

<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</b> <b>Standard Operating Procedures</b>		
<b>Policy Name:</b> Vocational Education		
<b>Policy Number:</b> 108.08	<b>Effective Date:</b> 3/16/2018	<b>Page Number:</b> 1 of 10
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**I. Introduction and Summary:** Classroom/Laboratory Vocational Education Programs operated by the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) provide offenders with job skills to prepare them for institutional work assignments and post-release employment. It is the intent of this policy to provide agency personnel with uniform guidelines for the operation of Classroom/Laboratory Vocational Education Programs. Staff operating offender work programs use the advice and assistance of labor, business and industrial organizations to assist in providing skills relevant to the job market.

Each vocational education program has a written, standardized, competency-based curriculum supported by appropriate materials and classroom resources. Vocational training programs are integrated with academic programs and are relevant to the vocational needs of the offender population and to employment opportunities in the community.

The academic and vocational education programs are recognized, certified, or licensed by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE), Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), or another recognized agency having jurisdiction. Programs up to the completion of high school and/or the GED are available at no cost to offenders. The academic and vocational training programs are assessed against stated objectives by qualified individuals, professional groups, and trade associations; this assessment is done at least every three years. All academic and vocational education personnel are certified by a DOE, TCSG or other comparable authority.

Academic and vocational personnel policies and practices are comparable to local jurisdictions or other appropriate jurisdictions. GDC provides a system of academic and vocational counseling as well as initial screening, assessment, and evaluation to determine each offender's educational needs. Provision is made to meet the educational and vocational needs of offenders who require special placement because of physical, mental, emotional or learning disabilities.

Educational/vocational records must be properly handled and maintained. Student's rights to privacy and confidentiality in accordance with state and federal law is maintained. Incentives for educational and/or vocational participation and formal recognition of specific accomplishments are provided.

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**II. Authority:**

- A. O.C.G.A. §§42-2-5.2, 42-5-64, 42-5-101, and 42-10-1, *et seq.*;
- B. GDC Board Rules: 125-3-5-.04, 125-4-2-.05, 125-4-2-.06, and 125-4-2-.07;
- C. Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA): Section 1910.144;
- E. Standard Operating Procedures 218.03-Control and Dispensation of Gasoline and Hazardous Materials, 228.01-Safety/Sanitation Inspections, 410.03-Barbershop Supplies, 108.12-Live Works, 211.01-Inmate Construction Housing Units, 207.01- Use of Inmate Labor on State Housing, 207.02-State Inmates on Private Property, 207.03-Work Assignment Agreement, and 207.04-Offender work Details;
- F. Public Law 101-336 Americans with Disabilities Act; and
- G. ACA Standards: 4-4453, 4-4466, 4-4467, 4-4469, 4-4470, 4-4471, 4-4472, 4-4473, 4-4474, 4-4475, 4-4476, and 4-4479.

**III. Definitions:**

- A. **ACCUPLACER** - College Board Exam, is a suite of tests that assesses reading, writing, math, and computer skills.
- B. **Assessment Coordinator** - GDC staff trained and certified to deliver assessments.
- C. **ASSET Test** - American College Testing. Assesses basic skills and mathematics.
- D. **Curriculum** - Subject matter and classroom activities organized and sequenced to foster learning.
- E. **GPAI** - Georgia Programs Assessment Inventory.
- F. **SAGE** - System for Assessment and Group Evaluation.
- G. **SCRIBE** - The GDC offender data base.

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H. **TABE** - Test of Adult Basic Education.

I. **TCSG** - Technical College System of Georgia.

J. **WAPR** - Work Activity Performance Report.

**IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

A. Offender Identification:

1. It is the responsibility of the offender's counselor and the institutional Classification Committee to identify possible candidates for vocational programs on a routine basis. Identification consideration should be made for programs at the facility where the offender is located, as well as, programs located throughout the system.
2. Offender Eligibility Criteria: Offenders who are eligible for vocational training should meet the following criteria:
  - a. TABE tested and a minimum 7.1 score for reading. TABE scores may be required at a higher or lower level for some courses. Special Education may have lower scores.
  - b. Positive disciplinary record: If a transfer is being requested, the offender must have received NO disciplinary reports for the past twelve (12) months.
  - c. GED or High School diploma (preferred). If dually enrolled in a vocational program while working towards a GED, a student who academically completes the courses in the program but does not receive his GED, will receive a non-certified certificate. The offender will have up to five (5) years to pass the GED, and then apply for and receive TCSG credit hours and credit certificate.
  - d. Within twenty-four (24) to sixty (60) months of release, longer term offenders can be trained if they can be used on a GDC work detail.

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- e. Medical/Physical/MH capabilities: Provisions are made for offenders, who require placement of physical, mental, emotional or learning disabilities. This process is accomplished through the GDC’s Americans with Disabilities Coordinator and/or GDC’s Partners, Special Populations Disability Services Coordinators.
- f. The offender should agree to actively participate in other programs required or recommended for the offender.
- g. Meet the individual program criteria specific to a designated program.
- h. Exceptions to the above criteria can be made by the instructor with approval of the Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment (“DWC&T”) at the Vocational Program site. For example, an offender who may not yet have his GED but is currently in a GED class and can read at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level may be considered for assignment.

**B. Initial Offender Referral Process:**

- 1. Referrals:
  - a. Referrals to Vocational Programs can be made locally if programs are available on site. Referrals can also be made to off-site programs through the transfer request process. Screening for referrals must be completed for either circumstance.
  - b. Counselors screen their caseloads on an on-going basis for potential training candidates and skilled workers. All referrals for a training program should first be made in SCRIBE at the referring institution. Referrals may be made from Diagnostics, as well as from permanent facilities. Counselors submit training eligible offenders for review and consideration through their facility Classification Committee.
- 2. Testing Requirements for Vocational participation:
  - a. Testing may occur prior to Classification Committee assignments or after a Classification referral for testing but should be completed prior to entering a program.

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- b. TABE: All referrals to Vocational Programs should be TABE tested to determine if the offender’s level of academic performance corresponds to the designated level needed for the Vocational Training Program.
- c. SAGE: Prior to entering a specific trade, the offender may be assessed by an Assessment Coordinator for occupational training using the SAGE. The SAGE test capability is available for all Vocational Training sites through the Assessment Coordinators. Developmental studies are provided as needed on a case-by-case basis.
- d. Counselors should refer potential Vocational Educational candidates based upon interest, experience, aptitude, and one of several tests (ASSET, SAGE, and ACCUPLACER). SAGE testing is just one of several options available to place offenders in Vocational Programs. Offenders who do not have a high school diploma or a GED will need to take the TABE test. Tests other than the SAGE will be administered by our Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) partners or members of our Vocational Educational team prior to placement in a Vocational Program. To coordinate non-SAGE testing, please contact your Program Development Consultant in the Inmate Services Division.
- e. The offender assigned to vocational work program shall be assigned based on the classification process.
- f. An offender assigned to a vocational work program shall be given a choice, during their initial classification, of attending an education program, rehabilitation program, or being assigned a job.
- g. The offender work day shall be aligned with the work day as outlined by the facility.
- h. An offender assigned to vocational work cannot quit, transfer or be terminated without classification action. If an offender is determined to be a security risk to the program, then the offender can be removed.

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3. Assessment Coordinators:

- a. Assessment Coordinators work under the direction of the DWC&T or Chief Counselor as designated by the Warden. Assessment Coordinators have the responsibility to administer and score the SAGE and provide reports for all referred offenders to the designated vocational instructor, and place the reports in the offender’s classroom training folder. Assessment Coordinators primarily test at the facility where they are located; however, their duties also require that they test at other assigned facilities as requested.
- b. Assessment Coordinators should keep records of the number of offenders tested at each site where the test occurred, and the number referred to the counselor for placement and classroom training. Reports are to be made available to Central Office program staff. Assessment Coordinators are also responsible for maintaining current assessment software.

C. Referral Transfer Process:

- 1. Off-site Referrals: After it has been determined that an offender is a good candidate for an off-site Vocational Training Program and meets the basic eligibility criteria as described above, it is the referring facility’s responsibility to initiate a transfer request in the Vocational queue in Scribe.
- 2. In addition, the institution must note in the comment section that the offender meets the eligibility criteria for placement and the specific name of the program(s) to be considered.
- 3. Offender Administration (OA) will review all transfer requests submitted under the Vocational queue for the next available Vocational slot. Transfers will only be considered if all the above information is provided, and if the offender meets all other classification criteria for transfer consideration.

D. Vocational Program Completions and Transfer-Out Process:

- 1. Upon the offender’s completion of a Vocational Program the training facility is responsible for submitting a transfer request for the offender under the

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Utilized Skills queue, which designates that the offender is available for transfer to a site that could utilize the skills obtained in training.

2. Facilities are also responsible for entering, in Case Notes, any skilled workers who either came in to the system with a verified skill(s) or have already been through a training program/OJT program in the system.
3. The OA will draw from the offenders entered under the Utilized Skills queue to assist other facilities in meeting their workforce requirements.

E. Classroom Management:

1. Vocational Curriculum is organized into individualized, competency-based Written Student Learning Modules (SLMs). Each SLM incorporates theoretical instruction, demonstration and live-work projects in such a way as to teach the student a specific task or competency associated with the trade.
2. Technical instructors develop curricula, in conjunction with TCSG, to best meet the needs of their students and to achieve maximum utilization of available resources. Curricula should be updated periodically as technology changes and in accordance with the skill needs of GDC. TCSG will maintain duties and responsibilities of instructors.
3. Technical instructors should include proper work habits and ethics as part of classroom training. Instructors/staff will sign and comply with TCSG's "Access to Information: Acknowledgement and Compliance Statement" (or equivalent). All student information is considered confidential and will be protected.
4. Technical instructors develop and maintain an Instructor manual which includes a course description, outlines the manner and sequence in which the program is taught and contains a copy of all SLMs developed for the instructional program, and a completion/competency check list.
  - a. Technical instructors must maintain a student program folder on each student that contains entrance, progression and completion data, in accordance with established completion guidelines.

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- b. The competency checklist which documents competencies mastered by the student is maintained in the offender’s folder. The progress should be documented within the timeframe of projected completion.
  - c. An individualized educational plan will be developed by Career, Technical, and Post-Secondary staff in conjunction with facility personnel, TCSG (or other educational) partners for offenders/probationers with special medical needs. These educational plans will be in accordance with GDC, TCSG, and other state agency accommodation procedures.
5. Technical instructors operate individualized programs of instruction to allow for flexible student entry and to permit each student to progress according to his/her ability and motivation. However, a target completion date should be determined in accordance with established completion guidelines.
  6. Technical instructors assess progress of vocational students through oral and written examinations as well as through observation of performance on hands-on projects. The progress should be noted using GDC guidelines for that particular program of instruction.
  7. Upon completion of each exit point within the program, a WAPR should be completed and sent to the offender’s counselor, who will then place it in the offender’s institutional file. It is expected that eighty percent (80%) of the offenders will complete training within the designated GDC guidelines.
  8. Prior to enrolling in a post-secondary course, the offender must have approval from the facility administrator, typically the Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment or local designee. The approval, or disapproval, will be documented in SCRIBE. An offender wanting to take post-secondary courses, or the offender’s family on his or her behalf, must contact the post-secondary provider/institution and make arrangements for enrollment, payment, study, testing, and all other requirements. The offender must notify his or her counselor prior to beginning and after completing each post-secondary course.

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- 9. Career Technical Education (or other) instructors, or other TCSG staff will conduct weekly program reviews/inspection for necessary adjustments. Education Program Specialist will conduct monthly reviews.
- 10. All courses are certified in accordance with TCSG policies and procedures.
- 11. GPAI is used to assess programs against stated objectives.
- 12. CTE instructors will be hired, trained and certified by partner TCSG units.

F. Safety and Accident Prevention:

- 1. The Vocational classroom environment (classrooms and labs) will meet minimum applicable federal, state or local work, health and safety standards. Technical instructors perform daily and weekly informal inspections for compliance. Local designated institutional staff verify that all required inspections have been performed and maintain written documentation of inspections. These inspections are conducted in accordance with Operations Division’s Standard Operating Procedures and other applicable federal, state or local health and safety standards.
- 2. Technical Instructors must maintain their vocational areas in a safe, clean and orderly manner in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
- 3. Instructional modules on safety must be incorporated into the program Curriculum.
- 4. Students are tested on safety and test results are maintained in the student folder.
- 5. The student program folder, maintained by the instructor must contain written documentation that students have demonstrated to the instructor their ability to operate equipment safely and properly.
- 6. Written documentation should be maintained by the designated institutional staff who verifies that inspections have been performed.

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7. Technical instructors must continually stress the importance of safety in the vocational area and provide adequate instruction on safe and proper handling of materials and use of tools and equipment. Instructional modules on safety must be incorporated into the program Curriculum.
8. Technical instructors must ensure that tools, materials, hazardous and flammable substances are properly and securely stored.
9. Technical instructors must mark safety lanes and highlight equipment per Occupational Safety and Health standards.
10. Technical instructors must ensure that fire extinguishers are properly located, marked and sufficiently charged.
11. Institutional supervisory staff who are responsible for the vocational education programs must ensure that safety inspections are conducted per the Operations Division SOPs and that written documentation is maintained, by designated staff, that such inspections have been performed.

G. Live Work Projects:

Live work projects should be accepted and incorporated into the system, in accordance with SOP 108.12, Live Works Projects. Live work projects should be selected for supporting competency development of students in the vocational program, and should not be used as a standard work detail. A complete and current file of completed GDC work order forms must be maintained by trade.

- V. **Attachments:** None
- VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.