



Application Instructions
for
Texas Skill Standards Based
Program Recognition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I. General Information.....	1
Eligibility	
Benefits	
Duration	
Questions	
SECTION II. Program Recognition Process.....	2
Step 1: Incorporation of skill standards content into technical curriculum	
Step 2: Submission of application	
Step 3: Review and discussion of application	
Step 4: Recognition of Texas skill standards based program	
SECTION III. Application Contents and Instructions	3
Application contents	
Required forms	
Instructions to complete application documents	

SECTION I. General Information

Texas skill standards based program recognition is a Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC) initiative to recognize a community or technical college workforce education award (credential) that has skill standards incorporated into the curriculum, classroom instruction, and assessments. Program recognition indicates to employers that a technical program is addressing the industry workforce needs as defined in the skill standards.

Eligibility

New and existing community and technical college level two certificate or associate's degree programs are eligible for program recognition.

Benefits

Colleges may use program recognition to promote their programs in the local and higher education communities, and to employers. Recognized programs will be displayed on the recognized programs page of the Texas skill standards website at: <https://tssb.org/colleges-0>, where they will have greater visibility among colleges, employers, and others visiting the site. In addition, colleges will have the option of affixing a gold embossed seal to the credential of every graduate of its recognized program(s). The seal will signal to employers that program graduates have been taught the industry skill and knowledge requirements specified in the skill standards.

Duration

Program recognition is valid for three years, effective on January 1 and expiring on December 31. Colleges may apply for recognition for another three years by submitting this application, with any changes to the program's course matrix or skill standards, during the application period of August 1 to September 30 in the expiration year. The application will then be reviewed and considered for approval and the program contact notified of the outcome by December 1 for an effective recognition date of January 1.

Questions

Colleges with questions about completing the program recognition application materials should contact the TWIC office at: twic.mail@gov.texas.gov or 512/936-8100.

SECTION II. Program Recognition Process

STEP 1: Incorporation of skill standards content into technical curriculum

Application for program recognition requires a community or technical college to document that it has incorporated the skill standards content into the courses for a level two certificate or associate's degree program. In some cases, a college may need to add or create new courses to integrate all the skill standards content into the program. Such a program revision may require formal approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). In other cases, a college may want to integrate skill standards into a new program that it is developing.

In both of these situations, the college should begin the program recognition process before it submits the new or revised program for approval to THECB. As the college designs or revises its program, it should ensure that the set of courses constituting the award (credential) encompasses all the skill standards elements. However, before receiving TWIC recognition, the program must be approved by THECB.

For guidance in integrating skill standards elements into curriculum, two resources are available to colleges. *Incorporating Skill Standards into Curriculum: A User's Guide (User's Guide)* is available to download from the Texas skill standards website at <https://tssb.org/community-and-technical-colleges>. Colleges may also schedule a skill standards usage workshop with TWIC staff. The workshop provides an orientation to the Texas skill standards elements and format followed by a suggested process for integrating each element into a program's curriculum. To schedule a workshop, colleges should contact the TWIC office at 512/936-8100.

STEP 2: Submission of application

Interested applicants must submit a separate application for each level two certificate or associate's degree program for which they are seeking recognition. See Section III for application contents, instructions, and submission requirements.

STEP 3: Review and discussion of application

TWIC staff reviews the college's application to determine whether the program recognition requirements have been met. This review may yield one of three potential outcomes:

- a. **Application meets all program recognition requirements.** All the key activities (or equivalent element) in the skill standards, are aligned with the program's courses.
- b. **Application does not appear to meet program recognition requirements.** There are questions regarding the alignment of the key activities (or equivalent element) with the program's courses. The college will be invited to discuss concerns and/or questions. If the discussion yields satisfactory answers, the college will be invited to submit revised application materials.
- c. **Application does not meet program recognition requirements.** The skill standards key activities (or equivalent element) do not align with the program's courses, as designated in the college's submitted matrix. The college is notified, with an explanation, that its program recognition application has been denied.

STEP 4: Recognition of Texas skill standards based program

If a. or b. above, the applicant will be considered for approval. If approved, the college will be notified and the program will be posted on the Texas skill standards website.

SECTION III. Application Contents and Instructions

Application contents

The contents of the application consist of the following documents:

A. Application cover page – including:

- College and program information
- Program contact
- Statement of assurance – in lieu of documentation, attesting to the college’s completion of, and intention to complete, additional requirements, and agreement to submit to a desk audit, if requested by TWIC
- Industry advisory committee statement of support

AND

B. Matrix – indicating in which technical core course(s) each key activity (or equivalent element) in the skill standards will be assessed as a learning outcome.

Required Forms

The application cover page and matrix template are available to download as Microsoft Word fillable forms from the Texas skill standards website (<https://tssb.org/applications>).

The two documents listed above (application and matrix) must be completed and emailed to TWIC staff. (For the current email, please call the TWIC office at 512-936-8100.) A separate application must be submitted for each level two certificate or associate’s degree program for which recognition is being sought.

Instructions to Complete Application Documents

A. Application cover page

- **College**
Enter the name of the institution seeking program recognition.
- **Program information**
Enter the title and select the level (AAS, AS¹, or Level 2 Certificate) of the program for which recognition is being sought. E.g., Biotechnology Laboratory Technician AAS.
- **Title of skill standards incorporated into curriculum**
Enter the title of the skill standards incorporated into the program award, as indicated in the Texas skill standards website repository at <https://tssb.org/texas-skill-standards-repository>.
- **Program contact**
Enter the name, title, and contact information of the single individual at the college who will submit the program’s recognition application, including coordination across all campuses, if relevant.
- **Statement of assurance**
Enter the name and title of the college CEO (president or chancellor, as applicable), along with the appropriate contact information, signature, and date, to indicate the institution’s commitment to the statement of assurance.

¹ The AS (associate of science) choice is for biotechnology programs only.

- **Industry advisory committee statement of support**

Enter the name, title, and company of the individual acting as the program’s industry advisory committee chair, along with his/her signature, to indicate the committee’s commitment to the statement of support.

B. Key Activities to WECM Courses Matrix

Required information

The matrix must include the following basic information to identify the college applicant and the program for which it is seeking recognition:

- Name of institution
- Name of program
- Type and name of award

Skill standards

There are two categories of skill standards recognized by TWIC: recognized and conditionally recognized. Recognized standards are developed and validated by Texas industry; all of them are formatted into the same seven elements. Conditionally recognized standards are developed and validated outside of Texas and accepted across an industry. They vary in elements and format, depending on the entity that endorsed the standards. (Conditionally recognized standards are indicated by the format CR in the online Texas skill standards repository: <https://tssb.org/texas-skill-standards-repository>.)

For recognized standards, the matrix should indicate the WECM course or courses in which each key activity will be assessed as a learning outcome. For conditionally recognized standards, the matrix should indicate the courses in which the element that is equivalent to a key activity will be assessed as a learning outcome.

Required contents and template

The matrix must list each key activity (or equivalent element) by number and statement. Each course in the matrix must include the WECM course rubric, number, and title.

A template for the matrix, which is a Microsoft Word fillable form, may be downloaded from the Texas skill standards website (<https://tssb.org/applications>) and completed, if desired. Colleges may also create their own matrices per the requirements above. Samples of colleges’ approved program recognition matrices are available to view on the website. (See the listings by college and occupational area on the recognized programs page: <https://tssb.org/colleges-0>.)