

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

Please click on each question for the response.

Measurable Skill Gains

1. Is a participant in high school equivalency exam classes included in the measurable skill gains (MSG) indicator?*¹
2. If a local youth program partners with a Title II program to provide dropout recovery services (high school equivalency preparation), should staff track MSG for participants in the dropout recovery services?*
3. Will out-of-school youth be included in the MSG performance indicator if they are in education or training funded by Title II Adult Education, Job Corps, or YouthBuild, as indicated in TEGL 10-16, Change 1?
4. Is a participant in an education or training program that is paid by partner funds included in the MSG performance indicator?
5. How can we improve the MSG reporting when some education services are free and are not paid by DES funding?*
6. Must a participant be in a training program in the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to be included in the MSG performance indicator?
7. Can we use free online accredited college courses for MSG?*

Types of MSG

8. If a participant raises the TABE 11/12 score in the posttest to correspond to a higher grade level, is this an educational functioning level (EFL) gain?
9. Can a “pre-GED” test and a “post-GED” test be used to document an educational functioning level (EFL) gain?
10. Does passing one GED test count as an educational functional level (EFL) gain?
11. How can MSG be captured for participants in a GED test preparation program?

¹ Questions with an asterisk (*) are from the Q&A/TA session in April 2022.

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

12. If a participant started training towards the end of the program year (e.g., May or June), and the training will end the next program year, what are examples of MSG that may be attained in the current program year?
13. For the training milestone MSG, are case notes based on a conversation with an employer acceptable source documentation?
14. Can progress reports be used to document a training milestone?
15. If a progress report from an employer shows merely that a participant has completed a percentage of the training (e.g., “the participant has completed 50% of on-the-job training”), is this sufficient documentation of a training milestone MSG?
16. Is skills progression documented by a participant’s credential attainment only?
17. Would a commercial driver’s license (CDL) instruction permit, which is obtained after passing a knowledge-based test, meet the criteria for skills progression or training milestone?*
18. Would either an unofficial transcript or a screenshot of the completion status of courses in a training program meet the criteria for skills progression?*
19. Can an unofficial transcript be used to document MSG?*
20. For a participant in a registered apprenticeship lasting up to four years, what kinds of MSG can be documented?*
21. What types of MSG may be captured for participants in a vocational or trade program for 3-9 months?*
22. Can a postsecondary transcript or report card with a failing grade (F) in any of the subjects be used to document MSG?*

Capturing MSG in AJC

² Questions with an asterisk (*) are from the Q&A/TA session in April 2022.

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

23. Are service providers allowed to record multiple MSG for a participant in a program year?
24. For participants in education or training programs that span several program years, does an MSG that is “set but not attained” in AJC affect the local area’s performance measures?
25. Can service providers set goals in AJC, instead of MSG, to capture participant progress?
26. Does an MSG need to be “set” in AJC for all participants?
27. Based on the information on the revised MSG Guide and informational broadcast, do we continue to record partner-funded education or training services under the Partner Provided Service in AJC?^{*3}
28. How far back do we go to revise a “goal” to an “MSG” in AJC so we can get credit for these youth participants?*
29. The service Enrolled in Postsecondary Education is not listed in the AJC Service Dictionary. Was this recently added to AJC?*
30. Will you clarify the updated guidance on entering HS diploma/equivalency under Outcomes on AJC?*

Credential Attainment

31. If our Youth program is partnering with a Title II program to provide dropout recovery services/high school equivalency preparation, should staff capture credential attainment for participants in the dropout recovery services?*

³ Questions with an asterisk (*) are from the Q&A/TA session in April 2022.

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

Measurable Skill Gains

Is a participant in high school equivalency exam classes included in the MSG indicator?

The participant may be included since an education or training that would place the participant in the MSG indicator denominator includes a secondary education program (PIRL data element 1811), and documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent would place the participant in the numerator.

In addition, TEGL 10-16, Change 1 describes the participants who are included in the measure:

- All in-school youth and out-of-school youth in secondary education, Title II-funded adult education, etc.
- Adult or Dislocated Worker program participants in an Adult or Dislocated Worker program-funded training, including a training program for a secondary school program equivalent.

If a local youth program partners with a Title II program to provide dropout recovery services (high school equivalency preparation), should staff track MSG for participants in the dropout recovery services?

Local youth programs must document MSG in Arizona Job Connection (AJC) for participants in Title II-funded dropout recovery services that lead to the attainment of a high school equivalency.

Will out-of-school youth be included in the MSG performance indicator if they are in education or training funded by Title II Adult Education, Job Corps, or YouthBuild, as indicated in TEGL 10-16, Change 1?

Yes, they will be.

Is a participant in an education or training program that is paid by partner funds included in the MSG performance indicator?

They may be included, as described below:

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

- Per TEGL 10-16, Change 1, all in-school youth and out-of-school youth in occupational skills training (program element), secondary education (9th grade and above), postsecondary education, Title II-funded adult education (9th grade or above), YouthBuild, and Job Corps are included in the measure.
- Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants in an *Adult- or Dislocated Worker-funded training* that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment, including on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training, are included in the measure.
 - Please note that if a local program had placed an adult or dislocated worker in a training program that was subsequently paid through Pell Grant (i.e., Pell Grant reimbursed the Title I program for the cost of the training), service providers would still document the participant's MSG.

How can we improve the MSG reporting when some education services are free and are not paid by DES funding?

To clarify, the education program does not have to be funded by the Title I Youth program for the youth to be included in the MSG performance indicator:

- All in-school youth are included in the measure.
- Out-of-school youth in secondary education (9th grade and above), postsecondary education, Title II-funded adult education (9th grade or above) are also included in the measure.

Must a participant be in a training program in the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to be included in the MSG performance indicator?

A participant may, but is not required to be in a training program in the ETPL to be included in the MSG performance indicator.

For example, an Adult or Dislocated Worker program participant in an on-the-job training funded by the Adult or Dislocated Worker program will be included in the measure. An out-of-school youth receiving occupational skills training (program element 4) that is not on the ETPL will also be included in the measure.

Can we use free online accredited college courses for MSG?

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

It depends. The participant must be in an education⁴ or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential (or employment) to be included in the MSG indicator.

WIOA defines recognized postsecondary credential as --

- An industry-recognized certificate or certification;
- A certificate of completion of an apprenticeship;
- A license recognized by Arizona or the federal government; or
- An associate or baccalaureate degree.

To help determine whether the education or training program leads to a recognized postsecondary credential, service providers should consider the types of organizations and institutions that award recognized postsecondary credentials, as described below. (Note: not all credentials awarded by these entities meet the definition of recognized postsecondary credential.)

- State educational agency/**State agency that administers vocational and technical education in the State**
- An **institution of higher education** that is qualified to participate in the student **financial assistance programs** (under the Higher Education Act of 1965)
 - E.g., community colleges, proprietary schools, etc.
- An **institution of higher education** that is formally controlled, or has been formally sanctioned or chartered, by the governing body of an **Indian tribe or tribes**
- A **professional, industry, or employer organization**
 - Eg., National Institute for Metalworking Skills
- ETA's Office of **Apprenticeship** or a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency

⁴ "Education" includes secondary education program (PIRL data element 1811 instructions/definitions)

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

- **A public regulatory agency**
 - E.g., Federal Aviation Administration aviation mechanic license
- **A program approved by the Department of Veteran Affairs** to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons
- **Job Corps**

For additional information, please refer to TEGL 10-16, Change 1. The Postsecondary Credential Attainment Decision Tree may also help determine if a credential is a recognized postsecondary credential.

Types of MSG

If a participant raises the TABE 11/12 score in the posttest to correspond to a higher grade level, is this an educational functioning level (EFL) gain?

It depends. To document an EFL gain, the increase in test scores must show an “achievement of at least one” EFL (20 CFR § 677.155). For example:

TABE 11/12 Pretest	TABE 11/12 Posttest	EFL Gain?
Reading Score: 570 Grade Level: 6-8 EFL: High Intermediate Basic Education	Reading Score: 576 Grade Level: 9-10 EFL: Low Adult Secondary Education	Yes. The posttest score places the participant one EFL higher - from High Intermediate Basic Education to Low Adult Secondary Education.

Please refer to the Test Benchmarks for NRS Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) for additional information, including test scores that correspond to each EFL.

Can a “pre-GED” test and a “post-GED” test be used to document an educational functioning level (EFL) gain?

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

It depends. Per TEGL 10-16, Change 1, when comparing a pre- and posttest to measure a participant's EFL gain, the test used "must be based on the list of tests the Secretary of Education determines to be suitable for use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education."

Thus, if the pre- and posttest administered by a *GED test preparation program* is included in the list mentioned above (for example, TABE 11/12, CASAS, etc.), comparison of the pre- and posttest -- as long as they are of the same type -- may be used to document an EFL gain.

To clarify, the pre- and posttest that is used to capture EFL gain (which must be included in the list mentioned above) is different from the GED test that consists of four subject exams and is a basis for awarding a high school equivalency diploma.

Does passing one GED test count as an educational functional level (EFL) gain?

No, it does not. EFL gain may be measured by:

- A participant's exit from instruction below the postsecondary level and enrollment in postsecondary education/training; or
- Comparing the participant's initial EFL and current EFL based on a test that is used in the National Reporting System for Adult Education (e.g., TABE 11/12, CASAS, etc.).

How can MSG be captured for participants in a GED test preparation program?

Attainment of secondary school diploma or equivalent may be recorded after the participant receives a high school equivalency diploma as a result of passing all four GED subject exams and the AZ Civics test.

If a participant started training towards the end of the program year (e.g., May or June), and the training will end the next program year, what are examples of MSG that may be attained in the current program year?

The answer will depend on the participant's training program. For example, an Adult participant in an on-the-job training may reach a training milestone in the current program year, as documented by a report from the employer showing technical or occupational skills that the participant has gained.

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

For the training milestone MSG, are case notes based on a conversation with an employer acceptable source documentation -- for instance, if the registered apprenticeship sponsor verbally informs the case manager that the participant's increase in pay is due to the participant's newly acquired skills?

Case notes are not identified as acceptable source documentation for a training milestone in Attachment II of TEGL 23-19. The guidance letter provides the following acceptable source documentation for a training milestone:

- Documentation of a skill gained through OJT or registered apprenticeship;
- Contract and/or evaluation from employer or training provider documenting a skill gain; or
- Progress report from employer documenting a skill gain.

Can progress reports be used to document a training milestone?

Yes, a progress report from an employer or training provider that documents a participant's skill gain may be a basis for recording a training milestone MSG.

If a progress report from an employer shows merely that a participant has completed a percentage of the training (e.g., "the participant has completed 50% of on-the-job training"), is this sufficient documentation of a training milestone MSG?

The document as described may not be sufficient to document a training milestone. Per TEGL 23-19, the following are acceptable source documents for training milestones:

- Documentation of a skill gained through OJT or RA
- Contract/evaluation from employer or training provider documenting a skill gain
- Progress report from employer documenting a skill gain

Documentation of a skill gained is needed to substantiate a training milestone.

Is skills progression documented by a participant's credential attainment only?

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

Not exclusively. Copy of a credential attainment after the passage of an examination (e.g., a nursing assistant certificate) may be used to document an exam passage or skills progression type of MSG . Likewise, a record of passing scores in other tests may be used to document this type of MSG. For example, a record that shows a passing score in a unit test in a certified nursing assistant training program may be used to document exam passage or skills progression.

For additional information on acceptable source documentation for exam passage or skills progression, please refer to the [Data Validation Checklist](#) and Attachment II of TEGL 23-19.

Would a commercial driver’s license (CDL) instruction permit, which is obtained after passing a knowledge-based test, meet the criteria for skills progression or training milestone?

To substantiate that the participant attained measurable skill gains, any of the acceptable source documentation described in Attachment II of TEGL 23-19 or the Data Validation Checklist must be collected.

For skills progression, the following are acceptable source documentation:

- **Copy of a credential** that is required for a particular occupation and is only earned after the passage of an exam
- Documentation that shows **progress in attaining technical/occupational skills through an exam** or benchmark attainment
- **Results of knowledge-based exam** or certificate of completion

For training milestone:

- Documentation of a skill gained through OJT or RA
- Contract/evaluation from employer of training provider documenting a skill gain
- Progress report from employer documenting a skill gain

Would either an unofficial transcript showing the grade and grade point average for each course in the training program or a screenshot showing the courses in a

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

training program and the completion status for each course meet the criteria for skills progression?

To substantiate that the participant achieved skills progression (exam passage), service providers must collect any of the following documentation:

- Results of knowledge-based exam or certificate of completion
- Documentation that shows progress in attaining technical/occupational skills through an exam or benchmark attainment
- Copy of a credential that is required for a particular occupation and is only earned after the passage of an exam

Can an unofficial transcript be used to document MSG?

Yes, an unofficial transcript may be used to document MSG.

Please note that any document used to substantiate the achievement of MSG must be consistent with the source documents identified in TEG 23-19 and the State Data Validation Checklist for the specific type of MSG.

For a participant in a registered apprenticeship lasting up to four years, what kinds of MSG can be documented?

Depending on the specific registered apprenticeship program, skills progression (exam passage), training milestone, or receipt of postsecondary transcript/report card may be captured and documented by the following:

- Copy of a credential that is required for a particular occupation and is only earned after the passage of an exam
- Documentation that shows progress in attaining technical/occupational skills through an exam or benchmark attainment
- Results of knowledge-based exam or certificate of completion
- Documentation of a skill gained through OJT or RA

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

- Contract/evaluation from employer of training provider documenting a skill gain
- Progress report from employer documenting a skill gain
- Postsecondary report card or transcript for a sufficient number of credit hours showing that the participant is meeting the State's academic standards (if applicable to the related instruction component of the registered apprenticeship)

What types of MSG may be captured for participants in a vocational or trade program for 3-9 months?

The type of MSG that may be captured will depend on the training program and its requirements and activities.

For example, skills progression (exam passage) may be documented through the result of a knowledge-based exam, passage of an examination that shows progress in attaining technical/occupational skills, or a copy of a credential that is required for a particular occupation and is only earned after the passage of an exam.

Can a postsecondary transcript or report card with a failing grade (F) in any of the subjects be used to document MSG?

To document an MSG, the postsecondary transcript or report card must be for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards (20 CFR 677.155). This means that the postsecondary transcript or report card must --

- Be for at least 12 hours per semester (or equivalent) or at least 12 hours over the course of two completed semesters, for part-time students; and
- Show grades of at least D- (or equivalent).

A failing grade (F) in a subject shows that the student is not meeting academic standards and may also mean that the requisite number of credit hours have not been completed.

Capturing MSG in Arizona Job Connection

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

Are service providers allowed to record multiple measurable skill gains (MSG) for a participant in a program year?

Yes, they are. Service providers may and are encouraged to record multiple MSG for a participant in a program year to accurately capture program services and participant progress.

Although multiple MSG may be recorded in the AJC system, *only one MSG* per participant, per period of participation, per program year *is reported to the Department of Labor (DOL)*. If there are multiple MSG recorded in AJC for a participant in a program year, the MSG with the most recent date attained will be pulled for DOL reporting.

Please email ea-wioa@azdes.gov if you are encountering technical issues recording multiple MSG.

For participants in education or training programs that span several program years, does an MSG that is “set but not attained” in AJC affect the local area’s performance measures?

If an MSG is “set but not attained” by the end of the program year, the participant will be included in the denominator but not the numerator, which impacts the measure. Thus, it is critical that service providers understand and document the different types of applicable MSG for a participant. It is also important to evaluate services when participants are not achieving academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress towards their credential or employment.

Please note as well that service providers must not delay enrollment and provision of services to coincide with the beginning of the program year in an attempt to avoid an unsuccessful MSG outcome.

Can service providers set goals in AJC, instead of MSG, to capture participant progress?

Service providers may set goals in AJC but are reminded to record participant progress as MSG if it may be classified as any of the MSG types.

Unlike goals, MSG is a performance indicator that States are required to report to DOL.

Does an MSG need to be “set” in AJC for all participants?

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

Service providers must “set” an MSG in AJC for the following participants:

- Youth program - all in-school youth and out-of-school youth in occupational skills training, secondary education (9th grade and above), postsecondary education, Title II-funded adult education (9th grade or above), YouthBuild, and Job Corps.
- Adult and Dislocated Worker programs - participants in an Adult- or Dislocated Worker-funded training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment, including on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training.
 - Please note that if a local program had placed an adult or dislocated worker in a training program that was subsequently paid through Pell Grant (i.e., Pell Grant reimbursed the Title I program for the cost of the training), service providers would still document the participant’s MSG.

Based on the information on the revised MSG Guide and informational broadcast 22-002, do we continue to record partner-funded education or training services under the Partner Provided Service in AJC?

Yes, partner-funded services must still be entered under Partner-Provided Service in AJC.

How far back do we go to revise a “goal” to an “MSG” in AJC so we can get credit for these youth participants?

Because MSG is captured per program year, revisions may be made for the current program year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022).

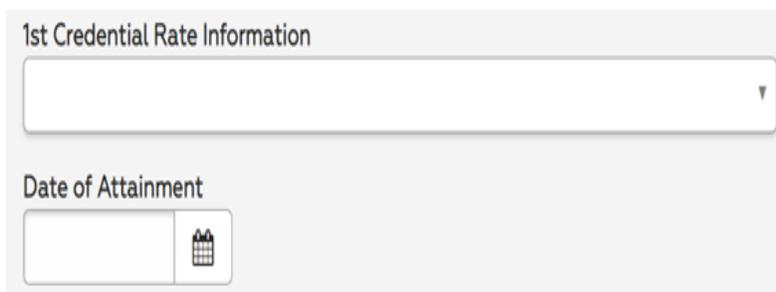
The service Enrolled in Postsecondary Education is not listed in the AJC Service Dictionary. In addition, the local area was not aware that this service is now available in AJC. Was this recently added to AJC?

Yes, this is a new service added to AJC to capture youth in postsecondary education.

Re. entering HS diploma/equivalency under Outcomes on AJC: Previous guidance has been that the Outcomes page is only completed during the participant’s 4th quarter after exit to indicate placement as this is tied to employment rate 4th quarter after exit. Also, previous guidance has been that the

Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Questions and Answers

Youth Placement Rate Information is not completed, only the 1st Credential Rate Information and the Date of Attainment:



The screenshot shows a form with two main sections. The first section is titled '1st Credential Rate Information' and contains a large, empty rectangular input field with a small downward-pointing arrow on the right side, indicating it is a dropdown menu. The second section is titled 'Date of Attainment' and contains a smaller rectangular input field followed by a calendar icon, suggesting a date picker.

Information may be entered under the 4th Quarter After Exit tab at any time during participation, at exit, and within 365 days after exit.

For MSG specifically, receipt of a high school diploma or equivalent must be entered on this page as soon as the participant attains the diploma/equivalent, so that the system captures and reports this type of MSG.

To clarify as well, the previous guidance on what information needs to be entered stands: the Youth Placement Rate Information does not have to be completed to capture MSG, only the 1st Credential Rate Information and the Date of Attainment.

Credential Attainment

If a local Title I youth program is partnering with a Title II program to provide dropout recovery services/high school equivalency preparation, should staff capture credential attainment for participants?

Yes, staff should capture credential attainment for the youth participant. Per TEGL 10-16, Change 1, a youth in Title II-funded adult education (9th grade level or above) is included in the credential attainment performance indicator.

Please note, too, that youth participants who attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent must be employed or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within 365 days following exit for them to be counted as a successful outcome in the credential attainment rate performance indicator.