

W-2 Manual Glossary

NOTE: The following definitions in the W-2 Manual Glossary have been updated to create a distinction between a tool to determine an individual's current educational level from the determination that an individual needs, or would benefit from education or training activities. The corresponding expanding definitions throughout the W-2 Manual have been updated to incorporate the changes.

Educational Needs Assessment

Educational needs assessments determine if the individual needs, or would benefit from, education or training activities, including a course of study for the granting of a declaration of equivalency of high school graduation. In making this determination, the FEP must consider the following:

- The information gathered on the applicant/participant's current educational levels;
- The level of education and training necessary to obtain full-time employment in the local labor market; and
- The applicant/participant's personal employment goals. ~~are tools used to measure and determine a participant's educational levels. Educational needs assessment tools, like the TABE or WRAT, test skills and aptitudes in reading, language, math computation, and applied math in order to identify current math and reading comprehension levels and any literacy or numeracy deficiencies.~~

Educational Needs Assessment Tool

Educational needs assessment tools measure a participant's current educational levels. Standardized educational needs assessment tools, like the TABE or BEST, test skills and aptitudes in reading, language, math computation, and applied math in order to identify current literacy and numeracy skill levels.

5.1.1.2 Referral for Formal Assessment at Application

During the application process, the FEP may also refer the applicant for vocational evaluation/assessment and/or formal assessment of employment barriers. (See 5.5.1) However, completing referrals for vocational evaluation/assessments or formal assessments are not eligibility requirements.

Because career assessments, additional vocational evaluation/assessments, educational needs assessments using a standardized educational needs assessment tool, and formal assessments are not eligibility requirements, the FEP must never delay eligibility determination and initial placement because one of these assessments is pending. The placement decision must be made using the best available information during the application timeframe. (See 1.4.4) The W-2 placement may be adjusted later, if needed, when the additional assessment information is received.

No change to remainder of 5.1.1.2

5.1.2 Assessment as Part of Ongoing Case Management

Prior to making a change in W-2 placement, the W-2 agency:

- Must work with the participant to complete and submit the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow (see 5.2); and
- Must work with the participant to complete an educational needs assessment (see 5.3).

The following assessments are considered an ongoing activity and are part of general W-2 case management:

1. **Educational Needs Assessment.** Educational needs assessment can be completed throughout ongoing case management as the participant's education and training needs may change.

Standardized educational needs assessment tools should be used to determine a participant's educational levels. Educational needs assessment tools, like the TABE or BEST, test skills and aptitudes in reading, language, math computation, and applied math in order to identify current math and reading comprehension levels. (See 5.3.1)

2. **Career Assessment :** Career assessments can be administered throughout ongoing case management as the participant's skill levels and work-readiness may change.

Career assessments should be used to identify *work styles*, *skills*, and *interests* in order to develop EPs and assign meaningful activities that allow participants to reach their goals.

- *Work styles* – Refers to the participant's patterns of action or conduct, such as attendance, punctuality, appropriate appearance, ability to work with others, obeying rules, following directions, and completing tasks. Work style-focused career assessments can demonstrate the participant's attitudes and job readiness.
- *Skills* – Refers to the participant's skills or understanding of specific tasks related to employment, like cooking or computer programming. Skills-

focused career assessments can include knowledge, aptitude, and ability. Skills can relate to a particular occupation, as typically listed in a job announcement to describe the tasks of a position.

- *Interests* – Refers to the participant’s likes of particular objects, activities, and personalities using the theory that individuals with the same career tend to have the same interests. Interest-focused career assessments help participants identify work-related interests and find the types of careers that match. The results can be used to help participants learn which careers they are most likely to enjoy, including careers they may not have had knowledge of.

Do not use educational needs assessment tools in place of career assessments tools. Use educational needs assessment tools in tandem with career assessments tools to identify the education and training needed to allow individuals to obtain employment that fits their work styles, skills, and interests ~~participant’s needs in order to improve work readiness and skills~~. The results of both assessments complement each other and inform the EP development and assignment of meaningful activities.

5.3.1 Educational Needs Assessment

The purpose of the educational needs assessment is to determine if the W-2 applicant or participant needs, or would benefit from, education and training activities:

1. A course of study meeting the standards established under Wis. Stat. s. 115.29 (4), for the granting of a declaration of equivalency of high school graduation;
2. Technical college courses;
3. Educational courses that provide an employment skill;
4. English as a second language (ESL) courses that the Wisconsin works agency determines would facilitate an individual’s efforts to obtain employment;
5. Adult basic education courses, including literacy skills and remedial math and reading courses; and
6. Employer-sponsored training.

The W-2 agency is required to conduct an educational needs assessment with all new W-2 applicants and must reassess the participant for education and training needs before making a change in W-2 placement. The assessment must:

1. **Identify the applicant or participant’s current educational levels.**
Agencies are ~~encouraged to~~ must use a standardized educational

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assessment tool to determine educational levels if the FEP determines an educational needs assessment is needed. Assessment tools such as TABE and WRAT are already widely used by W-2 agencies for this purpose. TABE, BEST, and WRAT TABE CLAS-E are standardized educational assessment tools supported in WWP.

The FEP must never delay eligibility determination and placement because completion of a standardized educational needs assessment tool is pending. If necessary to ensure timely placement, the FEP must use the best information available from the WWP Education History and Post-Secondary Education pages to fulfill the educational needs assessment requirement at application and inform the initial placement decision and EP.

For some applicants and participants, the self-reported information gathered through the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow may not accurately reflect current educational levels. When completion of a standardized educational needs assessment tool is necessary to determine or confirm the applicant or participant's current educational levels, the tool must be scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 days of placement. See 6.4 for information on assignment of activities in CARES.

For an individual who has demonstrated their reading and math skills through attainment of post-secondary education, a standardized educational assessment tool is not necessary. Postsecondary education includes completion of any coursework or education beyond high school such as a continuing education certificate, associate degree, or baccalaureate degree.

If a standardized assessment tool, such as TABE or BEST ~~WRAT~~ has been completed within the prior six months, the agency may use the results of that assessment to determine the applicant or participant's current educational level. It is not necessary to administer a new standardized educational assessment to the individual.

2. Determine the applicant or participant's education and training needs. In making this determination, the FEP must consider the following:

- a. The information gathered on the applicant or participant's current educational levels.

The FEP must document this information on the appropriate WWP Informal Assessment pages (Education History, Post-Secondary Education), the WWP Test Scores Application, CARES screens (WPED, ~~WPPE~~ and ~~WPAW~~) and in case comments on CARES screen CMCC;

- b. The level of education and training necessary to obtain full-time employment in the local labor market.

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The Department of Workforce Development maintains a website with Wisconsin labor market information at <https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy>. From this website you can link to many useful resources, such as:

- *LMI – for Workforce Development Areas (WDA)* at <https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/>. This site covers the occupations in demand for each region and county in the state.
- *The Occupational Information Network (O*NET)*, at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>. This site provides comprehensive information on job requirements and worker competencies for employment sectors and occupations.
- *SkillExplorer* at <http://skillexplorer.wisconsin.gov>. This site provides information on jobs that share similar skills, including typical education level required for entry, required training, and current openings searchable by location.

c. The applicant or participant’s program ~~personal~~ employment goals.

Program employment goals are shorter-term employment goals that can be achieved through participation in the W-2 program and are part of the EP. (See 6.1.1)

If the FEP determines that the individual is eligible for W-2 and s/he needs or would benefit from education or training activities, including a course of study meeting the standards established for the granting of a declaration of high school graduation, the education and training activities must be included in the individual’s EP. See 8.3 for additional information on education and training activities.

Example: Holly is found nonfinancially and financially eligible for W-2. During the WWP Informal Assessment, Holly reported that she ~~She~~ has not completed high school and 11th grade is her last grade completed. ~~the educational needs assessment finds her to be at a 10th grade reading and math comprehension level.~~ An aptitude assessment also shows that she is artistic and has good ~~mechanical skills.~~ Holly also tells the FEP she has had several brief job spells as a short-order cook and her long-term ~~personal~~ employment goal is to become a manager of a restaurant chef. However, all of her past employment has resulted in job terminations due to disputes with her supervisors. The FEP determines that Holly would be appropriate for a CSJ. Holly’s initial EP includes activity hours for completing TABE testing ~~For the first week, Holly is assigned to 40 hours of Job Readiness/Motivation training.~~ The TABE results indicate that Holly has a 10th grade reading comprehension level and an 8th grade math level. After completing the first week, she is assigned to 30 hours per week at a work experience site that combines food preparation experience with culinary skills training, which is expected to last about six weeks. In addition, Holly is assigned to eight hours per week of tutoring to prepare her for her GED.

If the applicant or participant refuses to complete an educational needs assessment, such as the TABE, and there is no other information available as to the individual's current math and reading comprehension level, the W-2 agency may proceed to work with the individual as though there are no literacy or numeracy barriers.

W-2 Manual Appendix – Activity Codes

CE – Career Planning & Counseling

Valid for the following programs: W-2, LF, CF, TMJ/TJ

Report this activity for participants receiving services geared towards assessment of a participant's career interests and guidance in the career planning process. Examples of activities include:

- *Career assessments*, including work styles, skills and interests;
- *Educational needs assessment tools* (e.g. TABE Testing) to determine education and training needs for increased employability;
- Career exploration/job shadowing;
- Reviewing labor market information and training opportunities; and
- Career guidance and counseling.

UC – Up-front Career Planning

Valid for the following programs: W-2, CF

Report this activity for applicants who receive up-front services geared toward assessment of an individual's career interests and guidance in the career planning process. Examples of activities include:

- *Career assessments*, including work styles, skills, and interests;
- *Educational needs assessment tools* (e.g. TABE Testing) to determine education and training needs for increased employability;
- Career exploration/job shadowing;
- Reviewing labor market information and training opportunities; and
- Career guidance and counseling.

This activity must be ended at time of W-2 placement.