

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Instructor Standards

IOWA
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

Note: On July 1, 2023, Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy Programs began transitioning to Iowa Workforce Development as part of a consolidation of programs primarily focused on workforce development and employment. Iowans can expect the same quality services from these programs, in addition to greater access to overall job services. The following content was originally prepared by the Department of Education, but these documents will continue to be updated as the transition continues.

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PREFACE

The *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act* is Title II of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014* and provides the framework for the establishment of the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program. The United States Department of Education Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) provides grants to states to fund adult education and literacy services, including:

- Workplace literacy services;
- Family literacy services;
- English literacy programs; and
- Integrated English literacy-civics education programs.

Participation in these programs is limited to adults and out-of-school youths age 16 and older who are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law. The amount of funding each state receives is based on a formula established by Congress. States, in turn, distribute funds to local eligible entities to provide adult education and literacy services. In Iowa, the Department of Education (IDOE) distributes these federal funds to local programs; for example, the state funding formula for PY 2015 was based on 90% need and 10% performance.

Both the previous *Workforce Investment Act of 1998* and WIOA has performance outcome measures that require the input of data to assess local program effectiveness and student progression. Further information on the process of collecting the data is contained in the [Assessment Policy](#).

HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Effective and quality instruction is an essential part of providing an exemplary educational program. Research shows that instructors are by far the most important factor in determining whether students succeed. So, where there are highly effective instructors, quality instruction follows.

These educators are passionate about actively engaging students and meeting them wherever they are on their learning journey. While the art and science of quality instruction may be more than the sum of its parts, some instructional building blocks are essential for it to occur. This document is designed to provide standards for Iowa's adult education and literacy instructors as guidance to promote adult students' success along their path toward college and career readiness.

Highly effective instructors who have mastered the art and science of quality instruction don't exist in isolation. They don't close their classroom doors and quietly figure it out all by themselves. They collaborate with other professionals in their program and in the educational community at large. They participate in personal learning networks (communities of practice) and consult them to get new ideas and feedback about their struggles and successes. They engage in professional reading of current research to improve and expand their repertoire of skills. When they discover an amazing instructional combination or resource, they share it with other instructors and in online environments

(Ferguson, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

As an Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) instructor you will:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency;
- Assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children;
- Assist adults in the completion of a secondary school education; and
- Assist adults to prepare for college and/ or career pathways.

To assist instructors in becoming highly effective, administrative rules were adopted (Chapter 23—Adult Education and Literacy Programs) and became effective July 1, 2015. Section seven outlines certain responsibility of the program to assist instructors to:

- a. Acquire knowledge, skills, approaches, and dispositions;
- b. Explore new or advanced understandings of content, theory, and resources; and
- c. Develop new insights into theory and its application to improve the effectiveness of current practice and lead to professional growth.

Adult education and literacy program staff shall participate in professional development activities that are related to their job duties and improve the quality of the adult education and literacy program with which the staff is associated. All professional development activities shall be in accordance with the published [Iowa Adult Education Professional Development Standards](#) and could include such topics as:

- a. Proper procedures for the administration and reporting of data;
- b. The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous and scientifically valid research available; and
- c. Appropriate reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training practices aligned with content standards for adult education.

In addition to providing professional development at the state and local level, AEL programs shall develop and maintain an individualized plan for each instructor or staff member involved in providing services that includes all of the following, as applicable:

- a. An implementation schedule for the plan;
- b. Orientation for new professional staff;
- c. Continuing professional development for professional staff;
- d. Procedures for accurate record keeping and documentation for plan monitoring and tracking of hours acquired and progress toward attaining minimal competencies; and
- e. Specific activities to ensure that professional staff attain and demonstrate instructional competencies and knowledge in related adult education and literacy fields.

STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

The standards framework consists of three components:

- **standards** that are broad descriptors of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to effective adult education instruction;
- a series of **indicators** that are sample concepts for implementing a standard; and
- **examples** of practices, which are some samples that demonstrate application of a standard.

HOW STANDARDS CAN BE USED TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTION

The standards framework can be used by instructors to assess their own performance in providing quality instruction and services to adult students. Also, the standards provide program administrators with a framework for what adult education and literacy instructors should know and be able to demonstrate. By completing a self-assessment, instructors can identify their strengths, as well as areas needing improvement. This is meant to furnish the data to make informed decisions in providing professional development activities and personal exploration. This process will help to ensure well-qualified teachers who are capable of meeting the diverse needs of adult students.

A self-assessment used with these standards should be a non-threatening tool for the instructor’s use. Additionally, the results may be used to complete a professional development plan that the instructor submits to the local administrator. This can provide an element in planning individual and program-wide professional development activities that respond to instructor needs. The standards framework is not intended to be utilized as a form of formative evaluation for instructors .

Annually, a local program should ensure that instructors complete a self-assessment and a professional development plan. This helps to ensure that the required professional development hours received are targeted to identified needs for the instructor. This information will also help programs to in their classroom observation efforts for the program year. Combining this data, will guide professional development and determine future training needs.

Finally, with each professional development activity an evaluation should be done to measure effectiveness and its application for use in program and the classroom. This evaluation helps to continue the improvement process.

Chart 1: Professional Development Continuous Quality Improvement Model



IOWA ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY INSTRUCTOR STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 – Instructors take responsibility for professional development and involvement in their learning community.

Instructors demonstrate this standard through the following indicators:

INDICATOR 1.1: Identify their professional development needs and accessing resources to address those needs.

EXAMPLES: individual professional development plan to reflect an ongoing process of growth; membership in a professional organization; participation in conferences, webinars, and IDOE resources/website/meetings.

INDICATOR 1.2: Transfer new learning gained from professional development into classroom practice.

EXAMPLES: Classroom observation feedback; lesson plans/classroom activities, class syllabi, and evidence of sharing new learning gained from professional development with colleagues.

INDICATOR 1.3: Continuously develop and maintain a knowledge base in content area(s) applicable to their teaching.

EXAMPLES: individual professional development plan to reflect an ongoing process of growth, certificates of completion/attendance of professional development activities, other proof of participation, and teaching re-certification credits.

INDICATOR 1.4: Maintain contact with administration, colleagues, and community partners by participating in committees, task forces/organizations relevant to adult education.

EXAMPLES: agendas, email correspondence, online group discussion archives, conference call notes, professional organization notes, and record of work with/as master teacher, mentor, advisor.

STANDARD 2 – Instructors plan, design, and implement effective instruction for the adult student.

Instructors demonstrate this standard through the following indicators:

INDICATOR 2.1: Align instructional goals and activities with standards and program priorities, using content area knowledge to design instruction with respect to student diversity.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans reflective of standards-based instruction (such as College and Career Readiness Common Core Standards, CASAS content standards, CASAS competencies) and student data according to program policy.

INDICATOR 2.2: Collaborate with students to set clear learning goals and linking learning activities to those goals.

EXAMPLES: goal planning activities, lesson plans that correlate to student goals, and classroom activities incorporating post-secondary and career options.

INDICATOR 2.3: Apply knowledge of how adults learn in the design and delivery of instruction.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans, course syllabi, observation records, student surveys, and anecdotal records.

INDICATOR 2.4: Incorporate student-focused instruction to support the learning needs of each student through the use of learner-centered principles.

EXAMPLES: cooperative/project-based/problem-based learning lesson plans/ activities, student surveys, observation notes, and student work samples/portfolio.

INDICATOR 2.5: Design instruction that embeds employability skills and workforce activities.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans and classroom activities that contextualize content learning, promote critical thinking, support building student leadership, community resource list, course syllabi, guest presentations, referral forms, lesson plans/classroom activities and instructor notes.

STANDARD 3 – Instructors understand and use varied assessments to plan instruction, evaluate student learning, and improve program practice.

Instructors demonstrate this standard through the following indicators:

INDICATOR 3.1: Possess knowledge regarding assessment types, their purposes, and the data they generate.

EXAMPLES: standardized assessment certification, professional development documentation, lesson plans, student diagnostic/competency results.

INDICATOR 3.2: Incorporate varied assessments into instructional activities.

EXAMPLES: formative/summative assessments and related data, lesson plans, and individual study plans.

INDICATOR 3.3: Involve students in self-assessment and progress monitoring.

EXAMPLES: teacher notes, student work samples/portfolio, individual study plans, lesson plans, and individual goal setting/learning plans.

INDICATOR 3.4: Analyze assessment data to plan, differentiate and modify instruction.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans aligned to assessment data (including amended plans,) teacher notes, benchmark/competency reports, accommodation documentation.

STANDARD 4 – Instructors help establish and support program goals and responsibilities.

Instructors demonstrate this standard through the following indicators:

INDICATOR 4.1: Establish competence in knowledge appropriate to teaching assignment.

EXAMPLES: certification, observation forms, lesson plans, professional development plans, and student achievement.

INDICATOR 4.2: Support the program’s mission, goals, and priorities.

EXAMPLES: usage of forms, student handbook, orientation script/materials, student progress rubrics.

INDICATOR 4.3: Maintain confidentiality of student information and records.

EXAMPLES: FERPA forms, implementation of college and state assessment protocols.

INDICATOR 4.4: Collect, maintain, and report accurate data for program improvement and accountability.

EXAMPLES: data integrity report (s) and attendance records.

INDICATOR 4.5: Implement program procedures and guidelines for the maintenance and security of materials and equipment.

EXAMPLES: check-out sheet, key sign-out, submitted work tickets, college “acceptable use,” policy, implementation of assessment security guidelines.

INDICATOR 4.6: Provide input for the selection of instructional materials and program improvement.

EXAMPLES: participation on textbook/materials/planning committee, written feedback, staff meeting agendas/minutes, and meeting sign-in sheets.

INDICATOR 4.7: Comply with the legal, ethical, social, and safety issues related to instruction.

EXAMPLES: lessons plans indicate compliance with copyright and fair use laws, implementation of college safety guidelines, and incorporation of universal designs for learning.

STANDARD 5 – Instructors provide a positive adult learning environment by promoting lifelong learning and respecting diversity.

Instructors demonstrate this standard through the following indicators:

INDICATOR 5.1: Design instruction that develops independent learners.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans and classroom activities that contextualize content learning, promote higher-level thinking skills, and support building student leadership.

INDICATOR 5.2: Facilitate and encourage student interaction to promote the development of a learning community.

EXAMPLES: peer review groups forms, classroom guidelines, and lesson plans/classroom activities.

INDICATOR 5.3: Demonstrate an understanding of adult students' responsibilities as workers, family members and community members.

EXAMPLES: community resource list, course syllabi, guest presentations, referral forms, lesson plans/classroom activities and instructor notes.

INDICATOR 5.4: Demonstrate a positive attitude and reinforce positive students' attitudes toward potential for success.

EXAMPLES: student surveys, observation notes, student learning plans/goal planning, guest presentations, referral forms, lesson plans/classroom activities and instructor notes.

INDICATOR 5.5: Implement educational strategies to enhance student retention and persistence.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans/classroom activities, benchmark reports, competency reports, core measure outcomes, student learning plans/goal planning, student work samples/ portfolio, and referral forms.

INDICATOR 5.6: Demonstrate an awareness and appreciation for the diversity of adult students.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans/classroom activities, inclusive language incorporation, course syllabi, classroom materials, event documentation, students surveys.

INDICATOR 5.7: Model respect for students' diverse skills, experiences and cultures.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans/classroom activities, inclusive language incorporation, course syllabi, classroom materials, event documentation, students surveys.

STANDARD 6 – Instructors take responsibility for understanding and integrating current technology options into instruction and professional development.

Instructors demonstrate this standard through the following indicators:

INDICATOR 6.1: Communicate information in a variety of formats.

EXAMPLES: teacher communications and classroom activities/lesson plans.

INDICATOR 6.2: Comply with the legal, ethical, social, and safety issues related to technology.

EXAMPLES: lessons plans/classroom activities that indicate compliance with copyright and fair use laws, appropriate technology use/etiquette, and incorporation of universal designs for learning.

INDICATOR 6.3: Integrate technology into instruction effectively.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans/classroom activities, course syllabi, student surveys, student assessment results, course descriptions, and student work samples/portfolio.

INDICATOR 6.4: Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the use of assistive technology to enhance learning.

EXAMPLES: student learning plans, accommodation plans, lesson plans/classroom activities, individual professional development plan to reflect an ongoing process of growth, certificates of completion/attendance of professional development activities, other proof of participation, and teaching re-certification credits.

INDICATOR 6.5: Participate in activities and use resources to support ongoing professional growth related to technology.

EXAMPLES: lesson plans/classroom activities, information technology forms, individual professional development plan to reflect an ongoing process of growth, certificates of completion/attendance of professional development activities, other proof of participation, and teaching re-certification credits.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOOL

With the adoption of the College and Career Readiness Standards in Iowa, this tool was introduced to help instructors with the implementation of content standards in their instruction. This same tool can and should be used to measure four out of six instructor standards and is an effective self-assessment, as well as a critical friends group, and monitoring tool.

Effective Teaching and Learning Practices		E=Evident NFE=Not Fully Evident
1. Curriculum content of the lesson is aligned to the demands of the standards¹. (Standards 2 and 5)	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor presents lesson clearly reflecting the concepts/skills of one or more of the standards.		
b. Instructor outlines a well defined standards-based lesson objective stated in terms of the desired student learning outcomes.		
c. Students use resources directly related to the targeted standards.		
2. Cognitive level of learning activities are aligned to the demands of the standards. (Standards 2 and 5)	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor poses questions that stimulate student thinking beyond recall.		
b. Instructor allows appropriate wait-time (3 or more seconds) after posing questions.		
c. Instructor asks students to elaborate on and justify their answers.		
d. Instructor activates students' metacognitive skills (e.g. models strategies, inquires about students' strategies).		
e. Students work on assignments reflecting the highest demands posed by the standards targeted by the lesson.		
3. Standards are translated into lesson content relevant to adult students. (Standards 2, 5 and 6)	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor ties standards-based lesson to students' goals, interests, or needs.		
b. Students actively participate in the lesson through class discussions, group projects, etc., instead of doing solitary seatwork or listening to extended lectures.		
c. Students have varied opportunities (beyond worksheets) to apply new learning in authentic or practical adult-oriented contexts.		
d. Students have access to technology in learning or for use in application in adult-oriented contexts.		

¹For the purpose of "standards", it is defined as the most specific level of outcome used by Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy programs as adopted by the College and Career Readiness Standards as well as the Iowa Core 21st Century Skills to indicate what adult students should know and be able to do. These can include indicators, and examples.

Effective Teaching and Learning Practices		E=Evident NFE=Not Fully Evident
4. Standards are addressed by a coherent progression of learning. (Standard 5)	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor explicitly links lesson content to previous lessons or what students already know.		
b. Students have prerequisite knowledge/skills to understand lesson content.		
c. Instructor incorporates standards in a lesson in a manner that builds on their natural connections.		
d. Instructor closes lesson by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing lesson objectives; • Summarizing student learning; and • Previewing how the next lesson builds on that learning. 		
5. Students' level of understanding is assessed during the lesson and instruction is adjusted accordingly. (Standard 3)	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor regularly checks whether students are mastering standards-based lesson content (e.g., circulates to check on students' work, monitors verbal responses).		
b. Instructor provided students with prompt, specific feedback to correct misunderstanding and reinforce learning.		
c. Students signal understanding of lesson content before instructor introduces new idea.		
d. Instructor provides supplemental instructions for students who show that they need it (e.g., individualized or peer tutoring, re-teaching, review of basic skills).		
e. Instructor provides extension activities for students who complete classwork, instead of leaving them idle or unchallenged.		
f. Students evaluate and reflect on their own learning.		

INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

To fully address Standard One, “*Instructors take responsibility for professional development and involvement in their learning community,*” as well as Standard Four, “*Instructors help establish and support program goals and responsibilities*” an individual professional development plan aligned to the local program’s goals which addresses content knowledge, strengths and weaknesses of the instructor is required annually and described in Administrative Rules Chapter 23.7(4) and (5).

Information captured through the plans can drive both local and state decisions on professional development offerings by identifying need. This information is also a requirement for monitoring of local programs.

Name	
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Adult Education and Literacy Program Goal:

TIMEFRAME	Personal goals: (Optional) (e.g. May be planning retirement, may be wanting to develop new skills, change careers, major changes to personal life, etc.)
Next 12 months	
Next 3 years	
TIMEFRAME	Professional goals: (e.g. Positional goals, gaining further qualifications, Memberships of Boards, Professional Associations etc)
Next 12 months	
Next 3 years	

This Professional Growth Plan was discussed and approved on _____

Instructor Signature _____ Coordinator Signature _____

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

	Planned Activities	Objective of Professional Development Activity	Aligned Instructor/ Professional Development Standard (s)	How activity impacts student outcomes
Required knowledge/skills Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • required competencies • job description • service plans and frameworks 				
Strengths Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your views • recent tests/ appraisals • other people's views 				
Weaknesses/gaps Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gaps in knowledge/ skills • changes to systems/services requiring new skills • what will help you to progress in your role? 				

INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTIVITY LOG

Description of professional development activity completed	Date(s)/hrs of participation	Type of Activity						
		Workshop Training	Credit course	Webinar Phone-in/Study Circle	Confer-ence	Self-Study	Other	
<i>Example:</i> Participated on our curriculum development team. Researched curricula, developed annual scope & sequence for Low Intermediate, assembled curriculum notebook	Jan – Mar 2013 5 team mtgs = 10 hours + 14 hours at home	10					14	
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6. <i>Click return for more rows.</i>								
Total PD Hours (Total each of columns 3-8)								
I have completed the professional development activities as described.		I have granted _____ professional development hours for the professional development activities described.						
Instructor Signature	Date	Adult Education and Literacy Program Coordinator Signature				Date		

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

The evaluation of the professional development received allows the completion of the continuous improvement cycle to best identify if the needs have been met. Input received will help guide programs and the state in determining if additional follow up is needed. Rigorous evaluations, “no-fault” reviews and feedback that can be incorporated into future events helps to strengthen the program and state’s professional development offerings. As a professional development standard, “uses data to drive professional development priorities, analyze effectiveness, and help sustain continuous improvement for adult education and literacy programs and learners”, the following are two examples of an evaluation tool:

Professional Development Event: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____ **Trainer:** _____

Please improve our professional development program by completing this information. Thank you!

I came expecting _____

Please use the criterion below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. It was not satisfactory to my needs. | 4. It was more than satisfactory for my needs. |
| 2. It only met a few of my needs. | 5. Outstanding-it far exceeded my expectations! |
| 3. It was satisfactory for my needs. | |

	1	2	3	4	5
Instructor knowledge of material					
Length of time on each topic					
Appropriateness of content					
Potential of using this in my job/classroom					
Instructor was clear and interesting					
Overall rating of this training					

We need and appreciate your additional feedback on this training:

The next follow up to this I would like is:

Briefly describe how you will use what you have learned to improve instruction or your own productivity:

How will what you have learned change instruction and assessment in your classroom?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION FORM

Title of training/workshop: _____

Trainer: _____ Date: _____

To what extent do you feel the goals/objectives for this training/workshop were accomplished? (circle the appropriate number)

NOT AT ALL < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > COMPLETELY

Comments:

How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the instructor(s)—preparation, style, methods, rapport—for this training/workshop? (circle the appropriate number)

INEFFECTIVE < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > VERY EFFECTIVE

Comments:

To what extent did this training/workshop provide you with useful ideas which you expect to apply to your own professional/personal situation? (circle appropriate number)

NO USEFUL IDEAS < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > SEVERAL USEFUL IDEAS

Comments:

What suggestions do you have for improving this training/workshop?

In retrospect, would you still choose to attend this training/workshop? (circle one response)

YES

NO

MAYBE

What, if any, suggestions do you have for additional trainings/workshop which might be organized in the future?

Other comments?

Iowa Workforce Development