



Vermont Instructor Registry Guidance

Adult instruction is a skill separate from teaching children, working with families or supervising staff. Vermont's Instructor Qualification System structures the collection, development and recognition of qualified adult instructors who support the early childhood and afterschool field.

The purpose of the Instructor Qualification System is to ensure that quality instruction is available statewide to individuals working with or on behalf of children. To accomplish this, an approval process determines that competent instructors are qualified to provide professional development. This system is designed to:

- Identify instructors who have met established criteria for high quality instruction of adults;
- Establish a clear pathway for instructor development;
- Be a resource for those who seek to hire instructors;
- Act as a promotional marketing tool for instructors;
- Provide networking, foster collegiality and support instructors of adults.

A consistent statewide process considers an applicant's education, credentials, current experience teaching adults, and formal instruction in adult learning principles and practices.

Instructor Levels

There are six different levels in Vermont's Instructor Registry.

Specialist II Level instructors have specific or technical knowledge in fields other than early childhood or afterschool fields. They may select up to two core knowledge areas that relate to their identified specialty area.

Master Level instructors who have taught college courses with an institution of higher education within the past 3 years do not need to submit a transcript or diploma and do not have to identify taking an orientation to adult learning. This is because the qualifications of higher education institutions supersede this document when applicants teach college level courses. Applicants must still have the appropriate degrees or related credit hours to be Master instructors.

Affiliate I, Affiliate II and Specialist I Level Instructors are required to work with a Supporting Instructor who is at the Master or Certified Level. The supporting instructor needs to have familiarity with the content being taught, but does not have to be an expert. Their role is to support instructors and help them to gain skills or current experience in instructing adults. Applicants search and identify potential supporting instructors within the

Instructor Registry. They contact that person to ask for their support, and confirm their interest in acting as a supporting instructor. Applicants should list their supporting instructor on the application. When the applicant accumulates sufficient experience instructing adults they can move to an independent level of instruction on the Instructor Registry.

Certified and Master Level instructors may be requested to act as Supporting Instructors to Affiliate, and Specialist I instructors. The minimum requirement to be a supporting instructor includes the completion of 25 hours of adult instruction.

Formal Instruction in Teaching Adults

All applicants need to have some formal instruction in teaching adults. The formal instruction can be a workshop, a course or part of a course. It must include the following learning objectives for participants.

- Describes principles of adult learning;
- Demonstrates consideration of adult learning styles, individual needs and interests in planning professional development activity;
- Includes assessment and evaluation of how the learning activity met its objectives;
- Demonstrates principles of effective planning and instruction of adults learning experiences; and
- Applies strategies that support interactive learning experiences.

The Northern Lights Career Development Center offers a workshop that meets these objectives. If applicants have completed a different training, they should specify this in their application.

It is an expectation that instructors will identify and use appropriate Vermont core knowledge areas and subheadings in planning, and be able to complete professional development documentation forms accurately. The Northern Lights Career Development Center will provide training and assistance in using these documents.

Definitions

Instruction

Instructors teach groups of adults working with or on behalf of children. Instructors provide professional development to individuals at all levels of the Vermont Northern Lights Career Ladder for early childhood and afterschool professionals.

Instructors have education and experience in the content of the professional development they teach, as demonstrated by appropriate work experience or academic credit.

Instruction is a planned and documented, interactive group learning experience among adults, led by a qualified instructor to meet specific learning objectives. It is responsive to the needs and interests of the learner and learning outcomes for individuals are assessed. For the purpose of the Instructor Registry, hours of one-to-one instruction between an instructor and a single learner cannot equal more

than half of the total hours required by the Instructor Qualifications System for that level of instructor.

Instructional Support/Supporting Instructors

Instructors at the Affiliate I, II and Specialist I levels are required to work with a Supporting Instructor at the Master or Certified Level.

The process of Instructor Support is tailored to the needs of the individual instructor. The process of support has three phases:

- Planning - This includes developing instructional activities based on current knowledge and participants' needs, and incorporating adult learning principles.
- Implementation - This may include co-presenting or observation.
- Evaluation - This includes reflection and review of both the learning experience and the performance of the instructor.

Supporting Instructors accept responsibility for the quality of all three phases of support. Both the Instructor and Supporting Instructor should complete the Instructor Support Documentation form to summarize how they planned, reviewed and assessed instruction.

When an instructor has accumulated enough hours of instruction experience to move to Affiliate II, Certified, Master, or Specialist II levels, s/he should send documentation of instruction hours (dates/time/topic) and a copy of the Instructor Support Documentation form to Northern Lights. This document must be signed by both the instructor and the supporting instructor.

Related Fields and Credits

Affiliate II, Certified and Master level instructors require degrees or education in a related field; Specialists may have degrees in un-related fields. Degrees with a major or concentration in one of the following areas are considered *related*:

- Child Development
- Human Development
- Education (early childhood or elementary or special education)
- Child and Family Studies (including Home Economics)

Related Credits: When the individual's field of study is not one of the four areas above, credit-bearing coursework in one or more of the following areas will be accepted.

- Child or human development
- Education, including special education
- Health, including nutrition and nursing
- Psychology/ mental health/ child and family studies
- Sociology/ human services/ social sciences
- Business / administration (related to early childhood or afterschool program management)

And for Afterschool Instructors:

- Recreation/physical education, outdoor education, art and music education

Related fields and credits will be reviewed and approved by the Approval Panel on a case-by-case basis. Degrees and coursework must be from a higher education institution approved according to criteria set forth by the Northern Lights Career Development Center.

Years of Experience

In the Instructor Registry *years of experience* may include direct work with children and/or administrative experience in programs for children and families. Applicant experience should correspond to the afterschool or early childhood fields in which they want to instruct.

Instructor Approval Panel

The Instructor Approval Panel has 6-7 volunteer members with representatives from the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center and others from the professional development field in early childhood and afterschool. There must be a quorum to approve applications. Members who are not staff of the Northern Lights Career Development Center can choose to continue or discontinue their membership on the panel annually. New members receive an Approval Panel Orientation prior to application review.

Appeals Process

Applicants may submit additional information to the Approval Panel if they disagree with the Panel's initial decision. To do so, please submit a brief letter stating the request, along with supporting documentation, to: Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center - CCV Springfield, 307 South St. Springfield, VT 05156, Attention: Instructor Qualifications. The Approval Panel will issue its final determination after reviewing the request. If the applicant does not agree with the Approval Panel's second and final determination, a formal appeal to an impartial Appeals Panel may be made. Please submit a letter specifically stating the nature of the appeal to the same address above. A three-person Appeals Panel comprised of knowledgeable but independent participants will review the entire file to determine the applicant's status. Applicants have the opportunity to appear before the panel if desired. The Appeals Panel's decision will be made within 30 days of receiving the appeal request. The Appeal Panel's decision shall be final.