# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual: Part A – Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation

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## A-500: Measurable Skill Gains

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) are a measure of the documented progress (academic, technical, occupational, or other) that a customer makes in a training or education program toward obtaining a recognized postsecondary credential or reaching employment-related performance outcome. This progress is captured in ReHabWorks and reported throughout the life of the case.

## A-501: Legal Authority and References

20 CFR Part 677 (and reprinted in 34 CFR Parts 361 and 463)

US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 10-16, issued December 19, 2016, and entitled “Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV Core Programs”

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, §116, Performance Accountability System establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of states and local workforce development areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce development system’s six core programs. Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) measure the outcomes of WIOA program participants in education or training programs that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment.

Requirements related to the implementation and operation of the performance accountability system are described under WIOA §116, including implementing joint regulations in 20 CFR Part 677 (and reprinted in 34 CFR Parts 361 and 463).

## A-502 What Can Be Reported as MSG?

The following are accepted as MSG’s for federal reporting:

* Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent;
* Associate Degree;
* Bachelor’s Degree;
* Graduate Degree;
* Occupational Licensure/ Certificate;
* Occupational Certification; and
* Other Industry/Occupational credential.

## A-503 What Cannot be Reported as MSG?

The following are not considered MSG’s for federal reporting:

* Yearly progression in special education courses working toward a Special Education Certificate;
* Transportation skills attainment;
* Soft skills training;
* Pre- and post-tests demonstrating mastery of orientation and mobility training; and
* Documentation of attainment of Microsoft Office skills in JAWS.

In addition to the above list, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) will not generally be associated with MSGs. For more information about Pre-ETS, refer to VRSM C-1305-6: Providing Pre-Employment Transition Services.

## A-504 Types of Progress for Measurable Skill Gains

The WIOA identifies the following five types of progress for Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs):

1. Achievement of at least one educational functioning level (EFL) of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level; An EFL gain is advancement of an educational level by making measurable improvement in educational attainment as measured by a pre- and post-test.

An example of an EFL would be moving from a 9th grade reading level to a 10th grade reading level. The tests typically used for this include the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and the Basic English Skills Test (BEST). Examples of paper documentation to confirm this MSG would include:

* results from a TABE or BEST pre- and post-test showing skills gains or academic improvement; or
* proof of enrollment in remedial training and acceptance into a post-secondary educational training program.

1. Attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

An example of attainment of a secondary diploma would be graduating from high school. Examples of paper documentation to confirm this MSG would include:

* high school transcript; or
* high school diploma.
1. Post-secondary progress towards a recognized credential;

An example of post-secondary progress towards a recognized credential would be successfully completing a semester of academic training. Examples of paper documentation to confirm this MSG would include:

* transcript or
* grade report.

Note: There must be a sufficient number of credit hours documented to show that the customer is meeting standards identified in the customer’s Individualized Plan for Employment.

1. Satisfactory or better progress towards established milestones;

An example of satisfactory progress towards established milestones would be completion of On-the-Job-Training (OJT) or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones. Examples of paper documentation to confirm this MSG would include:

* progress reports from an employer documenting completion of training period; or
* progress reports from a training provider who is providing training.
1. Successfully passing an exam that is required for an occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills;

An example of successfully passing an exam that is required for an occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills would be attaining a plumbing apprentice license or some other occupational license or certification. Examples of paper documentation to confirm this MSG would include:

* trade-related exam results;
* occupational license or certification; or
* online confirmation of license or certificate.

## A-505: Documenting Measurable Skill Gains

MSG’s must be clearly documented in RHW and in the paper casefile.

MSGs are capture in RHW from the Education History page, Training Information page, and the Semester/Grading Period sections within that page. These fields must be updated throughout the life of the case to ensure accurate reporting to Rehabilitation Services Administration and other stakeholders. Refer to the RHW Users Guide (RUG) B-300 Education History (insert link) for additional details.

VR staff must also document MSGs in RHW case notes to provide specific details about the customers progress and the reason for the update to the MSGs information in RHW. This can be captured in the system generated case note from the comments entered by VR staff when the pages are updated.

Paper copies of supporting documentation such as grade reports, transcripts, certificates, or diplomas, must be obtained from the customer when RHW is updated. Copies of these documents are maintained in the customer’s paper case file.

## A-506: Calculating Measurable Skill Gains

All VR customers enrolled in education programs that lead to secondary, recognized postsecondary credentials, or employment identified by their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) are counted in the denominator for that program year. This includes customers whose cases are closed during a program year as well as those who continue to receive services.

MSGs are captured and reported throughout the life of the case and at case closure; Customers who continue to receive services as well as those who’s cases are closed during the reporting period are included in the measure.