



**Alliance for Quality Career Pathways**  
a project of CLASP

# Shared Vision, Strong Systems: The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Framework Version 1.0 Summary

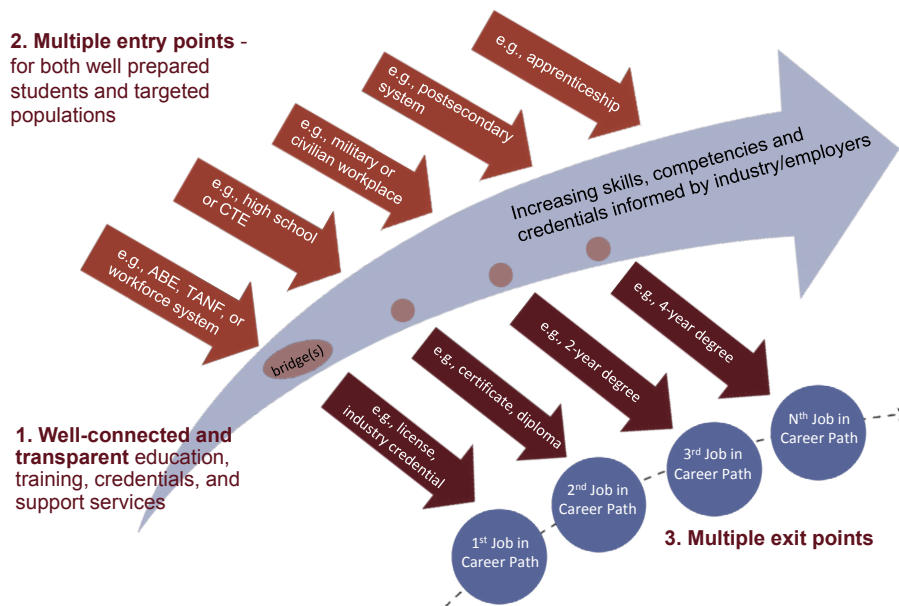
**What is the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways?** In 2012, CLASP invited partners in ten leading career pathway states—Arkansas, California, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin—to jointly develop the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Framework 1.0, which establishes a common understanding of quality career pathways and systems.

**What is Different About the Career Pathway Approach?** The career pathway approach is a paradigm shift in how we prepare people for work and lifelong learning. It reorients existing education and workforce services from myriad disconnected programs to a structure that syncs employers' workforce needs with individuals' education and training needs.

**What Are Career Pathway Systems?** A career pathway system is the cohesive combination of partnerships, resources and funding, policies, data, and shared performance measures that support the development, quality, scaling, and “dynamic sustainability” of career pathways and programs for youth and adults. The value of a career pathway system is that it connects and aligns all relevant public systems with private and nonprofit partners.

**Why Do We Need Career Pathways?** The career pathway approach is a new way of doing business that addresses the daunting education and skill challenges we face as a nation. These include tens of millions of adults with skills too low to succeed in education or work; millions of youth who are disconnected from school and work and who face a dire future without better opportunities; poor and worsening college completion and credential attainment rates; and our persistent challenge in meeting employers' need for skilled workers.

### THREE CORE FEATURES OF A CAREER PATHWAY



**How Does the Alliance Fit With WIOA?**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) codifies a robust career pathway program definition and puts local workforce boards in the role of convener. The goal of a career pathway system can be realized through this collaborative leadership. WIOA state and local plans need to clearly articulate how partners will identify and approve career pathways and support these efforts through braided resources, co-enrollment and articulation policies, data sharing and accountability, and continuous improvement toward higher quality.

**Alliance Criteria and Indicators for Quality Career Pathway Systems**

The Alliance framework strengthens career pathway system policies and processes by encouraging unified plans that help partners connect programs into pathways, which are continuously fortified through systemic quality improvement. The Alliance has identified these six quality criteria as essential to career pathway system building.

**Criterion 1: Commit to a Shared Vision and Strategy** for industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults and for building, scaling, and dynamically sustaining career pathway systems.

**Criterion 2: Engage Employers and Integrate Sector Strategy Principles** to ensure multiple employers, business associations, and labor unions are partners in creating demand-driven career pathways.

**Criterion 3: Collaborate to Make Resources Available** by identifying, prioritizing, and leveraging resources for career pathway systems, partnerships, and programs.

**Criterion 4: Implement Supportive Policies** for career pathway systems, pathways, and programs.

**Criterion 5: Use Data and Shared Measures** to measure, demonstrate, and improve participant outcomes.

**Criterion 6: Implement and Integrate Evidence-Based Practices and Processes** (specifically for regional/local career pathway systems).

**Alliance Career Pathway Participant Metrics**

**Why Do We Need Career Pathway Metrics?**

These metrics differ from existing measures in that they: (a) focus specifically on the performance of career pathways; (b) measure participant outcomes in the context of career pathway progression as opposed to the source of the funds; and (c) include “milestone” metrics to measure the progress of and provide credit for serving underprepared participants.

<u>WIOA Performance Metrics</u>	<u>Alliance Career Pathway Metrics Categories</u>		
	A: Interim Outcomes	B: Education and Training Outcomes	C: Labor Market Outcomes
1. Measureable skill gain	✓	✓	
2. Credential attainment	✓	✓	
3. Employment second quarter after exit			✓
4. Employment fourth quarter after exit			✓
5. Median earnings second quarter after exit			✓
6. Effectiveness in serving employers			

**Which Participants Should be Measured?**

The career pathway framework defines a career pathway participant, a career pathway leaver, and a career pathway credential completer. These individuals should be identified within administrative data across education, workforce, and human service systems regardless of funding stream. This will require partners to establish policies and protocols for identifying career pathway programs and “flagging” the individuals who are in those programs across data systems.

**LEARN MORE**

Explore the Alliance framework and tools at [clasp.org/careerpathways](http://clasp.org/careerpathways).

Read about WIOA career pathway opportunities at [clasp.org/WIOAgameplan](http://clasp.org/WIOAgameplan).

To join the conversation on Twitter, use #AQCPathways.