

CREDENTIALS AND MEASURABLE SKILLS GAINS

CREDENTIALS

Credential Attainment is the percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program (*excluding on-the-job training and customized training*) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma or equivalent during participation in, or within one year of, exit from the program.

Youth participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent are included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

For each core program, a description of who qualifies as being enrolled in an 'education or training program' and is thus included in the credential attainment indicator includes:

- **TITLE I ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER:** All participants in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs who are enrolled in an education or training program (*excluding those in On-the-Job Training or Customized Training*) are counted in the credential attainment indicator.
- **TITLE I YOUTH:**
 - *In-school Youth (ISY)*: All ISY are included in the credential attainment indicator because they are attending secondary or postsecondary school.
 - *Out-of-school Youth (OSY)*: Only OSY who participate in one of the following are included in the credential attainment indicator:
 - Occupational Skills Training (*OST*)
 - Secondary (*high school*) education at or above the 9th-grade level during participation
 - Postsecondary education during participation
 - Title II Adult Education and Literacy (*AEL*) programs at or above the 9th-grade level
 - YouthBuild programs during participation
 - Job Corps programs during participation

RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS: DEFINITION

A recognized postsecondary credential is defined as an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of apprenticeship completion, a license acknowledged by the State or Federal government, or an associate, bachelor's, or graduate degree. This includes graduate degrees for the purposes of the Vocational Rehabilitation program, as outlined in the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973 section 103\(a\)\(5\) and \(18\)](#). A recognized postsecondary credential is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or industry/occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry/occupation. These technical or industry/occupational skills generally are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations.

RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS ISSUED BY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES

- State education agency/state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state;
- Institution of higher education under [Section 102 of the Higher Education Act \(20 USC 1002\)](#) eligible for Title IV student financial aid, including community colleges, proprietary schools, and other qualifying institutions;
- Professional, industry, or employer organization (*AWS for welding*) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- Employment and Training Administration's (*ETA*) Office of Apprenticeship or recognized State apprenticeship agency;
- Public regulatory agency that awards a credential when an individual meets the educational, work experience, or skill requirements for a specific occupational or professional title;
- Program approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide education benefits to veterans and eligible individuals;
- Institutions of higher education that are formally controlled, or have been formally sanctioned or chartered by, the governing body of Tribes; and
- ETA's Job Corps program, which issues certificates for completing career training programs that are based on industry skills standards and certification requirements.

SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR RECONGNIZED EQUIVALENT: DEFINITION

A secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent is defined as a high school diploma acknowledged by a State and covered under the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 \(ESEA\)](#), as amended by the [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#). A secondary school equivalency certification indicates that a student has met the requirements for a high school education.

ACCEPTABLE CREDENTIAL TYPES + DEFINITIONS:

- **Secondary School Diploma:** An official certificate awarded for completing required coursework and credits at a high school or equivalent institution, showing proficiency in core subjects like math, language arts, and social studies.
- **Secondary School Equivalency Diploma:** A certificate awarded for demonstrating knowledge and skills equivalent to a high school diploma, usually through passing a standardized test like the GED (*General Educational Development*).
- **Associate’s Degree:** An academic degree awarded after completing a two-year program at a community or technical college, covering specific study areas or general education and serving as a basis for further education or workforce entry.
- **Bachelor’s Degree:** An academic degree awarded after a four-year undergraduate program, covering a specific major and general education. It’s often required for professional positions and can lead to advanced studies.
- **Occupational Licensure:** A certification from a government or regulatory body that authorizes individuals to work in a specific occupation, requiring specific education, experience, and exams to ensure they have the necessary skills.
- **Occupational Certificate:** A credential awarded for completing specific training or education in an occupation, verifying the necessary skills and knowledge. It is typically issued by educational institutions, professional organizations, or industry associations.
- **Occupational Certification:** A credential given to individuals who prove their competency in a specific occupation by passing an exam and meeting other criteria, validating their skills and knowledge.
- **Other Recognized Certificates:** Industry/occupational skills completion are sufficient to qualify for entry-level or advancement in employment.

CERTIFICATES VS CERTIFICATIONS

- **Certificates** are formal documents that validate the completion of a course or training, demonstrating acquired skills or knowledge in a specific area.
- **Certifications** are official credentials that validate expertise and competency in a profession or skill, awarded after meeting specific standards, often through exams or training.

CREDENTIAL DOCUMENTATION

Acceptable documentation includes:

- Data crossmatch
- Copy of credential (*e.g., a certificate from obtaining a license or degree*)
- Copy of school record 9 (*e.g., year-end transcripts with the ‘Date Conferred’*)
- Signed follow-up survey (*letter*) from program participant
- Case notes documenting information obtained from education or training provider (*letter or email from education or training provider must be uploaded in SDWORKS*)

MEASURABLE SKILLS GAIN

Measurable Skill Gains (*MSG*) is the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. *MSG*’s are specific improvements or achievements in skills that can be objectively measured and verified. The *MSG* indicator differs from other indicators because it is not based on program exit; a participant can achieve a measurable skill gain while still enrolled in the program.

The following participants in education or training programs are included:

- **TITLE I ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER:** All participants enrolled in an education or training program, including those in work-based training, are included in the MSG indicator.
- **TITLE I YOUTH:**
 - *In-School Youth (ISY)*: All ISY are counted in the MSG indicator because they are enrolled in secondary or postsecondary school.
 - *Out-of-School Youth (OSY)*: Only OSY who are in one of the following are included in the indicator:
 - ♦ Program element of Occupational Skills Training (*OST*);
 - ♦ Program element education offered concurrently with workforce preparation;
 - ♦ Secondary education during participation;
 - ♦ Postsecondary education during participation;
 - ♦ Title II (*DEL*) funded adult education during participation;
 - ♦ YouthBuild program during participation; and
 - ♦ Job Corps during participation

TYPES OF MEASURABLE SKILLS GAINS

DOCUMENTING PROGRESS FOR MSG

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL (EFL): Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary level

- Comparing participant’s initial educational functioning level from a pre-test with their level from a post-test;
- Participants in programs below the postsecondary level who subsequently enroll in State-recognized postsecondary education or training during the program year;
- Participants who pass a subtest on a State-recognized high school equivalency exam.

SECONDARY DIPLOMA/RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT: Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

Participant passes all sections of a State-recognized high school equivalency test or receives a diploma or equivalent confirming satisfactory completion of secondary studies.

SECONDARY TRANSCRIPT OR REPORT CARD: For a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the state unit’s academic standards.

Documented by receiving a secondary transcript or report card for one semester that shows the participant meets the State unit’s academic standards.

POSTSECONDARY TRANSCRIPT OR REPORT CARD: For a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the state unit’s academic standards.

Full-time Students: Documented by a postsecondary transcript showing at least 12 credit hours earned per semester and meeting academic standards.

Part-time Students: Documented by a postsecondary transcript showing at least 12 credit hours over two semesters within the same program year, meeting State unit’s academic standards.

TRAINING MILESTONE: Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training.

Documentation for this gain varies by service but must show significant skill development, such as progress reports, milestone achievements, or pay increases. Milestones should be set before the program starts or the measurement year to be valid.

SKILLS PROGRESSION: Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or, progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as a knowledge-based exam.

Documentation may include passing a Registered Apprenticeship exam, a knowledge-based employer exam, an industry competency assessment, or other credentialing tests.

EXCLUSIONS

Participants who meet the requirements in [WIOA Exit Policy 6.2](#) under 'Exclusion from Exit' (*also know as a hard exit*) excluded from the Credential and Measurable Skill Gains indicators.

**WIOA §3(37) & §134(2)(A)(bb)
WIOA §116(b)(2)(A)(i) & §116(b)(2)(A)(ii)
20 CFR §361.430(4)(A)(B)
TEGL 10-16, change 3**