



Board of Regents Policy: Quality Postsecondary Credentials of Value

While the Master Plan speaks to the importance of increasing attainment of credentials of value by Louisiana residents, it does not provide a clear definition of these credentials. Louisiana has counted academic degrees – two-year and four-year academic programs – as well as an undefined and incomplete scope of non-academic credentials toward completion and attainment goals. Adoption of the definition below ensures that non-academic credentials leading to competitive employment and wage outcomes are uniformly counted toward these goals.

Quality Postsecondary Credentials of Value:

The Board recognizes that additional market-relevant credentials exist and should be valued. National efforts are underway to define those high-quality credentials and to include them in state attainment rates. For Louisiana, a certificate or industry-based certification will also be considered a quality postsecondary credential of value if it meets the following criteria:

- 1.) It provides valid, reliable, and transparent evidence of the competencies mastered by credential holders and is conferred by an entity recognized by business and industry and/or the State of Louisiana.
- 2.) It directly aligns to an occupation that has a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating as defined by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. These ratings are assigned to occupations based on job demand, projected job growth and earnings. Specific metrics include long- and short-term annual demand; long- and short-term percent growth; total prior-year recorded openings; and a weighted measure of median wages for each occupation (as defined by the Louisiana Star Occupations methodology and derived from Regional Labor Market Areas).
- 3.) It leads directly to an occupation that, at a minimum, maintains a 20% wage premium over a high school diploma in Louisiana.
- 4.) Evidence can be provided for employment and wage outcomes.
- 5.) It meets these criteria as a stand-alone credential, independent of another credential.

On-Ramp Credentials:

Though an on-ramp credential does not meet credential of value standards, it is an industry-based training credential and/or college credit-based curriculum that meets these criteria:

- 1.) It provides specific skills that are mapped to higher-level credentials which meet credential of value standards.
- 2.) It provides specific skills that are recognized by industry partners and/or lead to a set of pre-determined standards.

- 3.) Pre-determined standards are assessed to award either an industry-based certification (IBC), state licensure or state-recognized certification, and/or a degree or diploma from an entity recognized by business and industry and/or the State of Louisiana

The standards aligned to these definitions are consistent with national practice, adjusted to account for the unique needs and circumstances of Louisiana. Upon adoption of these definitions, credentials of value will be included, in addition to academic degrees, in the Board's postsecondary completers calculations. This will enable the Board to more clearly and comprehensively track progress toward Master Plan goals, while also recognizing the role and value of non-academic credentials in attainment efforts. In addition, regular reports will be provided to the Board regarding the completion of on-ramp credentials, serving as a leading indicator of the rate at which students are pursuing pathways to programs that provide access to sustainable careers.

The Board's adoption of definitions of a quality postsecondary credential of value and on-ramp credential will acknowledge the impact that technical and industry-based education has on changing life trajectories across the state, which ultimately leads to meaningful prosperity for all Louisianans.