

# ACTE Quality CTE Program of Study Framework



## Element 9: Student Career Development

The ACTE Quality CTE Program of Study Framework™ (2018 version) and companion self-evaluation instrument is an evidence-based framework defining high-quality CTE. With more than 90 criteria organized under 12 elements, the Framework captures the full range of activities across a CTE program of study that are essential for quality. Access the complete framework, the self-evaluation instrument and resources that support success within each element at [www.acteonline.org/high-quality-cte](http://www.acteonline.org/high-quality-cte).

### Criteria Under the Student Career Development Element

*This element addresses strategies that help students gain career knowledge and engage in education and career planning and decision-making, including career counseling, career assessments, curricula that helps students learn about careers, information about educational opportunities and workforce trends, and job search information and placement services.*

- a. Comprehensive career development is coordinated and sequenced to promote and support the career decision-making and planning of all students, including prior to entering the program of study.
- b. Each CTE student in the program of study has a personalized, multi-year education and career plan that reflects exploration of the student's interests, preferences and abilities; and informs course selection, planning for further education and a career, and involvement in extended learning.
- c. Career development activities are aligned with relevant national, state and/or local standards.
- d. Students in the program of study and their parents/guardians (as appropriate) are provided accurate and timely information on extended learning experiences available through the program of study, such as work-based learning, CTSO participation and articulated credit.
- e. Students in the program of study and their parents/guardians (as appropriate) are provided accurate and timely information on further education and training options, including application procedures, enrollment, financing, and their projected educational, employment and earnings outcomes.
- f. Students in the program of study and their parents/guardians (as appropriate) are provided accurate and timely information on regional occupational trends and outlooks, high-demand and high-wage career opportunities, and the educational pathways that lead to current and projected career opportunities.
- g. Students in the program of study have access to job search information and placement services as they near completion of the program of study.
- h. Career development professionals have access to professional development and up-to-date information on extended learning experiences, education and training options, and regional occupational trends to aid students in education and career planning and decision-making.



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### Additional Criteria Relevant to Student Career Development

The Framework criteria are designed to be mutually exclusive to ensure that programs are not doubly rewarded or punished for criteria that they have or have not implemented. However, the following criteria from other elements of the Framework can add relevance to an assessment of progress on the Student Career Development element.

- *Prepared and Effective Program Staff*: Criteria describing professional development and administrator supports that help staff implement high-quality career development (d, f).
- *Access and Equity*: Criteria addressing the delivery of career guidance both prior to and during the program of study that is free from bias, inclusive and non-discriminatory, including promoting programs of study to all potential participants and recruiting students from populations that have been traditionally underrepresented (a, b, c).
- *Business and Community Partnerships*: A criterion describing partners' roles in identifying, participating in and evaluating work-based learning and CTSO experiences, which are potential career development activities (e).
- *CTSOs*: Criteria about how CTSOs foster interaction with business professionals and enable students to participate in competitive events, which are potential career development activities (d, e).
- *Work-based Learning*: Criteria that relate to work-based learning as a key strategy within career development, including the expectation that programs will provide the full continuum of work-based learning experiences to each student, intentionally align work-based learning with student education and career goals, and maximize meaningful interaction with business professionals (a, d, e).
- *Data and Program Improvement*: Criteria addressing the use of data for program improvement, including data about career development activities, as well as the use of labor market data to inform programmatic and student decision-making (c, d).