

Gateways to Opportunity® ECE Credential Framework

ECE Levels	Education Requirements	Education and Training in Early Care & Education	Work and Practical Experience in Early Care & Education	Professional Contributions in Early Care & Education
Level 6	Graduate Degree	30 points in the ECE Content Areas <i>(of level 5 benchmarks)</i> – of which a maximum of 6 points may be from credential approved training Mastery in at least 3 of the 7 ECE Level 6 Skill Areas	6,000 hours of documented ECE related experience	Six professional contributions in three different areas within the last five years
Level 5	Bachelor's Degree A Professional Educator License with endorsement in Early Childhood Education meets these requirements	30 points in the ECE Content Areas <i>(of level 5 benchmarks)</i> – of which a maximum of 6 points may be from credential approved training	Minimum of 200 hours of ECE supervised experience or 1200 total hours of documented ECE work experience	Required at Renewal
Level 4	Associate's Degree or 60+ semester hours (including the 9 semester hours listed at level 3)	24 points in the ECE Content Areas <i>(of level 2-4 benchmarks)</i> – of which a maximum of 3 points may be from credential approved training <i>(must include 20 clock hours of ECE observation)</i>	100 total hours of ECE supervised experience or 600 total hours of documented ECE work experience	Required at Renewal
Level 3	Three semester hours: Any Math, English, and General Education electives (Psychology, Sociology, Science, etc.) <i>(These 9 hours must be credit bearing and nondevelopmental 100 level +)</i>	18 points in the ECE Content Areas <i>(of level 2-4 benchmarks)</i> – of which a maximum of 3 points may be from credential approved training <i>(must include 20 clock hours of ECE observation)</i>	10 hours of ECE supervised experience or 400 total hours of documented ECE work experience	Required at Renewal
Level 2	High School Diploma or GED Effective July, 2016, 4 additional points required from general or ECE specific education	12 points in the ECE Content Areas <i>(of level 2-4 benchmarks)</i> – 3 points in Human Growth and Development, 3 points in Health Safety and Well-Being, and 6 points from ECE electives or 6 points in ECE electives and a CDA, CCP, or Montessori Credential through AMS* 3 points may be from credential approved training or the ECE Credential Level 1	10 hours of ECE observation or 200 hours of documented ECE work experience	Required at Renewal
Level 1	Level 1 ECE Credential is awarded through completion of a 48 clock hour training available through local Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies statewide or 16 modules online.			

Guide: A point is equivalent to one semester hour of college credit.

*American Montessori Society (AMS) Early Childhood and Infant Toddler Credentials count for a maximum of 6 points of credential approved training for the ECE, Infant Toddler Credential, or Illinois Director Credential.

ECE Credential Requirements

This guideline sheet provides additional information regarding Gateways Credential requirements. Information is also available on the Gateways to Opportunity website at www.ilgateways.com.

ECE Level 2:

- A minimum of three points is required in the ECE Content Areas of:
 - *Human Growth and Development*
 - *Health, Safety, and Well-Being*
- ECE Credential Level 1 may be used in place of the three points of credential approved training toward the ECE Level 2 only.
- Level 2–4 benchmarks

ECE Level 3 and ECE Level 4:

- A minimum of one point is required in each of the seven ECE Content Areas.
- Level 2–4 benchmarks

ECE Level 5:

- A minimum of one point is required in each of the seven ECE Content Areas.
- Level 5 benchmarks

General Credential Information:

- One point is equivalent to 1 semester hour of college coursework, 1.5 quarter hours of college coursework, and/or 15 consecutive contact hours of Credential approved training.
- A Credential approved training must be at least 7.5 consecutive contact hours in length, cover one Content Area, and contain an assessment component. Each 7.5 consecutive contact hour training may be worth ½ of a point.
- Points for a Gateways ECE or IDC Credential may be earned through an INCCRRA administered Assessment of Prior Learning. This process includes submitting documentation directly to Credential program staff, including an artifact collection and a seven-point reflection on each collection. An additional fee may be assessed for this process.
- Contact your local higher education institution to inquire about possibly receiving Prior Learning Assessment of college credit. (*Note: College credit is not guaranteed for prior learning*)
- American Montessori Society (AMS) Early Childhood and Infant Toddler Credentials count for a maximum of 6 points of Credential approved training for the ECE Credential, Infant Toddler Credential, or Illinois Director Credential.
- Gateways Credentials are valid for five years. For more information on what is needed to renew a Gateways Credential, please see the renewal section of the Gateways website at www.ilgateways.com.