The purpose of this guide is to empower students to use career pathway maps to set goals, record milestones and track progress along a career path. Some adult learners may need assistance with developing a career pathway map, others may be able to do this on their own. For additional assistance with career pathway mapping, please contact the Workforce Development System Liaison Project.

**Step 1: Self-Assess**

* Encourage students to reflect on their interests, skills, and values.
* Provide tools like interest inventories or skill assessments from websites such as [O\*NET OnLine®](https://www.onetonline.org/) or [CareerOneStop](https://www.careeronestop.org/).
* Explore [Workforce Preparation Skills](https://www.paadultedresources.org/pa-foundation-skills/) and identify personal strengths.

**Step 2: Research Options**

* Share resources about high-demand careers and local industries. Use labor force statistics from [Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA)](https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/statistic-materials.html). Some specific documents students can access for regional information within CWIA would be [County Population & Labor Force Statistics Dashboard](https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/statistic-materials/dashboards/county-stats.html) and [Industry Clusters](https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/statistic-materials/products/industry-clusters.html).
* Discuss pathways within sectors (e.g., Health Care, Building and Construction, Advanced Manufacturing).
* Explain the value of stackable credentials and lifelong learning.

**Step 3: Map Out the Journey**

* **Starting Point**: Identify their current status (e.g., education level, work experience).
* **Short-Term Goals**: Specify immediate steps, like obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, completing credential translation and/or evaluation for foreign credentials, entering postsecondary education, or enrolling in a training program.
* **Long-Term Goals**: Define ultimate career aspirations.
* **Milestones**: Plot key achievements needed to progress, such as certifications or internships.

**Step 4: Identify Resources and Support**

* Help students locate available resources, such as:
  + Financial aid.
  + Tutoring or mentorship programs.
  + Childcare or transportation assistance.
  + Apprenticeship opportunities.
* Support students in identifying strategies to help students achieve their goals.

**Step 5: Action Plan**

* Develop a clear, actionable plan with timelines.
* Assign accountability by identifying who will support each step (e.g., instructors, counselors, family members).
* Support students set goals and identify next steps.
* Explain the variety of occupations available within industry clusters.
* Work with students to research different jobs available with an employer.
* Explain the process of obtaining new employment.
* Identify partners that can provide credential translation and evaluation. [Supporting Language Learners with Career Planning](https://www.paadultedresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ELL-Career-Planning-Flyer-8-19-22-FINAL.pdf)
* Assist in locating potential training providers for upskilling or training.

***Student Support   
Coordinators can:***

***Students can:***

***Instructors can:***

* Work with local partners to identify knowledge and skills required for entry level jobs.
* Connect academic skills to a variety of entry level jobs in an industry.
* Create a classroom activity where students match and order education requirements to occupations beginning at entry level.
* Explain the importance of networking and interpersonal relationships needed to move along a career path.
* Connect the academic skills taught in the classroom to the occupations on student career pathway maps.
* Explain the transference of skills and knowledge from one occupation to another.
* Complete pathway maps of their own past jobs and compare and contrast skills, knowledge, and tasks among those jobs.
* Complete pathway maps of occupations held by family members.
* Use a [blank career map](https://www.paadultedresources.org/blank-career-pathways-map-pdf/) to plan next-step options, then compare and contrast the effort involved in moving along different paths.
* Explore and record on the map the educational requirements and certifications needed to move along a career path.
* Identify all relevant information needed to make a decision about pursuing a particular career path (e.g., salary, certification, OJT, openings, job growth).
* Complete the map while listening to a guest speaker, performing a job shadow, or watching an occupational video.
* Examine sample industry cluster maps for your local area.