

Career Focus on...

# Computer Forensics

## Introduction

- Are you technologically inclined
- Do you have strong problem-solving skills?
- Are you interested in both computer science and criminal justice?
- Would you like a career that responds to the needs of a large number of organizations in both the public and the private sectors?

If you answered “yes” to these questions, you may want to consider a career in Computer Forensics.

## Did You Know...?

- Virtually all companies and organizations, whether public or private, employ information technology professionals.
- The growth of Internet crime such as identity theft, spamming, e-mail harassment, and illegal downloading will increase the demand for computer forensic experts.
- As the number of devices that connect to the Internet grows so will the need for cyber security specialists.
- A certificate can be a first step towards earning an Associate’s degree. Students who complete an Associate’s degree at QCC may be able to transfer to a variety of other schools to further continue their education.

## Computer Forensics @ QCC

The Computer Forensics Option Certificate is one of seven offered by the Computer Systems Engineering Technology (CSET) program. The CSET program at QCC prepares students for a broad range of career opportunities in the Information Technology (IT) field. Graduates are prepared to work in virtually any business or organization that utilizes computers and computer networks. This is accomplished by adhering to industry standards developed to measure and promote the competency of IT professionals. Graduates of the Computer Forensics Certificate program will have strong IT skills in addition to knowledge about investigating, reporting, and combating electronic crime.

The Computer Forensics Certificate at QCC develops a students’ ability to investigate cybercrime and recover lost data that can be used as evidence in court. This program includes both computer and criminal justice courses so that students will have insight into both fields. The Computer Forensics Certificate may be completed in two semesters.

## Career Options

### PRIVATE DETECTIVE/COMPUTER FORENSIC SPECIALIST

Median Annual Salary: \$42,870

Recommended Education: Some college  
[www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/private-detectives-and-investigators.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/private-detectives-and-investigators.htm)

### COMPUTER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Median Annual Salary: \$46,260

Recommended Education: Some college  
[www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-support-specialists.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-support-specialists.htm)

### COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST

Median Annual Salary: \$78,770

Recommended Education: Associate’s degree  
[www.onetonline.org/link/summary/15-1121.00](http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/15-1121.00)

### COMPUTER HARDWARE ENGINEER

Median Annual Salary: \$98,810

Recommended Education: Bachelor’s degree  
[www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/computer-hardware-engineers.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/computer-hardware-engineers.htm)

## Worcester Area Employers

- AbleBridge
- AKUITY Technologies
- Atos
- City of Worcester
- Deloitte
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Hanover Insurance Group
- IBM
- Local Schools, colleges, and universities
- Raytheon
- UMass Memorial Medical Center

## Next Steps

Wondering if Computer Forensics is right for you?

- Take a Career Assessment to match your interests with potential careers:  
[www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerassess](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerassess)
- Research the web links on this *Career Focus* page, as well as links suggested online under Career Information: [www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerinfo](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerinfo)
- Conduct an Informational Interview with someone employed in the field. For more information on how to do this, review the Informational Interview links online:  
[www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#infointerview](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#infointerview)
- Attend a Career Planning Session. For more information, and the current schedule, visit Career Academic Personal Success (CAPS) online:  
[www.QCC.edu/services/academic-advising/career-academic-personal-success](http://www.QCC.edu/services/academic-advising/career-academic-personal-success)
- Speak with an Advisor:  
[www2.qcc.mass.edu/advising/](http://www2.qcc.mass.edu/advising/)
- Speak with QCC Faculty who teach Computer Forensics courses.

## Sources Used

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition*:

- Private Detective/Computer Forensic Specialist:  
[www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/private-detectives-and-investigators.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/private-detectives-and-investigators.htm)
- Computer Support Specialist:  
[www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-support-specialists.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-support-specialists.htm)
- Computer Hardware Engineer:  
[www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/computer-hardware-engineers.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/computer-hardware-engineers.htm)

O\*NET Online:

- “Summary Report for: 15-1121.00 - Computer Systems Analysts,”  
[www.onetonline.org/link/summary/15-1121.00](http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/15-1121.00)

Quinsigamond Community College, Online Course Catalog

- Computer Systems Engineering Technology Certificate: Computer Forensics:  
[www.qcc.edu/academics/technology/computer-systems-engineering-technology/computer-forensics-0](http://www.qcc.edu/academics/technology/computer-systems-engineering-technology/computer-forensics-0)

## Professional Associations

- Computing Technology Industry Association:  
[www.comptia.org](http://www.comptia.org)
- Information Technology Association of America:  
[www.techamerica.org](http://www.techamerica.org)
- International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists:  
[www.iacis.com](http://www.iacis.com)
- NorthWest Center of Emerging Technologies:  
[www.nwccet.org](http://www.nwccet.org)
- Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory:  
[www.rcfl.gov](http://www.rcfl.gov)

## Positions Entered by QCC Graduates

- Computer Repair Tech
- Desktop Support Specialist
- IT Tech
- Microsoft Dynamics CRM Developer
- Tier-One Computer Tech

## Employment, Co-op, Internship, or Service Learning Opportunities

Contact the Career Placement Office:

[www.qcc.edu/pages/Career\\_Placement.html](http://www.qcc.edu/pages/Career_Placement.html)

## Possible Transfer Schools

- Anna Maria
- Becker
- Fitchburg State University
- Northeastern University
- UMass Amherst
- UMass Lowell
- Westfield State University
- Worcester State University

## Specific Transfer Information

- Start at the QCC Transfer web site:  
[www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer)
- Make an appointment online with the Transfer Advisor: [www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer/calendar](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer/calendar)
- Email questions to:  
[transfer@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:transfer@qcc.mass.edu)