

What are NCWorks Certified Career Pathways?

Certified Career Pathways are integrated, seamless systems of education and workforce development programs, initiatives and resources. Certified Career Pathways focus on matching worker preparation to employer need in high-demand occupations.

Who creates Certified Career Pathways?

Certified Career Pathways are created by regional and local teams that consist of engaged employers, workforce development boards, high schools and community colleges. The most successful Certified Career Pathways also include universities, local community leaders and chambers of commerce as team members.

We already have career pathways at our institution. Why should we get them certified?

There are many reasons to apply to the NCWorks Commission for certification. Certified Career Pathways have the endorsement of NC's lead workforce agency, making them eligible for targeted grant funds. Certification indicates that career pathways meet eight best-practice criteria, ensuring sustainability of the pathway. Also, certification ensures enrollees of the best education, training and work-based learning opportunities as they pursue careers in high-demand occupations.

What are the criteria for NCWorks Certification?

Certified Career Pathways are demand driven, employer led, collaborative, career aware, coordinated, work based, flexible and evaluable. The full set of criteria can be found here: [Certified Career Pathways Criteria](#)

How does a team get a pathway certified?

Teams apply to the NCWorks Commission for certification. The application requires a narrative detailing the development of the pathway and evidence of meeting each of the eight criteria. Teams must identify all of their members and each member's role in the development of the pathway. Certification review is completed by a statewide interagency team of workforce professionals that makes recommendation to the NCWorks Commission.

How long is the certification process?

Career pathways are certified on a rolling basis. When applications are received by NCWorks Commission staff, they are distributed to the interagency team for review. An eligible pathway can be certified in as little as 30 days.

How does an enrollee enter a Certified Career Pathways?

High school students may enter Certified Career Pathways through career and technical education programs at their school. Adult workers may enter pathways through NCWorks Career Centers or local community colleges. Employers may recommend current employees enroll in a Certified Career Pathways to gain additional skills.

How long is an individual enrolled in a Certified Career Pathway?

Certified Career Pathways are required to be flexible and allow multiple entry and exit points. An individual could be on a Certified Career Pathways a few weeks, earning a work-ready credential or several years, earning a postsecondary degree in a high-demand field.

Do other states have Certified Career Pathways?

Career pathways meet federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirements for workforce training. Statewide certification further establishes NC as a leader in workforce development.

I still have questions. Where can I get more information on Certified Career Pathways?

For more information visit [NCWorks](#), or contact Dr. Dion Clark, NC Works Career Pathways Director at dion.clark@ncommerce.com.