

Florida Credentials Review Committee

Framework of Quality

Background

Consistent with the requirements in section 445.004, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Framework of Quality must establish a definition for credentials of value to assist the Credentials Review Committee in evaluating credentials for inclusion in Florida's Master Credentials List.

Credentials of Value

Consistent with sections 14.36 and 445.004, F.S., the following are defined as credentials:

- Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Apprenticeship Certificates
- Industry Certification, including the following:
 - Occupational certifications specifically for veterans
 - Agricultural occupations pursuant to s. 570.07(43), F.S.
 - CAPE Industry Certifications, including CAPE Acceleration Industry Certifications, and
 - CAPE Digital Tool Certificates
- Licenses
- Advanced Technical Certificates
- College Credit Certificates
- Career Certificates
- Applied Technology Diplomas
- Associates degrees
- Bachelors or baccalaureate degrees
- Graduate degrees

A credential of value, consistent with guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor ([Training and Employment Notice 25-19](#)), is one that meets both the demand and wage criteria, described in more detail below, and is a recognized credential that serves as an attestation of qualifications of competence issued to an individual by a relevant and appropriate authority with expertise to issue such a credential. Characteristics of a credential of value are:

- **Industry-Recognized:** This means the credential is either
 - Developed and offered or endorsed by a nationally or regionally recognized industry association or organization representing a significant portion of the industry sector; or
 - Sought or accepted by companies or businesses within the industry sector for the purpose of hiring or recruitment (which may include credentials from vendors).
- **Stackable:** A credential is stackable when it is part of a sequence of credentials that can accumulate over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help move the individual along a career pathway to different jobs that are potentially higher paying. Additional details on credential sequencing criteria are below.
- **Portable:** This means the credential is recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings including:
 - Other geographical areas
 - Other educational institutions; or
 - Other industries or businesses

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- **Accredited (where applicable):** Some educational institutions or specific educational programs require accreditation by an independent, quality-review body for students to be eligible for Federal financial aid. Not all credentials are accredited and those that are not must demonstrate their labor-market value by other means including:
 - industry-wide recognition,
 - professional association acceptance, or
 - through local demand.
- A credential of value should lead to positive employment and earning outcomes and result in occupational or technical skills that prepare an individual for entry to or advancement in an occupation.

Degree Credentials

Degree Credentials must be part of programs approved either by the State Board of Education, Florida College System or Florida's State University System. Value of these credentials is determined by assessing alignment of programs with labor market value and state identified programs of emphasis.

Florida Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Credentials

For purposes of implementation of the Florida Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act, the Florida Department of Education implements rules adopted by the State Board of Education which determine required components of industry certifications included on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List. Industry certifications recommended for CAPE funding eligibility must meet the requirements adopted in rule by the State Board of Education. Credentials that are seeking to be considered CAPE funding eligible must be assessed by an independent, third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for occupationally specific knowledge, skills and competencies, resulting in the award of a certificate or other documentation of successful completion.

CAPE Digital Tool Certificates

Digital tool certificates provide elementary and middle school students with skills that are foundational to the earning of credentials on the Master Credentials List. These certificates are to be included on the Master Credentials List. The Florida Department of Education shall annually transmit a list of all eligible digital tool certificates that shall be included on the Master Credentials List for review and approval by the Credentials Review Committee.

Demand Criteria

Degree and non-degree credentials must be linked to at least one Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) code that is either:

1. 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 Master Credentials List.

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-OR-

2. Included on the Florida Department of Commerce's most recent [Regional Demand Occupation Lists](#) available at the time of the annual review of the Master Credentials List.

Subsequent releases of the LMEC product or Regional Demand Occupation Lists may be used to resolve demand throughout the quarterly update cycle of the Master Credentials List.

A registered apprenticeship meets demand if it:

- a. Meets the Framework of Quality demand criteria; **OR**
- b. Meets local demand by having at least one registered apprentice in the last academic year; **OR**
- c. Is a newly registered apprenticeship program in the last academic year; **OR**;
- d. Submits an application for local demand and passes evaluation.

Local Demand

Credentials that do not meet criteria 1 or 2 above may be evaluated under **local demand**. Credentials must be submitted by the local workforce development board and meet all the following criteria for **local demand**:

1. Documented support from the local workforce development board, education institution and economic development organizations in the local area.
2. Evidence that the credential leads to occupations in an industry sector of focus or in an emerging industry for the local area.
3. Evidence that the number of current or future job openings for the occupation exceeds either a threshold established by the local workforce development board or a minimum of 30 openings where no local threshold exists.

A local demand designation is good through the year in which it meets criteria and for one full year after.

Wage Criteria (Non-Degree Credentials Only)

Non-degree credentials must show evidence of earnings outcomes and evidence that earnings outcomes meet middle- to high-level wages. For non-degree 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:

1. 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-

2. 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.

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Non-degree credentials without sufficient and recent wage outcome data in FETPIP must show evidence of earnings outcomes with middle-level to high-level wages through a link to a SOC code. For a linked SOC code, the occupational wages from the most recent Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program available at the time of the annual review of the Master Credentials List must meet the following criteria:

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-

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

-OR-

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.

Subsequent releases of the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program data may be used to resolve wage throughout the quarterly update cycle of the Master Credentials List.

Credential Sequencing Criteria

Non-degree credentials that do not meet the wage criteria must be part of a sequence of credentials that are required for the next-level occupation that does meet the wage criteria. To meet the credential sequencing criteria, the non-degree credential must:

1. 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.

-AND-

2. Be validated and recognized by industry.

-AND-

3. Demonstrate evidence that the credential is part of an established sequence of credentials that lead to an occupation that meets the Framework of Quality wage criteria.

New industry certifications that meet demand criteria and sequencing criteria 1 and 2 above may be recommended for conditional approval pending review of evidence of a career pathway through articulation or other means when documentation is available. Conditionally approved certifications must be reviewed for sequencing criteria 3 within the first year of addition to the Master Credentials List. If the certification does not meet sequencing criteria 3, the certification will be recommended for removal from the list.

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Periodic Quality Review of Credentials

To ensure credentials on the list remain of value and continue to meet criteria, credentials must undergo regular review. Criteria that may trigger the need for removal from the MCL include those initiated by updates to wage and demand criteria as labor markets change over time. Once identified for removal, credentials on the Master Credentials List remain on the list for two years prior to being removed. Each February a new Master Credentials List is produced based on the most recent labor market data.

- Credentials highlighted in yellow are in their first year of "flagged-for-removal" status based on demand and/or wage deficiencies. Credentials on the MCL whose demand/wage deficiencies are not cured by February of the following year will remain on the list for a second year.
- Credentials highlighted in orange indicate they are in their second year of "flagged-for-removal" status. Additional information to cure the demand/wage deficiencies associated with credentials highlighted in orange must be submitted by no later than December 1, to prevent the removal of these credentials from the MCL published in February of the following year.