MESURABLE SKILLS GAIN

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I. BACKGROUND

The Measurable Skill Gains indicator is the percentage of WIOA Formula program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment (see 20 CFR § 677.155(a)(1)(v)).

The measurable skill gains indicator is used to measure interim progress of WIOA Formula program participants who are enrolled in education or training services for a specified reporting period. Therefore, it is not an exit-based measure. Instead, it is intended to capture important progressions through pathways that offer different services based on program purposes and participant needs and can help fulfill the vision for a workforce system that serves a diverse set of individuals with a range of services tailored to individual needs and goals.

II. POLICY

There are five documented progress types to capture measurable skills gains for eligible WIOA Formula (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG), and Federal Economic Security for All) program participants enrolled in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment.

Depending upon the type of education or training program in which a participant is enrolled, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

1. Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;

2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

3. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours (12 full time) that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;

4. Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or

5. Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams.

Documenting Progress for Types of Measurable Skill Gains

1. **Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary level** – Programs may measure educational functioning level gain in one of three ways:
    a. States may 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;

    b. States that offer adult high school programs that lead to a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent may measure and report educational gain through the awarding of credits or Carnegie units; or

    c. States may report an educational functioning level gain for participants who exit a program below the postsecondary level and were enrolled in postsecondary education and training after exit during the program year. A program below the postsecondary level applies to participants enrolled in a basic education program.

2. **Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent** – Programs may document attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent if the participant obtains certification of attaining passing scores on all parts of a State-recognized high school equivalency test, or the participant obtains a diploma or State-recognized equivalent documenting satisfactory completion of secondary studies or an alternate diploma, including a high school or adult secondary school diploma.

3. **Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards –** On page 19 of TEGL 10-16 Change 2 the Footnote 11 states, "For gain type three, the Departments recommend that States **and** local areas develop policies suitable for the **applicable academic system in use by the secondary or postsecondary institution in which the participant is enrolled** including, but not limited to, semesters, trimesters, quarters, and clock hours for the calculation of credit hours (or their equivalent) when documenting progress towards Measurable Skill Gains." WorkSource Policy 1020 Revision 3, which conveys State guidance on measurable skill gain, does not further

define or restrict the academic period to be used for documenting significant progress for MSG compared to the TEGL. The WorkSource Policy 1020 Revision 3 does specify that "the State has established the academic standard as a grade of "C" or higher as having met the academic standard for report cards."

a. For secondary education, this gain may be documented through receipt of a secondary transcript or report card for one semester showing that the participant is achieving the State unit's policies for academic standards.

    i. **In-School Youth:** WIOA In-School Youth who meet their enrolled school districts published guidelines for satisfactory academic progress over the course of one academic term may claim an MSG on the Test & Results Touchpoint.
    ii. **Open Doors Co-Enrolled in Youth:** WAC 392-700-160 defines satisfactory academic progress for dropout reengagement (Open Doors) Youth as "the documented attainment of at least one indicator of academic progress (IAP) identified in WAC 392-700-015(15)". Appendix I of this directive shows the crosswalk between each of the IAPs and the applicable high school credit possible for each. A WIOA Out-of-School Youth co-enrolled in Open Doors who attains any of these IAPs has achieved satisfactory academic progress, and therefore a MSG.
    iii. **Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) Co-enrolled Youth:** WAC 392-550-025 (3) states that educational progress for alternative learning experience students must be evaluated according to the requirements set forth in sections 3i-ii:
        (i) Each student's educational progress evaluation must be based on the learning goals and performance objectives defined in the written student learning plan;
        (ii) The evaluation of satisfactory progress must be conducted in a manner consistent with school district or charter school student evaluation or grading procedures, and be based on the professional judgment of a certificated teacher.

A monthly evaluation report which determines and documents that a WIOA Out-of-School Youth co-enrolled in school district ALE has made satisfactory progress towards student learning plan goals will be counted as satisfactory academic progress, and therefore a MSG. Progress reports may include progress grades in online coursework as documentation of progress.

b. For postsecondary education, this gain must demonstrate a sufficient number of credit hours—which is at least 12 hours per semester (or equivalent11) or, for part-time students, a total of at least 12 hours over the course of two completed semesters (or equivalent) during a 12-month period that shows a participant is achieving the State unit's academic standards (or the equivalent for other than credit hour programs). For example, if a postsecondary student completed 6 hours in the spring semester and 6 more hours in the fall semester and those semesters crossed two program years, they

would not count as a skill gain in the first program year, but they would count as a skill gain in the second program year.

i. **Participants in Post-Secondary Education at Community or Technical Colleges:** The Washington State community and technical college system uses an academic quarter system. The SBCTC policy manual states that "Full-time status can be viewed in two ways:

(i) Financial aid eligibility: For the purposes of awarding federal and state financial aid, a full-time student is enrolled for 12 or more credits per quarter. A part-time student is enrolled for 11 or fewer credits. Part-time students can still get financial aid, but their financial aid award is prorated.

(ii) Academic time to degree: To complete a 90-credit associate degree in two years requires "full-time" attendance of 15 credits per quarter x 3 quarters per year (fall, winter spring) for a total of 45 credits for each of the two years."

A community or technical college student who takes **at least 12 credits** in a quarter and achieves a "C" (2.0 GPA) or better will be assessed as earning a MSG. Students taking **less than 12 credits** in a given quarter will be considered part time and may document the achievement of 12 credits at a "C" or better **over a 2 quarter period** to record a MSG in this category.

4. **Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training** – Documentation for this gain may vary, as programs should identify appropriate methodologies based upon the nature of services being provided, but progress reports must document substantive skill development that the participant has achieved. The gain may be documented by a satisfactory or better progress report from an employer or training provider. Progress reports may include training reports on milestones completed as the individual masters the required job skills, or steps to complete an OJT or apprenticeship program. Increases in pay resulting from newly acquired skills or increased performance also can be used to document progress. Milestones should be established in advance of the education or training program, or in advance of the program year being measured, to be considered an "established milestone."

5. **Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams** – Documentation for this gain may include passage of a component exam in a Registered Apprenticeship program, employer-required knowledge-based exam, satisfactory attainment of an element on an industry or occupational competency-based assessment, or other completion test necessary to obtain a credential.

Recording the Types of Measurable Skill Gains in ETO

See Appendix II for ETO procedures to record five different types of documented Measurable Skill Gains.