

# Information Memorandum Transmittal Vocational Rehabilitation



Matt Baldwin, Policy and Training Manager

***Authorized signature***

**Number:** VR-IM 18-02

**Issue date:** 02/06/2018

**Topic:** Other

**Due date:** 02/06/2018

**Subject:** Documenting Measurable Skill Gains

**Applies to (check all that apply):**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All DHS employees                     | <input type="checkbox"/> County Mental Health Directors  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area Agencies on Aging: {Select type} | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aging and People with Disabilities    | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS)                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self Sufficiency Programs             | <input type="checkbox"/> ODDS Children's Intensive In Home Services                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County DD program managers            | <input type="checkbox"/> Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU)                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ODDS Children's Residential Services  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>please specify</i> ): Vocational Rehabilitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Welfare Programs                |  |

**Message:**

## Procedures

### 1. Instructions to Document a Measurable Skill Gain in ORCA

Under the Educational Goal in ORCA, under "Measureable Skill Gain" entry, you must:

- **Add a date** the measureable skill gain **was attained** and
- **Enter one of the five categories** of the measureable skill gain attained (see below).
- Finally, you **must scan documentation for the measure** and **add it to the "Education & Training Documents" case notes** in the service case file.
- In ORCA, assume a file is being built. Under the "case summary page" locate "Education." **Print the Educational Plan and add to the IPE** as a reminder to track Educational Goal and Measurable Skill Gain progress and completion.

## **Definition:**

### **Measurable Skill Gain**

A measurable skill gain means documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. [RSA-TAC 17-01, 2017, page 5]

This measure shows the interim, documented progress of participants enrolled in education or training services for a specified reporting period. The intent of this measure is to capture important progress along a pathway to gain and maintain employment. [RSA-TAC 17-01, 2017, page 15]

All Program participants who are in an education or training program that:

- Leads to a recognized secondary or postsecondary credential or employment,
- Is identified on the individual's IPE, and,
- Purchased by the Program or procured as a comparable benefit
- Are included in the measurable skill gains indicator [RSA-TAC 17-01, 2017, page 19].

**A measurable skill gain is not an exit-based measure.** [RSA-TAC 17-01, 2017, page 15]

### **Services Counted As Measurable Skill Gains**

Education or training programs that leads to recognized credential or employment include:

- High school equivalency program (ABE/GED)
- Apprenticeship program
- Bachelor's degree program
- Associate's degree program
- Certificate program
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Occupational Skills training
- Certification

[Source: WIOA Performance Accountability Guidance Overview - Today's Focus: Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gains, Wednesday, January 11, 2017]

## What is Not a Measurable Skill Gains?

- Customized employment
- Job coaching
- Licenses
- Work experience
- Work readiness

## Measurable Skill Gains Indicators [RSA-TAC 17-01, page 16]

A participant's enrolled, documented progress varies with the type of education or training program. There are five categories of documented, measureable skills gains [RSA-TAC 17-01, page 21]. A participant can only achieve a measurable skill gain while participating in a program.

### **“Adult Secondary Education”**

The approved pre- and post-tests must be based on the list of tests the Secretary of Education finds to be suitable for use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education. The list of approved assessments is published annually in the Federal Register. See the documents titled, **“Tests Determined to Be Suitable for Use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education”** in [References](#) below.

Examples include:

- TABE forms 9 and 10
- Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test for Reading and Adult Proficiency Test for Math
- CASAS Life Skills Math Assessment
- TABE survey
- Remedial classes or literacy
- GED classes

### **“High School Education”**

Measurable skill gains at the secondary school, or high school level, show achievement of at least one educational functioning level or a “move up a grade” in school while maintaining good academic standing when receiving instruction in high school.

- Receipt of a **high school diploma** or **modified diploma** through the Oregon Department of Education is also documentation.

- A participant could show they meet the Oregon Department of Education academic standards by sharing a **secondary school transcript** or **report card** demonstrating progress toward secondary education outcome:
- A minimum total of 24 hours must be completed to gain a high school diploma or modified diploma

### **“Post-Secondary Education”**

For postsecondary education, this gain must demonstrate a sufficient number of credit hours, defined as: (reference: RSA-TAC-17-01, DATE: August 17, 2017, page 17)

- **At least 12 hours per semester** (e.g., semesters, trimesters, quarters, and clock hours for the calculation of credit hour) **for a full-time student, or**
- **A total of at least 12 hours over the course of two completed semesters** (or equivalent) **during a 12 month period** for a part-time student.

Additionally, the **participant must maintain good academic standing and average of C grade or 2.0 GPA overall.**

### **“Training Milestone”**

An employer or training provider who provides training could provide documentation of satisfactory or better progress towards established milestones in training. This could include completion of on-the-job training (OJT) or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones.

### **“Skills Progression”**

The participant can earn measurable skill gains by successfully passing an exam required for a particular occupation. Passing knowledge-based exams is also evidence of measureable skill gains. These exams show progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks.

## **ORCA**

Depending on the type of education or training program, **a measurable skill gain is only acceptable when it is documented in ORCA in the following ways.**

### **ORCA – Designate as “Educational Functioning Level”**

**This section documents Adult Secondary Education measurable skills gains.**

- Compare the participant’s initial educational functioning level, as measured by a pre-test, with the participant’s educational functioning level, as measured by a post-test.
- Attend an adult high school programs that lead to a secondary school diploma recognized equivalent or that measures and reports educational gain through the

awarding of credits or Carnegie units.

- Report an educational functioning level gain for participants who exit a program below the postsecondary level and enroll in postsecondary education and training during the program year. A program below the postsecondary level applies to participants enrolled in a basic education program.
- Obtain a GED.

### **ORCA – Designate as “Secondary Transcript/Report Card”**

**This section documents High School Education measurable skills gains.**

The participant could show:

- They are enrolled in secondary education and plan to gain at least one educational functioning level or “move up a grade”. This gain of an educational functioning level is documented.
- Receipt of a Oregon Department of Education high school diploma or a Modified Diploma, or,
- Secondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the Oregon Department of Education’s academic standards.
- Credits earned.
- A transcript or report card for one semester that indicates that the client is achieving the Oregon Department of Education’s policies for academic standards.

### **ORCA – Designate as “Postsecondary Transcript/Report Card”**

**This section documents Post Secondary Education measurable skills gains.**

- Postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit or college’s academic standards.
- Twelve (12) credits over two semesters during the reporting period for part-time students. Must meet State unit or college’s academic standards.
- Twenty-four (24) credits for two semesters during the reporting period for full-time students. Must meet State unit’s academic standards

### **ORCA – Designate as “Training Milestone”**

**For these programs the participant shows satisfactory or better progress reports towards established milestones, such as completion of on-the-job training (OJT)**

from an employer or trainer and often including classroom training. Documentation may include:

- A report from the employer documenting substantive skill attainment or completes steps to complete OJT;
- Demonstrated increases in skills obtained as the individual masters required job skills;
- Satisfactory or better completion of one “phase” (depending on the required time in the apprenticeship) of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or trainer;
- Completion of a year of the apprenticeship program during the reporting period; or
- Increases in pay as a result of mastering newly acquired or increased performance can be used to document skill gains.

### **ORCA – Designate as “Skills Progression”**

**Skills Progression means successfully passing an exam required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.** This could include:

- An employer-required knowledge based exam;
- An exam in a Registered Apprenticeship program;
- An employer-required knowledge-based exam;
- Satisfactorily attaining an element on an industry or occupational competency-based assessment;
- Other completion test necessary to obtain a credential; or
- Occupational competency exam.

### **Educational Goal to Measurable Skill Gain Crosswalk**

The relationship between the educational goal and the measurable skill gain is further provided in the Crosswalk from Educational Goal to Measurable Skills Gain and Documentation table directly following this IM. (This is a two page table.)

### **Participation Period**

During a State fiscal year (July 1 to June 30 the following year), a participant can obtain multiple skill gains if the participant exits the program and then re-enters the program during the same state fiscal year.

If a participant is only in the vocational rehabilitation program once during a single state fiscal year, despite possibly obtaining multiple skill gains, the individual is only counted once in the measurable skill gain standard.

## **References**

Also see **VR-AR 17-01 Educational Goal** for information about credentials.  
[https://inside.dhsoha.state.or.us/images/stories/images/stories/VR\\_AR\\_17-01\\_Document\\_ed\\_goal\\_12-12-2017\\_no\\_source.pdf](https://inside.dhsoha.state.or.us/images/stories/images/stories/VR_AR_17-01_Document_ed_goal_12-12-2017_no_source.pdf)

**Technical Assistance Circular, RSA-TAC-17-01, August 17, 2017.**  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/rsa/subregulatory/tac-17-01.pdf>

**Tests Determined To Be Suitable for Use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education**, 81 FR 89920 (12/13/2016).  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/13/2016-29899/tests-determined-to-be-suitable-for-use-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult-education>

**Tests Determined To Be Suitable for Use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education**, 82 FR 42339 (09/07/2017).  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/09/07/2017-19004/tests-determined-to-be-suitable-for-use-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult-education>

## **Training requirement:**

- At the time of the release of this transmittal: Policy and/or Training Staff will announce Skype-based sessions to review the content of this transmittal.
- Ongoing reviews: Branch Managers will review with staff as needed.
- FAQs will continue to be collected for one quarter after release of the transmittal. Thereafter FAQs in this transmittal will be updated.

*If you have any questions about this information, contact:*

Contact(s): Robin Brandt	
Phone: 503-945-5857	Fax: 503-945-5052
Email: VR.Policy@state.or.us	

## **Attachments that follow:**

- Crosswalk from Educational Goal to Measurable Skills Gain and Documentation
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) – Measurable Skills Gain](#)

## Crosswalk from Educational Goal to Measurable Skills Gain and Documentation

VR Service Sub Category	Educational Goal	Educational Goal Outcome, Successful		Educational Goal Outcome, Unsuccessful	Measurable Skill Gain	Example of Measurable Skill Gain Documentation
	9th grade	High school Diploma		Disenrollment	Secondary	Report Card
	10th grade			Disenrollment	Secondary	Report Card
	11th grade			Disenrollment	Secondary	Report Card
	12th grade			Disenrollment	Secondary	High School Diploma
	Special Education	Special Education Modified Diploma		Disenrollment	Secondary	Oregon Department of Education does not track grade level changes for Special education
<b>Basic Remedial or Literacy, High School Equivalency</b>	Adult Secondary Education	GED		Disenrollment	Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Report of Increased Grade Level
	1st year post secondary	Associate Degree or	Bachelor Degree	Disenrollment	Postsecondary Transcript/Report Card	Transcript of Credits Earned/In Good Standing According to School (12 Credits a year if going part-time. 12 hours per semester, trimesters, quarters, and clock hours for the calculation of credit hour) for a full-time student
<b>Community College</b>	2nd year post secondary			Disenrollment		
	3rd year post secondary	Bachelor Degree		Disenrollment		
<b>Four Year College/University</b>	4th year post secondary			Disenrollment		
<b>Graduate College/University</b>	Post secondary beyond 4th year	Master Degree, Doctorate Degree		Disenrollment		

<b>VR Service Sub Category</b>	<b>Educational Goal</b>	<b>Educational Goal Outcome, Successful</b>	<b>Educational Goal Outcome, Unsuccessful</b>	<b>Measurable Skill Gain</b>	<b>Example of Measurable Skill Gain Documentation</b>
<b>Vocational or Occupational</b>	Career/Technical training (Credential)	Vocational/Technical Certificate	Disenrollment	Skills Progression	Report attesting to exam passed and skills obtained
<b>Licensing and Certification</b>		Vocational/Technical Certification	Disenrollment	Skills Progression	
<b>Apprenticeship</b>	Apprenticeship	Completed Apprenticeship	Disenrollment	Training Milestone	Report: client satisfactorily passed probationary period. Report: at testing, participant passed requirements for year of apprenticeship (classes and working hours)
OJT (On the Job Training), OJT Set Up Fee	OJT	Completed OJT, Obtained Employment	Disenrollment	Training Milestone	Report from employer that describes participant skill gains

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - Measureable Skills Gain

### **Question 1: if a participant successfully completes a work experience, will they count in the measurable skills gain performance indicator?**

**Answer:** No. The participant must be in education or training to be included in the measurable skills gain indicator. [Work experience is not considered education or training](#); therefore, participation in work experience alone is not a measurable skill gains indicator. The participant would need to be in some type of education or training beyond the work experience.

### **Question 2: Does “Occupational Skills Training” count as a measurable skills gain?**

**Answer:** Some community colleges have Occupational Skills Training. (Example: Portland Community College, Chemeketa Community College.) Some of the classes in these sets of courses count as measurable skills gains.

**Classes that have to do with “work readiness” do not count as measurable skills gains.**

Classes that meet the requirements of any category of [services counted as measurable skill gains](#) and can [provide documentation of that skill gain as required by WIOA](#) may count as measurable skills gain.

If uncertain, request and review the curricula and the outcomes of the course carefully.

### **Question 3: Does a course in the PDX Code Guild count as a measurable skill gain?**

Please see the answer to Question 2. The website for the PDX Code Guild is: [https://pdxcodeguild.com/pdx\\_code\\_guild\\_portfolio\\_bootcamp/](https://pdxcodeguild.com/pdx_code_guild_portfolio_bootcamp/)

### **Question 4: Does a course in Think College! count as a measurable skill gain?**

Please see the answer to Question 2. The website for the Think College is: <https://thinkcollege.net/programs/think-college-inclusion-oregon#academic>  
The following table comes from Think College for Oregon. Some of the courses may be counted as measurable skill gains. Many of the courses may not be counted as measurable skills gains.

Think College! Academic courses	
<b>Students take these types of "typical" courses (with students who don't have disabilities):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Typical college courses for credit</li><li>• Typical college courses for audit</li></ul>

<b>Think College! Academic courses</b>	
<b>More about course access:</b>	Students are enrolled in one typical college course per term offered by the university.
<b>Students take courses that are only for students in this program:</b>	Yes
<b>Information on special classes:</b>	Students are enrolled in an independent study course each term in which they meet with an advisor weekly to set and monitor their goals, receive individualized academic coaching supports and attend 3 seminars a term to develop skills for success in college.
<b>Time spent only with other students in this program:</b>	Less than 25% of the time
<b>Credential(s) students earn upon completing the program:</b>	Career and Community Studies
<b>The credential(s) is/are:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved by Institute of Higher Education</li> <li>• Just for students in this program</li> </ul>