

CREDENTIALS AND MEASURABLE SKILLS GAINS

A **Credential** is an award in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation. These technical or occupational skills are generally based on standards developed or endorsed by employers. Training is often one component of the certificate performance measures. In most instances, successful completion of training is coupled with other requirements to receive a credential.

Credentials awarded by workforce investment boards are not included in this definition, nor are work readiness credentials because neither of them document “measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation.”

INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS

A variety of public and private entities award industry-recognized credentials, including:

- A state education agency, or a state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state;
- An institution of higher education described in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act (20 USC 1002) that is qualified to participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of that Act. This includes community colleges, proprietary schools, and all other institutions of higher education that are eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs;
- A professional, industry, or employer organization (AWS for welding) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills and abilities;
- ETA's Office of Apprenticeship or a State Apprenticeship Agency.
- A public regulatory agency, upon an individual's fulfillment of educational, work experience or skill requirements that are legally necessary for an individual to use an occupational or professional title or to practice an occupation or profession
- A program that has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons;
- Job Corps; and
- Institutions of higher education that are formally controlled, or have been formally sanctioned or chartered by, the governing body of Tribes. Types of credentials include:
 - High School Diploma
 - Secondary/High School Equivalency
 - AA/AS Degree
 - BA/BS Degree
 - Occupational Skills License
 - Occupational Skills Certificate or Credential
 - Other Recognized Diploma, Degree or Certificate (specify)
 - Occupational Certification

Graduate/Post Graduate Degree (Masters Level) does not count as credential attainment for Title I, but does count for the purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR Title IV)).

A participant falls into this denominator when one of the following are entered:

- Employed Worker Skills Upgrading service;
- Entrepreneurial Training (Adult Only) service;
- ABE/ESL in Combination with Training service;
- Occupational Skills Training service;
- Remedial Training (TAA Only) service;
- Registered Apprenticeship Training service;
- Youth Occupational Skills Training service;

- Enrolled in Secondary Education service; OR
- For Title I Youth only
 - School Status at Program Entry or Service Closure: Enrolled in Postsecondary School; OR
 - School Status at Program Entry or Service Closure: Enrolled in Secondary Education

***A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is 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 education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year or after exit from the program.*

NON-OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

Non-Occupational Skills Training is training that enhances employability but does not in itself result in a credential. If a training program does not include a credential, the participant's training can still be funded through WIOA as non-occupational skills training. Non-occupational skill training would not count as a credential in performance reporting, since a credential is not earned as part of that particular training. Non-Occupational Skills training count as a measurable skill gain.

MEASURABLE SKILLS GAIN

A Measurable Skills Gain is used to measure interim progress of participants who are enrolled in education or training services. Therefore, program entry triggers inclusion rather than program exit. However, if a participant exits the program and meets one of the exclusion reasons, they are not included in the measurable skills gains performance measure.

Types of Measurable Skills Gains

1. Documented secondary or postsecondary transcript, report card, or school documentation for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards –
 - Secondary – Participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards by achieving passing grades in all classes
 - Postsecondary - Full time student who has completed 12 hours per semester, or
 - Postsecondary - Part time student who has completed 12 hours over the course of two consecutive semesters, within the same WIOA program year
2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
3. Satisfactory or better progress report towards established milestones from an employer or training provider who is providing training
 - Final OJT monitor identifying skills gained and signatures by the participant and worksite.
 - Completion of one year of apprenticeship program verified through documentation by the employer identifying satisfactory or better progress.
 - Other training milestone
 - Completion of customized training verified through documentation by the employer identifying satisfactory or better progress.
 - Increase of pay as a result of training received documented by the employer or through a paystub
4. Documentation of skills progression; such as
 - Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation, or
 - Satisfactory progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as documentation of a passing a knowledge-based exam. Examples of such exams may include those Other Non-Occupational Skills Trainings.

5. Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary level.
 - EFL Gain by Assessment - This may be captured by comparing the educational functioning level of a pre-test to the educational functioning level of a post-test.
 - EFL Gain by Entry into Postsecondary Education or Training – This may be captured when a participant attains a secondary school diploma/equivalent during participation and enters postsecondary education or training *after exit* but during the same program year in which the exit occurred.

A participant falls into this denominator when one of the following are entered:

- On-the-Job Training service;
- Customized Training service;
- Other Non-Occupational Skills Training service;
- Employed Worker Skills Upgrading service;
- Entrepreneurial Training (Adult Only) service;
- ABE/ESL in Combination with Training service;
- Occupational Skills Training service;
- Remedial Training (TAA Only) service;
- Registered Apprenticeship Training service;
- Youth Occupational Skills Training service;
- Enrolled in Secondary Education service;
- Job Corps provided service;
- Co-enrolled with Job Corps;
- Adult Education provided service;
- Co-enrolled with Adult Education;
- School Status: Enrolled in Postsecondary School; OR
- School Status: Enrolled in Secondary Education

DOCUMENTATION

Credentials and Measurable Skills Gains are data-validated items and documentation must be recorded in SDWORKS. Acceptable documentation of a credential includes a copy of the credential, such as a license or degree or copy of a school/training record.

Measurable Skills Gains can be documented with the following:

- EFL Gain: Pre-and post-test results measuring EFL gain or, after attainment of secondary diploma/equivalent, the documentation of enrollment in postsecondary education or training after exit but within the same program year
- Postsecondary Transcript/Report Card: Copy of the transcript or report card
- Secondary Transcript/Report Card: Copy of the transcript or report card
- Training Milestone: Successful completion of OJT service or evaluation from training provider or employer documenting achievement of established milestones
- Skills Progression: Results of knowledge-based exam, copy of a credential required for a particular occupation that is ONLY earned after the passage of an exam, or documentation demonstrating progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

WIOA §3(37) & §134(2)(A)(bb)
20 CFR §361-430(4)(A)(B)
TEGL 10-15 and 10-16