



Credential Transparency Self-Assessment

Colleges, job training programs, and employers offer all kinds of credentials—from degrees to certifications to badges—for learning and gaining skills. But with over 1,000,000 different credentials it is hard to easily find reliable and actionable information on the value of various credentials, where to get them, what each competency and skill means, cost, and employment opportunities associated with each opportunity. Credential transparency requires bringing together this varied information from colleges, companies, government agencies and others to describe the knowledge and skills they confer and expect in clear, detailed, and consistent language.

This self-assessment tool provides an overview of the specific steps laid out in the [“Making Sense of Credentials: A State Roadmap and Action Guide for Transparency”](#) report that state leaders can take to help integrate a common data infrastructure into their statewide education systems and to build a public, open marketplace for information about credentials for learners, workers, employers, and others to make informed decisions about credentials and pathways.

Credential Engine will use these responses to help target continued support for our state partners. We will also use aggregate, summary data to share the story of progress being made around credential transparency across the nation. We will not share any specifics without express written consent of the relevant state.

Instructions

We suggest that a team of individuals who have been engaged in credential transparency efforts within your state work collaboratively to develop and agree on the responses. For each of the 10 elements of the [Roadmap](#), please score your state’s progress and provide some supporting evidence for context.

Return your assessment to us at info@credentialengine.org.

State: _____ **Primary Contact:** _____



Understand the Value

Learn how credential transparency can benefit students, workers, employers, educators, policymakers, and others			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
Credential transparency is a new topic for stakeholders and state leaders	Some stakeholders understand the value of credential transparency; state leaders do not see how credential transparency can meet state goals	Stakeholders are committed to using credential transparency to address equity and attainment goals, better align P-20W systems, and be more resilient in meeting economic changes; state leaders are equally committed	
Supporting Evidence:			

Make the Case

Communicate clear use cases to benefit students, workers, employers, educators, programs, and key policy goals			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
No data on credentials or competencies is publicly available; state leaders are limited in using data for decision-making	Some data on credentials and competencies is publicly available, but it's not comprehensive across all institutions, systems, or agencies; state leaders are limited in their use of data to inform key policy goals	The state makes publicly available current, comprehensive, and comparable data on credentials and competencies so stakeholders can make data-informed decisions; state leaders use these data to inform key policy goals	
Supporting Evidence:			



Commit to using a common language and identify what data about credentials and competencies are necessary to be transparent and publicly available

Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
No common language is used to describe and make publicly available data on credentials and competencies	Some institutions, systems, or agencies have audited data on credentials, mapped their data to the CTDL, and publish to the Credential Registry	The state has comprehensively adopted the Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL) to make information on all credentials available through linked open data and available on the Credential Registry	
Supporting Evidence:			

Align with Existing Education & Workforce Data Commitments

Ensure this work is integrated with, complements, and strengthens quality, attainment, equity, access, affordability, and P-20W data efforts to ensure continuity and impact

Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
Data on credentials are not compatible with P-20W data infrastructures	Some data on credentials are integrated into P-20W data systems and are used to to strengthen state education policy goals but the data infrastructure does not use common languages	Common and comprehensive data around credentials are integrated within existing P-20W data systems; data are used to strengthen state education policy goals (e.g., quality, attainment, equity, access, and affordability)	
Supporting Evidence:			



Catalog and Publish Credentials and Competencies

Inventory all credentials in your jurisdiction			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
A complete inventory of credentials within the state does not exist	There have been some efforts to inventory credentials using the CTDL and Credential Registry, however some data on credentials (e.g., third-party, proprietary, or private providers) is missing	A complete inventory of credentials within the state exists, uses the CTDL, and is published to the Credential Registry	
Supporting Evidence:			

Publish all credentials and their competencies to the Credential Registry and the Open Web in CTDL and CTDL-ASN			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
Data on credentials and competencies is not transparent or interoperable	Some data on credentials and competencies are publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability, through the use of the CTDL and CTDL-ASN	All credentials and competencies are publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability, through the use of the CTDL and CTDL-ASN	
Supporting Evidence:			



Turn these Data into Actionable Information

Link and align credential data with other essential data			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
Data on credentials and competencies is not aligned with other data, such as job postings, financial assistance, or other data in state's P-20W data systems	Some linkages between credentials and competencies and other data systems exist; data, do not use open schema and linked data	Data on credentials and competencies, as well as other related data, use open schema and linked data so it can be easily linked and used	
Supporting Evidence:			

Support the creation of end-user tools, services, and systems with robust navigation and guidance capabilities			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
No end-user tools, services, or systems exist to provide robust navigation and guidance capabilities; the state does not require prospective vendors to use CTDL to develop end-user services	Some tools, services, and resources exist but they don't use the CTDL, CTDL-ASN, or meet the needs of all stakeholders; the state does not require prospective vendors to use CTDL to develop end-user services	Tools, services, and resources using the CTDL and CTDL-ASN exist to meet the needs of different stakeholders to use credential and competency data through robust career navigation and guidance; state RFPs include language that require vendors to use the CTDL and the Registry to develop end-user services	
Supporting Evidence:			

Build Enduring Commitment

Ensure sustainability of credential transparency through legislative, agency, and institution policies that continuously improve credential transparency for the benefits of its citizens and markets			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
Credential transparency is not included in policies at any level	Some institutions, systems, and agencies have credential transparency policies; no comprehensive statewide legislation exists to align credential transparency efforts	Credential transparency is fully embedded in policy and practice across the education and workforce system; legislation exists to provide for credential and competency transparency	
Supporting Evidence:			

Establish the necessary infrastructure for enduring data transparency			
Just getting started (1)	Efforts underway (2)	Established practices (3)	Score (1-3)
Agencies tend to work in silos; transparency is not prioritized in data management systems or with vendors; there is little or no funding to maintain and upgrade technology; there is no training on data transparency practices	There is cross-agency collaboration; the value of transparency is understood but not prioritized in how data is maintained; there is not adequate funding to maintain and upgrade technology; professional development and practitioners are minimally trained in data transparency practices	Strong cross-agency collaboration; transparency is a stated goal of all data management systems and vendors (with clear MOU language); data maintenance processes prioritize transparency; adequate funding to maintain and upgrade technology; professional development includes training in data transparency practices; practitioners are trained in best practice uses of linked open data to improve operations	
Supporting Evidence:			