

## WHAT DO I NEED TO TAKE IN MY FIRST YEAR?

1<sup>st</sup> year students are undifferentiated for their first two semesters; they select their plan at the end of their second semester, usually in mid-May. Typically this is what 1<sup>st</sup> year looks like for a student who wants to qualify for Computing in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year. You should take CISC 101 if you do not have any computing programming skills, but otherwise:

### Fall

CISC 121  
MATH 121A  
MATH 111A  
CISC 102  
Elective

### Winter

CISC 124  
MATH 121B  
MATH 111B  
Elective  
Elective

If you are planning on taking any specialization, there are other first year courses that you will need to take.

It is a good idea to start with CISC 101. Students often overestimate their programming proficiency, only to end up struggling in CISC 121 and/or CISC 124. In fact, it is likely to put you in a better position to meet our acceptance thresholds when it comes to selecting plans at the end of your first year. Rest assured, starting with CISC 101 does not put you at a disadvantage at all and/or prevent you from graduating in 4 years.

So, here's what's possible:

Fall Term: CISC 101

Winter Term: CISC 121 (you need to get a B here for automatic entry into 2<sup>nd</sup> year Computing)

Spring/Summer: CISC 124 or take CISC 124 in fall of next year, you can still take all required second year courses, and graduate in 4 years.

Here is a [link to a self-assessment](#) that will help you determine if you should be in CISC 101 or CISC 121. The link takes you to a copy of the first assignment given in CISC 121 in Winter 2022. If you are ready for CISC 121, you will look at this assignment and be able to figure out how you would approach the problem and code it in whatever language that you currently know. If you can do this and are comfortable with a task like this, then you are ready for CISC 121. If not, you should consider starting in CISC 101. Please note that it isn't important that you come up with an exact, correct answer (and we won't be providing one so please don't ask) – it is enough that you are able to use programming concepts and craft a solution.

Starting in CISC 101 does not put you behind in your program – you can take 101 in the fall, 121 in the winter and 124 either in the summer online (6 week course) or in the fall of 2023. You will still be able to finish your degree in 4 years.

We cannot make the 101/121 decision for you – it totally depends on your background and your abilities. We can only advise. Looking at the assignment posted above will give you a good way to evaluate where you are right now.

To be eligible for any of our computing plans, students must take **CISC 121 (Introduction to Computer Science 1)** and **CISC 124 (Introduction to Computer Science 11)**, get a **B** in either of those courses and achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.6 to qualify.

Please visit our website for more information on our plans.

<https://www.cs.queensu.ca/undergraduate/programs/>

### **WHAT MATH SHOULD A COMPUTING STUDENT TAKE?**

Most Computing students take MATH-111/6.0 and MATH-121/6.0 (in addition to CISC-102/3.0 and CISC-121/3.0) in 1st year.

MATH-110/6.0 and MATH-120/6.0 are more challenging than MATH-111/6.0 or MATH-121/6.0; we recommend them only for students who are considering doing Computing and Math (COMA) or a concentration in MATH, or who really like mathematics.

MATH-126/6.0 is for students who didn't do 4U Math (or equivalent) in high school.

MATH-112/3.0 is an abbreviated version of MATH-111/6.0 for Computing majors; the Math department considers this plus MATH-212/3.0 together to be equivalent to MATH-111/6.0. Only take this if you're strong in Math (or if you're aiming for Biomedical Computing).