Recommended Criteria for the Review and Selection of Instructional Materials for Higher Education and Career Path Skills Courses

Introduction

Beginning with the class of 2027, Oregon diploma requirements will include a 0.5 credit in Personal Financial Education and a 0.5 credit in Higher Education and Career Path Skills, as part of the 24 credit requirements. On or after January 1, 2027, districts and public charter schools must ensure that all students graduating with a diploma are able to satisfy these credit requirements.

This document is aligned to the 2024 Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards adopted by the State Board of Education on June 13, 2024.

For guidance on the 2024 Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards, please visit Oregon's Newest Diploma Requirements webpage.

How to Use This Tool

The *Recommended Criteria for Higher Education and Career Path Skills Instructional Materials* was developed to assist districts in the review and selection of instructional materials that align with the goals of Higher Education and Career Path Skills instruction. The criteria outlined below serve as a guide for selecting high-quality resources that support student learning and readiness. For questions regarding Higher Education and Career Path Skills instruction in Oregon high schools, please contact ODE's Newest Diploma Requirements inbox at ODE.StateGraduationRequirements@ode.oregon.gov.

Instructional Materials Requirements Section

1. **Major Instructional Vehicle for a Course**

   Materials make up a structured instructional system designed to support the teaching of the 2024 Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards which includes the four domain areas: Seeking Assistance and Self-Advocacy, Career Exploration and Preparation, Postsecondary Readiness, and Workforce Readiness.

   Does the program meet the above requirements for the major instructional vehicle for a given course of study, or any part thereof?

   Yes   No

   If the program does not meet the above requirement, what is the district's plan to supplement for domains and/or standards that are not included in the program?

   _____

   _____

2. **Equity Criteria**

   Materials provide models, selections, activities and opportunities for responses, which promote respect for all people described in ORS 659.850 and OAR 581-021-0045; materials must support program compliance standards described in OAR 581-021-0046.

   Does the program meet the above requirements for equity?

   Yes   No

3. **Accessible Instructional Materials**

   Materials include assurance from the publishers agreeing to comply with WCAG 2.0 AA and the most current NIMAS specifications regarding accessible instructional materials.

   Does the program meet the above requirements for accessibility?

   Yes   No

Criteria Summary

To effectively meet the needs of the local school community and support educators and administrators in selecting, implementing, and aligning materials, programs, and practices to the Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards, it is recommended that individuals and teams adopt a strategic approach that incorporates:

- goal setting for a clear instructional vision
- aligning instructional materials and practices with the standards
- evaluation effectiveness to inform continuous improvement efforts.

Part 1: Higher Education and Career Path Skills Criteria

Concentrates on essential knowledge, understanding, and abilities for learners and educators in Higher Education and Career Path Skills. This section emphasizes content delivery and supportive adult interactions, enabling learners to practice, reflect, and progress towards meeting established standards.

Part 2: Equitable Student Engagement and Cultural Pedagogy Criteria

Addresses how educators create inclusive conditions, environments, and approaches for delivering Higher Education and Career Path Skills instruction. It includes practices, interactions, and perspectives essential for selecting materials that promote learning and thriving across various contexts during the school day.

Part 3: Usability Criteria

Emphasizes the usability and adaptability of materials and practices that support educators, learners, and families, whether in classrooms, homes, or online. Criterion 3.3 is specific to digital materials, included as an optional component based on content delivery format.

Part 4: Assessment

Covers formative and performance assessments aligned with Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards. The focus is on leveraging student strengths, fostering belonging, and promoting agency and identity development.

Part 1: Oregon Higher Education and Career Path Skills Baseline Criteria

This section focuses on the Higher Education and Career Path Skills content and delivery by adults that describe what a person needs to know, understand, and be able to do with individual learners and the learning community as they learn, practice, and reflect on how they are making progress towards the standards.

Criterion	Description	Metric 1	Metric 2	Metric 3	Metric 4
Criterion 1.1 Alignment to Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards	Materials and instructional practices intentionally integrate multiple opportunities to apply the Higher Education and Career Path Skills (HECPS) standards throughout the course, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the four domains: A. Seeking Assistance and Self-Advocacy, B. Career Exploration and Preparation C. Postsecondary Readiness D. Workforce Readiness	**DOMAINS** Materials cover all four domains included in the Oregon Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards using language and approaches that are inclusive and culturally and linguistically affirming	**APPLIED LEARNING** Materials reflect applied learning strategies to equip and empower students to make informed and critical decisions that impact their postsecondary life. The materials encourage students to generate and explore their own questions, interests, and future plans.	**HIGHER-ORDER THINKING SKILLS** Tasks and assignments are appropriately aligned with grade-level expectations and require students to apply higher-order thinking skills.	**COHERENT DESIGN** Materials are organized in a sequence that builds on prior knowledge and increases in complexity throughout the course or grade level.
Criterion 1.2: Asset-Based Approach	Materials and instructional practices that adopts an asset-based approach by affirming all forms of identities and abilities through honoring individual, family and community backgrounds such as race, culture, language, lived experiences, and equity in access to education for students experiencing disabilities.	**STUDENT AGENCY AND CHOICE** Materials offer multiple pathways for investigation and expression, emphasize the development of critical thinking and positive skill-building, and empower learners to make informed decisions for themselves based on their values and goals.	**PROTECTIVE FACTORS & WELL-BEING** Materials empower students by building on their strengths and fostering a positive sense of self-worth, avoiding fear- or shame-based instruction. They focus on resilience, opportunities, and the potential for growth in areas such as income, access, and future planning decisions.	**SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS** Materials cultivate and strengthen authentic relationships through intentionally fostering community, valuing learners' rich cultural and linguistic assets, and encouraging students to identify their own individual, family, and community strengths, values, goals, and resources.	**ASSET-BASED PERSPECTIVE** Materials support educators in creating safe and welcoming learning environments by approaching sensitive subjects with care, acknowledging that students may have personal experiences with the topic, and empowering educators to identify, value, and maintain a high commitment to students' experiences from their homes and communities.

Part 2: Equitable Student Engagement and Cultural Pedagogy Criteria

This section focuses on the decisions made by adults to create the conditions, environments, and approaches to providing Higher Education and Career Path Skills content across contexts, in the school day, so every learner can learn and thrive. This includes the practices, interactions, and lenses necessary in selecting materials for planning and instruction. The following criteria help guide decisions about how the Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards are implemented and supported.

Criterion	Description	Metric 1	Metric 2	Metric 3	Metric 4
Criterion 2.1: **Engagement & Motivation**	Materials give opportunities for rigorous student-driven learning. Materials should focus on relevant topics, provide authentic contexts and experiences, and give students the opportunity to make connections with their goals, interests, and values.	**RELEVANCE** Materials are engaging, meaningful and intentionally make connections between students' postsecondary goals and career planning. Materials provide strategic access to authentic contexts and tools that give students the freedom to make connections to their experiences, goals, and interests.	**ADAPTABILITY AND EXTENSION** Materials include adaptation strategies to differentiate learning for all students. Examples may include extensions to build on prior learning or strategies to support students in reaching course-level content.	**COMMUNITY & SERVICE LEARNING** Materials engage learners in a community's context (classroom, school, district, local, and global) and promote opportunities that highlight their power, agency, values, goals, resources and potential to make real-world impacts to their lives and the lives of others in their community.	**FLEXIBILITY** Materials provide structured guidance for adapting instruction to various pathways, backgrounds, income levels,, and student needs while preserving the coherence of the instructional sequence.
Criterion 2.2: **Culturally Responsive Instructional Support**	Materials and practices that explicitly recognize and incorporate students' cultural knowledge, experiences, and ways of being and knowing in teaching, learning, and assessment.	**FRAMES OF REFERENCE** Materials utilize multiple frames of reference, access to authentic contexts, and tools that give learners the autonomy to make connections to their experiences, goals, and interests.	**INCLUSIVE CULTURAL VIEWS** Materials include pathways to: ● develop Higher Education and Career Path skills ● explore a variety of future pathways ● leverage cultural perspectives that affirm student identities ● reflect knowledge of students' background experiences and social realities.	**ATTENTION TO BIAS** Materials increase awareness of biases and assumptions regarding income levels, career pathways and how these impact students' actions, behaviors, interactions, and development of ways to disrupt, reduce, and heal from their effects.	

Part 3: Technical Usability Criteria

This section focuses on the usability and adaptability of materials and practices to support educators, learners, and families, whether it's in the classroom, at home or online. Criterion 3.3 is considered when selecting digital materials and is an optional component depending on the format of content delivery.

Criterion	Description	Metric 1	Metric 2	Metric 3	Metric 4
Criterion 3.1: **Supports for Teachers**	The materials provide structured opportunities for educators to effectively plan, implement, and adapt instruction with fidelity while deepening their own content knowledge and instructional expertise.	**SUPPORTING GUIDANCE** Materials include comprehensive teacher guidance with clear instructional strategies, lesson plans, and pacing recommendations. They provide rationale for instructional choices, anticipate student responses and misconceptions, and offer differentiation strategies to support diverse learners.	**PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE** Resources incorporate embedded professional learning opportunities that enhance educators' content knowledge and pedagogical skills related to Higher Education and Career Path Skills.	**HOME CONNECTION** Materials provide strategies for engaging all partners (i.e., students, parents, or caregivers) about the program and suggestions for how they can help support student progress and achievement.	**CONTENT EDITABILITY** Materials are designed to allow a teacher to differentiate content and vary modes of communication within lessons, tasks, or other activities for students.
Criterion 3.2: **Supports for Students**	Materials have explicit teacher support with suggestions (e.g., routines, strategies, etc.) for how they can meet the needs of individual learners. Support materials include live updates (e.g., data sources, current events, etc.).	**STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS** Materials provide scaffolds to support students from special populations in their regular and active participation in Higher Education and Career Path Skills learning (i.e. students who are multilingual, students experiencing disabilities, and/or students identified as TAG).	**EMERGENT BILINGUAL STUDENT SUPPORT** Materials provide strategies and support for multilingual students to enable their full participation in learning.	**STUDENT EDITABILITY** Digital materials include resources for students that are editable and allow students to show their understanding and comprehension.	

Criterion	Description	Metric 1	Metric 2	Metric 3	Metric 4
Criterion 3.3: **Digital Learning Design Elements**	The materials are attentive to digital design elements specific to structure, support for users, and adaptability of materials.	**MATERIALS USABILITY** The organizational structure of the digital materials allows for intuitive navigation and meaningful interaction on a variety of devices.	**LEARNING RESOURCES** The digital materials provide support for users in a variety of settings, including robust support for families supporting their students at home, for students working independently, for emergent bilingual students, and students with disabilities.	**MEDIA INTEGRATION** Digital and multimedia elements support, rather than distract from, intended learning outcomes and instructional content.	**ADAPTABILITY OF MATERIALS** Digital materials allow teachers to adjust and adapt documents and resources to meet student needs. (e.g., translating materials, modifying reading levels, downloading capacity, etc.).

Part 4: Assessment Criteria

This section focuses on formative assessment related to Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards. The Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards are intended to provide an approach that builds on student assets, creates a sense of belonging, and develops agency and identity. The standards are not meant to decide appropriate behavior or used as a means for identifying, tracking, or excluding students in ways that have historically led to disproportionate outcomes for students. In partnership with families and caregivers, the standards provide ongoing formative opportunities for reciprocal feedback that includes dialogue, reflection, goal-setting and increasing individual and collective awareness and growth.

Criterion	Description	Metric 1	Metric 2	Metric 3	Metric 4
Criterion 4.1: **Formative Assessment Process**	Materials embed formative assessments throughout units to evaluate student learning progress and inform Higher Education and Career Path Skills instruction.	**CLARITY OF LEARNING GOALS** Materials are designed around clear learning goals and written in a way that educators can adapt with integrity and/or students can understand.	**ELICITATION OF EVIDENCE** Instructional tasks and activities elicit a variety of evidence demonstrating student thinking, including opportunities for student self-assessment and reflection.	**INTERPRETATION OF FEEDBACK** Assessment tools emphasize a strengths-based approach, providing clear guidance for interpreting student responses and delivering targeted feedback. Materials include strategies for using assessment results to inform instruction, such as reteaching supports, extension activities, and differentiated learning opportunities tailored to student needs.	**STUDENT REFLECTION** Materials incorporate opportunities for students to assess their own learning and reflect on their progress. This may include self-check questions, peer review activities, or reflective journaling prompts that encourage metacognition and support students in taking ownership of their learning in Higher Education and Career Path Skills.
Criterion 4.2:	Materials focus on concepts related to Higher Education and Career Path Skills that affect postsecondary success and	**ALIGNMENT** Materials include performance tasks that are comprehensive, inclusive,	**CULTURAL AFFIRMATION** Performance assessments utilize and affirm students' interests and	**CLARITY & FEEDBACK** Materials include clear scoring criteria while providing structured	**VARIETY** Materials include multiple assessment formats that cater to

Criterion	Description	Metric 1	Metric 2	Metric 3	Metric 4
Performance Assessments	align to the depth, breadth, and cognitive demand of the standards.	aligned with Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards, and reflect the four domains.	cultural backgrounds. Tasks are suitable for both group and individual engagement.	opportunities for feedback, reflection, and improvement before final submission.	different learning styles and allow students to demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways. This may include verbal or written responses, in-depth projects, presentations, debates, or performance tasks that simulate real-world applications of Higher Education and Career Path Skills concepts.