



Evidence Supporting the Use of the ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate®

The purpose of this paper is to summarize the validity evidence collected to date on the updated ACT WorkKeys® assessments—Workplace Documents, Applied Math, and Graphic Literacy—that form the foundation of the ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate® (ACT WorkKeys NCRC®). The assessments and the WorkKeys NCRC are measures of cognitive foundational workplace skills and are used for a variety of purposes, some of which involve high-stakes decisions. ACT issues the WorkKeys NCRC at four levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. The levels are determined by the scores a test taker earns on the three WorkKeys assessments.

The validity of a test is the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores for proposed uses of the test. The primary sources of guidance for test publishers are the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (1978), the *Standards for Educational and Psychological*

related cognit



The identification of these three skills as foundationally critical to a wide array of jobs in areas ranging from manufacturing to health care to information technology is supported by over 20 years of research conducted by ACT's job profiling services and the evaluation of the skill requirements for a wide variety of industries and occupations.

Based on ACT's job profiling studies and meta-analyses conducted by other researchers, individuals' foundational cognitive skills are highly predictive of their ability to succeed in a wide variety of occupations that cut across multiple industries and businesses.

What information did ACT use to develop its updated WorkKeys assessments?

ACT primarily used information from three sources:

1. Professional literature, including white papers sponsored by business, manufacturing, and think tanks, including ACT's Holistic Framework®, to identify 21st-century job skills
2. ACT's content and job profiling expertise related to workplace reading, applied mathematics, and graphic literacy
3. Input, feedback, standards provided by a team of external experts who reviewed all ACT documentation. Team members included specialists with experience in human resources, job placement, advanced manufacturing, state workforce development, business consulting, community college, or academic research.

How did ACT evaluate the quality of the updated assessments?

ACT conducted three sets of field test studies, each with a specific purpose:

- 1) A timing Study, to ensure that all examinees would have an adequate amount of time to