

Mapping Certificates in Your Local Area

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To prepare WIA youth participants for further education and careers and jobs that lead to self-sufficiency, WIA youth staff need to know what certificates are available in the local area. Unfortunately, there is no centralized clearinghouse of certificates available in Ohio's 20 local workforce investment areas, so local staff need to map the certificates available in the local area.

Mapping certificates involves identifying the training programs in your local area that prepare youth to earn a certificate.

What Is a Certificate?

High school diplomas, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees are all included under the Youth Common Measure Attainment of a Degree or Certificate. Certificates count under this measure if they meet 2 requirements as defined in TEGL 17-05.

- The certificate must be awarded in recognition of technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation that are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers.
- The certificate must be issued by
 - A state educational agency or a state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state
 - An institution of higher education including 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 (e.g., National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence certification, National Institute for Metalworking Skills, Inc., Machining Level I credential) or a product manufacturer or developer (e.g., Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, Certified Novell Engineer, Sun Certified Java Programmer) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities
 - A registered apprenticeship program
 - 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 (e.g., FAA aviation mechanic certification, state-certified asbestos inspector)
 - A program that has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons
 - Job Corps centers that issue certificates
 - 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.

Work readiness certificates are explicitly excluded and do not count toward this performance measure.

Identifying Training Programs

Local WIA youth staff typically know where traditional educational credentials like high school diplomas, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees are available. However, local youth staff may be less well informed about where to find training programs for other certificates.

A master list of Ohio-approved **industry-recognized certificates** for secondary education and adult workforce education is available at <http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1148&ContentID=13250&Content=31314>. There is no comparable master list of **occupational or professional licenses** awarded by Ohio or federal public regulatory agencies.

Training programs that prepare youth for industry-recognized certificates and occupational or professional licenses may be available at

- Secondary schools, including career centers, joint vocational schools, and Job Corps centers
- Adult education centers, sometimes called *adult workforce education centers*
- 2-year campuses, including community colleges, technical colleges, and branch campuses of state universities
- Public or private 4-year universities or colleges
- Private, for-profit proprietary or career schools
- Employers in the local community

Registered apprenticeship programs are provided by local sponsors, including individual union or nonunion employers, employer groups, associations, and joint labor-management committees. Apprenticeship program information is available online at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/apprenticeship/>.

Postsecondary occupational certificates are awarded by an educational institution for a program of study after high school that is shorter than an associate degree program. They may count as certificates under Common Measures if they are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers. They may be available from

- Adult education centers
- 2-year campuses (community colleges, technical colleges, and branches of 4-year state universities)
- Private, for-profit proprietary or career schools

These are some examples of postsecondary occupational certificates.

- Supply Chain Management Certificate at Columbus State Community College (<http://global.csc.edu/CoursesDegrees/degrees.asp?D=LOGI.ICRT&I=D>)
- Web Design Certificate from Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (<http://www.cincinnati.state.edu/CurrentStudent/Academics/AcademicDivisions/InformationTechnologies/ITD-WEBC.htm>)
- Phlebotomy Certificate of Completion from Lorain County Community College (<http://www.lorainccc.edu/Academic+Divisions/Allied+Health+and+Nursing/Allied+Health+and+Nursing+Programs/Phlebotomy.htm>)

Requirements for Programs and Certificates

Requirements for different training programs and certificates vary. In addition, requirements for a training *program* may be different than the requirements for the industry-recognized *certificate* or occupational or professional *license* the training program leads to.

- **Courses.** Many certificates require that youth successfully complete a specified series of courses in occupational skills, academic skills, or both. Postsecondary occupational certificates, associate degrees, and apprenticeship programs typically have detailed requirements for course completion. Some industry-recognized certificates do not require any course-taking at all, whereas others require a specified series of courses designed to the specifications of the professional, industry, or employer organization.
- **On-the-job experience.** Youth may be required to complete a specified number of hours of on-the-job training (OJT) or supervised internship or work experience in the occupation, especially in apprenticeships, industry-recognized certificates, and occupational or professional licenses. Programs may require thousands of hours of OJT or other work experience.
- **Examinations.** Industry-recognized certificates and occupational or professional licenses typically require youth to pass a comprehensive written examination to earn the certificate.
- **Other.** Some certificates also require the completion of a special project, practicum, or portfolio to demonstrate competency in the occupational area.

How to Find Training Programs

To find training programs in your local area that prepare youth for certificates, you can review information provided by educational institutions and apprenticeship programs. You may be able to find program information yourself online or in paper documents, or you may find it preferable to network with local educators to get that information.

3 Online information. The Internet can be a good source of information on training programs in your local area.

- Some secondary school and district websites provide information on what career-technical training programs are available, where they are offered, and other program details.
- Adult education center websites may provide information on postsecondary occupational certificate programs.
- Apprenticeship program information is available online at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/apprenticeship/>.
- College websites often provide considerable information on postsecondary occupational certificate programs, degree programs, and the details of those programs. Some 2-year campus websites have a link from their home page to a list of all courses, degrees, or certificate programs. Other websites may list degree or certificate programs separately for different academic divisions or departments.

Paper documents. Traditional printed college catalogs also provide information on certificate and degree programs and details. Additional documents may describe course offerings and other details of individual certificate or degree programs. College catalogs may be available in a local public library or the resource room of a local One-Stop.

Networking with local educators. It can be equally productive to network with local educators to find training programs that prepare youth for certificates. Other local educators may have information on secondary, adult education, and postsecondary training programs in the local area, or they may know who you can contact to get that information.

You can network with these local educators to get program and contact information.

- Secondary guidance counselors
- Career center or joint vocational school instructors or administrators
- WIA youth program occupational skill training providers
- One-Stop postsecondary vocational education partners
- 2-year campus instructors or administrators
- 4-year campus instructors or administrators

You can start networking with any local educator you already know. If you don't already know a local educator, get a referral from someone you do know. If the local educators you contact don't have the information you need, ask them to refer you to another educator who might have it.

What Information to Look For

For each training program that prepares youth for a certificate, you should identify

- Any entrance requirements, such as
 - High school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate
 - Specified levels of basic skills or successful completion of specified math or science courses
- When the program admits students
- Certificates awarded
 - Educational certificates (postsecondary occupational certificate, associate or other degree)
 - Industry-recognized certificates
 - Occupational or professional licenses
- Requirements for training programs, industry-recognized certificates, and occupational or professional licenses, including courses, on-the-job experience, examinations, and other
- Evidence of industry-based standards, for example

“Courses for these certificates follow the guidelines and cover the content established by the Council of Supply Chain Management Professions (CSCMP), the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) and The North American Small Business International Trade Educators. (NASBITE) respectively, in their certification exams.” (<http://global.cscm.edu/CoursesDegrees/degrees.asp?D=INTLBUS.ICRT&I=D>)

- Career pathway of connected training programs, certificates, and occupations
 - Sequence of related occupations like health care aide, licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, and nurse practitioner
 - Articulation agreements between secondary programs, postsecondary occupational certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees

Training programs leading to a certificate can require a significant investment in time and money. So, WIA youth staff should ensure that each youth is prepared for the program.

- Review entrance requirements for the training program. The youth should meet all entrance requirements before applying.
- Include basic skills remediation and tutoring as appropriate to meet basic skill levels or course requirements.
- Help each youth select a training program based on realistic career information. The youth's interest in the occupation should be based on solid information. If necessary, career awareness and career exploration activities like internships and job shadowing can be provided as paid and unpaid work experience activities.
- Provide activities to prepare the youth to enter the workplace. Each youth should be prepared with the work readiness skills required to obtain and retain employment.
- Assist youth in gaining admission to the educational institution and the training program. Refer youth to the appropriate admissions counselor. At the least, schedule an appointment for the youth and provide clear directions and information; if possible, accompany the youth to the appointment.
- If the training program has prerequisite courses, assist the youth in scheduling those courses. If necessary, provide tutoring activities to help youth succeed in prerequisite and certificate program courses.
- Ensure that the youth is aware of instructional support services provided by the postsecondary education institution and uses them if needed.
- Include the training program and resulting certificate in the youth's Individual Service Strategy (ISS).
- Continue other activities in the youth's ISS as appropriate.
- Assist the youth in acquiring funding for training, if necessary.

Conclusion

Certificates are an excellent way to prepare WIA youth for careers and jobs that lead to self-sufficiency. With some time and research, local WIA youth staff can identify training programs available in their local area that prepare youth to earn certificates and then take appropriate measures to ensure that the youth is ready for the training program.

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