

Rhode Island Workforce Pell Program Readiness Checklist 2026-2027

Use this checklist to confirm that both the institution and program meet Workforce Pell requirements before applying. Completing this review in advance can help streamline the approval process and reduce follow-up requests.

1. Institution Eligibility

☐ Title IV Participation

- Institution currently participates in federal Title IV financial aid programs.
- Institution has an active Program Participation Agreement (PPA).

☐ Accreditation

- Institution is an accredited postsecondary institution authorized to operate in Rhode Island or serving learners located in Rhode Island.

☐ Disciplinary Standing

- Institution has not been subject to any suspension, emergency action, or program termination by the U.S. Secretary of Education during the five years immediately preceding the date of eligibility determination.

2. Institution Eligibility Exemptions

☐ Ineligible Institution or Organization

- An ineligible institution may instruct up to 25 percent of an approved Workforce Pell program.
- A written agreement between approved institution and an ineligible institution/organization is required.

☐ Registered Apprenticeship Related Instruction

- An ineligible institution or organization may instruct up to 49 percent of an approved Workforce Pell program if the program serves as Related Technical Instruction for a Registered Apprenticeship.
- A written agreement between approved institution and an ineligible institution/organization is required.

3. Program Eligibility

☐ Length Requirements

- Program length is a minimum of 8 weeks but less than 15 weeks of instruction.
- Program is between 150-599 clock hours; between 4-15 semester or trimester hours; or between 6-23 quarter hours.

☐ Program History

- For the 12 months preceding the date on which the institution applied for eligibility the program must have been implemented as currently designed.

☐ Recognized Postsecondary Credential

- Program leads to a recognized postsecondary credential that is stackable and portable, or prepares students for an occupation for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential.

☐ Delivery Format

- Program is not offered using correspondence courses, study abroad, and credit or clock hour equivalencies that are part of a direct assessment.

☐ Occupational Alignment

- Program aligns with the state's approved occupations list or serves as related technical instruction for a registered apprenticeship program.

☐ Registered Apprenticeship Related Technical Instruction

- Programs that serve as Related Technical Instruction (RTI) within a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) will be considered to have met the following requirements:
 - The State's occupational alignment criteria.
 - The postsecondary credential requirement.
- RTI programs must meet all other applicable Workforce Pell programming eligibility requirements, including but not limited to minimum and maximum clock-hour thresholds and program duration parameters.

☐ Completion and Placement Rates

- Programs that meet the baseline eligibility requirements will be asked to submit student-level data to verify compliance with the federally required 70% completion rate and 70% job placement rate.

4. Required Evidence

☐ Credential Stackability

- A credential may be determined to be stackable if one or more of the following are documented:
 - A written agreement establishing that academic credit is awarded upon successful completion of the workforce program and that it can be applied toward a certificate or degree program;
 - An articulation or transfer-of-credit agreement specifying the number and type of credits awarded for the eligible workforce program;
 - A pre-evaluated credit designation has been awarded for the program through credit for prior learning policies;
 - Published pathway maps showing automatic progression from the eligible program to at least one credit-bearing certificates or degrees with increasing labor market

- value and evidence that the pathway has been established and in use for at least one year;
- Documentation demonstrating no administrative or institutional barriers to advancement between credentials.
- A sole recognized credential will meet the credential stackability requirement.
 - Sole Recognized Credential Exception: A program that prepares students for an occupation for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential is exempt from demonstrating the credential is stackable and portable. An institution must submit written evidence that a program qualifies for this exception, which may include statutes, regulations, state or national licensing standards, licensing board rules or guidance, statutory or regulatory excerpts, official agency letters or webpages, or governing occupational standards.

☐ Credit Articulation

- A Workforce Pell-eligible program may be determined to meet program-to-credit articulation requirements if one or more of the following conditions are documented:
 - A written agreement establishing that academic credit is awarded upon successful completion of the workforce program and that it can be applied toward a certificate or degree program;
 - An articulation or transfer-of-credit agreement specifying the number and type of credits awarded for the eligible workforce program;
 - A pre-evaluated credit designation has been awarded for the program through credit for prior learning policies;
 - A consortium, partnership, or system-level agreement confirming credit acceptance or transferability across participating institutions;
 - Other formal documentation demonstrating guaranteed or standardized credit recognition upon enrollment in a certificate or degree program.

☐ Credential Portability/Employer-Aligned Competencies

- Three letters of support from employers, or one letter of support from an industry association representing a group of employers, verifying that 1) the specific skills and competencies the program provides meet their current hiring requirements and 2) the employers are currently or are planning to hire for the occupation.
- The Rhode Island Workforce Pell Employer Validation & Industry Support Form can be found at <http://riopc.edu/WorkforcePell> as a fillable PDF.

☐ Program Participation Agreement (PPA)

- Institution must submit a copy of its PPA.

☐ Related Technical Instruction Validation

- Standards of Apprenticeship registered with the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT), in its capacity as the State Apprenticeship Agency, that demonstrate the program provided by the institution is the related technical instruction (RTI) for the Registered Apprenticeship; and
- The RTI component meets all other applicable Workforce Pell requirements (e.g., hours, etc.).