

Workplace Literacy (WPL)

Section 1: Overview

The [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA), Section 203, defines Workplace Literacy (WPL) as activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.

Section 2: Establishing Workplace Literacy Classes

Any Adult Education program in Georgia seeking to establish a workplace literacy class must receive approval from the Office of Adult Education (OAE) before starting the workplace literacy class entering and it into Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS). Programs must complete a **Workplace Literacy Class Form** and submit it to oaereporting@tcsge.edu for OAE approval. In addition to the Workplace Literacy Class Form, programs must also submit a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Adult Education program and the employer establishing the workplace literacy partnership. OAE will only review workplace literacy classes that have a completed Workplace Literacy Class Form and a signed MOU with the partnering employer. OAE will notify programs whether the Workplace Literacy class is approved or needs revisions within five business days after receipt of the Literacy Form and the MOU.

Once an employer has been identified for a Workplace Literacy (WPL) class, the Adult Education program should consider the following in developing the class:

- Establishing Desired Outcomes
- Class Duration
- Orientation and Assessment
- Curriculum
- Performance

Establishing Desired Outcomes

Adult Education programs should establish clear expectations and outcomes for the WPL class with the employer partner prior to setting up the class.

Some questions to discuss with the employer partner:

- What is the primary desired outcome for both the employer partner and the Adult Education program? Do those align? If not, how can they align to make this an effective partnership for both parties?

- What skills do the employers want addressed, as part of the curriculum, in the WPL Class? Can the Adult Education program incorporate those into the curriculum?
- What goals does the employer have for the class in the way of enrollment, class duration, performance outcomes, and advanced employment as a result of the class?
- What space and resources (i.e. dedicated space, laptops, desks, chairs, copier/printer) will the employer offer for the class? Does it meet the expectations of an Adult Education classroom and is it conducive to meeting the desired outcomes?
- What goals does the Adult Education program have for the class in the way of enrollment, class duration, and performance outcomes?

Class Duration

Per the **Adult Education Grant Assurances**, students should be scheduled for a minimum of six hours of instruction per week. Based on how many days per week the employer is able to host the class for its employees, the class schedule should be built to ensure that students are able to reach the agreed upon outcomes and performance measures. Typically, classes are built long enough to ensure a posttest (minimum of 40 hours) though other performance measures may be obtained as well.

For example, if the employer can host the class two days per week and classes last for three hours each day (meeting the six hours of instruction per week minimum), then a Workplace Literacy class cycle could run for 7 weeks. This builds in enough time for most students to get to a posttest by the end of the class cycle.

Orientation and Assessment

Per the Office of Adult Education's (OAE) Policy and Procedure Manual, a formal orientation must take place within the first 12 hours of student enrollment. Workplace Literacy class orientation must include all of the required intake forms (per the Policy and Procedure Manual) as well as any forms required by the employer for participation in the class.

All adult learners enrolled in an OAE-funded program must be assessed using an NRS-approved assessment per [OAE's Adult Learner Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual](#). If the employer requires other assessments that are not NRS-approved to align with their desired outcomes, programs must still administer NRS-approved assessments to class participants.

Curriculum

Workplace Literacy class curriculum should be designed in collaboration between the Adult Education program and the employer. The class should meet the requirements stipulated in [Section 203 of WIOA](#) for Workplace Literacy which includes designing classes that improve the productivity of the workforce.

Per OAE's Policy and Procedure Manual, Adult Education programs will institute the Georgia Adult Education Curriculum Framework to plan and guide student instruction.

Performance

Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) is a key indicator in the National Reporting System (NRS) and provides a measure of a participant's interim progress towards a credential or employment. Documented progress for all Adult Education participants is defined as one of the following:

1. Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Gain: Documented achievement of at least one EFL of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level; Programs may measure EFL gain in one of three ways:
 - a. Pre- and post-testing: States may compare the participant's initial EFL, as measured by a pre-test, with the participant's EFL, as measured by a post-test;
 - b. Awarding of credits or Carnegie Units: Programs that offer a credit-bearing secondary education program sanctioned by State law, code, or regulation that leads to a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent may measure and report EFL gain through the awarding of credits or Carnegie units; or
 - c. Entry into a postsecondary education or training program: Programs may report an EFL 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.
2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

Exclusively for participants in an IET or Workplace Literacy programs, an MSG may be completed using these additional measures beginning in FY22:

3. Secondary or postsecondary transcript¹: For students who complete a minimum of 12 hours per semester, or for part-time students a total of at least 12 credit hours over the course of two completed consecutive semesters during the program year, report an MSG for a postsecondary education transcript or report card that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards.
4. Progress toward milestones: Satisfactory or better progress report toward established milestones, such as completion of on-the-job training or completion of 1 year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or

¹ Per Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) [Program Memorandum 17-2](#), secondary transcript under MSG type 3 is specific to youth attending high school.
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5. Passing technical/occupational knowledge-based exam: Successfully passing 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.

States may report MSG types 1 and 2 for all Adult Education participants and any of the five MSG types for participants in Workplace Literacy and IET programs to the NRS. For additional information on Performance for WPL students, visit the Data Management web page.

Section 3: Funding and Sustaining a Workplace Literacy Class

Adult Education programs should allocate grant funds for WPL classes according to the program's **FY22 Grant Award Notification Assurances**. IET funds are only applicable if the Workplace Literacy class is **also** an IET class and can only be used to support the training portion of the IET. Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education (IELCE) funds are only applicable if the instructor is paid through IELCE funds and the Workplace Literacy class meets the requirements of the IELCE program.

If an Adult Education program is able to demonstrate that all other OAE grant funds are being utilized, it may be appropriate to have an employer contribute in order to sustain the WPL class long-term. If there are concerns about sustaining the WPL class in future years, the Adult Education program should communicate with the employer and include in their MOU that funding is only guaranteed for the current program year.

Sustaining WPL Classes Example:

Adult Education Program A is partnering with a local manufacturing plant whose goal is to help their employees obtain their HSE in order to be promoted to manager within the plant. Program A had additional funds in the current program year to run the WPL class and found that 6/10 students earned an MSG including obtaining their HSE. Program A and the local manufacturing plant would like to continue this class into the next program year, but Program A does not have the funds available to run the class the next program year.

In order to continue running the WPL class into the next program year, Program A can:

- look at their existing classes, specifically at enrollment/contact hours and MSG, to determine which class could be combined with another or closed, based on low outcomes, in order to move the funding and resources to the WPL class.
- take two part-time positions and make one full-time position where the instructor teaches two classes including the WPL class.



- renegotiate an MOU with the manufacturing plant which includes Program A paying for supplies and technology while the manufacturing plant pays for the instructor.

While this is not an exhaustive list, Adult Education programs can use these ideas or others in order to find ways to sustain WPL classes.

Section 4: Creating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Per the **FY22 MSG Updates FAQ**, beginning in FY22, every program that wishes to offer a Workplace Literacy Class must submit a Workplace Literacy Class Form with a signed MOU with the employer and receive approval from the Office of Adult Education before proceeding with a Workplace Literacy class.

An MOU should include:

- Expected enrollment and/or contact hours per hour that support the program's total enrollment target
- Expected Measurable Skills Gains and other performance measure outcomes for the class that support the program's MSG target
- Expectation for duration and length of class which supports the program's MSG target
- A plan for ensuring employees attend class, especially if classes occur during work time. Coordination and support from management will be necessary.
- Expectation for completion of distance education hours, if applicable
- Incentives provided to employees for participating in class and achieving pre-determined goals



Sample MOU

[NOTE: This MOU can be edited, as needed, to fit the exact needs of the Adult Education program]

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement between [ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM NAME] and [EMPLOYER NAME] for Workplace Literacy classes. This document establishes guidelines for the Workplace Literacy class.

The [Adult Education Program] agrees to:

1. Provide Workplace Literacy instruction with a qualified instructor.
2. Provide supplies such as books, pencils, folders, laptops, and distance education software.
3. Work together with [COMPANY NAME] to recruit students for the class.
4. Provide a curriculum in line with the established needs of [COMPANY NAME] including distance education to be completed outside of class.
5. Monitor progress and performance outcomes through formal and informal assessments and report progress back to [COMPANY NAME].

The [COMPANY NAME] agrees to:

1. Recruit and enroll at least [# students and/or contact hours] during the class cycle which will allow students the opportunity to gain [LIST EXPECTED PEFORMANCE OUTCOMES].
2. Provide classroom space [ADD ANY ADDITIONAL ITEMS] on [INSERT DAYS AND TIMES] for a total of [HOURS] per class cycles.
3. Provide registration paperwork necessary for employees to enroll in the Workplace Literacy class.
4. Incentivize the class for employees by providing [LIST OF INCENTIVES].
5. Ensure that employees are able to leave work in order to attend classes.

This agreement is effective upon acceptance in writing by both parties through [END DATE].

[COMPANY DESIGNEE, TITLE]

[ADULT EDUCATION DESIGNEE, TITLE]

[DATE]

[DATE]

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do workplace literacy classes have to take place during paid working hours?

There is no requirement for Workplace Literacy classes to occur during paid working hours for employees. Workplace Literacy students can attend classes during the work day or outside of working hours. Workplace Literacy students can also earn proxy hours through approved distance education curricula.

2. If an employer uses WorkKeys as an assessment for employment, but we have to administer the TABE, how can we instructionally support students if WorkKeys does not align to TABE? Are there any resources for WorkKeys preparation?

If an Adult Education program has built a curriculum based on the WIOA's definition for Workplace Literacy as well as the Georgia Adult Education Curriculum Framework, then WPL students will be amply prepared for any assessment including WorkKeys. TABE is a required assessment for enrollment in Adult Education per the [Adult Learner Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual](#). If the employer requires WorkKeys upon employment then the Adult Education program could use the diagnostic from that assessment to develop the Student Learning Plan and incorporate WorkKeys preparation into the class curriculum.

3. What are the eligibility requirements for a Workplace Literacy Participant?

Workplace Literacy class participants follow the same eligibility criteria as adult education students. Per WIOA, Section 203, the term "eligible individual" means an individual:

- a) who has attained 16 years of age,
- b) who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and
- c) who
 - a. is basic skills deficient;
 - b. does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent level of education; or
 - c. is an English language learner.

Students who do not meet the eligibility requirement of "basic skills deficient" would not be eligible to take the WPL class. WPL class participants must be assessed using an NRS-approved assessment, first administering the Locator if the assessment has one, per [OAE's Adult Learner Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual](#). Both the Adult Education program and the employer should agree upon and address, within the MOU, whether the WPL class will be open to the community.