Florida Credentials Review Committee
Framework of Quality

Section I: Background and Overview

The Framework of Quality establishes criteria, consistent with state and federal law and guidance, to assist the Florida Credentials Review Committee in evaluating credentials for inclusion on the Master Credentials List (MCL). The following credential types are addressed in this Framework:

- Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Apprenticeship Certificates
- Occupational certifications specifically for veterans
- Industry Certifications, including
    - Industry Certifications for agricultural occupations pursuant to s. 570.07(43), Florida Statutes (F.S.); and
    - CAPE Industry Certifications and CAPE Acceleration Industry Certifications
- Licenses
- Advanced Technical Certificates
- College Credit Certificates
- Career Certificates
- Applied Technology Diplomas
- Associates degrees
- Bachelor's or baccalaureate degrees
- Graduate degrees

Credentials are evaluated using **three simple questions**, reflecting requirements in state and federal law and consistent with state workforce strategic goals and policy.

- **Demand:** Is there evidence of economic and employer demand for this credential in Florida?
- **Wage:** Does the credential demonstrate evidence of earnings that support self-sufficiency and economic mobility?
- **Value:** Is the credential recognized by industry, portable across employers or regions, and stackable within a documented career pathway that leads to an in-demand, high-wage occupation?

Section II: Required Criteria

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants authorized to submit MCL applications are local workforce development boards, Florida school districts, and public or private colleges and universities located in Florida. Applicants must submit publicly available documentation demonstrating assessment integrity, availability in Florida, and compliance with sequencing requirements when applicable. Applicant submissions must comply with all published application instructions and technical assistance and must be complete to be reviewed and considered. Applications submitted at least 20 calendar days
prior to the published submission deadline will receive notification if their application is not complete.

C. Credential to Occupational Linkage

Degree, non-degree, and registered apprenticeship credentials must be linked to at least one Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code that meets both wage and demand criteria. All credentials are reviewed for SOC linkages, which are assigned by the Florida Department of Commerce and validated by the Credentials Review Committee. These linkages confirm that the skills and knowledge gained from the credential align with the education, training, and core duties required for the occupation. A credential may be linked to more than one occupation if all requirements are met for each linked occupation. Linked occupations are required to evaluate demand and may also be used to evaluate wage criteria, as described below.

In addition, a document with Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) to SOC linkages is produced by the Florida Department of Commerce and reviewed by CareerSource Florida. Upon approval, the State Workforce

Development Board shall submit this document to the State Board of Education with each credential added to the MCL.

D. Resolving Credentials with Broad Skillsets

Credentials with generalized or nonspecific objectives may require supplemental documentation to establish occupational relevance. This may include revised learning outcomes, proposed SOC linkages, exam blueprints, labor market information, and stakeholder validation. To address this, applicants may provide evidence consistent with requirements specific to credential sequencing in Section II.F.5. Supporting evidence must document a clear rationale for each SOC code proposed, including exam objectives/blueprints and labor market information. Credentials assigned "No Valid SOC" may be revised or stacked with related credentials to demonstrate occupational relevance and strengthen alignment with the Framework of Quality.

E. Demand Criteria for Degree and Non-Degree Credentials

1. Labor Market Demand Product Criteria

Degree and non-degree credentials must be linked to at least one SOC code that meets demand criteria that is either:

i. Designated by the Labor Market Estimating Conference (LMEC) as an occupation identified as an area of concern either statewide or for an individual region in the most recent conference product available at the time of the annual review of the MCL. **-OR-**

ii. included on the statewide portion of Florida Department of Commerce's most recent Regional Demand Occupation Lists available at the time of the annual review of the MCL.

2. Registered Apprenticeship and Demand

A registered apprenticeship program meets demand if it satisfies statewide demand criteria, demonstrate local demand through active apprentices, are newly registered, or successfully document local demand through application review.

3. Other Demand Pathways Local Demand

*Credentials that do not meet Labor Market Product Demand Criteria in Section II.E.1. may be evaluated under **local demand.** Only local workforce development boards can submit for local demand consideration. To qualify, a local workforce development board must submit evidence demonstrating the following:*

i. Documented support from the local workforce development board, an education institution, and a business within the local area.

ii. Evidence that the credential is recognized by industry and leads to occupations within an industry sector of focus or an emerging industry for the local area.

iii. Evidence that current or projected job openings for the occupation exceed a locally established threshold or a minimum of 30 openings when no local threshold exists, based on JobsEQ or other state-adopted labor market information tools.

A local demand determination is valid for the year it is met and one additional year and is subject to the same duration limits and removal review as statewide determinations.

F. Wage Criteria

1. FETPIP

Credentials must show evidence of earnings outcomes and evidence that earnings outcomes meet middle- to high-level wages. For credentials that have sufficient and recent wage outcome data in the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), the following criteria must be met:

a. Wages reported one year after completion must be greater than or equal to 80% of the median Year One wages for all non-degree credential completers in FETPIP. **-OR-**

b. Wages reported five years after completion must be greater than or equal to 80% of the median Year Five wages for all non-degree credential completers in FETPIP.

2. Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS)

FETPIP remains the primary source when available; state-adopted tools may be used when outcome data are insufficient or unavailable. If sufficient and recent wage data are not available using FETPIP, wage validation must rely on statewide Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics occupational data. Wages for linked SOC codes must be evaluated using the two most recent statewide Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics data releases available at the time of the annual MCL review. The wages must meet the following criteria.

a. The 10th percentile wage for the occupation must be greater than or equal to the 10th percentile wage for all occupations requiring a postsecondary non-degree award.

-OR-

b. The average annual wage for the occupation must be greater than or equal to the average annual wage for all occupations requiring a post-secondary non-degree award.

-OR-

c. The 75th percentile wage for the occupation must be greater than or equal to the 75th percentile wage for all occupations requiring a postsecondary non-degree award.

Current wage thresholds are published on the CareerSource Florida website. Subsequent releases of the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program data may be used to resolve wage criteria requirements throughout the quarterly update cycle of the MCL.

4. Apprenticeship Wage determinations

A registered apprenticeship meets wage if the SOC code linked to the program meets exit wage criteria established in the program's approved wage scale.

5. Credential Sequencing Criteria for Career Pathways

Non-degree credentials, including micro-credentials, that do not meet the wage criteria must be stackable, part of an established career pathway, and sequenced to a credential that meets the wage criteria. Stackable credentials may be offered through certifications, non-degree programs, third party certifications, or occupational licenses. To meet the credential sequencing criteria, the non-degree credential must:

a. Be linked to at least one SOC code that has an average wage greater than or equal to the median wage of high school graduates with no other credential as calculated using FETPIP data. Documentation of linkage may include skill maps demonstrating at least 15% of pre-requisite skills for a higher-level credential as being taught and tested for in the lower-level credential.

-AND-

b. Be validated and recognized by industry.

-AND-

c. Demonstrate evidence that the credential is stackable as part of an established sequence of credentials as part of a career pathway that leads to an occupation that meets the Framework of Quality wage criteria. Evidence proving stackability must demonstrate a clear pathway to a certificate, associate degree or bachelor's degree that meets the wage criteria and may include credentials awarded from educational institutions for completion of credit-bearing courses, non-credit certifications for course completion, apprenticeship-related credentials, industry and professional association certifications and licenses. Evidence may include articulation agreements, data on industry hiring patterns, and other labor market information.

Additional documentation may be required for credentials not directly aligned with Florida's Targeted Industries identified as part of requirements in Section 288.005(7), Florida Statutes.

Guidance on credential sequencing as part of an established career pathway will be issued by CareerSource Florida, in collaboration with the Florida Department of Commerce.

6. Local Wage Resolution Criteria

Credentials that do not meet statewide wage requirements in Section II.F.1. or 2. may be assessed using local wage data. If FETPIP data are unavailable, local wage may be documented using OEWS data from Chmura's JobsEQ by SOC code. To qualify, the local workforce development board must submit evidence demonstrating the following:

a. Local OEWS wage estimates are available on the Florida Department of Commerce's website.

b. Wage data from Chmura JobsEQ demonstrating current and projected wage estimates by SOC code. Wage estimates must be state or regionally specific.

c. A letter from the local workforce development board or local business confirming wage levels and local labor market value.

A local wage determination is valid for the year it is met and one additional year and is subject to the same duration limits and removal review as statewide determinations.

Section III: Specialized Credentials

A. Degree Credentials

Degree credentials must be part of programs approved either by the State Board of Education, Florida College System or Commission for Independent Education programs and align with labor market value.

B. Agricultural Credentials

Agricultural credentials are submitted and evaluated by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in coordination with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and Florida A and M University. These credentials must demonstrate relevance to Florida's agricultural sector through occupational linkage, demand evidence, wage outcomes, and industry validation.

C. Identified Essential Workforce Credential Pathways

Credentials required to sustain critical statewide activities in occupations identified in Section 420.5096(6)(a)1, Florida Statutes that would be eligible for the Florida Hometown Hero Program are eligible for inclusion on the MCL even if they do not meet the wage criteria in Section II.F.1. or 2. This applies to credentials leading to employment as a health care worker, school staff member, first responder, public safety or court employee, or childcare worker. Additional qualifying occupations are made available at the following site: Hometown Heroes Program.

D. Small Business and Entrepreneurial Workforce Support Pathways

Credentials aligned to small business and entrepreneurial occupations within targeted industry sectors per section 288.005, F.S., may be evaluated using wage growth and income progression that do not meet the wage criteria in Section II.F.1. or 2 or demand criteria in Section II.E.1. These entrepreneurial and small business credentials must:

- Be clearly aligned to one or more of Florida's identified targeted sectors; and
- Support business creation, sustainability, expansion, or innovation that contributes to earnings growth, job creation, or supply chain stability within the sector.

Evidence of credential value may include income growth over time, business survivability, revenue benchmarks, advancement into higher-value contracts or markets, sector-based employer validation, or documented progression into supervisory or leadership roles.

E. Postsecondary Funding Eligibility Designations for Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Certification Funding List

Applicants seeking Florida Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act postsecondary funding must submit an MCL application. A credential must be approved for inclusion on the MCL before the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) will consider it for CAPE funding. All CAPE postsecondary submissions must comply with Rule 6A-6.0576, Florida Administrative Code and the Framework of Quality, which assesses value, demand, and wage.

F. CAPE Digital Tool Certificates

Digital tool certificates provide foundational skills aligned with MCL credentials and are reviewed annually by the Florida Department of Education for inclusion. The Florida Department of Education shall annually submit a list of eligible digital tool certificates for review and approval by the Credentials Review Committee for inclusion on the MCL.

G. Workforce Pell Program Credentials

A credential must be approved for inclusion on the MCL before being considered by FDOE for inclusion on the state approved list of Workforce Pell programs.

Section IV: Appeal Process

The appeal process is governed by the Florida Credentials Review Committee Charter adopted pursuant to section 445.004(4), Florida Statutes. Appeals must be submitted through the MCL application portal. Appeals may not introduce new credentials or materially revised program designs, can be submitted by LWDBs to resolve wage or demand deficiencies via local wage and local demand options described in sections II(D)(3) and II(E)(6) and must be submitted by the original applicant if not seeking to resolve through local wage or demand.

Section V: Periodic Quality Review of Credentials

Credentials on the MCL are subject to ongoing review based on updated wage and demand data. Credentials identified for removal remain on the list for two years under a flagged for removal process. Annual updates are published each February using the most recent labor market data, with defined timelines for curing deficiencies prior to removal.

a. Credentials highlighted in yellow indicate the first year of flagged for removal status due to demand or wage deficiencies. Unresolved deficiencies by the following February result in a second year on the MCL.

b. Credentials highlighted in orange indicate the second year of flagged for removal status. Required documentation must be submitted by December 1 to avoid removal from the MCL published the following February.