

## Credentials Guidance April 2018

**Purpose:** To inform DVR staff of the credentials definitions, the process for recording credentials, and the importance of credentials under WIOA.

**Rationale:** The recording/tracking of education and training that leads to a credential in IRIS is essential for accurate RSA 911 reporting as well as for reporting DVR performance on the related common performance measure under WIOA (677.155(a)(1)(iv)).

**Definition:** A credential is attained at the end of an approved education or training program that is included in the IPE. (e.g. bachelor's degree, high school diploma, apprenticeship certificate and GED)

### Credential Common Performance Measure

The percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent during participation or within one year after exit from the program. 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 is also employed or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

In addition to this, it is important to monitor and document each consumer's completion of necessary and appropriate training and skills development toward the achievement of their employment goal.

**Procedure:** Staff will record each consumer's enrollment in education and training toward a secondary or post-secondary credential, track skills gains made, and record the attainment of the credential using the Education/Training module in IRIS. The date of the most recently entered credential should be the date that it was achieved. For example, if a consumer successfully completed high school on June 15, but did not provide documentation (copy of diploma or completed transcript indicating graduation) until July 1, the date of the credential entered in IRIS is June 15.

In the Education/Training Module in IRIS, the enrollment date is defined as the first day that classes/training begin.

Training and education that will be tracked includes: High school; secondary adult education; post-secondary degrees; vocational or technical programs leading to licenses and certificates; other education and training leading to an industry-recognized diploma, degree, or certificate; and apprenticeships. In addition to these trainings, staff will need to record and track On-the-Job Trainings (OJTs) and remedial training (see Measurable Skills Gains Guidance).

**Note:** Only training and education necessary to achieve the IPE goal, listed in the IPE, and specified below is to be documented and tracked in the Education /Training module in IRIS. This includes education and training that DVR purchases **and** training/education services provided by a comparable benefit or consumer contribution. Documentation must be attached in IRIS for the credential attained.

Staff should continue to pursue documentation until the case is closed. Best practice is to request the documentation at the time they know the credential is attained. If staff are not able to get it at that point they should ask at IPE annual review, IPE amendment, and 30-day contacts. Staff must make multiple attempts to obtain credential documentation prior to case closure.

## **Types of Credentials Tracked in IRIS**

**Secondary School Credentials:** A secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent recognized by the state and included for accountability under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act.

*Examples of Secondary School Credentials:*

- High School Diploma
- High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)
- General Education Diploma (GED)

*Examples of what would **not** count as a credential:*

- Special education certificate (we still track enrollment and attainment of this)

**Post-Secondary Credentials:** A credential awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or industry/occupation-specific skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry/occupation. These skills are generally based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations (degrees, occupational licensure, occupational certificates, etc.).

*Examples of Post-secondary credentials:*

- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Graduate Degree
- Vocational/Technical license, diploma or certificate
  - An industry-recognized certificate or certification (e.g. Microsoft Information Technology certificate, Certified Nursing Assistant, certificate in business administration, Certified Welder, Commercial Driver's License)
  - License recognized by state or federal government (e.g. Registered Nurse, Asbestos Inspector, Cosmetologist, Master Plumber, Licensed Professional Counselor)
  - Technical Diploma

- Other education or training diploma, degree, or certificate (e.g. Job Corps certificate of completion for career technical training)
- Apprenticeship certificate/diploma (e.g. youth apprenticeship or apprenticeship)
- Business Enterprise Program (BEP) License

*Examples of what would **NOT** count as a post-secondary credential:*

- Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Disability Skills Training (Sign language, Speech Reading, cognitive training/retraining)
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Certificates of completion (Project SEARCH, REDI)
- Work readiness certificates (e.g. completion of soft skills training)
- Workforce Development Board awarded certificates
- General skill certificates related to safety or hygiene, etc. (e.g. CPR, OSHA, Emergency Management)
- Credentials that are not industry-recognized or sought by employers in industry (e.g. local college certificates such as Professional Communication, Global Studies, Bi-Lingual Spanish Skills)

**Note:** *While not leading to a credential, staff will also need to record and track On-the-Job Trainings (OJT) and remedial training (see Measurable Skills Gains Guidance).*

## Crosswalk of Education and Training Type and Credentials/

The below crosswalk demonstrates what type of credential can be documented for the various education and training programs being tracked.

\*A Special Education Certificate does NOT count as a credential. However, we must track them for reporting purposes for RSA.

### Credential Screening Process

When a consumer is beginning an education or training program **that is not indicated in categories listed above**, the following process should be used to determine if it should be tracked and will count as a credential:

- Review the Post-Secondary Credential Checklist to determine if program completion meets the requirements of a credential (see checklist below).

Education/Training Type Leading to Credential or Employment	Credential Attained Drop-Down List Options
Secondary - High School Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diploma</li> <li>Special Education Certificate*</li> </ul>
Secondary - Adult Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HSED</li> <li>GED</li> </ul>
Postsecondary – Associate's Program	Will not see a drop-down list for these 4 Programs (IRIS will keep track of the Credential Attained behinds the scenes based upon when the Credential Attained Date is entered).
Postsecondary – Bachelor's Program	
Postsecondary – Master's Program	
Postsecondary - Graduate Program	
Postsecondary - Vocational/Technical Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>License</li> <li>Certificate/Diploma</li> </ul>
Other Education or Training (Ex. Job Corps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diploma</li> <li>Degree</li> <li>Certificate</li> </ul>
Apprenticeship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certificate/Diploma</li> </ul>
Business Enterprise Program (BEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>License</li> </ul>
On-the-Job Training (OJT)	N/A
Remedial Training	N/A

- After completing the checklist review and all criteria have been met (indicated "yes" for every category on the checklist), gather program documentation, consult with your local team, and submit to the Policy Analyst mailbox (DWD MB DVR Policy Analysts or [dvrpolicyanalyst@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dvrpolicyanalyst@dwd.wisconsin.gov)) for final determination of credential status.

**Resources:**

- Technical Assistance Circular – RSA TAC 17-01  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/rsa/tac/2017/tac-17-01.pdf>

## Post-Secondary Credential Checklist

*This is intended as a guide. Official determinations are to be made by the programs.*

CRITERIA	YES/NO
1. Is the certificate awarded for recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or industrial/occupation skills? These are generally based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations.	
2. Certificate is <b>not</b> issued by a workforce development board.	
3. Certificate is <b>not</b> a work readiness certificate.	
4. Does the certificate recognize technological or industry/occupational skills for the specific industry/occupation rather than general skills related to safety, hygiene, etc.	
<p>5. Issued by 1 of the 8 identified entities that issue recognized postsecondary credentials.  <i>(Not all credentials awarded by these entities meet the definition of credential.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. State educational agency or state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a State.</li> <li>b. Institution of higher education described Sec. 102 of 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.</li> <li>c. An institution of higher education that is formally controlled, or has been formally sanctioned or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes.</li> <li>d. Professional, industry, or employer organization or product manufacturer or developer using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge skills and abilities.</li> <li>e. ETA's Office of Apprenticeship or a State Apprenticeship Agency;</li> <li>f. A public regulatory agency, which awards a credential 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.</li> <li>g. Program approved by the Department of Veteran's Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons.</li> <li>h. Job Corps, which issues certificates for completing career training programs that are based on industry skills standards and certification requirements.</li> </ul>	

Does the Certificate meet the WIOA Definition of a Credential in TEGL 10-16/TAC 17-01/Memo 17-02? (Must answer yes to all 5 criteria above)      **YES**      **NO**