

Program Approval Policies for School Year 2015-2016

Introduction

Career and Technical Education programs offer an implicit promise to students, parents and communities: if students work hard and apply themselves to mastering both the academic and career-facing components of the program, those who successfully complete the program will have a clear pathway into related postsecondary education, entry-level employment, or both. Further, they'll emerge with a deeper understanding of their own interests in college and career, and how best to pursue them through a blend of educational and work experience activities.

The Office of Postsecondary Readiness (OPSR) within the NYC Department of Education utilizes the CTE Program Approval Process to ensure that all CTE programs deliver on this promise. The stakes are high, and the rewards are significant:

- Only career and technical education (CTE) programs that have secured approval from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) can issue a CTE endorsement on the diplomas of graduating students who have completed a CTE program sequence.
- CTE program approval carries positive implications for schools with approved programs, including college and career readiness measures on the High School Quality Snapshot and where available, opportunities for the [4+1 Graduation option](#).
- As of September 2016, all programs must demonstrate alignment to NYSED program approval to remain eligible for federal Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) funding.

All CTE programs of study should be developed with following quality indicators taken into consideration:

- Qualified Faculty who hold the appropriate CTE State certification in alignment with the program of study including a certified Work-Based Learning Coordinator
- A minimum of a seven credit sequence of courses including career and financial management with curricula aligned to Common Core, NYS, and CDOS learning standards (where applicable)
- A culminating end-of-program technical assessment that prepares students with industry credentials, where applicable, to better position students for entry level employment
- A Work-Based Learning sequence that provides grade-appropriate experiences such as career exploratory activities, job shadowing, mentoring, industry-based career related competitions and internship placements
- A Postsecondary partner and an articulation agreement that offers students a value added benefit such as college credits, advanced standing, or reduced tuition in the CTE content area in order to provide students with a clear postsecondary pathway upon graduation
- Business/industry partnerships that provide postsecondary training, apprenticeship, and/or employment opportunities for students, and professional development for staff, curriculum and technical assessment review

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This document summarizes the Program Approval Process, including the various documents required at each step in the development of a CTE program:

- Schools wishing to propose a new CTE program of study should visit the [CTE Educators and Administrators](#) page on the NYC DOE website.
- **All** CTE programs are required to complete the Program Accountability Form.
- All CTE programs are required to submit STARS CTE Program Manager for review and approval. Sequences in the STARS CTE Program Manager must be kept current and align with NYSED approval.
- Schools with first-time program approvals and re-approvals must complete a Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). Approved programs making significant modifications (e.g., changes in technical assessment, coursework, faculty, content, or articulation agreements) are required to complete an **Approved Program Amendment Form**. This form must be submitted directly to the NYC DOE Program Approval Team for review and consideration.

Please note:

Programs applying for approval in time for June 2016 and those programs with first graduating classes must give technical assessments between January and February of 2016.

The CTE Program Quality team is available to answer questions and provide support.

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Program Accountability Form: **Deadline November 20th, 2015**

The Program Accountability Form (PAF) is required for all schools with CTE programs and must be submitted as a condition of VTEA eligibility.

Schools should use the Program Accountability Form to share updates on the following program elements:

- Program Course Sequence
- Qualified Faculty
- Program Enrollment Data
- Work-Based Learning Sequence
- Program Technical Assessment
- College & Career Partners
- Self-Study Team Members
- Program Outcomes

In school year 2015-16 all programs must provide the following supporting documentation along with the Program Accountability Form:

- Work Skills Employability Profile
3 sample profiles with student names redacted
- Postsecondary Articulation Agreement
If no agreement is currently in place please provide a letter demonstrating support from a postsecondary or industry partner/s
- Curriculum crosswalks
Crosswalks must be submitted for each course in the program sequence demonstrating alignment to the CDOS, CCLS and NYS content standards
- Technical assessment score report(s) – where applicable

Programs that fail to submit a PAF and the above progress indicators—even if only to report that no changes have occurred on the above-listed program elements— may face consequences including postponement of review (for non-approved programs) and reduction in VTEA award (for approved programs).

Approved Program Amendment Form

Effective April 17th, 2015 Approved Programs within the first 4 years of the approval period must complete the Approved Program Amendment Form to make program modifications that directly impact a program's approval status (e.g., changes in technical assessment, faculty, content, or articulation agreements). This is a two-step process, which requires the form be reviewed and approved by the NYC DOE Program Quality Team. Upon recommendation from the NYC DOE Program Quality Team the proposed amendment will be forwarded to the NYSED for final consideration.

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CTE STARS Program Course Sequence Updates: **Deadline October 30th, 2015**

In school year 2015-16 programs are required to submit course sequence updates for review and approval in the CTE STARS program manager. Program sequence updates include:

- Additions or revisions to course offerings within the program sequence
- Modifications to calendar models, course codes, credits assigned
- Modifications to technical assessments
- Enroll new students who will begin the program sequence

New sequence versions must be submitted and approved by the Central CTE Office prior to enrolling students. This step has been added to confirm proposed courses are within the parameters of the program's CIP code as well as maintain fidelity to NYSED approved CTE programs of study. Please be advised Approved Programs that wish to make significant program modifications must use the Approved Program Amendment Form to propose changes to the NYC DOE Program Quality Team prior to submitting changes in STARS.

All programs must submit program sequences in STARS and once approved, enroll students as a condition of VTEA eligibility.

Self-Evaluation Form: **Deadline November 20th, 2015**

All CTE programs seeking state approval within the current school year that have not done so in the previous year must complete the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). The Program Approval team uses the completed SEF to evaluate the viability of the program and possibly schedule an external review visit, the crucial step before finalizing the application to the New York State Education Department (SED). The SEF enables schools to self-assess their program on five Quality Indicators that inform the application to the state.

To become eligible for review, schools must submit a complete SEF, with required supporting documentation, for each program it wishes to have reviewed in advance of application to SED. Incomplete forms will create a delay in the review process. It is critical that schools promptly respond by email or phone call to follow-up on requests from the CTE Program Quality Team. We welcome your questions and will provide guidance around those areas where you may not be able to provide complete documentation.

Please note: All established programs (defined as serving a minimum a two year sequence) must submit SEFs to be eligible for VTEA funding in the 2015-16 school year. Because of the VTEA application timeline, schools must have completed SEFs submitted by, November 20, 2015.

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External Review Visit

The External Review Visit (ExRev) is a one day visit by Program Quality team members to meet with CTE school leaders and administrators within CTE designated high schools and academic high schools to review the specifics of their program aligned to the five Quality Indicators within the Self-Evaluation Form:

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Work-Based Learning
- Assessment and Accountability
- Partnerships
- Program and School Capacity

The ExRev involves school stakeholders, external postsecondary and industry partners, in evaluation of the five quality indicators. It is the last step before finalizing the application to SED for approval.

Selection Criteria for External Review Visits

The program approval team will prioritize scheduling ExRevs as follows:

- Schools will receive at least one consultation visit by the Program Quality Team prior to being assigned an External Reviewer and scheduling an External Review.
- Fall 2015: CTE programs that submitted completed Self-Evaluation Forms and supporting documentation during school year 2014-15 that demonstrate meeting city program approval standards in all five quality indicators.
- Spring 2016: as capacity allows, programs that submit completed SEFs and supporting documents that demonstrate meeting city program approval standards in all five quality indicators as indicated in the Evaluation Schedule.
- All External Review visits will be scheduled and completed by May 27th, 2016.

Please note:

A complete SEF and supporting documents do not guarantee an External Review Visit. The Program Approval team will review the self-evaluation form to determine the information submitted aligns to the New York State Education Department requirements for approval.

In some cases schools will be required to do additional work to move the program closer to SED guidelines before an External Review Visit will be scheduled. Given scheduling demands some programs that meet guidelines in the Spring may not qualify for an External Review visit within the same school year. Though some programs meet NYCDOE Standards, certain new and emerging pathways are not yet recognized by the NYSED. The DOE is working with our counterparts at SED to align the City and State standards and ensure that all programs we support are eligible for state approval.

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Eligibility Letter (EL):

Schools and programs that have not submitted self-evaluation forms or otherwise have failed to comply with CTE program policies will be notified accordingly that their eligibility for CTE funding and program supports is at risk. Schools and programs so notified must respond immediately by communicating to the CTE team of intent either to move forward in the program approval process or to relinquish eligibility for CTE funding and program supports.