

“Career Pathways Program” and Federal Student Aid Available For Students Who Do Not Possess a High School Diploma or GED®

In *Dear Colleague Letter* (DCL) [GEN-15-09](#) published on May 22, 2015, ED it clarifies changes made to the Higher Education Act (HEA) by the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) to the Title IV eligibility of students who are not high school graduates. The DCL includes detailed information about the reinstatement of ability to benefit (ATB) alternatives for student eligibility, and the statutory definition of an eligible career pathway program required under Pub.L. 113-235 for purposes of Title IV aid eligibility.

At WCC, the federal student aid “ability to benefit” eligibility option is available for students without a high school diploma or GED who:

1. Pass an approved ability to benefit (ATB) test. At WCC, this is the ACCUPLACER exam. The minimum scores are as follow:
Reading Comprehension: 55
Sentence Skills: 60
Arithmetic: 34

AND

2. Enroll in an approved career pathway program. Student must contact the program coordinator, Professor Laura Milhaven (606-7752), for more information and enroll in an appropriate program.

Please be aware that if a student completes a career pathway program and then enrolls in a regular TIV eligible academic program, the student will not be eligible for additional federal funds UNLESS they now have a high school diploma or equivalent

Also, once a student obtains a HS diploma or equivalent they are no longer subject to the restrictions placed on ATB students.