

House Bill 20-1002

College Credit for Work Experience

BACKGROUND AND DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

August 2021



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

House Bill 20-1002:

Concerning a Statewide Plan for Awarding College Credit for Work-Related Experience

Legislative Declaration:

- ...students need additional rights for their work-related experience to be evaluated fairly for application toward a postsecondary credential
- ...industry credentials should be evaluated for potential application toward a postsecondary credential with transferability among institutions
- ...industry members...are important stakeholders in this process to ensure Colorado's higher education system is responsive to students and to the changing economy

Two related yet distinct mandates.

A **study** of institutional capacity and potential expansion of prior learning assessment in public institutions, such that a student can “test out” of any course in the undergraduate curriculum



- **Study** to be completed by September 1, 2021 and include:
 - The PROCESSES for assessment that are appropriate to the learning outcomes of a given course.
 - The BENEFITS to students and to the state.
 - The COSTS to institutions, and the ability to recover costs.

Two related yet distinct mandates.



A **plan** to award transferable credit for work-related experience

- “Work-related experience” is defined in statute as experience “that may lead to or result in a business credential, an industry credential, a technical certificate, or a professional license”
- The plan is to be developed by the General Education Council in collaboration with the Commission, with a due date of January 1, 2022

Knowledge and Competencies Are Key.

Connecting the **learning** validated by industry credentials and professional licenses to the **learning outcomes** of GT Pathways and other transferable courses

Similar to recent efforts to align **learning** from military education and occupations to the **learning outcomes** of GT Pathways



Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Prior learning assessment (PLA) is a set of well-established, researched, and validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit. It allows learners to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular field or fields and have that learning evaluated for college credit (CAEL).

Assessment leads to credit.

PLA → CPL

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

- Standardized Exams (National)
- Challenge Exams (Institutional)
- Military and Corporate Education and Training
- Industry Credentials and Professional Licenses
- Other Work-Based Learning (Portfolio Review)

By the numbers

Source: The PLA Boost (2020) cael.org/pla-impact

Adult Students with CPL
Completed Credentials
at a Higher Rate

49% with CPL
27% without CPL

CPL Students Saved
Time to a Degree

9-14 Months saved for
adult degree earners
with 12 or more
CPL credits

Adult Students with
CPL Saved Money

\$1,500 –
\$10,200 Estimated
student savings across
sectors

CPL AND WBL: National Trends

- ❑ State Workforce and Higher Education Systems are increasingly joining forces to better identify the skills necessary for the emerging workforce.
- ❑ The interoperability of industry credentials, professional certificates, and higher education degrees is a huge topic of conversation and innovation.
- ❑ The development and use of a "common language" to describe knowledge and skills across jobs and across sectors is at the top of everyone's list.
- ❑ Meeting potential students/employees where they are and counseling them about prior learning, talent pipelines, and broad employment opportunities is seen as best practice in meeting equity and achievement gap goals

Elements of "The Plan"

- ❑ A process for “assessing and aligning work-related experience to the knowledge and competencies” of courses in GT Pathways (general education transfer curriculum), or courses in a Statewide Degree Transfer Agreement
- ❑ A process for evaluating credentials earned at an area technical college and identifying transfer pathways into two-year and four-year institutions
- ❑ Priority “may” be given to growing and high-demand industries identified in the Talent Pipeline Report
- ❑ Annual data reporting beginning March 1, 2024, on credit awards, transfer activity, and demographics of students who receive or transfer credit for work-related experience

Implementation Steps

1

Exploratory Study Completed by CAEL (October 2020)

2

Secured Funding from Strada Education Network

3

With Consultant and GE Council Workgroup, Developed Draft Plan

4

Presented Draft Plan to GE Council and Council of Chief Academic Officers

5

Stakeholder Consultations (Aug/Sept)

6

Revise Plan and Present to CCHE for Approval at December 2021 Meeting

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

“Work-Related Experience” defined in statute as that which
“may lead to or result in a business credential, an industry credential,
a technical certificate, or a professional license”

*“Work-Based Learning”, or WBL, is used synonymously
in this plan with “Work-Related Experience”*

For the purposes of this plan, work-related experience does not include non-credentialed learning that can be documented and presented in a portfolio (although institutions are encouraged to develop or expand portfolio review processes)

Forms of recognized and documented work-related experience to include in the plan:

- Industry certifications
- Professional licenses
- Apprenticeships
- Certificates earned at one of Colorado's three area technical colleges
- Other structured experiences with formal recognition and assessment of learning by a third-party evaluator/validator



For the purposes of this plan, work-related experience does not include non-credentialed learning that can be documented and presented in a portfolio, although institutions are encouraged to develop or expand portfolio review processes

HB 20-1002 College Credit for Work Experience IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STEP 1

Credentials are presented for consideration



STEP 2

Determination of whether credentials meet minimum criteria for consideration



STEP 3

CCCS/other IHE evaluates WBL for college credit or other alignment with a postsecondary program



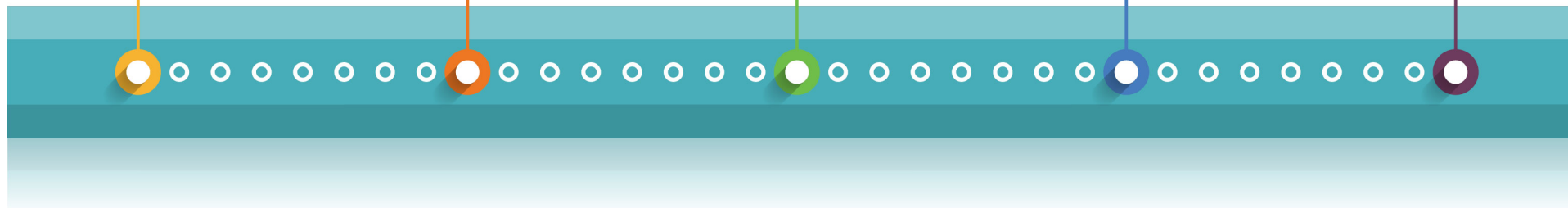
STEP 4

Validation and affirmation for statewide transfer



STEP 5

Documentation and communication



STEP 1

Credentials are presented for consideration



Credentials are presented for consideration FROM any of these interested parties:

- Credential holders (*current or potential student*)
- Credential providers (*industry group/trade association; training organization*)
- Credential “buyer”/hirer (*e.g., individual business/employer*)
- Credential promoter/supporter (*government entity such as CDE or state apprenticeship agency*)
- Other interested party (*e.g., faculty in a specific academic program*)
- CDHE (*credentials identified in consultation with GE Council as having high potential for alignment with transfer frameworks; these may be referred direct to CCCS or addressed in batches at a Fac2Fac-type conference*)

Credentials are presented for consideration TO any of these entities:

- CDHE, through a to-be-created portal or intake form (CDHE then routes to CCCS)
- A CCCS institution (referred to CCCS for evaluation using existing/refined PLA processes)
- Directly to CCCS through an existing/refined portal/intake form
- To another IHE that uses its own processes for evaluation
- To another IHE that refers presenter to CCCS

STEP 2

Determination of whether credentials meet minimum criteria for consideration



- A to-be-developed portal/intake form will outline criteria and include a checklist to be completed by presenter
- Criteria used will include alignment with National Skills Coalition criteria on quality non-degree credentials, which must be met for WBL to be considered for evaluation:
 - Is aligned to an occupation on a regional or statewide list of in-demand or critical occupations
 - Said occupation meets the living wage threshold for Colorado (*statewide average*)
 - Credential meets 2 out of the following 4 criteria:
 - ✓ Provider is accredited or credential is recognized by an accredited body
 - ✓ Credential is stackable into an existing degree or certificate program
 - ✓ Credential is traceable to competencies (valid) or to the provider (verified)
 - ✓ Credential is portable
- WBL provider will also be encouraged to register with the ETPL (*Education and Training Provider List*); in the future this may be required for consideration

✓ If credential meets minimum criteria proceed to Step 3

✗ If credential does not meet minimum criteria, communicate such to the presenter

STEP 3

CCCS/other IHE evaluates WBL for college credit or other alignment with a postsecondary program



Possible outcomes:

A.	Alignment with a specific GT Pathways category with recommendation to GE Council for consideration for statewide transfer	✓ <i>proceed to step 4</i>
B.	For CCCS only, equivalency with a specific course that is part of a Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement with recommendation to GE Council for consideration for statewide transfer	✓ <i>proceed to step 4</i>
C.	Equivalency with another course or courses in the curriculum specific to the institution where the credential is presented (<i>could be part of a degree program or a CTE program</i>) – CCCS/other IHE will add to its own credit for prior learning (CPL) crosswalks – will not be part of statewide transfer but institutions could enter into articulation agreements with partners	
D.	Partial alignment with GT Pathways (<i>fulfills one or more content criteria or competencies</i>) – CCCS or other IHE may identify other credentials that fulfill remaining elements, and/or work with a student to identify opportunities to acquire and demonstrate learning to fulfill remaining elements (<i>these might be added into a crosswalk/working document of sorts</i>)	
E.	No credit awarded and no application toward program requirements	
F.	For WBL that is referred from a four-year institution to CCCS, CCCS will document the outcome of the review and communicate to the student, along with options for how to apply recommended course credit or learning outcomes to a program within CCCS	

Note: CCCS will have a dry run of this process with selected credentials evaluated at its "2+2" faculty conference scheduled for September 24-25, 2021

STEP 4

Validation and affirmation
for statewide transfer



If STEP 3 results in (a) or (b):

- For GT Pathways recommendations, CCCS/other IHE submits proposal to CDHE using form to be created, similar to proposals to add institutional courses to GT Pathways
 - CDHE reviews and brings proposal to GE Council; proposal added to a list for statewide faculty review
 - CDHE holds (quarterly/semi-annual?) Fac2Fac-type conference to review proposals and make recommendations to GE Council regarding GT Pathways alignment; agenda will include:
 - ✓ Credentials that are nominated by an institution for inclusion in GT Pathways
 - ✓ Credentials that are nominated by CDHE for inclusion in GT Pathways based on market capture, connection to in-demand industries, and with high potential to align with statewide transfer frameworks
 - GE Council reviews faculty recommendations and advises CDHE on alignment of WBL with GT Pathways
 - CDHE recommends selected GT Pathways equivalencies and statewide transferability to CCHE for a three-year period, at which point they would need to be re-evaluated
- For STAA course recommendations...similar or different process?? Or does CCCS make the determination and bring information and documentation to GE Council?

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

- **FACULTY:** CFAC meeting and semi-annual statewide faculty town hall, September 10 (tentative)
- **REGISTRARS:** Combined registrar/data advisory group meeting TBD in September
- **STUDENTS:** Outreach to Young Invincibles; CCCS SSAC does not meet until November
- **INDUSTRY:** CDHE Employer Advisory Group August 11; other opportunities TBD
- **CWDC:** Outreach to Lee Wheeler-Berliner (managing director)
- **REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMISSION:** CCHE Standing Committee on Student Success & Academic Affairs, August 19

Thank You!

Chris Rasmussen

**Senior Director for Academic Pathways
and Innovation**

chris.rasmussen@dhe.state.co.us

303-862-3008

