



Criteria Checklist for Work Readiness Credentials of Value

This checklist outlines criteria to evaluate the value and effectiveness of career readiness credentials. It is designed to be adaptable for various contexts, including educational institutions, workforce development programs, and individuals seeking to enhance their employability. This checklist forms the basis for determining whether credentials are endorsed by the National Work Readiness Council (NWRC).

Recognition and Alignment:

Demand-Driven: Is the credential aligned with current and future in-demand occupations and industries in the relevant labor market (local, regional, or national)? (Evidence: Labor market data, employer surveys, industry reports)

Employer Recognition: Is the credential recognized and valued by employers in the target industry? (Evidence: Job postings listing the credential, employer partnerships, industry advisory boards)

Skill Alignment: Does the credential demonstrably validate the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required for success in the related occupations? (Evidence: Curriculum mapping, learning outcomes, competency frameworks)

Transferability/Portability: Is the credential transferable or portable across different employers, sectors, or geographic regions? (Evidence: Industry-wide standards, articulation agreements, recognition by professional organizations)

Career Pathway Integration: Does the credential clearly articulate within a broader career pathway, allowing for progressive skill development and advancement? (Evidence: Stackable credentials, articulation agreements with further education/training)

Quality and Rigor:

Clear Learning Objectives: Are the learning objectives of the credential clearly defined, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART)? (Evidence: Curriculum documents, assessment criteria)

Valid and Reliable Assessment: Does the credentialing process utilize valid and reliable methods to assess the required KSAs? (Evidence: Standardized assessments, performance-based evaluations, third-party validation)

Qualified Instructors/Providers: Are the instructors or training providers delivering the credential program qualified and experienced in the relevant field? (Evidence: Instructor credentials, industry experience, program accreditation)

Adequate Program Duration/Intensity: Is the duration and intensity of the program sufficient to allow learners to acquire the necessary KSAs? (Evidence: Program hours, learning activities, practical experience components)

Continuous Improvement: Is there a process in place for regular review and improvement of the credential and its associated program based on feedback from employers, learners, and industry trends? (Evidence: Program evaluation reports, advisory committee input)

Value and Impact:

Positive Employment Outcomes: Does attainment of the credential lead to improved employment outcomes for individuals, such as higher employment rates, better job quality, and increased earnings? (Evidence: Graduate employment data, wage analysis, alumni surveys)

Return on Investment: Does the cost and time investment in obtaining the credential provide a reasonable return in terms of career advancement and economic benefits? (Evidence: Cost-benefit analysis, salary data)

Contribution to Economic Development: Does the credential contribute to meeting the workforce needs of the community and fostering economic growth? (Evidence: Alignment with regional economic development strategies, partnerships with local businesses)

How to Use This Checklist:

For Evaluation: Review existing or proposed career readiness credentials against these criteria to determine their value and effectiveness. Check the boxes for criteria that are met and provide evidence where requested.

For Development: Use this checklist as a guide when developing new career readiness credentials or improving existing ones.

For Selection: Individuals can use this checklist to evaluate different credentials and choose those that best align with their career goals and the demands of the labor market.

By systematically evaluating career readiness credentials using these criteria, stakeholders can ensure that individuals are acquiring valuable skills that lead to meaningful employment and contribute to a thriving economy.