Early Childhood Teacher Quality

Recognizing High Quality Core Content in Pennsylvania
Table of Contents

Contents

1. Overview ........................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.1. Purpose ...................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.2. Rationale .................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.3. Core Knowledge Competencies ................................................................................................. 4
   1.4. Career Lattice ............................................................................................................................ 4

2. Responsibilities ................................................................................................................................. 4
   2.1. Regional Keys ............................................................................................................................ 4
   2.2. PA Key ....................................................................................................................................... 5
   2.3. ECE Credit Advisory Group ..................................................................................................... 5
   2.4. Office of Child development and Early Learning (OCDEL) ...................................................... 5
   2.5. ECE and School-Age Professionals ............................................................................................ 5

3. Policies .............................................................................................................................................. 5
   3.1. Verifying accreditation of the degree granting institution ........................................................... 5
   3.2. Transcript Review Resources ................................................................................................... 5
   3.3. Foreign Degrees ......................................................................................................................... 6
   3.4. Related and Equivalent degrees on the Career Lattice .............................................................. 6
   3.5. Degrees Earned from Business, Technical and Trade Schools ................................................. 6
   3.6. Counting Credits ....................................................................................................................... 7
   3.7. Alternative Pathways requiring a Waiver and Action Plan ....................................................... 8
   3.8. Alternative Pathways not requiring a Waiver and Action Plan ................................................ 11

4. Procedures ......................................................................................................................................... 14
   4.1. Transcript Review ....................................................................................................................... 14

Forms and Tools ................................................................................................................................... 16

ECE College Credit Calculation Tool ................................................................................................. 17
ECE College Credit Calculation Tool - Form ....................................................................................... 18
ECE College Credit Calculation Tool – Listing of Courses and Credits ........................................... 19
Staff Qualifications Waiver and Action Plan (part 1) .......................................................................... 20
Staff Qualifications Waiver and Action Plan (part 2) ........................................................................ 21
Resources ................................................................. 22

Examples of College Course Prefixes and Names .................................................. 23
College Course Prefixes Directly Related to ECE Core Content .............................. 23
College Course Prefixes that may contain ECE (or school-age specific) Core Content .......... 23
Examples of College Course Titles in Early Childhood ............................................ 24
Examples of College Course Titles in Early Childhood (continued) ............................. 25
1. Overview

1.1. Purpose
The purpose of this document is to provide guidance that will ensure consistency across the commonwealth in identification and calculation of early childhood core content credits. This information is essential in determining placement on the PA Early Learning Keys to Quality Career Lattice as well as assessing eligibility for special certifications such as the PA Director Credential and PQAS approval.

1.2. Rationale
Early childhood and school-age professionals come from diverse backgrounds including many different degrees, experiences, and professional development. The research about outcomes for children when teachers have professional development in Early Childhood content is compelling. Working with young children is a profession that requires knowledge of how children grow and develop as well as the skills to communicate effectively with children and families. Research compiled in the last fifteen years underscores two essential findings: 1) high quality early learning programs are important for good child outcomes, and 2) practitioner education and training are keys in providing good early learning experiences.

- Practitioner/teacher preparation (both pre-service and in-service) significantly predicts program quality. Research shows compelling evidence of the value added to children’s development and experiences being taught by educated, experienced teachers in high quality facilities. Areas where research revealed above average competencies were in vocabulary, mathematics, print awareness and concepts. These findings also continued through elementary school as evidenced in the pre-k counts report (NIEER Report, 2005).

- The education and specialized professional development opportunities of practitioners are critical to sustaining high quality early learning experiences for children. Early childhood practitioners provide more sensitive and appropriate experiences for children if they have completed more years of formal education and have received specialized training in early childhood education, or child development. (C.M. Connor, et.al. 2005).

- Experience alone is not a predictor of effective care-giving. Practitioner formal education and specialized training are among the most critical elements in ensuring positive outcomes for children (W.S. Barnett, 2004; Burchinal, et.al, 2002).
1.3. Core Knowledge Competencies

Knowledge expectations of early childhood professionals are identified in Pennsylvania’s Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School-Age Professionals (CKCs). It identifies a set of content areas that help define the knowledge expectations for professionals in settings within the early childhood education and school-age field. These core competencies, linked to the PA Early Learning Standards, specify the scope of skills and knowledge that guides those who work with children to facilitate child learning and development and support strong partnerships with families. The CKC is a valuable tool for individuals as they assess their own knowledge and skill level and chart a course for their personal development. It supports an individual’s preparation for entry into the field of early childhood and school-age care as well as professionals’ commitment to lifelong learning through ongoing professional growth. The CKCs are also used for PQAS instructors to determine objectives and expected outcomes of their courses as well as to identify courses that are needed in specific areas for the practitioner. To view the CKCs visit www.pakeys and select Career Development or click here.

1.4. Career Lattice

The Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality Career Lattice serves as a guide to the education levels required for many positions in the early learning and school-age field, as well as a framework for career planning.

The term “career lattice” refers to a framework that outlines multiple pathways for professional growth and development. It illustrates how early childhood education and school-age care professionals can move within the early learning system in order to advance their careers. The career lattice provides information regarding the minimum requirements of some positions within the system so individuals can plan their education in relation to the position that they are seeking.

The goal of this career lattice is to ensure that children in Pennsylvania are being educated by professionals who have achieved adequate levels of education that are consistent across the state. The Career Lattice also serves as a guide for those who are interested in specific positions within the field by indicating the typical requirements for those positions. Public School, Head Start/Early Head Start, Technical Assistance, Child Care and Higher Education are some of the sectors represented.

The career lattice is an integral part of Keystone STARS, the standards define career lattice expectations for directors and staff at various STAR levels.

2. Responsibilities

The following describes the various organizational responsibilities in the transcript review and counting credits process.

2.1. Regional Keys

The Regional Key is the primary reviewer to count an individual’s college and university credits to determine career lattice level placement. It is assumed that the majority of the reviews will be completed at this level. At their discretion, the Regional Key may request a further review by the PA Key.
2.2. PA Key

The PA Key is the primary reviewer to count credits to determine individual qualifications for PQAS certification and director credentials. In instances where the Regional Key is unable to make a determination with regard to staff credentials as described in section 4.1, the PA Key will provide a secondary review of individual transcripts and documentation. In circumstances where a determination is inconclusive, the PA Key will convene the ECE Credit Advisory Group.

2.3. ECE Credit Advisory Group

This is an ad hoc group which consists of representatives of the Regional Key, PA Key, OCDEL and the higher education community. This group will be called upon when a determination is in question and cannot be clearly resolved in a review of the PA Key.

2.4. Office of Child development and Early Learning (OCDEL)

OCDEL sets policy related to education and professional development requirements for individuals participating in OCDEL early learning initiatives. OCDEL makes the final career lattice determinations based on the information provided from the individual and prior reviews completed by the Regional Key, PA Key, and/or ECE Credit Advisory Group.

2.5. ECE and School-Age Professionals

Individuals seeking career lattice placement determination are responsible for providing all supporting documentation to their Regional Key in order to assist in the completion of an accurate review and determination. Individuals may seek a re-evaluation if they are not satisfied with the rendering. Individuals must contact their Regional Key before receiving a re-evaluation from the PA Key or OCDEL.

3. Policies

3.1. Verifying accreditation of the degree granting institution

The following websites are to be used when verifying accreditation for colleges, universities, online degrees, business, technical or trade colleges.

a. The accreditation of an educational institution, including business, technical and trade schools can be verified via the US Department of Education’s website at http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html. Many Pennsylvania business, technical and trade colleges are accredited by organizations listed on this website.

b. Additional information about the accreditation of an individual institution can be found by searching http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/.

c. Online degrees can be verified by visiting the Distance and Training Education Council (DETC) website. DETC is a private, non-profit organization that is a national accreditor of distance education institutions. DETC is recognized on the USDOE list mentioned above. Click here to link to the website or go to www.detc.org.

3.2. Transcript Review Resources
a. **Transcript review from the conferring institution** – An individual may request a transcript review by contacting the conferring institution to request a letter stating the number of early childhood education core content credits awarded to the student. This letter will serve as the source of evidence and result in no credits needing to be counted by the Regional Key, PA Key or the ECE Credit Advisory Group.

b. **College or University website** – Individual institution websites may provide information about core coursework identified on a transcript.

c. **Pennsylvania Transfer and Articulation Center (PA TRAC)** - A resource for navigating course and credit transfer policies across participating colleges and universities. [https://www.pacollegetransfer.com/](https://www.pacollegetransfer.com/)

### 3.3. Foreign Degrees

Individuals who hold a degree or transcript from outside of the United States must have their degree or transcript translated by an approved organization. Approved options are listed below.

a. Translation by an organization who is a current National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) member. NACES is an association of independent and private foreign educational credential evaluation services located in the United States. Click here to link to the NACES member list or go to [www.naces.org/members.htm](http://www.naces.org/members.htm).

This evaluation must show U.S. equivalent of all foreign degrees plus a course-by-course evaluation showing semester hour college credits and the student’s cumulative GPA.

b. Individuals may submit a letter from the institution of higher education attended that translates the degree earned, including the courses taken, and showing the semester hour college credits and the student’s cumulative GPA.

### 3.4. Related and Equivalent degrees on the Career Lattice

#### 3.4.1. Related Degrees


#### 3.4.2. Equivalent Degrees

a. A list of approved degrees equivalent to an ECE degree without teacher certification, can be found at [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org) under Career Development/Requirements.

b. If a degree does not appear on this list, the individual has the option of submitting, to the PA Key, a letter from the college or university along with supporting documentation that illustrates how the specific degree is equivalent to an early childhood degree.

### 3.5. Degrees Earned from Business, Technical and Trade Schools

If a business, technical or trade college is accredited by an approved accrediting organization, OCDEL will recognize Associate of Specialized Business (ASB) or Associate of Specialized Technology (AST) degrees on the Career Lattice.
a. ASB and AST ECE degrees will be recognized on the Career Lattice at Level IV.

b. If the business, technical, or trade college has a signed program-to-program articulation agreement with another accredited institution of higher education offering an Associate in ECE or Baccalaureate in ECE or Child Development, the degree will be placed on Career Lattice Level V.

c. **Tuition assistance eligibility** - Courses offered by business, technical or trade schools with accredited programs identified on the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) website at www.pheaa.org by school name and program code will be eligible for payment through the Rising STARS Tuition Assistance Program. The PHEAA code for business, technical and trade schools offering an approved ASB or AST ECE is 7B – Early Childhood Education. This information can be accessed on the PHEAA website by selecting the State Grant Program link under Funding Opportunities then selecting the State Grant Program Manual from the list of Documents and Forms.

d. **Education and Retention Awards** - ASB and AST ECE degrees are eligible for Education & Retention Awards.

3.6. Counting Credits

The following guidance provides information when reviewing transcripts about when credits are to be counted or not counted and when credits are counted for full or partial credit. When reviewing transcripts, college courses may earn either one credit or full credit. This determination is based on the documentation provided by the individual.

Credits are to be calculated as semester hours. If a college or university operates on a system other than semesters (e.g. quarter system) a ratio will need to be identified. Information can be obtained from the institution’s website or by contacting the institution directly.

3.6.1. Full Credit

a. Full credit is given for any course that has been determined to be primarily ECE content (over 50 percent ECE content).

b. If the course is an Elementary Education course and the staff member works ONLY with school age children, full credit is given for the course.

c. Individuals who have earned the PA Director Credential and/or who have taken the credit coursework from one of the PA approved institutions of higher education can count those credits as ECE Core Content.

3.6.2. Partial Credit

a. Partial credit is considered one credit for a course, regardless of the full credit amount. Partial credit is determined when the course is not ECE Core content and documentation indicates that less than 50 percent of the content is ECE content.

b. Courses that are in Special Education or Elementary Education automatically receive one credit for ECE core content unless additional documentation is provided.
3.6.3. **Student Teaching**

Student teaching may be counted as full or partial credit depending on the age group of the students during the student teaching experience. To determine full or partial credit, refer to sections above. Documentation may include the following:

a. Grade level attestation by the practitioner

b. PDE Form 430 (Effective July 1, 2011 this is the only source of evidence acceptable for new graduates)

c. Out of State or Out of Country Student Teaching placements in accordance with the acceptance of the Pennsylvania Department of Education refer to http://www.pde.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/certifications/7199

3.6.4. **Degrees or Certification that DO NOT require Credits to be Counted**

Regional Keys will accept the following degrees and certifications at the applicable Career Lattice level (Bachelor’s degree or Associate’s degree) without counting any credits:

a. Early Childhood Education (ECE) Bachelor’s degree (with or without teaching certification) and the subject-area content was entirely ECE content;

b. Degree programs that have been approved by the PA Key as equivalent to ECE, without teacher certification. Please refer to www.pakeys.org under “Career Development/Requirements” for a list of approved degrees;

c. Elementary Education (ELED) Bachelor’s degree (with or without teaching certification) and teacher works with school-age children;

d. Early Childhood/Elementary Education (ELED/ECE ) dual Bachelor’s degree (with or without teaching certification);

e. Early Childhood Education N-3 (ECE/N-3 PA) Pennsylvania Instructional I/II Teaching Certificate;

f. Early Childhood Education Instructional Certification out of state from an accredited institution;

g. Early Childhood Education PreK-4 (ECE/PreK-4) as required by Chapter 49;

h. Current National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification (NBPTS) in the appropriate age category for the age level assignment.

3.7. **Alternative Pathways requiring a Waiver and Action Plan**

Individuals wishing to pursue approval for any of the following alternative pathways are required to complete the Staff Qualifications and Action Plan Form found in the Forms and Tools section of this document.
3.7.1. Directors Enrolled in a Master’s Degree Program

Directors who are enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Master’s Degree Program meet the PA Director’s Credential requirement under the following conditions only:

a. The PA Director’s Credential is embedded in the Master’s program;

b. The director is nine (9) credits into the Master’s program, AND

c. The director develops a waiver with action plan with a minimum of 6 credits completed per year.

3.7.2. Directors not Enrolled in a Master’s Degree Program

To assist a facility when director turnover occurs, a new director at a facility currently designated STAR 3 or STAR 4 may be granted a waiver with action plan not to exceed 2½ years from the director’s start date. The following circumstances must be met.

a. The director enrolls in approved Pennsylvania Director Credential coursework and develops a detailed action plan for completion within 2½ years;

b. The facility is maintaining a current STAR level and not moving to a higher STAR level;

c. Progress on the action plan is reviewed at least annually.

3.7.3. College Students pursuing a Bachelor’s degree

A college student pursuing a Bachelor's degree without an Associate’s degree can be counted at Level V on the Career Lattice if the following criteria are met:

a. The individual has earned sixty (60) credits. Credits are counted as per the credit counting guidance above;

b. Eighteen (18) credits must be early childhood credits;

c. The individual must be matriculating at least six (6) credits per year;

d. Course of study must align with those accepted through the Rising STARS Tuition Assistance Program.

If the individual stops matriculating six (6) credits per year, the individual will drop to Level IV on the Career Lattice.

3.7.4. Staff Qualifications

If a program does not meet the Keystone STARS Performance Standards related toStaff Qualifications due to staff turnover, a waiver with action plan may be granted. The following criteria are to be used to determine if a waiver should be granted.

a. The waiver is used only to maintain a current STAR level. It is not used to facilitate moving up a STAR level.

b. The Keystone STARS Staff Qualification Waiver with Action Plan form will be completed when implementing this policy.
c. The Regional Key must evaluate the total number of staff at a center versus the number of staff needing waivers before approving a waiver. The following chart indicates the number of waivers permitted in relation to the number of staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Facility Staff</th>
<th>Number of Waivers Permitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-34</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-38</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-43</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. A staff member can only be granted a waiver for one year (365 calendar days), except to obtain the Child Development Associate (CDA). The action plan must be written so that the staff member obtains the next level on the Career Lattice within one year. The action plan can be written for up to eighteen (18) months when obtaining the CDA.

e. The individual with the waiver will be counted at the level on the Career Lattice to which they are aspiring.

f. A waiver can only be written to achieve one step above the individual’s current level on the Career Lattice. The individual must meet prerequisites guidelines and demonstrate “good effort” as defined in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level on the Career Lattice</th>
<th>Prerequisite Guidelines</th>
<th>How Long</th>
<th>Good Effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level II to Level III</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>CDA/SAPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level III to Level IV</td>
<td>Must have 15+ credits</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>6-15 credits per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level IV to Level V</td>
<td>Must have 45 credits</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>15 credits per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level V to Level VI</td>
<td>Must be within 15 credits of Bachelor’s Degree (18 credits must be ECE)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>15 credits per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

g. Regional Keys will monitor progress two times per year, checking course completion, successful academic progress and enrollment.
3.7.5. **Staff Qualifications for Centers with Three of Fewer Staff (STAR 3)**

The equivalency for small centers in achieving the STAR 3 standard of “75% of Assistant Teachers/Assistant Group Supervisors at Level III or above” is as follows:

a. **Centers with Three (3) Staff** - If a center provider only has three (3) staff members to calculate in determining the percentage, the provider meets this standard with 66% of Assistant Teachers/Assistant Group Supervisors at Level III or above.

b. **Centers with Two (2) Staff** - If a center provider only has two (2) staff members to calculate in determining the percentage, the provider meets this standard with 50% of Assistant Teachers/Assistant Group Supervisors at Level III or above.

It is not the intent of this standard to require a center provider with three (3) or less staff to have 100% of these staff at Level III or above.

3.7.6. **Staff Qualifications for Centers with Three of Fewer Staff (STAR 4)**

The equivalency for small centers with three (3) or less staff in achieving the STAR 4 standard of “100% of Teachers/Group Supervisors (GS) at Level V or above and 50% of Teachers/Group Supervisors (GS) at Level VI or above on Career Lattice; 50% of Assistant Teachers/Assistant Group Supervisors (AGS) at Level IV or above and 25% of Assistant Teachers/Assistant Group Supervisors (AGS) at Level V or above on Career Lattice; and 50% of Aides at Level II or above on Career Lattice” is as follows:

a. **STAR 4 Centers** must have a Lead Teacher at Level VI on the Career Lattice. The second staff person can be at Level III if they are matriculating six (6) credits per year and have an Action Plan to get to Level IV. If there is a third person, that person must be at Level IV.

3.8. **Alternative Pathways not requiring a Waiver and Action Plan**

The following circumstances qualify as Alternative Pathways for meeting Career Lattice requirements or Director or Staff Qualification requirements in the Keystone STARS standards. These alternative pathways do not require a waiver and action plan.

Alternative pathways are based upon a combination of education and/or professional development, ECE credit attainment, and experience. For director qualifications a defined number of administrative/management credits are also required.

3.8.1. **Director Qualifications**

The following chart illustrates the only situations in which the director can meet the Alternative Pathways for Director Qualifications without having to complete the Director Credential requirements.

a. The director must meet Career Lattice Level VII or above.

b. Director must meet ECE credit minimums, administrative/management credit requirements, and years of supervisory/administrative experience in an early childhood or school-age program. These requirements align with the Career Lattice and Director Credential requirements.
**c.** Directors in Keystone STAR 4 Accredited programs are not required to take the Director Credential coursework or to meet the above requirements as standards in accreditation apply.

**Alternative Pathways to Director Qualifications without Director Credential**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>ECE Credit Minimum</th>
<th>Administrative/Management Credit Requirement</th>
<th>Years of Supervisory/Administrative Experience in ECE/School-Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters in ECE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3 Credits in Admin/Management (related to childcare)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters in Related or Unrelated Field and meets Teacher Certification requirements</td>
<td>30 ECE/Equivalent Credits</td>
<td>3 Credits in Admin/Management (related to childcare)</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accredited Program – Director</td>
<td>As per Accreditation Standards</td>
<td>As per Accreditation Standards</td>
<td>As per Accreditation Standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.8.2. Staff Qualifications**

The following chart illustrates the circumstances in which individuals can meet alternative pathways to meet Staff Qualifications for Career Lattice Levels IV and V placement.

- **a.** Individual must meet Level IV or above on the Career Lattice.
- **b.** Individuals working in early childhood classrooms may present a passing score on the Pennsylvania Educator Certification Test (PECT)\(^1\) PreK-4\(^{th}\) grade test.
- **c.** Individuals working in school-age only programs may present a passing score in the PRAXIS II\(^2\) 4\(^{th}\) -8\(^{th}\) graded test # 5152.

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\(^1\) The PECT was developed in alignment with Pennsylvania regulations and standards, including the Pennsylvania Program Framework Guidelines and the relevant Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The PDE has contracted with the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson to assist in the development and administration of the tests.

\(^2\) The PRAXIS II is a nationally recognized test designed for individuals who have completed an undergraduate degree and assesses whether the entry level middle school teacher has the content that is important and necessary at the time and entry into the profession in order to teach English, math, social studies and science.
### Alternate Pathways to Career Lattice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>ECE Credit Minimum</th>
<th>PECT PreK-4 or PRAXIS II #5152</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level IV</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates Degree in related field</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree in unrelated field</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level V</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree in related field</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree in unrelated field</td>
<td>12 ECE/equivalent credits</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PECT PreK-4 exam content includes:

- Child development, learning and assessment
- Collaboration and professionalism
- Language and literacy development
- Social studies, arts, and humanities
- Mathematics, science, and health

PRAXIS II 4th - 8th grade test #5152 exam content includes:

- Adolescents as learners
- Curriculum and instruction
- Assessment
- Professionalism
4. Procedures

4.1. Transcript Review

Regional Keys will use procedure below and the policies stated in the *Early Childhood Education Teacher Quality: Recognizing High Quality Core Content in Pennsylvania* guidance when reviewing transcripts. Regional Keys should follow the steps below when reviewing transcripts for Career Lattice placement.

1. Verify that the college/university is accredited by one of the approved accrediting organizations listed in Section 3.1: Verifying accreditation of degree granting institution.
   a. If the institution is not found on the databases, check to make sure that the name of the institution has not changed.
   b. If the name has not changed and the accreditation cannot be verified, the credits from that institution cannot be counted.

2. Check the documentation provided by the practitioner. Ask for more documentation if needed. If a foreign degree/transcript, follow the guidance regarding translation requirements in Section 3.3 Foreign degrees.
   a. Is there documentation that a degree was granted?
   b. Is the major clear?
   c. Does the transcript or diploma have the practitioner’s name listed?
      
      If the answer to the above questions is yes and the degree is clearly an early childhood degree or equivalent, then the review can stop here. Otherwise proceed to the next step. Guidance related to degrees is found in the following sections:

   Section 3.4 Related and Equivalent Degrees
   Section 3.5 Degrees Earned from Business and Technical Schools

   d. Was this practitioner’s transcript reviewed during a designation visit previously? The Career Lattice determination may be grandfathered, but documentation is needed.
      
      If the answer to the above questions is yes and documentation of the transcript review exists then the review can stop here. Otherwise proceed to the next step.

   e. Are there course descriptions, syllabi or other supplemental information from the college/university included (for coursework that is not clearly labeled as Early Childhood Education)?
   f. Are there any special circumstances about the practitioner’s role or the population they serve that should be considered?

3. Determine if credits need to be counted using the guidelines.

4. If credits need to be counted, use the guidelines to determine if full or partial credit can be granted in Section 3.6: Counting Credits.

5. Complete the ECE College Credit Calculation Tool and Listing of Courses and Credits form.

6. The Regional Key will file the completed ECE College Credit Calculation Tool and supporting documentation according to Regional Key procedures.
7. If the Regional Key is unable to make a determination, further transcript review may be requested by the PA Key.
   
   a. Submit a Transcript Review Request, transcripts and supporting documentation including the ECE College Credit Calculation Tool and Listing of Courses and Credits form indicating the courses counted and amount of credit counted for each course.
   
   b. Submit via email to Kris Madden at krimad@berksiu.org.
   
   c. Please allow two weeks to process the request.

7. The Reviewer returns the transcripts, ECE College Credit Calculation Tool and the Listing of Courses and Credits form.

8. If the PA Key is unable to make a determination, the PA Key may seek guidance from the ECE Credit Advisory Group.

9. If a practitioner seeks re-evaluation, the process outlined above is used to submit the request to the PA Key.

Reference Documents:

- Early Childhood Education Teacher Quality: Recognizing High Quality Core Content in Pennsylvania
- Career Lattice
- Description of Positions and Roles by Career Lattice Level
- ECE College Credit Calculation Tool
- Listing of Courses and Credits form
Forms and Tools
Instructions

This form is to be used to determine the number of ECE credits or education, (excluding secondary education) in an individual’s transcript(s) and Career Lattice Level placement. The completed form will serve a record Career Lattice placement for the individual. Follow the guidance below when completing the form.

1. **Contact Information**: Complete name, current email and employer information.

2. **Institution of Higher Education (IHE)**: List all colleges/universities attended. Check if the IHE is an accredited institution.

3. **Degrees, Credentials, Certificates**: List all degrees, credentials, certificates awarded. Include the major course of study if applicable.

4. **ECE/Education Credits**: List total credits if in an ECE/mixed age setting (including special circumstance/other at bottom of chart) AND determine the total credits if in a SACC only program. Please refer to Teacher Quality guidance to determine when credits in a degree need to be counted.

5. **Career Lattice Level**: Determine the PA Early Learning Keys to Quality Career Lattice Level for ECE, SACC Only, and Exception/Other (if applicable). At a minimum, ECE and SACC must be calculated.

   Document justification for “Exception” category. List ONLY the number of credits that were calculated for this special circumstance. These credits may not “count” if the practitioner leaves that program setting, and would therefore be subtracted from the totals in #4 above. For example, Nursing credits may receive full credit if a practitioner was employed in a respite care setting, however not all of the credits may count in a non-respite care setting.

6. **Alternative Pathways**: If an alternative pathway was used to determine Career Lattice level or Director Qualifications, complete these fields.

7. **Signatures/Date**: The form on the following page must include the reviewer’s signature including organization/agency and date. Copies of the transcript(s) used to make the determination and the Listing of Courses and Credits counted should be attached.

8. **Distribution**: A copy of the original signed document should be placed in the employee’s personnel file. A copy should be placed in the facility file at the Regional Key. The original copy is the property of the employee for their professional development record.

9. **Reviewer Notes/Justification of Decision**: In this field the reviewer should write any notes supporting the Career Lattice placement. This field should always be completed when the Career Lattice Level for an “exception” is determined.

10. **Ethical Considerations for Review**: To avoid a potential conflict of interest, transcripts are not to be reviewed by anyone with whom the candidate has or has had a prior professional or personal relationship. If there is no appropriate person within an agency to review the documentation, it should be sent up to the next review level.
**Contact Information**

Practitioner Name: __________________________ Contact Email: __________________________

Current Employer: __________________________ MPI #: __________________________

Address: __________________________ Phone: __________________________

**Degrees/Credentials**

College/University Name: __________________________ Accredited Institution: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Degree: __________________________ Major: __________________________

Degree: __________________________ Major: __________________________

College/University Name: __________________________ Accredited Institution: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Degree: __________________________ Major: __________________________

Degree: __________________________ Major: __________________________

Certificates/Credentials: __________________________

Certificates/Credentials: __________________________

**Career Lattice Level**  
ECE: _____  SACC: _____  Exception: _____

**Alternative Pathways**

Career Lattice Level met via Alternative Pathway: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Director Qualifications met through Alternative Pathway: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Waiver and Action Plan in Place: ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Reviewer Notes/Justification of Decision**

Reviewer’s Name: __________________________ Title: __________________________

Agency: __________________________

Reviewer’s Signature: __________________________ Date: ____________
**Instructions**

The following table should be used when calculating the number of credits in an individual’s transcript. This form does not need to be completed if the degree is clearly in ECE. If completed, this form should be included with documentation along with the completed ECE College Credit Calculation Tool. *Make additional copies of this form as needed.*

**Credits and Course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practitioner Name:</th>
<th>Contact Email:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Current Employer:</th>
<th>MPI #:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Review Date:</th>
<th>Phone:</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number and/or Name</th>
<th># of ECE credits</th>
<th># of SACC Credits</th>
<th># of Other Credits</th>
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<tr>
<th>Total Credits</th>
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</table>
Staff Qualifications Waiver and Action Plan (part 1)

Instructions

Complete all relevant information in Part 1 and Part 2 of this form and return signed copy to your STARS Manager/Specialist at the Regional Key. List all courses you plan to take including the semester and year you plan to take the course, the number of credits, expected completion date. Once complete record the grade. If course is not completed please provide an explanation.

Action Plan

Today’s Date: __________________________ Agency Name: ____________________________________________

Total # of Staff at facility: _______________ Total Number of Staff at facility with Action Plans: ______

Practitioner Name: ___________________________ Position: _______________________________________

Current Degree: ___________________________ Major: ____________________________________________

Current Level on Career Lattice: ___________ Career Lattice Level Goal ______ by __/__/____

Anticipated # of credits needed to obtain next level of Career Lattice: ____________________________

College/University Name: ______________________ Enrollment Date in program: ______

Name of Degree Program: (if applicable) ______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester &amp; Year</th>
<th>Course Number and/or Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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If courses were not completed, provide an explanation below.
Staff Qualifications Waiver and Action Plan (part 2)

Reason for request for Waiver and Action Plan:
(Refer to section 3.7 for the Teacher Quality Document)

- Director enrolled in a Master’s Degree Program
- New Director enrolled in approved Director Credential program
- College Student pursuing Bachelor’s degree
- Staff Qualifications (1 year)
- Staff Qualifications (CDA)

I affirm that this Action Plan is correct and I agree to complete this Action Plan as described.

__________________________________________________
Signature of Applicant Date

I acknowledge that this Action Plan is correct and I acknowledge responsibility for assisting the individual to attain required qualifications by identified date. I am requesting a waiver for this individual’s qualification.

__________________________________________________
Signature of Director/Administrator Date

For Use by Regional Key

Waiver and Action Plan Reviewed by:________________________________________

- Waiver and Action Plan Approved
- Waiver and Action Plan NOT Approved
  Reason:

Follow up review

Date: _____ Name: ___________________________ Disposition: □ Continued □ Discontinued
Date: _____ Name: ___________________________ Disposition: □ Continued □ Discontinued

Confirmation that Action Plan Completed

Date: _____ Regional Key Specialist Name: __________________________________________
Examples of College Course Prefixes and Names

Below are examples of course codes and/or course titles that might appear on a transcript and are related to early childhood education (ECE) core content. Additionally, courses with Early Learning, Young Child, Primary Child, etc. in the title may also contain ECE core content. These lists are not exhaustive but are meant to be used as guidance.

**College Course Prefixes Directly Related to ECE Core Content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHD</td>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFA</td>
<td>Child and Family Studies</td>
<td>ECH</td>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EARL</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>ECED</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>HDFS</td>
<td>Human Development and Family Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(specific to young children)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**College Course Prefixes that may contain ECE (or school-age specific) Core Content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASE</td>
<td>After School Education</td>
<td>PSYC</td>
<td>Psychology of Early Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>Special Education, Education of Differing Abilities</td>
<td>HDFS</td>
<td>Human Development and Family Studies (specific to young children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>HSR</td>
<td>Management &amp; Administration in Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>MUSI</td>
<td>Music for Early Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDR</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>PSY</td>
<td>Child Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDSP</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>SED</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTF</td>
<td>Instructional Media for Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>YW</td>
<td>Youth Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td>Strategies for Early Intervention</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Examples of College Course Titles in Early Childhood

**Infant Toddler Content Focus**

- Assessment of Infants and Toddlers
- Attachment Theory
- Child Development: Birth to Three
- Family Focused Infant and Toddler Care
- Infant & Toddler Development /lab
- Infant and Toddler Care and Education
- Programming for Infants and Toddlers
- Techniques of Parent Education

**Preschool or General ECE Content Focus**

- Administration & Supervision of Early Childhood Programs
- Advocacy in EC
- Art for the Developing Child
- Assessment and Planning for Young Children
- Behavior Management in ECE
- Business Management in EC
- Career Growth & Development in ECE
- Child Growth & Development
- Child Psychology
- Childcare Standards and Regulations
- Children with Disabilities
- Children, Parents and Community
- Clinical Skills with Young Children
- Creative Experiences with Young Children
- Cross Cultural Perspectives in Child Rearing and Child Care
- Cross-cultural Perspective in Child Rearing
- Cultural Diversity in ECE
- Curriculum Early Childhood Classroom
- Curriculum in EC
- Diversity and Partnerships in Family, Schools, and Community
- Diversity Perspectives in Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood Classroom Environment
- Early Childhood Professional
- Early Childhood Science & Math
- EC Exceptionalities
- EC Leadership
- ECE Program Management
- Educating Students with Special Needs in Inclusive Settings
- Emergent Literacy
- Families and Early Childhood Education
- Family Systems and Child Rearing
- Foundations (or Fundamentals) in ECE
- Foundations of Early Literacy
- Growth and Wellness in Childhood
- Health, Safety, Nutrition for the Young Child
- Health, Safety, Nutrition in the ECE Environment
- History & Trends in ECE
- Including Children with Special Needs in EC
- Inclusion Practices in EC Settings
- Instructional Media for Early Childhood Education
- Introduction to American Sign Language For Use in the Classroom
- Issues and Advocacy in ECH
- Language and Literacy in ECE
- Language Arts and Reading for ECE
- Legal Issues & Ethics
- Math & Logical Thinking in EC
- Music & Movement for Young Children
- Music for Early Childhood
- Nature of the Young Child
- Observation & Assessment in ECE
- Observation and Communication with Young Children
- Observing & Recording the Behavior of the Young Child
- Organizations and Admin of ECE Programs
- Partnering with Parents
- Planning for Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- Play and the Young Child
- Policy & Planning in EC
- Practicum in Early Childhood
- Problems & Issues in EC Ed
- Professionalism & Leadership in EC
- Psychology of Early Childhood
- Science for Young Children
- Social Studies for Young Children
- Social-Emotional Development in Young Children 0-8
- Society and the Child
- Special Education Methodology
- Speech & Language Development in EC
- Teaching Young Children - An Introduction to Early Childhood
- Using Technology to Support Classroom Learning in ECE
- Values & Ethics in EC
- Young Children as Theory Builders
- Young Children in Society
Examples of College Course Titles in Early Childhood (continued)

**School-Age Content Focus**

- Adolescence: Risk & Resiliency
- Adolescent Literature
- Adolescent Psychology
- Adolescent Psychology
- Bully Prevention in Schools
- Child and Adolescent Development
- Classroom Partnerships and Inclusion
- Core of Child and Youth Care Work
- Critical Issues in Youth Work
- Developmental Needs of School Age Children
- Educational Leadership and Professional Development
- English Language Structure for English as Second Language Teachers
- Exploring Arts in School Age Programs
- Exploring Sciences in School-age Programs
- Extended Learning in Action (Applied Project)
- Family and Community Engagement
- Family and Professional Collaboration
- Family Systems and Child Rearing
- Foundations of Youth Work
- Fundamentals of School Age Care
- Health and Safety of Children
- Healthy Child
- Integrated Curriculum
- Introduction to Afterschool Care and Education
- Introduction to American Sign Language For Use in the Classroom
- Introduction to Classroom and Behavior Management
- Middle Childhood/Adolescent Development
- Out of School Time: Promises and Practices
- Program Environment and Curriculum Development in Afterschool Programs
- Promoting Developmental Success: Assets and Activities
- Reading and Literature for Young Adults
- Supervision and Leadership on Afterschool Education
- Teaching and Learning in Extended Learning Environments
- Teaching Health and Wellness in Elementary Schools
- Teaching Non-Native Speaking and Culturally Diverse Students
- Teaching Reading and Language Arts 4 – 6
- Teaching Students with Autistic Spectrum and Developmental Disorders
- Understanding Emotional Intelligence
- Using Technology in the Classroom