



## Maine College and Career Access Services Description and Guidance September 2023

### **Introduction:**

Maine College and Career Access (MCCA) is defined as high-quality, comprehensive academic and advising services **leading to a learner’s enrollment in post-high school education and/or training that results in a credential of value and high-quality employment**. Participants receiving MCCA services will acquire the skills and knowledge to pursue their learning and employment goals.

A **credential of value** is defined as a credential that recognizes an individual’s attainment of measurable educational, technical, or occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an occupation.<sup>1</sup>

Examples of credentials of value include:

- Educational degrees and diplomas (associates, bachelors, or graduate)
- Professional certifications
- Occupational licenses
- Micro-credentials
- Registered apprenticeship certification
- Military Services

Maine College and Career Access programming serves adult learners who are **planning to enter a post-high school education and training program** that leads to a credential of value within 18 months, are **close to academic and career readiness** at intake, and who agree to **provide the adult education program with updates on their college and career status** for 12 months after completing MCCA.

At a minimum, all MCCA participants must receive advising services, academic skill building relevant to their specific goals, and opportunities to use technology to enhance learning and to improve digital literacy.

MCCA programming is coordinated within the Adult Education and Career Development Hub (referred to as “MCCA providers” in this document) to provide flexibility for learners. Services will align with regional partner institutions that will include community colleges, the university system, and other educational and employment training institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> [Making Maine Work 2022](#), p. 12

## **Goals of MCCA Services:**

Maine College and Career Access providers will meet the following goals:

1. High-quality, comprehensive services
2. Effective partnerships
3. Learner-centered intake and advising
4. Rigorous and aligned instruction
5. Effective assessment practices
6. Program evaluation and sustainability
7. Staff expertise

### **High-quality, comprehensive services:**

Maine College and Career Access programming is comprehensive academic and career advising services that supports MCCA learners who are seeking a post-high school credential of value and, ultimately, high-quality employment. Programming should be designed to increase access and equity, such as hybrid, remote and/or in-person approaches. Educational program services will include academic courses, digital literacy, financial literacy, career planning and exploration, workforce preparation activities, and academic success skills.

### **Effective Partnerships:**

Effective partnerships enhance MCCA programming and provide opportunities for MCCA learners. MCCA providers will maximize education and training possibilities for MCCA learners through partnering within their Adult Education and Career Development Hub partners, postsecondary partners, employers, MJRP College and Career Success Coordinators, and local, community, and state agencies. The State Office recommends that Providers develop and implement Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that clearly articulate the responsibilities of each partner and the identifiable outcomes of the partnership.

### **Learner-Centered Intake and Advising:**

College and career advising is required for all MCCA learners, and the advising starts at intake. All MCCA providers are expected to follow the **Assessment Policy** outlined by the Maine Department of Education (MDOE).

Providers will implement a formal intake process that includes the following:

- an assessment measuring college and career readiness (e.g., CASAS, ACCUPLACER, HiSET, etc.)
- an initial advising session
- program orientation

- completion of the MDOE intake form for MaineSTARS, including a Social Security release form for data matching, a FERPA release, and an agreement for follow-up for 12 months following completion of MCCA services.

**MCCA learners should be close to academic college and career readiness at intake.**

Academic readiness is defined as

- **239 or above** on Reading GOALS (Low Adult Secondary), and/or
- **225 or above** on Math GOALS 2 (High Intermediate).

**These scores are recommendations.** MCCA providers may use CASAS GOALS, ACCUPLACER, HiSET College Ready scores, or another appropriate assessment to determine academic readiness.

A program advisor will support learners in developing and monitoring Individual Learning Plans (ILP) with objectives based on personal interests with clear outcomes for education, career and life and guided by data from assessments. Providers will develop a procedure for conducting and tracking ongoing learner-centered advising of education and career goals.

Career awareness, exploration and planning may be integrated into the MCCA curriculum to inform the advising of MCCA learners.

**Rigorous and Aligned Instruction:**

Academic preparation is an integral component of Maine College and Career Access services. MCCA academic courses will employ rigorous, research-based instructional approaches and be aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS). Academic course offerings should provide regular opportunities for learners to develop and apply their digital skills, including online learning contexts. Instruction should be responsive to diverse learner needs and align with learners' goals to the greatest extent possible.

**Effective Assessment Practices:**

Formative and summative assessments should be used regularly to document learner progress toward education and career goals, including, but not limited to academic assessments and career assessments. Instructors and advisors should share assessment data with learners to determine needs, goals, and progress, beginning at intake and throughout the MCCA program. Providers will develop a procedure for documenting a learner's progress and completion of the MCCA program outcomes (See page 5: **MCCA Required Services and Completion**).

### **Program Evaluation & Sustainability:**

MCCA providers will develop a program evaluation and sustainability plan by June 30, 2025 that includes how the provider will measure and document the outcomes and impacts of MCCA services, including measures such as learner goal attainment and persistence, return on investment, development of partnerships, and impact on identified local needs.

A process for **surveying learners who complete the MCCA program outcomes** should be developed by MCCA providers. Past participants should be surveyed at regular intervals (6 weeks, 3 months, and 12 months) to learn about their progress towards their education and career goals. The State Office will provide a tool for data collection and technical assistance on survey strategies.

Marketing and recruiting will be developed and implemented in coordination with statewide efforts. MCCA providers should market their programs to the public and partners as **Maine College and Career Access**.

### **Staff Expertise:**

MCCA providers will support continuous professional growth and improvement through staff evaluation processes and tracking processes. Clear expectations for professional development participation of both new and experienced staff are communicated and supported, including paid participation in MCCA-related professional development for MCCA staff working more than 12 hours/week. Instructional staff will have demonstrated content expertise, or if the MCCA course is also for high school credit or equivalency, staff will maintain appropriate certifications. Advising staff will be trained in effective advising practices and the use of career and other assessments.

### **MCCA Competitive Priority Areas**

The State Office has identified three priority areas for MCCA services, and MCCA providers are encouraged to develop strategies to support these priorities.

1. Serving adults with some college but no degree (e.g., targeted marketing and outreach, co-enrollment opportunities, development of pathways to credential attainment, strategic advising around prior learning, etc.)
2. Increasing equity and access across the Hub through collaboration (e.g., itinerant staff, distance or hybrid delivery models, team-teaching, community partnerships, alternative sites for classes, etc.)
3. Collaborating with the Maine Community College System (e.g., MCCA instruction on college campuses, development of processes to work with College and Career Success Coordinators, development of career pathways from adult education to the community college)

## **MCCA Learner Eligibility and Intake:**

This section outlines the required criteria for enrolling a learner as “MCCA” and counting them as “completed.”

Adult learners are eligible for MCCA services if they satisfy the following conditions:

1. They are planning to enroll in post-high school education or training **within 18 months** of MCCA enrollment. Their post-high school education or training should lead to a credential of value.
2. They are **close to academic college and career readiness at intake**. CASAS GOALS, ACCUPLACER, HiSET College Ready, or another appropriate assessment may be used to determine academic readiness.
3. They agree to be **tracked for 12 months** after completing MCCA services.

At intake all MCCA learners will **participate in an initial advising section** to establish the short- and long-term goals of the Individualized Learning Plans.

A high school diploma/equivalency is not required, but those without should be co-enrolled in MCCA services and a program to obtain their high school credential.

Academic readiness is defined as

- **239 or above** on Reading GOALS (Low Adult Secondary), and/or
- **225 or above** on Math GOALS 2 (High Intermediate).

## **MCCA Required Services and Completion:**

Services for MCCA learners should be driven by the Individualized Learning Plan.

All MCCA learners must participate in the following required services:

- Advising
- Academic skill-building relevant to the learner’s goals
- Opportunities to use technology to enhance learning and to improve digital literacy

An MCCA learner has completed MCCA if she or he has done **at least one** of the following:

- Completed the goals of the ILP
- Entered post-high school education or training program

## **Hub MCCA Coordinator Responsibilities:**

The intent of the position should be to coordinate MCCA services within the HUB to ensure comprehensive services and flexible access for MCCA learners, but the specific tasks to meet those intents are to be determined by the provider. Coordinators may also collect and analyze data, support local providers with programming needs or professional development, determine

future needs, complete reports, etc. The MCCA coordinator will be the point of contact with MDOE for non-budget related MCCA business.

MDOE will hold quarterly videoconference calls with MCCA coordinators to share best practices and resources, support HUB needs and to provide technical assistance. Dates and times for the call will be determined based on coordinator availability.

**PY 23-24 MCCA Coordinator calls:**

- October 2023
- January 2024
- April 2024
- June 2024

MCCA Coordinators should share information from the calls with HUB program directors, including notes from the meeting and other shared resources. MDOE encourages the MCCA Coordinators to meet regularly with their HUB program directors.

**Data & Reporting:**

Each local provider will collect and enter its own data in MaineSTARS, but MCCA providers will have the capability to view data at the HUB level. At intake, MCCA learners should complete the MDOE intake form for MaineSTARS, including a FERPA release and Social Security release form for data matching.

Learners enrolling in MCCA services, as defined above, should be registered as “**Maine College and Career Access**” in MaineSTARS. If for some reason a learner is not MCCA and not registered as “*Maine College and Career Access*,” they can be registered as “*Adult Transitions*.” If a learner is enrolled in postsecondary education and accessing MCCA services, they should be registered as “*Dually enrolled in college*.”

**FY24 Reporting Dates:**

- **Data snapshot** reporting enrollments and completions will be due twice per year: **January 31, 2024 (July to December 2023), and July 31, 2024 (Jan to June 2024)**
- **Final narrative report** on the MCCA grant goals due: **August 1, 2024**
- **Tracking and Follow-up** by cohort (up to 12 months) reporting on progress towards meeting their education and career goals due: **August 1, 2024**

**Fiscal Guidance & Requirements:**

MCCA providers (fiscal agents) should invoice for and report on MCCA expenses quarterly through the MCCA FY24 Budget Invoice form provided by the Department. Hub’s should budget for funding to be spent by the end of the FY24 fiscal year on June 30, 2024, and there is no guarantee that Hubs will be able to carry forward funds into the next year.

Invoices are due on **October 31, 2023, January 31, 2024, April 30, 2024, and July 31, 2024**, and should be emailed as an Excel spreadsheet to David McDonough, [david.mcdonough@maine.gov](mailto:david.mcdonough@maine.gov). If an invoice is 30 days overdue, the fiscal agent contact will receive an overdue notice from the Department. After 60 days overdue, notice will be sent to the fiscal agent superintendent.

MCCA providers may reallocate funds within their budgets but should follow the process outlined below. Changes up to 10% or more may be allowable from one category to another and will require state office approval in advance of spending.

- Review grant spending quarterly to see if any changes need to be requested. To request **any** changes to the final, approved grant budget
  - Fill out the Budget Adjustment form and Budget Detail to reflect your proposed changes.
  - Explain the need for the changes in an email (for documentation purposes)
  - Attach the Budget Adjustment form to the email description
  - Email it to David McDonough, [david.mcdonough@maine.gov](mailto:david.mcdonough@maine.gov).

All budget adjustment requests should include the Hub fiscal agent. When possible, they should be compiled for the entire hub and sent in using one budget adjustment form for the whole hub.

Final invoices for program year funds should be submitted by **July 31, 2024**.

### **Allowable Expenditures**

Funding must be used to support the development, planning, and operation of a high-quality comprehensive MCCA program that supports learner success and results in learners' academic growth and career development.

Examples of allowable expenditures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Salary and benefits for full- and part-time personnel necessary for program activities, including a MCCA coordinator for the HUB and access to a program advisor for each local provider.
- Purchase of CCRS-aligned curriculum materials, including educational and instructional software, that is necessary to operate a successful MCCA program. Curriculum materials, including licenses for software, should be purchased as a HUB to the greatest degree possible.
- Assessments (CASAS, ACCUPLACER, World of Work Inventory (WOWI), or other academic and career assessments)
- Materials and supplies: Consumables necessary for programming
- Professional development activities, including salaries for personnel to attend MCCA-related professional development activities

- Equipment necessary for and used in MCCA programming by teachers and students. This does not include general purpose equipment, such as furniture.
- Expenses, including transportation, related to field trips or other activities that enrich MCCA programming
- Expenses related to recruitment and retention, including marketing materials specific to MCCA programming
- Expenses related to MCCA data collection, tracking, and analysis
- Administration and indirect costs (e.g., accounting expenses, expenses shared by other parts of the program) Administration and indirect costs should be no more than 5% of the total budget without Department approval.

The following expenditures may not be included in the proposed budget:

- Capital improvements
- Out-of-state travel, unless prior approval by the Department ([See Appendix A](#))
- General purpose equipment
- Incentives of non-educational value
- Food-related expenses
- Childcare
- Scholarships (i.e., tuition or fees to be paid to external educational institutions on behalf of a learner)

Funds allocated under this program may be used only to supplement, not supplant, funds that local educational agencies would otherwise expend for adult education program. Expenditures outlined in the budget should be reasonable for the size and scope of the program with most grant funds going toward items and personnel that directly impact programming for MCCA learners.

MCCA providers seeking to use MCCA funds for out of state travel should submit the Out-of-State Conference Approval Form, Appendix A, and submit to David McDonough, david.mcdonough@maine.gov

For questions related to MCCA services, please contact **David McDonough**, Grants Specialist, Office of Adult Education, Maine Department of Education, David.mcdonough@maine.gov



**APPENDIX A**

**Appendix A: Out of State Travel Approval Form  
Maine College and Career Access  
Maine Department of Education**

Maine College and Career Access providers seeking to send one or more people to an out of state professional development event must seek prior approval from MDOE to use Maine College and Career Access professional development funds for travel expenses.

Please send the completed form to David McDonough, [david.mcdonough@maine.gov](mailto:david.mcdonough@maine.gov), **at least one month before the expected travel**. Providers may submit as a HUB or as local providers.

Date:
Hub:
Local Provider's Director:
Local Provider's email:
<b>Professional Development Event:</b>
PD Dates and Location:
Estimated travel expenses (registration, travel, lodging/meals):
<b>Staff Planning to Attend:</b>
1. Name:
Job Title:
2. Name:
Job Title:
3. Name:
Job Title:
Please answer both questions completely.
1. Briefly describe why the staff listed above should attend the PD event and how this will improve your MCCA activities.
2. Please share how what you learn will be shared with your Hub partners.

## APPENDIX B

### Appendix B: MCCA Learner Criteria Maine College and Career Access Grant 2023 -2024

This document outlines the criteria for enrolling a learner as MCCA and counting them as “completed.” Page numbers refer to the Maine College and Career Access Program Guidance for 2023-2024.

#### **MCCA Eligibility and Intake:**

Adult learners are eligible for MCCA services if they satisfy the following conditions:

1. They are planning to enroll in post-high school education or training **within 18 months** of MCCA enrollment. Their post-high school education or training should lead to a [credential of value](#).
2. They are **close to academic college and career readiness at intake**. CASAS GOALS, ACCUPLACER, HiSET College Ready, or another appropriate assessment may be used to determine academic readiness.
3. They agree to be **tracked for 12 months** after completing MCCA services.

Academic readiness is defined as

- **239 or above** on Reading GOALS (Low Adult Secondary), and/or
- **225 or above** on Math GOALS 2 (High Intermediate).

At intake, all MCCA learners will participate in an [initial advising session](#) to establish the short- and long-term goals of the Individual Learning Plans (ILP).

#### **MCCA Required Services:**

Services for MCCA learners should be driven by the Individualized Learning Plan.

All MCCA learners must participate in the following required services:

- Advising (p. 2-3)
- Academic skill-building relevant to the learner’s goals
- Opportunities to use technology to enhance learning and to improve digital literacy (p. 3)

An MCCA learner has completed MCCA if she or he has done **at least one** of the following:

- Completed the goals of the ILP
- Entered post-high school education or training program