

CTE State Program Audit Rubric

This document is a supporting resource from ExcelinEd’s playbook [Auditing a State Career and Technical Education Program for Quality](#).

Following development of the program quality indicator questions, the audit team will need to establish the thresholds—ideally, ranges—for evaluating the quality of the program. This can be a simple rubric with quantitative or qualitative measures for each indicator designating high-quality, moderate-quality or low-quality. These thresholds should be descriptive, making clear what range of achievement/attainment equates to each quality level.

This resource is one example of a CTE State Program Audit Rubric, in this case aligned to the program quality indicator audit questions below. However, states can and should customize the rubric to address their identified audit priorities and corresponding program quality indicators.

This third playbook outlines key design components of a purposeful state CTE program audit, a three-phase process for establishing and conducting such an audit, a customizable framework for CTE program quality indicators and a rubric for evaluating overall CTE program quality.

Program Quality Indicator: “College and Career Ready” Programs of Study

Definition: Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study should incorporate a series of progressive industry-relevant and industry-valued courses. These courses should be sequential and braid core academic and technical skills learning. Course standards should reflect a high level of instructional rigor that matches the desired high level of learning. Where appropriate, completed coursework in a program of study should lead to awarded postsecondary credit and industry certifications.

<i>Program Quality Threshold</i>	High-Quality (HQ)	Moderate-Quality (MQ)	Low-Quality (LQ)
Quality Threshold Descriptor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state-promoted CTE programs of study (POS) offer courses reflecting the academic, technical and employability skills necessary for that occupation • 100% of POS courses are appropriately sequenced to ensure student skills mastery • $\geq 85\%$ of students who start a state-promoted POS earn CTE concentrator status • 100% of students have access to early postsecondary course/exam credit while progressing through their chosen POS; $\geq 90\%$ earn 1 (or more) postsecondary credit • Where industry appropriate, 100% of students have access to industry-valued certifications (IVC) while progressing through their chosen POS; $\geq 90\%$ earn IVCs • $\geq 85\%$ of CTE concentrators matriculate to postsecondary; $\geq 80\%$ earn postsecondary credential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $\geq 85\%$ of state-promoted CTE programs of study (POS) offer courses reflecting the academic, technical and employability skills necessary for that occupation • $\geq 90\%$ of POS courses are appropriately sequenced to ensure student skills mastery • $\geq 65\%$ of students who start a state-promoted POS earn CTE concentrator status • 100% of students have access to early postsecondary course/exam credit while progressing through their chosen POS; $\geq 70\%$ earn 1 (or more) postsecondary credit • Where industry appropriate, 100% of students have access to industry-valued certifications (IVC) while progressing through their chosen POS; $\geq 70\%$ earn IVCs • $\geq 65\%$ of CTE concentrators matriculate to postsecondary; $\geq 65\%$ earn postsecondary credential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $< 85\%$ of state-promoted CTE programs of study (POS) offer courses reflecting the academic, technical and employability skills necessary for that occupation • $< 90\%$ of POS courses are appropriately sequenced to ensure student skills mastery • $< 65\%$ of students who start a state-promoted POS earn CTE concentrator status • 100% of students have access to early postsecondary course/exam credit while progressing through their chosen POS; $< 70\%$ earn 1 (or more) postsecondary credit • Where industry appropriate, 100% of students have access to industry-valued certifications (IVC) while progressing through their chosen POS; $< 70\%$ earn IVCs • $< 65\%$ of CTE concentrators matriculate to postsecondary; $< 65\%$ earn postsecondary credential
Validating Data Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State K-12 student information system • State longitudinal data system • State postsecondary information system • Administered survey • Vendor data 			
Special Data Considerations			

Program Quality Indicator: Education and Industry/Labor Alignment

Definition: CTE programs of study should fully align with statewide and regional (and where appropriate, local) economic and labor priorities and projected growth areas. Economic, labor, and wage data should call attention to high-growth, high-demand, high-wage opportunities (H³) and the role secondary education must play in meeting those opportunities.

Program Quality Threshold	High-Quality (HQ)	Moderate-Quality (MQ)	Low-Quality (LQ)
Quality Threshold Descriptor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state-promoted CTE programs of study (POS) are fully aligned with state/regional economic and labor/workforce identified needs based on data • 100% of state-promoted CTE courses possess standards fully reflect the technical and employability skills necessary for the aligned occupation • 100% of state-promoted industry certifications are confirmed as valued by employers • ≥95% of LEAs offer only POS aligned with economic/labor H³ • ≥95% of CTE concentrators who enter the workforce immediately following graduation obtain positions in their POS occupation field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥85% of state-promoted CTE programs of study (POS) are fully aligned with state/regional economic and labor/workforce identified needs based on data • ≥85% of state-promoted CTE courses possess standards fully reflect the technical and employability skills necessary for the aligned occupation • ≥85% of state-promoted industry certifications are confirmed as valued by employers • ≥70% of LEAs offer only POS aligned with economic/labor H³ • ≥75% of CTE concentrators who enter the workforce immediately following graduation obtain positions in their POS occupation field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <85% of state-promoted CTE programs of study (POS) are fully aligned with state/regional economic and labor/workforce identified needs based on data • <85% of state-promoted CTE courses possess standards fully reflect the technical and employability skills necessary for the aligned occupation • <85% of state-promoted industry certifications are confirmed as valued by employers • <70% of LEAs offer only POS aligned with economic/labor H³ • <75% of CTE concentrators who enter the workforce immediately following graduation obtain positions in their POS occupation field
Validating Data Sources:			
Special Data Considerations			

Program Quality Indicator: Postsecondary and Secondary Program Systems Alignment

Definition: CTE programs of study at the secondary level should be vertically aligned with credentialed (certificate or degree) programs offered at the postsecondary level. These should be fully aligned with the state’s economic and labor priorities. This vertical sequencing ensures that there are no “dead end” programs being promoted to students.

Program Quality Threshold	High-Quality (HQ)	Moderate-Quality (MQ)	Low-Quality (LQ)
<p>Quality Threshold Descriptor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state-promoted secondary CTE programs of study (POS) are confirmed as vertically aligned with public postsecondary program offerings that lead to a formal credential • 100% of state-promoted secondary CTE courses possess standards fully reflect postsecondary academic and technical skills learning necessary for a CTE concentrator’s seamless matriculation to postsecondary • ≥85% of CTE concentrators who matriculate to a public postsecondary institution will not require content remediation • 100% of state-promoted secondary CTE courses or exams designated for early postsecondary credit will be recognized/ awarded by the state’s public postsecondary institutions for credit in aligned credentialed programs as program-required credit not elective credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥85% of state-promoted secondary CTE programs of study (POS) are confirmed as vertically aligned with public postsecondary program offerings that lead to a formal credential • ≥85% of state-promoted secondary CTE courses possess standards fully reflect postsecondary academic and technical skills learning necessary for a CTE concentrator’s seamless matriculation to postsecondary • ≥70% of CTE concentrators who matriculate to a public postsecondary institution will not require content remediation • ≥85% of state-promoted secondary CTE courses or exams designated for early postsecondary credit will be recognized/ awarded by the state’s public postsecondary institutions for credit in aligned credentialed programs as program-required credit not elective credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <85% of state-promoted secondary CTE programs of study (POS) are confirmed as vertically aligned with public postsecondary program offerings that lead to a formal credential • <85% of state-promoted secondary CTE courses possess standards fully reflect postsecondary academic and technical skills learning necessary for a CTE concentrator’s seamless matriculation to postsecondary • <70% of CTE concentrators who matriculate to a public postsecondary institution will not require content remediation • <85% of state-promoted secondary CTE courses or exams designated for early postsecondary credit will be recognized/ awarded by the state’s public postsecondary institutions for credit in aligned credentialed programs as program-required credit not elective credit
<p>Validating Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State K-12 student information system • State longitudinal data system • State agency data systems • Focus groups 			
<p>Special Data Considerations</p>			

Program Quality Indicator: Career Transition Experiences and Skills Development

Definition: The state CTE program promotes and provides multiple access points for students to obtain employability and career-related experiences. These should be visibly progressive over the course of a student’s K-12 learning continuum and culminate with one or more capstone experiences in high school that allow a student to exhibit her/his academic and technical skills development. These capstone experiences include, but are not limited to, work-based internships and industry-valued certification exams. These experiences should be in concert with a student’s progression through a CTE program of study.

Program Quality Threshold	High-Quality (HQ)	Moderate-Quality (MQ)	Low-Quality (LQ)
Quality Threshold Descriptor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of LEAs use a K-12 career awareness model for all students • $\geq 85\%$ of LEAs promote a K-12 vertically aligned and progressive career exposure model for all students; of those, $\geq 80\%$ intentionally integrate K-12 career awareness/exposure curricula into core and elective course curriculum for all students • 100% of students have access to 1 or more work-based learning experiences while progressing through their chosen POS; 100% experience a job shadow; $\geq 85\%$ experience a job shadow and a work-based internship • For those students experiencing a work-based internship while progressing through their POS, $\geq 95\%$ of the internships are fully aligned with, and relevant to, the students’ POS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of LEAs use a K-12 career awareness model for all students • $\geq 65\%$ of LEAs promote a K-12 vertically aligned and progressive career exposure model for all students; of those, $\geq 80\%$ intentionally integrate K-12 career awareness/exposure curricula into core and elective course curriculum for all students • 100% of students have access to 1 or more work-based learning experiences while progressing through their chosen POS; $\geq 90\%$ experience a job shadow; $\geq 65\%$ experience a job shadow and a work-based internship • For those students experiencing a work-based internship while progressing through their POS, $\geq 85\%$ of the internships are fully aligned with, and relevant to, the students’ POS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of LEAs use a K-12 career awareness model for all students • $< 65\%$ of LEAs promote a K-12 vertically aligned and progressive career exposure model for all students; of those, $< 80\%$ intentionally integrate K-12 career awareness/exposure curricula into core and elective course curriculum for all students • $\geq 90\%$ of students have access to 1 or more work-based learning experiences while progressing through their chosen POS; $< 90\%$ experience a job shadow; $< 65\%$ experience a job shadow and a work-based internship • For those students experiencing a work-based internship while progressing through their POS, $< 85\%$ of the internships are fully aligned with, and relevant to, the students’ POS
Validating Data Sources:			
Special Data Considerations			

Program Quality Indicator: Educator “Lifecycle” Professional Development

Definition: The state CTE educator professional development and training program should be complementary to the rigor and relevance of CTE programs of study and courses. The educator program should reflect and reinforce the necessary classroom conditions and instructional capacities needed to achieve student academic and technical learning success. Utilizing the “lifecycle” approach, educators are provided multiple, ongoing touch points over the course of a given year and over the course of their career to sharpen their instructional skills and retain relevant industry know-how and skills reflective of their content expertise.

Program Quality Threshold	High-Quality (HQ)	Moderate-Quality (MQ)	Low-Quality (LQ)
<p>Quality Threshold Descriptor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state-promoted, CTE-related teacher PD/training events are fully aligned with state CTE program priorities • ≥6 distinct state-promoted, CTE-related teacher PD/training events are offered in a given 12-mos cycle • 100% of LEA CTE-related teachers have access to state-promoted PD/training • ≥80% of LEA CTE-related teachers participate in 2 or more distinct state-promoted PD/training events in a given 12-mos cycle; >60% participate in 4 or more distinct state-promoted PD/training events • 100% of LEA CTE-related teachers have access to LEA-sponsored PD/training aligned with state CTE program priorities; 100% participate in 3 or more events • ≥80% of CTE-related teachers are measured as above proficient in instructional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state-promoted, CTE-related teacher PD/training events are fully aligned with state CTE program priorities • ≥4 distinct state-promoted, CTE-related teacher PD/training events are offered in a given 12-mos cycle • 100% of LEA CTE-related teachers have access to state-promoted PD/training • ≥70% of LEA CTE-related teachers participate in 2 or more distinct state-promoted PD/training events in a given 12-mos cycle; >55% participate in 3 or more distinct state-promoted PD/training events • 100% of LEA CTE-related teachers have access to LEA-sponsored PD/training aligned with state CTE program priorities; ≥95% participate in 3 or more events • ≥70% of CTE-related teachers are measured as above proficient in instructional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state-promoted, CTE-related teacher PD/training events are fully aligned with state CTE program priorities • ≤2 distinct state-promoted, CTE-related teacher PD/training events are offered in a given 12-mos cycle • 100% of LEA CTE-related teachers have access to state-promoted PD/training • <70% of LEA CTE-related teachers participate in 1 or more distinct state-promoted PD/training events in a given 12-mos cycle; <55% participate in 2 or more distinct state-promoted PD/training events • 100% of LEA CTE-related teachers have access to LEA-sponsored PD/training aligned with state CTE program priorities; <95% participate in 3 or more events • <70% of CTE-related teachers are measured as above proficient in instructional practice
<p>Validating Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State K-12 student information system • State agency educator data system • State agency educator participant tracker • LEA educator participant tracker 			
<p>Special Data Considerations</p>			

Program Quality Indicator: Leveraged Funding to Drive Policy and Program

Definition: Targeted federal, state and local funding are identified and leveraged through state policies to drive attainment of state CTE program priorities. Funding includes traditionally allocated CTE sources, such as Carl Perkins IV, as well as other funding sources that reflect shared priorities across state agencies and stakeholder groups.

Program Quality Threshold	High-Quality (HQ)	Moderate-Quality (MQ)	Low-Quality (LQ)
Quality Threshold Descriptor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state approved LEA Perkins local plans identify academic and equipment priorities aligned with state CTE program priorities and PQIs; $\geq 85\%$ achieve plan priorities by 12-mos conclusion • 100% of Perkins Reserve (PR) funds are used by the state to drive state CTE program priorities with LEAs; $\geq 80\%$ LEA PR grant application submission rate • $\geq 90\%$ of awarded PR applicants achieve identified goals/outcomes by grant conclusion • ≥ 3 state cross-agency grants and/or funding initiatives are offered continuously to promote state CTE program-related priorities • ≥ 2 shared agency priorities are promoted formally across K-12 education, postsecondary, labor/workforce and economic/commerce agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of state approved LEA Perkins local plans identify academic and equipment priorities aligned with state CTE program priorities and PQIs; $\geq 70\%$ achieve plan priorities by 12-mos conclusion • 100% of Perkins Reserve (PR) funds are used by the state to drive state CTE program priorities with LEAs; $\geq 65\%$ LEA PR grant application submission rate • $\geq 70\%$ of awarded PR applicants achieve identified goals/outcomes by grant conclusion • ≥ 2 state cross-agency grants and/or funding initiatives are offered continuously to promote state CTE program-related priorities • ≥ 1 shared agency priorities are promoted formally across K-12 education, postsecondary, labor/workforce and economic/commerce agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $< 100\%$ of state approved LEA Perkins local plans identify academic and equipment priorities aligned with state CTE program priorities and PQIs; $< 70\%$ achieve plan priorities by 12-mos conclusion • $< 100\%$ of Perkins Reserve (PR) funds are used by the state to drive state CTE program priorities with LEAs; $< 65\%$ LEA PR grant application submission rate • $< 70\%$ of awarded PR applicants achieve identified goals/outcomes by grant conclusion • ≤ 1 state cross-agency grants and/or funding initiatives are offered continuously to promote state CTE program-related priorities • No shared agency priorities are promoted formally across K-12 education, postsecondary, labor/workforce and economic/commerce agencies
Validating Data Sources:			
Special Data Considerations			