

# Definitions and Guidance Regarding Secondary State-Approved CTE Programs



*Performance measurement and data reporting require the use of defined and consistent terminology. This document is a summary of key terminology related to state-approved CTE programs, intended to reduce confusion and increase consistency. Italicized items are defined somewhere in this document.*

*This document cannot address every term and circumstance that may exist. Please submit questions and requests for technical assistance in writing to the appropriate personnel on the Secondary Postsecondary Transition Team, Oregon Department of Education.*

## **Completer (or program completer):**

For performance measurement and data-reporting purposes, a CTE program completer is a *CTE Concentrator* who has passed all of the *required courses* in a state-approved CTE program. For local purposes, schools/districts may include *optional courses* or other criteria before they consider a CTE student as having 'completed' a CTE program.

## **CTE Concentrator:**

Any secondary student who has earned one (1) or more credits in *technical skill-based courses* as part of an Oregon *state-approved CTE program*, of which at least one-half (.5) credit must be designated as a *required course*.

## **CTE Participant:**

Any secondary student who has earned one-half (.5) or more credits in any technical skill course part of an Oregon *state-approved CTE program*.

## **General education course:**

In the context of *state-approved CTE programs*, the purpose of identifying general education courses is two-fold: 1) to ensure that Perkins funds are not expended on courses that are the district's responsibility (supplanting), and 2) to ensure that data is not inadvertently gathered on students who are not part of a *state-approved CTE program*.

General education courses usually address academic content standards and are not primarily based on *industry-validated standards*. A general education course typically is not included in the ODE database as part of a *state-approved CTE program*. However, a general education course might be appropriately identified in state records as part of a *state-approved CTE program* if, for example, it is the only course at the school that addresses specific *industry-validated standards* necessary for that program. Exceptions must be approved by ODE.

Note: The inclusion of a general education course as part of a *state-approved CTE program* does not imply automatic eligibility for use of Perkins funds.

## **Industry-validated standards:**

*State-approved CTE programs* must be based on current standards that are validated by industry representatives, employer representatives, and/or professional organizations. In addition, valid and reliable *technical skill assessments* based on the industry-validated standards must be approved by ODE. The *Oregon Skill Sets* is a widely-used example of industry-validated standards.

## **Maximum required credits:**

Due to performance measurement and data-reporting requirements, *state-approved CTE programs* are limited to a maximum of three (3) credits of *required courses*. *CTE Concentrators* are required to be assessed after completion of all *required courses* in their *state-approved CTE program*. Therefore, a large number of credits for *required courses* make it difficult for students to complete a program and be assessed. In addition, a large number of *required credits* increase content and the comprehensiveness required of the *technical skill assessment(s)* used. Exceptions must be approved by ODE.

**Minimum credits:**

A minimum of two (2) full *technical skill-based* credits are necessary for *state-approved CTE programs*, of which no less than one (1) credit must be *required courses*. Aside from this requirement, the appropriate minimum number of credits is determined by *industry-validated standards* and input of the advisory committee. In addition, the breadth and depth of a *state-approved CTE program* must involve consideration of size, scope, sequence, and quality issues.

**Optional course:**

Optional courses are *technical skill-based courses* that are not designated as *required courses*.

**Oregon Skill Sets:**

The Oregon Skill Sets are a collection of state-approved *industry-validated standards* that define what students should know and be able to do in order to be successful in specific careers.

**Recommended course:**

This is an out-of-date designation that still exists in the CTE Program Update application, remaining from before Perkins IV. This designation is not applicable to categorizing courses in *state-approved CTE programs* and should not be used. During the CTE Program Update process, schools/districts, Regional CTE Coordinators, and ODE Specialists are asked to ensure that no courses are designated as Recommended.

**Required course:**

A required course is a *technical skill-based course* that prepares students for success on the approved *technical skill assessment (TSA)* for that specific *state-approved CTE program*. *CTE Concentrators* are required to be assessed upon completion of all *required courses*.

**State-approved CTE Programs:**

CTE programs that have applied to ODE and have been approved as either a State-Recognized CTE Program (SRP) or a CTE Program of Study (POS), as determined by the application submitted by the school/district and/or the criteria met by the program.

**Technical skill assessment (TSA):**

Valid and reliable technical skill measurements aligned with *industry-validated standards*. A *CTE Concentrator* who completes the *required courses* in a *state-approved CTE Program* must be assessed with a technical skill assessment (TSA). Technical skill assessments used in *state-approved CTE Programs* must be approved by ODE.

**Technical skill-based course:**

Technical skill-based courses are based on *industry-validated standards* which are identified for a particular *state-approved CTE program*. Those *industry-validated standards* are taught by the appropriately licensed CTE teacher/instructor with intent and purpose, and are assessed as part of the instructional delivery of those courses. Only courses categorized as technical skill-based courses should be included in the ODE records of a *state-approved CTE program*. They are designated in the CTE Program Update application as *required courses* or as *optional courses*. (See also *General education course*)

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**Other resources:**

Oregon Career and Technical Education (CTE) Performance Measurement (Secondary) document  
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/pte/perkins-iv-cte-performance-measurement---secondary-only.pdf>  
Summary of state-level performance measure definitions, target levels, and actual performance.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) portal

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=151>

ODE's portal webpage for secondary CTE resources, links, handouts, contact lists, and more.