

Workforce Pell Year One Self-Assessment

This simple rubric is intended to serve as a tool to step back as an internal Workforce Pell implementation group within your state government and hold an informal but structured reflection on the past year (whether after the first year, or any year afterwards), and how the state is positioned for the year ahead. It focuses on Engagement, Planning & self-assessment, and Building capacity.

Scale:

Red: Off track | **Orange:** Needs attention | **Yellow:** Minor risks | **Green:** On track

Mark each dimension Red, Orange, Yellow, or Green. Then write the rationale.

The color rating is for conversation and learning purposes rather than evaluation.

A) Engagement to build and sustain momentum

1 Coalition & partners

Is the coalition continuing to convene as a standing implementation group?

☐ **RED**
☐ **ORANGE**
☐ **YELLOW**
☐ **GREEN**

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating

2 Students

Did trusted messengers (such as guidance counselors or career coaches) reach the students who would benefit most?

☐ **RED**
☐ **ORANGE**
☐ **YELLOW**
☐ **GREEN**

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating

3 Employers

Has employer input (e.g., validating in-demand job categories) informed the current or upcoming set of programs the state will approve for Workforce Pell?

☐ **RED**
☐ **ORANGE**
☐ **YELLOW**
☐ **GREEN**

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating



B) Planning & self-assessment

4 Track program approval and student reach trajectory

Did the group conduct regular (ideally quarterly) data reviews to track progress – not only report top-line figures to the Department of Education?

☐ RED

☐ ORANGE

☐ YELLOW

☐ GREEN

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating

5 Data as a tool, not a box to check

Is data (program performance / completion / placement data, enrollment data, labor market data, etc.) steering which programs the state pursues or encourages colleges to strengthen?

☐ RED

☐ ORANGE

☐ YELLOW

☐ GREEN

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating

C) Building capacity to offer more programs

6 Provider support

Did we help colleges redesign toward the eligibility bars and build a pipeline of quality programs?

☐ RED

☐ ORANGE

☐ YELLOW

☐ GREEN

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating

7 Deliberate growth

Did the approved occupation and course list grow with real, evidenced demand – not institutional pressure or convenience?

☐ RED

☐ ORANGE

☐ YELLOW

☐ GREEN

mark one

Rationale & evidence for this rating

Overall rating (see next page for scoring): **Red** **Orange** **Yellow** **Green**

Where the team disagrees on a color, that is the conversation worth having.

The one move that would move your state up a color next year:

Scoring your self-assessment

To turn the seven color ratings into a single score, add up the number of each color rating, and multiply by the values below. This gives you a total between **7 and 28**.

Red = 1 **Orange = 2** **Yellow = 3** **Green = 4**

Find your total in the table below to read the overall rating, what it signals for your progress, and where to focus next.

Overall score bands

Overall rating & score	What it means for your progress	Two actions to focus on next
RED 7 – 12 <i>Off track</i>	Momentum has stalled across most dimensions. The building blocks of Workforce Pell – an active coalition, employer and student engagement, disciplined data use, and provider capacity – are not yet in place. The state risks approving few quality programs and reaching few students in the year ahead.	• Reconvene the implementation group with a named owner and a standing agenda. • Fix one or two dimensions first – usually coalition and data – rather than everything at once.
ORANGE 13 – 17 <i>Needs attention</i>	Some foundations exist, but progress is uneven and fragile. A few dimensions are working while others are dormant, leaving the state exposed if key people or partners disengage.	• Target the two or three lowest-rated dimensions with named owners and deadlines. • Turn one-off wins into routines – schedule recurring data reviews and coalition meetings.
YELLOW 18 – 22 <i>Minor risks</i>	The state is broadly on track with a functioning system, but specific gaps could limit growth or quality. The work now is to close those gaps and deepen the disciplines already forming.	• Address the remaining orange and red dimensions before they slow program approvals. • Use data reviews to decide where to strengthen, pause, or scale programs deliberately.
GREEN 23 – 28 <i>On track</i>	Implementation is healthy across the board. An engaged coalition, real employer and student signals, disciplined data use, and a growing pipeline of quality programs. The priority is to sustain and scale without losing quality.	• Protect what works: keep ownership and routines in place as staff change. • Grow the approved program list where real, evidenced demand supports it.

After self assessing, use the following table of suggested actions to pinpoint potential areas for improvement in each of the areas where you rated your state less than green.

Dimension & question	Potential recommended actions
1 Coalition & partners <i>Is the coalition continuing to convene as a standing implementation group?</i>	• Set a fixed meeting cadence with a named chair and a rolling agenda. • Confirm the right agencies, colleges, and employers are still at the table. Replace anyone who has dropped off.
2 Students <i>Did trusted messengers reach the students who would benefit most?</i>	• Equip guidance counselors and career coaches with clear, simple information on Workforce Pell options. • Focus outreach on the students who benefit most, and track which channels actually reach them.
3 Employers <i>Has employer input informed the programs the state will approve?</i>	• Create a standing channel – e.g., a sector advisory group – for employers to validate in-demand roles. • Feed that employer signal directly into which programs the state approves or encourages.
4 Track program approval and student reach trajectory <i>Did the group conduct regular data reviews to track progress?</i>	• Hold quarterly internal data reviews that go beyond the figures reported to the Department of Education. • Set a simple trajectory of programs approved and students reached, and manage closely to it (beyond just reporting on it).
5 Data as a tool, not a box to check <i>Is data steering which programs the state pursues or strengthens?</i>	• Bring performance, completion, placement, enrollment, and labor-market data into a single view. • Use it to decide which programs to strengthen, pause, or scale. Record the decisions and revisit them during your routine planning.
6 Provider support <i>Did we help colleges redesign toward the eligibility bars and build a quality pipeline?</i>	• Offer hands-on help – templates, guidance, peer examples – so colleges can reset programs toward the eligibility bars. • Build a shared pipeline of quality programs in development, not just those already approved. Check in on providers to see if they are progressing toward eligibility for those programs.
7 Deliberate growth <i>Did the approved list grow with real, evidenced demand?</i>	• Require an evidence check – demand data plus employer signal – before adding any occupation or course to your approved list. • Retire or pause weak programs so growth reflects real-time employer demand.

Appendix: Example ratings

Consider using the example ratings below as a reference as you're thinking about how to self-assess and calibrate before you mark a color. Many dimension ratings are actually likely to sit somewhere between Red and Green.

Dimension	A RED rating looks like...	A GREEN rating looks like...
A) Engagement to build and sustain momentum		
1 Coalition & partners	The coalition met once, at launch, and is now dormant.	The coalition is a standing implementation group with a live agenda.
2 Students	Employer input informed no decisions; students found options by chance.	Trusted messengers reach students who benefit most.
3 Employers	Employer input was not considered and program selections are misaligned with employer needs.	Employer / economic signals inform the program list.
B) Planning & self-assessment		
4 Approve & track to a trajectory	Reporting to the Department of Education is the only data tracking the state does.	Managing to a trajectory with quarterly reviews owned internally.
5 Data as a tool, not a box to check	Data is filed for federal compliance and never influences program choices or future planning.	Data steers which programs to strengthen, pause, or to encourage to apply.
C) Building capacity to offer more programs		
6 Provider support	Colleges interpret the eligibility standards alone, without support or peer problem solving facilitated.	Active support to redesign programs toward standards and to build a strong pipeline.
7 Deliberate growth	The list grew by institutional convenience or inertia.	The list grew from real, evidenced demand; weak programs were retired.