

Programs of Study

- The intention of programs of study is to provide students the opportunity to participate and engage in high-quality career and technical education that meets business and industry standards and rigor.
- The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) has provided an opportunity for Minnesota to support the impact of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.
- Leadership in the state of Minnesota looks to clarify programs of study and provide an opportunity to offer greater assistance to Perkins consortia in our state with the implementation of continuous quality improvement processes related to their programs of study.

The use of the terms Program of Study (POS) and State-Recognized Program of Study as defined in this document as well as the [Minnesota State Recognized Program of Study User Guide](#) relate to the Perkins legislation and expenditures within a consortium.

Consortium expenditures can be used for Programs of Study & State-Recognized Programs of Study and should be based on results of the CLNA, included in the plan application, and assure Perkins Uses of Funds criteria are met (Section 135 of Perkins V, Operational Handbook).

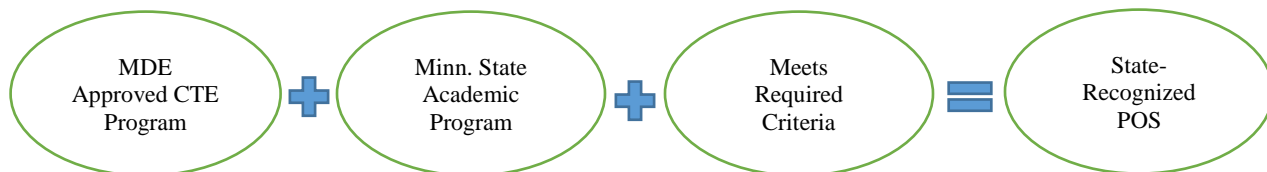
Programs of Study (POS):



A coordinated, non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical content at the secondary and postsecondary levels that:

- incorporates challenging State academic standards,
- includes both academic and technical knowledge and skills that are aligned with State approved frameworks including employability skills,
- is aligned with local and regional needs of current and emerging occupations,
- progresses in specificity (beginning with all aspects of an industry or career cluster) and leads to more occupation-specific instruction,
- has multiple entry and exit points that incorporates credentialing, and
- culminates in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential.

State-Recognized Programs of Study:



Once a consortium has established a Program of Study, there are seven minimum criteria that must be met to become a Perkins State-Recognized Program of Study. They are:

1. **Course standards accurately align to the academic, technical, and employability skills learners must master for entry and success in a given career pathway:** Content standards, frameworks and competencies that define what students are expected to know and be able to do to enter and advance in college and/or careers comprise the foundation of a POS.

2. **Program of Study incorporates active involvement from an integrated network of partners:** Ongoing relationships among education, business, and diverse community stakeholders bolster POS design, implementation, evaluation and maintenance.
3. **Secondary program(s) meets MDE program approval requirements and incorporate courses that lead to postsecondary credits/credentials:** Secondary programs have appropriately-licensed teachers, advisory committees, develop and ensure access to equitable student leadership opportunities, and provide career exploration activities leading to postsecondary credits/credentials.
4. **Postsecondary academic program meets Minnesota State board policy and Higher Learning Commission requirements:** A cohesive arrangement of college-level credit courses and experiences, designed to accomplish predetermined objectives, lead to the awarding of a degree, diploma, or certificate.
5. **Materials, Equipment, and Resources:** Facilities, equipment, technology and materials used in the program of study reflect current workplace, industry and/or occupational standards and practices for installation, use, maintenance, and safety.
6. **Incorporates authentic work experiences at the secondary and/or postsecondary level that are valued by industry:** POS engages students in authentic work-based learning experiences that demonstrate progressive occupational learning aligned to industry workforce needs.
7. **Program of Study development, improvement and advocacy are supported by findings from a comprehensive local needs assessment:** Systems and strategies for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating needs assessment data are effective for guiding the improvement of POS, and available in plain language to enhance use by stakeholders for POS advocacy. Including:

Size:

- o Parameters/resources that affect whether the program can adequately address student learning outcomes. This includes:
 - o Number of students within a program
 - o Number of instructors and staff involved with the program
 - o Number of courses within a program
 - o Available resources for the program (space, equipment, supplies)

Scope:

- o Programs of study are part of or working toward inclusion within a clearly defined career pathway with multiple entry and exit points.
- o Programs of study are aligned with local workforce needs and skills.
- o Postsecondary programs connect with secondary career and technical education via articulation agreements and/or dual credit, etc.
- o Programs develop not only specific work-based skills, but also broadly applicable employability skills.

Quality:

- o A program must meet two out of the following three criteria: the program develops (1) high skilled individuals, (2) individuals who are competitive for high wage jobs, and (3) individuals who are trained for in-demand occupations.
- o High skilled: programs that result in industry-recognized certificates, credentials, or degrees.
- o High wage: High wage is anything that is above the median wage for all occupations (\$41,749 based on 2018 data from Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development).
- o In demand: occupations that are identified in the Occupation in Demand index (<https://careerwise.minnstate.edu/jobs/hotCareers?re=R01000>) and/or through local needs Assessment.

Terms NO longer being used for Perkins purposes:

- Rigorous Program of Study
- Consortium Program of Study