

Technical Assistance (TA) Credential Entitled Application Introduction

The information provided in this document is designed to support institutions in becoming a Gateways to Opportunity Entitled Program and in maintaining program entitlement. Information provided includes an overview of the Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential and processes required to gain and maintain entitlement.

Careful review of this document will support faculty knowledge of their role in attaining and maintaining entitlement within the Gateways TA Competency-based system. Information provided in this document, in addition to an overview of the Gateways to Opportunity TA Credential and the Gateways TA Competencies, includes:

- Entitled application processes
- Annual reporting requirements
- Candidate credentialing processes
- Entitling assurance processes
- Course substitution procedures

Overview: Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential

The Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential reflects professional attainment of knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to provide relationship-based professional development, coaching, mentoring, and technical assistance. The Credential reflects multiple professional standards considered essential for professional practice within the field, and influence all levels of training, education and role responsibilities in Illinois.

Standards, Guidelines, and Program Outcomes Informing Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential

- Gateways to Opportunity Credentials
- Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- The Department of Health & Human Services—Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in partnership with:
 - National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (PDW Center)
 - Office of Head Start

Additional program quality guidelines, program outcomes, and professional standards informing the Gateways to Opportunity TA Credential include, but are not limited to:

- Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)
- Colorado Coaching Competencies for Colorado Early Childhood Education
- Minnesota Center for Professional Development Core Competencies for Relationship-Based Professional Development
- Georgia Technical Assistance Provider Competencies

The Role of Competencies within the Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential

In addition to the required ECE competencies, the Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential is comprised of 33 TA Competencies. Competencies reflect knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected at different levels of employment within the relationship-based professional development.

Level 4 Competencies represent foundational knowledge, skills, and dispositions within the field. Competencies included at Levels 5 and 6 build on this foundation.

The Gateways to Opportunity ECE Credential is comprised of 56 ECE Competencies. Competencies reflect knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected at different levels of employment within the early childhood field. These competencies are organized under the seven Gateways Content Areas, which include:

- Human Growth & Development (HGD)
- Health Safety & Well-Being (HSW)
- Observation & Assessment (OA)
- Curriculum or Program Design (CPD)
- Interactions, Relationships & Environments (IRE)
- Family & Community Relationships (FCR)
- Personal & Professional Development (PPD)

In addition, the 33 TA competencies are organized under the seven TA specific Content Areas, which include:

- Leadership & Professional Skills (LPS)
- Communication (C)
- Adult Learning (AL)
- Collaborative Relationships (CR)
- Reflective Practice (RP)
- Assessment & Planning (AP)
- Change Process (CP)

Levels of Entitlement

The Gateways ECE and TA Competencies align with different levels of entitlement within the Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential. Each level is tied to completion of a degree.

The Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential is available for alignment within community colleges at Level 4.

- Institutions are required to demonstrate where Level 4 Gateways ECE and TA Competencies are introduced, developed, and assessed within their curriculum. Requires the completion of an Associate's degree.

The Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential is available for alignment within universities at Levels 4, 5, and 6.

- Universities are entitled at Level 5 (Bachelor's Degree) are required to demonstrate where Level 4 and Level 5 Gateways ECE and TA Competencies are introduced, developed, and assessed within their curriculum. Requires the completion of a Bachelor's degree.
- Universities aligned with 6 (Graduate Degree), and are required to demonstrate where Level 4, Level 5, and Level 6 Gateways ECE and TA Competencies are introduced, developed, and assessed within their curriculum. Requires the completion of a Graduate degree.

Entitlement Processes

Institutions seeking Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential Entitlement are required to demonstrate how their program plan, content, and assessment practices align with the Gateways ECE and TA Competencies. Demonstrating alignment with competencies includes (1) documenting how current course objectives align and (2) describing how competencies are introduced, developed, and assessed within the program.

Competency Alignment within Coaching, Mentoring, and Technical Assistance Coursework

Illinois relationship-based professional development and principal preparation faculty are required to demonstrate how their current course content aligns with the Gateways ECE and TA Competencies. To determine alignment, faculty will need to carefully consider course content and objectives. It is important to note that competencies represent a composite of knowledge, skills, and dispositions, while course objectives are often a more micro-level representation of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Therefore, several course objectives might fit within one Gateways ECE and/or TA Competency.

A master list of Gateways ECE and TA Credential Competencies and Descriptors is provided at <http://www.ilgateways.com/professional-development/higher-education-programs/becoming-entitled-ta>. Note that competencies are arranged by level, which is indicated in the horizontal column at the top of the (title) page, as well as by color.

- Level 4 competencies are indicated by the color tan
- Level 5 competencies are indicated by the color blue
- Level 6 competencies are indicated by the color lavender

Because competencies are arranged by level, it is essential to consider the sequencing of content when aligning programs and the Technical Assistance Credential.

Leveled Competency Implications for Program Planning

Faculty designing courses within a competency-based framework must consider several factors. Leveled competencies imply a progression across courses. Each competency included in a Gateways Content Area may not be included within the same course, however, it is assumed that foundational competencies (Level 4) are included in course/content sequencing prior to the introduction and assessment of higher level competencies (Level 5 and 6). As faculty pursue Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential entitlement, it is important to consider competency levels and appropriately sequencing of competencies within their curriculum.

As noted, institutions are required to submit the Gateways ECE and TA Competency Alignment Table when applying for Gateways to Opportunity TA Credential entitlement. The Entitled Application provides an alignment table (Competency Alignment Table) for use in this process.

- Institutions entitled at Level 4 (Associate's degree) are required to complete this table for each competency in each content area at Level 4. Level 4 competencies are noted in tan.
- Institutions entitled at Level 5 (Bachelor's degree) are required to complete this table for each competency in each content area at Level 4 and Level 5. Level 4 competencies are noted in tan. Level 5 competencies are noted in blue.
- Institutions entitled at Level 6 (Graduate degree) are required to complete this table for each competency in each content area at Level 4, and Level 5, and Level 6. Level 4 competencies are noted in tan. Level 5 competencies are noted in blue. Level 6 competencies are noted in lavender.

Articulation Application: When a community college is articulating competencies with a four-year institution, they are required to meet the Level 5 competencies within the articulating competency area. For example, if a community college is articulating Adult Learning, reporting requirements will include a description of how Level 4 and Level 5 Competencies are introduced, developed, and assessed.

In addition to program sequencing and assuring that competencies are aligned to credentials at appropriate levels, faculty need to align course and objectives to the Gateways ECE and TA Competencies. As noted previously, competencies represent a composite of knowledge, skills and dispositions. Course objectives, comparatively, are often a more micro-level representation of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Therefore, several course objectives might fit within one Gateways ECE and/or TA Competency.

Entitlement Process: New Institutions

Institutions initially seeking Gateways to Opportunity Technical Assistance Credential Entitlement are required to submit the following, which are each explained in more detail below:

- **Entitled Application Form**
 - Competency Alignment Table
 - Program Layouts
 - Current Plan of Study for Credential-Related Degrees and Certificates
 - Course Delivery
 - Institutional Procedure for Credential Attainment
 - Program Articulation Agreements
 - Course Substitution Procedure
 - Non-Course Requirements
 - Institutional Assurances & Signatures
 - Program Syllabi



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