

Arizona Technical Skill Assessment System

People, Process, Product, and Progress

The Who. The Arizona Department of Education in partnership with the University of Arizona has established an end of program technical skill assessment system that meets the needs of Career and Technical Education in Arizona.

The What. The outcome ensures industry-validated standards for all career and technical education programs and an online skills assessment delivery system that serves secondary comprehensive Career and Technical Education, Joint Technical Education Districts and Community Colleges.

The Why. In 2006, Congress reauthorized the Perkins legislation that emphasized accountability for industry-validated technical skills for all Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs. In the same year, the State of Arizona enacted legislation for Joint Technical Education Districts (JTEDS) that requires accountability for program-specific, industry-validated skills attainment for all students.

The How. Occupational-specific committees, composed principally of incumbent workers, assemble to validate standards and measurement criteria for CTE programs. Teams composed principally of educators assemble to adapt, adopt, and develop test items related to the standards and measurement criteria for CTE programs. A Stakeholders Committee, represented by the JTEDS and CTE program instructors and administrators, provides input and support for the implementation and sustainability of the assessment system. The Arizona Quality Commission is composed mainly of business and industry leaders, with additional representation from government, education, labor, and other key organizations. The Commission works with the business/industry community to provide students with certificates detailing their skill attainment.

The Progress. Currently there are 58 active Technical Skill Assessments for the 72 CTE programs. The number of assessments will grow to 60 by the end of spring 2015. Students have two opportunities to take the assessment; once as practice and once as final. During the spring 2014 assessment period, 22,536 CTE students were assessed; 21,201 final and 1,335 practice assessments. Fall 2014 assessment period 26,419 CTE students were assessed; 2,868 final and 26,366 practice assessments.

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