



Determining Non-Degree Credentials Under WIOA

Effective: July 1, 2025

Reference: NYSDOL TA 25-01

Background:

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) have primary responsibility for determining credentials that are included in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Credential Attainment Indicator for their Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) when the credential is considered “non-degree.” Non-degree credentials include occupational certificates, occupational certifications, and other recognized certificates of industry/occupational skills completion.

Policy:

The WDB of Oswego County authorizes the Executive Director of the WDB, along with one designee at a supervisory level, to review and determine non-degree credentials needed for employment in local and regional in-demand industries, and their appropriateness for the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator. This review will be conducted using the forms provided by the New York State Department of Labor in TA 25-01 (see Attachments A and B). The review will be conducted at least once every four years.

The Administrative Secretary will track the non-degree credentials approved for the LWDA and will notify the Executive Director of the WDB of the need to re-review a non-degree credential to determine if aspects of that credential have changed.

The Administrative Secretary will also retain a copy of the completed attachments and provided the attachments to NYSDOL upon request.

The Administrative Secretary (as OSOS Security Coordinator) will also add an offering for staff to use when documenting the service within OSOS. Staff will enter the appropriate service as well as any Credentials and Measurable Skills Gains attained by the customer.

NON-DEGREE CREDENTIALS FOR THE WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR

This attachment is designed to support the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) to determine and document non-degree credentials for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Credential Attainment Primary Indicator of Performance ("WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator").

Contents

DETERMINATION FOR WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR 2

 Qualified Credentials 2

 Non-Degree Credentials that Require Staff Determination..... 2

 Five (5) Disqualifying Criteria for Non-Degree Credentials 3

 Four (4) Qualifying Criteria for Non-Degree Credentials..... 3

DOCUMENTATION OF NON-DEGREE CREDENTIALS FOR THE WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR..... 4

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS..... 7

DETERMINATION FOR WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. [10-16, Change 3](#) helps determine non-degree credentials that count toward the WIOA [Credential Attainment Indicator](#). Regulated credentials are automatically included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator, while non-degree credentials require determinations from LWDB staff.

Qualified Credentials

An individual's attainment of one (1) of the following credentials, as regulated by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) or other State and federal agencies, is automatically included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator:

- [High School Diploma \(HSD\)](#) and [High School Equivalency \(HSE\)](#) with employment or enrollment in an education and training program leading to a [recognized postsecondary credential](#) within one year of program exit;
- [Associate's Degree](#);
- [Bachelor's Degree](#);
- A Graduate degree earned by a participant in a WIOA Title IV [Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\)](#) program (not applicable to WIOA Title I programs);
- [Occupational Licensure](#);
- [Registered Apprenticeship](#) certification; or
- [Career and Technical Education](#) certification.

Non-Degree Credentials that Require Staff Determination

Non-degree credentials requiring LWDB review include the following:

- [Occupational Certificate](#);
- [Occupational Certification](#); or
- Any other recognized certificate of industry/occupational skills completion.

These non-degree credentials are included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator only if:

1. They do not meet any of the five (5) disqualifying criteria; and
2. They meet all four (4) required qualifying criteria.

Five (5) Disqualifying Criteria for Non-Degree Credentials

If any of the following five (5) criteria apply, the non-degree credential is **not** included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator:

1. The certification is awarded or issued by the LWDB;
2. The training is an [On-the-Job Training](#);
3. The training is a [Customized Training](#);
4. It is a stand-alone certification that trains for [work readiness skills](#) only; or
5. It is a stand-alone certification that trains for [general skills](#) only, including but not limited to computer security, good hygiene, or safety.

Note: Work readiness and general skills certifications are not considered occupational skills training or education for a specific industry/occupation under WIOA. They are typically classified as [pre-vocational services](#) for WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker programs and as the [Leadership Development Element](#) for the Youth Program, and are therefore not included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator.

Four (4) Qualifying Criteria for Non-Degree Credentials

Non-degree credentials must meet four (4) qualifying criteria to be included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator. The credential must be awarded in recognition of the individual's attainment of skills that are:

1. Technical or occupational/industry skills; and
2. Measurable; and
3. Generally based on standards developed or endorsed by businesses or industry associations; and
4. Necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry or occupation.

DOCUMENTATION OF NON-DEGREE CREDENTIALS FOR THE WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR

Credential Name: _____ Date: _____

Training Provider Name: _____

Reviewer 1: _____ Reviewer 2: _____

Thoroughly answer the following questions to document the qualifications of a non-degree credential to count toward the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator.

*A completed **Attachment A** must be re-reviewed by the LWDB at least once every four (4) years to determine if aspects of the non-degree credential have changed.

1. List the measurable technical or industry/occupational skills taught during the credential training. (Note: Technical skills are practical knowledge and abilities needed to perform a specific job, **not limited to** proficiency in technology.) Please also provide the occupation by referencing at least one (1) of the applicable [Occupational Information Network \(O*NET\) codes](#).

2. Explain how participant skills attainment is measured, providing evidence.

3. To establish industry recognition, list the business or industry association that helped develop or is endorsing the curriculum/content of the credential, providing documentation or verification.

Credential Name: _____ Date: _____

Training Provider Name: _____

Reviewer 1: _____ Reviewer 2: _____

WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR FIVE (5) DISQUALIFYING CRITERIA		
<i>If a credential meets any of the five (5) disqualifying criteria, then it is not counted in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator</i>	Yes/No	Comments
D I S Q U A L I F Y I N G	1. The certification is awarded or issued by the LWDB	
	2. The training is an On-the-Job Training	
	3. The training is a Customized Training	
	4. The training is a stand-alone certification that trains for only work readiness skills	
	5. The training is not a stand-alone certification that trains for only general skills	
WIOA CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT INDICATOR FOUR (4) QUALIFYING CRITERIA		
<i>A credential must meet all four (4) qualifying criteria to be counted in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator.</i>	Yes/No	Comments
Q U A L I F Y I N G	1. Credential is awarded in recognition of the individual's attainment of technical or occupational/industry skills	
	2. Credential is awarded in recognition of the individual's attainment of skills that are measurable	
	3. Credential is awarded in recognition of the individual's attainment of skills that are generally based on standards developed or endorsed by businesses or industry associations	
	4. Credential is awarded in recognition of the individual's attainment of skills that are necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry or occupation	

WE ARE YOUR DOL

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

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 is often required for professional positions and can lead to advanced studies.

Career and Technical Education: A required WIOA partner program that provides academic and technical instruction in the content areas of agriculture, business and marketing, family and consumer sciences, health sciences, trade and technical education, and technology education (NYSED [Career Training \(Proprietary\) Schools](#) and [Career and Technical Education Programs](#)).

Customized Training: WIOA term for contracted group training based on a commitment by an employer or group of employers to hire participants upon successful completion of the training. Employers pay for a significant cost of the training, as determined by the LWDB. Customized Training is advantageous for participants because it helps build skills and establish employment status. Customized training requires an employer’s commitment to retain the individual upon successful training completion. Employers benefit from Customized Training by leveraging the programs to attract workers, build workers’ skills tailored to employer needs (including for hard-to-fill vacancies), and gain a competitive advantage with a skilled workforce (TEGL No. [21-22](#)).

General Skills: General discrete, single skills within one (1) or more industries or occupations. Examples may include, but are not limited to, leadership or writing skills that are generally needed in any occupation. These general skills certificates may be valuable for entry-level employment or career advancement. However, because they do not provide the specific competencies needed for a particular occupation, they are not included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator. The following general skills certificates related to computer security, safety, good hygiene, etc., are disqualified by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL):

- a. Computer security (e.g., training that only teaches computer safety fundamentals such as the importance of strong passwords and changing them frequently; installing, updating, and using current software, antivirus, anti-spyware, malware, and firewalls; creating backups; securing wireless networks; keeping personal information safe; and controlling access to computer equipment);
- b. Good hygiene (e.g., handwashing or food handling training); or

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

WE ARE YOUR DOL



- c. Safety (e.g., First Aid, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10-Hour, Lifeguard, or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training) (TEGL No. [10-16, Change 3](#) and Training and Employment Notice (TEN) No. [25-19](#)).

High School Diploma and Equivalency (HSD/E): A high school diploma or its equivalent as recognized by New York State (NYS) Education Law. For a NYS resident, NYS has [approved HSDs](#) and [four approved pathways](#) for HSE. NYS residents should utilize those pathways for future college admission, scholarships, and civil services prospects.

Industry-Recognized Credential: Developed and offered by, or endorsed by, a nationally or regionally recognized industry association or organization representing a sizeable portion of the industry sector; or a credential that is sought or accepted by companies within the industry sector for purposes of hiring or recruitment, which may include credentials from vendors of certain products (TEN No. [25-19](#)).

Non-Degree Credential: Occupational certificates, occupational certifications, and other recognized certificates of industry/occupational skills completion that recognize an individual's acquisition of specific skills, knowledge, or competencies, but typically does not lead to an academic degree. These credentials are designed to support professional or personal growth and may recognize learning that occurs outside traditional accredited education settings, such as workplace experience, independent study, or industry-specific training.

Non-degree credentials are issued by various organizations, including educational institutions, industry associations, occupational groups, businesses, military organizations, unions, and government agencies. These credentials are awarded based on criteria such as course completion, competency demonstration, work experience, and examination results. Other terms used to describe non-degree credentials include micro-credentials, badges, sub-baccalaureate certificates, non-credit certifications, and certificates of completion for exams or training courses ([Rutgers University and Lumina Foundation](#)).

Occupational Certificate/Certification: A certification awarded for completing specific training or education in an occupation, validating the necessary skills and knowledge by passing an exam or other criteria. It is typically issued by educational institutions, professional organizations, or industry associations. Certifications attest to attainment of competence through a rigorous examination or demonstration and may also have a work experience requirement. Certifications are usually considered to be more rigorous and indicate a higher level of competence or proficiency than a certificate (TEN No. [25-19](#)).

Occupational Licensure: An occupational license is a credential awarded by a government agency that constitutes legal authority to do a specific job. Licenses are

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

WE ARE YOUR DOL



Department
of Labor

based on some combination of degree or certificate attainment, certifications, assessments, or work experience; are time-limited; and must be renewed periodically (TEN No. [25-19](#)).

Occupational Skills Training (OST): An organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. OSTs must:

- Be outcome-oriented (focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy);
- Be of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal and lead to the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential; and
- Meet the quality standards in WIOA sec. 123. (20 CFR § [681.540](#))

On-the-Job Training (OJT): A training by an employer, to a participant hired by the employer, that provides knowledge and skills essential to full and adequate job performance. OJT funds provide reimbursements to businesses of up to 50% of the wage rate of OJT participants (in certain circumstances up to 75%) to help defray the training costs of the newly hired employee. In an OJT program, the business is generally the entity providing the training. This training is funded by a direct contract and could exist as a stand-alone training, or as a portion of an integrated training type, such as a Registered Apprenticeship.

The advantages of OJT for participants are that they build skills and establish employment status while receiving a consistent paycheck. OJT also provides learning opportunities for those who cannot spend time outside of work hours for more traditional classroom training programs. OJT benefits employers because they can hire an employee right away, ensure the training program is specific to their hiring needs, and get help offsetting training costs. Employers should ensure that all OJT programs and hiring are non-discriminatory and equitable (TEGL No. [21-22](#)).

Pre-Vocational Services: Include, but are not limited to, the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. These are similar to work readiness skills (20 CFR § [463.430](#)).

Recognized Postsecondary Credential: Consists of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or the federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree. Recognized postsecondary credentials are awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or industry/occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an industry/occupation (TEN No. [25-19](#)).

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

WE ARE YOUR DOL



Department
of Labor

Registered Apprenticeship: An industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce and individuals can obtain a paid work experience with a mentor, receive progressive wage increases, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential. Registered Apprenticeships are industry-vetted and approved, and validated by USDOL or a State Apprenticeship Agency ([Apprenticeship USA](#)).

Stand-Alone Credential: A credential that is offered independently, without being combined with, sequenced with, or integrated into other occupational skills credentials.

Technical Skills: Practical knowledge and abilities needed to perform a specific job, **not limited to** proficiency in technology.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): Assists individuals with disabilities to achieve and maintain employment, and supports independent living through training, education, rehabilitation, and career development ([Adult Career & Continuing Education Services-VR](#)).

WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator: The percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or an HSD/E, during participation in or within one (1) year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained an HSD/E is included in the percentage of participants who have attained an HSD/E only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one (1) year after exit from the program (TEGL No. [10-16, Change 3](#)).

Work Readiness Skills: Work readiness skills refer to the essential personal and interpersonal capacities that enable individuals to secure, maintain, and succeed in employment. These skills are transferable across different work settings and careers. Key components of work readiness skills include, but are not limited to:

- Effective communication, writing, and interpersonal skills;
- Adaptability, problem-solving, and time management;
- Ability to accept supervision, feedback, and guidance;
- Work behaviors, such as punctuality, attendance, and work tolerance;
- Social skills, including teamwork, leadership, conflict resolution, and negotiation;
- Self-management skills, including goal setting, self-motivation, and self-discipline; and
- Practical skills, such as using public transportation, grooming, and hygiene.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

WE ARE YOUR DOL



These work readiness skills are fundamental to an individual's ability to adapt and perform in various work environments and are closely related to pre-vocational services and job search and career development skills.

Youth Program Leadership Development Element: Opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors, including but not limited to:

- Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities;
- Community and service learning projects;
- Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring;
- Organizational and team work training, including team leadership training;
- Training in decision-making, including determining priorities and problem solving;
- Citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training;
- Civic engagement activities, which promote the quality of life in a community; and
- Other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role, such as serving on youth leadership committees (i.e., Standing Youth Committee).

(20 CFR § [681.520](#) or [WIOA Youth Services Brief](#))

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

WE ARE YOUR DOL



NON-DEGREE CREDENTIAL QUALITY

This attachment is designed to support the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) to utilize additional, critical, and recommended quality criteria for non-degree credentials to enhance the quality and options of occupational skills training provided to customers. Quality is essential for non-degree credentials, ensuring value for all stakeholders, including participants, employees, LWDB staff, training providers, partners, and businesses. Quality non-degree credentials have the potential to facilitate social mobility by acting as clear markers of competency that should be rewarded with valuable outcomes; however, low-quality non-degree credentials have the potential to perpetuate or even worsen inequality.

In addition to skill measurement and business endorsement criteria set by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the following criteria may be used to determine quality, when applicable, to align resources and participant support.

Note: A non-degree credential does not need to meet all criteria to be considered quality. LWDBs should utilize the criteria they see fit in making this determination.

Contents

CREDENTIAL ATTRIBUTES	2
CREDENTIAL ENDORSEMENTS	2
CREDENTIAL DELIVERY	3
CREDENTIAL OUTCOMES.....	4
KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS.....	4

Training Provider Name: _____
 Reviewer 1: _____ Reviewer 2: _____

QUALITY CRITERIA FOR NON-DEGREE CREDENTIALS			
Credential Name: _____		Date: _____	
CREDENTIAL ATTRIBUTES		Yes/No	Comments
A T T R I B U T E S	Is the credential portable? Recognized and accepted across different educational institutions, industries, and geographic locations, providing multiple entry and exit points.		
	Is the credential stackable? A series of certifications and qualifications are built using a competency model (i.e., CareerOneStop Competency Model) and link credit and non-credit offerings at training institutions to apply the stackable certifications towards a degree or a career pathway.		
	Is the credential cost-effective? Consider the cost of the credential in relation to the occupation it helps individuals attain, and the corresponding wages earned in that occupation.		
	Are credential competencies and standards available and updated frequently? The credential is designed with transparency in mind and with explicitly available information about the standards used to award credentials and competences achieved. The frequency of updates to the training curriculum and certification standards, combined with consistent feedback from businesses, tends to enhance both the quality of the credential and its demand.		
	Is the credential and/or the credential grantor known? How do key stakeholders including businesses, educational institutions, policymakers, and the public at large, perceive the credential? Check quality determinations made by other organizations such as the USDOL Certification Finder , Credentials Matter , or Credential Engine . (*Inclusion on these registries does not mean the credential is automatically included in the WIOA Credential Attainment Indicator).		
CREDENTIAL ENDORSEMENTS		Yes/No	Comments
E N D O R S E M E N T S	Is the credential for in-demand occupations? Credentials aligned with targeted in-demand occupations are likely to provide graduates with quality, high-paying jobs with an employee pipeline, improved retention with increased productivity, and diversity.		
	Is the credential used as factor in business hiring or promotion practices? How does the credential get translated into job descriptions, promotions, as company policy, or personal hiring preferences?		

WE ARE YOUR DOL



Department
of Labor

QUALITY CRITERIA FOR NON-DEGREE CREDENTIALS			
Credential Name: _____		Date: _____	
E M E N T S	<p>Is the credential aligned with the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and regional sector strategy/partnerships?</p> <p>Sector partnerships involve diverse agencies, community-based organizations, business associations, and other stakeholders, aligning with local, regional, state, and national labor market trends and demands.</p>		
	<p>Is the credential endorsed by a third party?</p> <p>Standards for curriculum and participant assessments, when endorsed by a third party, tend to ensure the quality of training. For example, check for accreditation (ANSI National Accreditation Board Directory), certification, or quality monitoring, as applicable.</p>		
CREDENTIAL DELIVERY		<i>Yes/No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
D E L I V E R Y	<p>Is the credentialing program robust enough to support the retention of the target population?</p> <p>The diversity and depth of wraparound supportive services and partnerships that align with participant needs can increase their engagement and retention in training.</p>		
	<p>Is the credentialing program offered in parts to permit credit for the skills and knowledge the participant already has?</p> <p>Trainings are often broken down into smaller portions, or chunks, enhancing participants' ability to earn interim credentials and combine part-time study with full-time employment and/or family responsibilities.</p>		
	<p>Is the credential contextualized to meet the diverse learning needs of participants?</p> <p>Context-based, hands-on, and integrated training is beneficial for participants with diverse learning needs, such as the low-skilled; English Language Learners; and those needing digital, basic, and other skills.</p>		
	<p>Is the credentialing program accessible, available, affordable, and inclusive?</p> <p>Geographical, transportation, financial, and programmatic accessibility and inclusion are crucial for serving diverse participants, including individuals with disabilities, LGBTQI+ individuals, immigrants, young adults, and seniors within our workforce system, ultimately contributing to success.</p>		
	<p>Is the training provider or LWDB assessing trainee satisfaction?</p> <p>Feedback and input from participants tend to be indicative of the training quality.</p>		

WE ARE YOUR DOL

QUALITY CRITERIA FOR NON-DEGREE CREDENTIALS			
Credential Name: _____		Date: _____	
	<p>Is the training provider building the capacity of its staff?</p> <p>Continual support and training of the staff, who are the face of the program and train and case-managed participants, critically helps in participant engagement.</p>		
CREDENTIAL OUTCOMES		Yes/No	Comments
O U T C O M E S	<p>Are credential achievement outcomes for individuals captured and communicated, and goals met?</p> <p>Completion, job placement, recruitment, and retention rates for participants are indicative of the training's quality. For incumbent workers, increased promotions, retention, and wages are beneficial outcomes to evaluate.</p>		
	<p>Are business outcomes data captured and communicated, and goals met?</p> <p>Reduced recruitment costs, expedited hiring, and reduced costs related to in-house training and turnover, higher productivity, diversity, and a more skilled workforce due to the credential is valued.</p>		
	<p>Is the credential enhancing societal outcomes?</p> <p>Are there contributions to public safety, consumer efficiency, social mobility, reducing racial and ethnic inequality, and higher rates of civic engagement?</p>		

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Accredited: Accreditation by an independent, quality-review body is a valuable attribute and is often required for educational institutions or specific educational programs for students to be eligible for Federal financial aid. Certificates and certifications can be accredited by a variety of accrediting organizations, such as The American National Standards Institute, Institute for Credentialing (TEN No. [25-19](#) and [U.S. Education Department](#)).

Portable Credential: A credential is considered portable when it is recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings; either in other geographic areas, or other educational institutions, or by other industries or businesses (TEN No. [25-19](#)).

Stackable Credential: A credential is considered stackable when it is part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help them to move along a career pathway or up a career ladder to different and potentially higher paying jobs (TEN No. [25-19](#)).

WE ARE YOUR DOL



Department
of Labor