formalize the relationship between Cisco and academy community members
- clarify the many benefits available to academy members directly from Cisco
- more clearly define Cisco and academy member roles and responsibilities
- provide streamlined membership policies
- enable access to the larger community and recognition opportunities

b. What are the different Membership documents?

- Cisco Academies sign a Membership Agreement for academies
- In addition to Membership Agreements, all academy members must also review and adhere to the policies in the Membership Guide. The Membership Guide is part of an academy member's legal agreement with Cisco. By signing a Membership Agreement, the institution agrees to abide by the applicable policies in the Membership Guide.

c. Does Cisco have a cutoff date or timeframe by which all Membership Agreements should be signed?

Yes, in a phased schedule. Once the new system is available for a given country, existing Cisco Networking Academy participants will be given 60 days to sign their Membership Agreement, at which time the academy community member will no longer have access to the learning management system or any other Cisco Networking Academy resource.

d. What happens to those entities that decide NOT to sign a Membership Agreement with Cisco?

If an academy community member does not sign a Membership Agreement, it will not be able to participate in the Cisco Networking Academy program.

e. What if academies cannot sign electronically?

Most academies will sign electronically, but the system has been enabled to accommodate manual signatures. Academies have the opportunity to download, print, sign, scan, and upload the document in order to complete the application process. Detailed instructions for stepping through this process are included in the Membership Agreement for academies.

f. Are quality requirements clearly explained in the Membership Agreements?

The quality requirements are clearly described in the Membership Guide, which contains legal documents that must be reviewed prior to signing the Membership Agreement.

g. Will the Membership Agreements be made available in multiple languages?

All agreements and supporting documents will be available in English, Slovak and Italian. Beginning in August 2011, they will be available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Japanese, Slovak, Italian and Simplified Chinese. Also, local languages can be accommodated in the system on an as-needed basis.

4. WHAT HAPPENS TO EXISTING INSTITUTIONS?

a. What will happen with the contracts that currently exist between Academies and Regional Academies?

Current contracts between Academies and Regionals and/or CATCs remain in place for the duration of the contract.

5. ACADEMY QUALITY AND COMMUNITIES

a. How will Cisco promote quality in the new model?

Cisco is creating a quality infrastructure across the Cisco Networking Academy community to help academies be successful in their academic goals. This quality infrastructure includes:

- quality definitions, processes, policies and guidelines
- sharing quality reports with academies that include metrics to measure and recognize teaching excellence, learning experience, and student success
- dedicated Cisco Quality Managers
- technology enablement to empower the quality support process
- community-generated quality best practices

b. What is the process to ensure that academies meet quality requirements?

The Cisco Quality Manager will monitor quality metrics. If an academy is performing at such a poor level of quality that students are being negatively impacted, and the Cisco Networking Academy brand is harmed, an academy will be put on a “get-well plan”. Should performance fail to improve, the Area Academy Manager will be involved and the academy may be decommissioned.

c. How long does an academy have to remedy any quality issues?

The “get-well plan” will be reviewed quarterly, and the final decision on duration of the remediation process will be made by the Cisco Quality Manager, depending on the specific needs of the academy or the severity of the issue.

d. What is the Academy Success Dashboard and are those the same for all academies around the world?

These are a set of quality indicators drawn from student performance data and student feedback, along with other indicators, that will be normalized for each country or region. Academy Administrators will have access to their quality report through the Academy Success Dashboard. Multiple quality metrics are

provided in the report, allowing academies to focus on the metrics that align with their academic quality goals.

e. What happens to academies that cannot meet the quality requirements?

New academies—if a prospective academy does not meet the minimum participation requirements listed in the Membership Guide for academies, it cannot participate in the Cisco Networking Academy program.

Existing academies—if an existing academy is not compliant with the new quality requirements, it will have the opportunity to benefit from the quality support process in order to become compliant, and there will be an appropriate timeline associated with this effort. See Academy Quality and Communities section.

f. Can Cisco decommission an academy if it is not performing at the quality level specified in the Membership Agreement for academies?

Cisco may decommission such a non-performing academy at any point, at will.

6. TECHNOLOGY ENABLEMENT

a. Should academy community members continue to use the Academy Connection website?

Yes, until further notice. The new Cisco Networking Academy interface will host the Academy Connection link, while giving academies an opportunity to browse relevant information and access useful tools. Cisco will provide sufficient notice when full access to the new interface is available.