

The **SPONSOR** makes credit determination

Granting credit for prior learning allows apprentices who come to the sponsor with relevant background to **advance faster** and complete their apprenticeship earlier

It may also **save time and money** for the sponsor and the apprentice in repeating a course taken elsewhere

Registered Apprenticeship programs are designed to help an apprentice master the competencies of the given profession, and that purpose can be accelerated by granting credit and advanced standing in consideration of relevant prior work experience or high school and post-secondary coursework. This document outlines best practices on approaching the **how** and **when** of granting credit to new apprentice.

The Apprenticeship SPONSOR makes Credit Determinations

The decision to grant credit for prior course work towards the related technical instruction (RTI) or for prior work experience to the on-the-job learning (OJL) is made by the sponsor. Credit for OJL will be based on demonstration of previous skills or knowledge equivalent to those competencies identified in the **Sponsor's Standard of Apprenticeship**. Credit can be given towards the related instruction (RTI), hours of on-the-job learning (OJL), or both. If your apprenticeship program relies on an outside instruction provider, we recommend that the Sponsor seek the training institution's recommendation to determine if credit should be given for the prior coursework.

The granting of advanced standing by the Sponsor will be uniformly applied to all apprentices. Sponsors are completely within their rights to require all apprentices to progress through their instructional sequence in its entirety. Even if other sponsors in the trade give credit for a high school or post-secondary program, all sponsors are not obligated to do so.

Documentation of Related Technical Instruction

The U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship requires that the sponsor document the decision to grant credit in their apprenticeship program records and include justification, such as evidence of prior coursework or placement assessments. Ensure all needed documentation and justification of your decision, is saved within the apprentice's file, both with the Sponsor as well as RAPIDS. Often used documentation:

- College degree earned (attached evidence of degree)
- College, technical or high school coursework (attached copy of transcripts)
- Military service (Joint Service Transcript)
- Relevant certification
- Placement assessment (with description of test used)

- ✓ The Apprentice **REQUESTS** credit for prior experience or education and provides documentation
- ✓ You may **ASSESS** knowledge and skills through practical or written tests
- ✓ **COMPARE** against your Standards of Apprenticeship
- ✓ **DOCUMENT** your decision in writing
- ✓ **COMMUNICATE** your decision to the Apprentice so they know what will be required for completion

Documentation of On-the Job Hours worked in the Occupation

For apprentices who come to you with prior work experience in the occupation, you may give them credit for the hours worked if you are satisfied that their work experience is relevant. Documentation could include:

- A letter on letterhead from prior employer attesting to the hours worked in the trade;
- An apprentice cancellation by previous sponsor, documenting prior experience;
- An apprenticeship work record book;
- Military service (Joint Service Transcript / DD214)

Process and Timeline

Apprentices requesting credit for previous work experiences that match the direct competencies within the apprenticeship’s OJL, may start the apprenticeship at the beginning wage rate for the duration of the defined probationary period. The request for OJL credit should be evaluated and a determination made by the sponsor during the probationary period, when actual on-the-job and related instruction performance can be examined.

Prior to completion of the probationary period, the amount of credit to be awarded should be determined by the combined review of the apprentice’s previous work experience and evaluation of the apprentice’s performance during the probationary period. The determined outcome for requested Credit for Prior Learning should be discussed with apprentices to ensure full understanding of the impact to their apprenticeship completion timeframe and wage scale.

An apprentice who is granted OJL credit should be advanced to the corresponding wage level as defined on the apprenticeship’s wage scale.

Career and Technical High School Students

The same principles apply when registering a high school student as an apprentice in allowing relevant coursework to fulfill part of the Related Technical Instruction required for the apprenticeship.

[Note: If the Standards require a high school diploma for entry, the Sponsor will need to update entry requirements prior to registering a high school student as an apprentice.]