



UTAH SYSTEM OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# MEMORANDUM

February 17, 2023

## Transfer Credit and Credit for Prior Learning

### **Background**

The Board Strategic Plan includes initiatives to strengthen educational pathways and improve the award of credit for prior learning in an effort to increase student access to and completion of higher education programs.

The award of articulated credit and credit for prior learning benefits both high school and adult students by expediting student time to completion and reducing the cost of tuition and fees by ensuring students do not have to duplicate coursework already completed or competencies attained through experience. The following is a summary of both practices:

### Articulation

In FY2022, the eight technical colleges served over 32,000 students. Over 31% of those students are dual enrolled at a high school and technical college. Many of these students have already completed technical education courses at their high school.

To ensure high school students do not have to repeat coursework to develop competencies already attained, technical colleges have robust articulation agreements with the Utah State Board of Education defining over 350 high school courses that are accepted for technical education credit.

### Credit for Prior Learning

Many adult learners who enroll in technical education programs have valuable industry experience in the program area, but gaps in their knowledge and skills, or lack of institution or industry credentials needed to support their employment, professional growth, and wage increases.

In cases where a student has learning experience gained outside of the classroom, technical colleges have policies and procedures to evaluate the student's knowledge and skills to validate the competencies defined in specific courses. In these cases, the college awards credit so the student can focus their time and effort on areas that need development.

### Strategic Plan Objectives

The following objectives have been defined to increase the award of articulated credit and credit for prior learning for technical education students to reduce time to completion and program cost:

- Develop policies and procedures to support the seamless and consistent award of articulated credit and credit for prior learning
- Increase the proactive and equitable award of articulated credit
- Connect high school and technical college subject matter experts to align coursework and expand articulation opportunities
- Through program alignment committees, develop statewide articulation agreements
- Improve the equitable communication of articulated credit opportunities to high school students, parents, and counselors

### **Commissioner's Recommendation**

This information contributes to a discussion item.