

## Adult Diploma Requirements in Other States: Vermont

### Overview

The Adult Diploma Program is designed specifically for adults with experience in meeting family and work responsibilities. ADP works best with adults age 20 or older who have been out of school for several years. Persons age 18-19 years of age can enroll with a placement form from the ADP assessor in their local center. Students can work at their own pace and at a location convenient to them, tailor assignments to fit with their own experiences and needs, and receive individualized feedback and support from the ADP assessor.

### ADP PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Adult Diploma Program (ADP) is an assessment process that requires students to complete performance-based projects to demonstrate performance standards that align with the [EFF Content Standards](#) and the Vermont Framework of Standards.

The students are asked to demonstrate these skills on practical tasks relevant to adult lives. For example, a student might be asked to:

1. Write a letter in order to advocate for a particular point of view
2. Compare products and make a purchase decision
3. Calculate and compare interest rates on a loan
4. Read several types of articles in order to research a particular topic
5. Locate community resources to meet a personal or professional need

Completing the assigned tasks will call on the student to gather information, organize and analyze information, draw conclusions, and apply findings to real problems and/or projects. Students complete their tasks at home and meet with an assessor to review it against the list of skills and performance criteria for satisfactory completion.

ADP works with nearly 100 adults each year. Many choose to enroll in ADP because they prefer to work on practical projects rather than take an exam like the GED and because it enables them to earn a high school diploma from their local high school rather than an equivalency certificate.

There are no fees charged to an adult who enrolls in the Adult Diploma Program. ADP costs are reimbursed from the state education fund on a per student basis. The program is operated under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Agency of Education which contracts with an Adult Education and Literacy organization for delivery of ADP services statewide.

### **DETAILS OF ADP DESIGN**

Most students take 4-9 months to complete the Adult Diploma Program (ADP) process. The length of time required varies based on individual schedules and different needs for instruction in conjunction with ADP.

New students begin their ADP experience by completing a series of basic skills assessments. The purpose of this is to determine if the student has the reading, writing, and math skills necessary to complete the take home projects. The student meets with an assessor to complete the written and oral assessments. If the student successfully demonstrates the required reading, writing, and math skills, he/she advances. Students who do not demonstrate the required skills are given a profile of the skills they need to upgrade and a referral to an adult education organization that can provide them with free services. When they have upgraded their skills, they return to ADP and complete a new series of assessments to demonstrate their readiness to advance.

Students in the program demonstrate the completion by five projects. Each project asks the student to complete a series of tasks. They also will be asked to verify occupational skill during this phase. This can be done through employer evaluation or a performance demonstration with a community expert in the specialized field. Completion of advanced education or training can also be used to demonstrate occupational competency.

As students complete the assigned projects, they build an individual portfolio of their work. This portfolio will be sent to another trained assessor, the Vermont Agency of Education and the diploma granting high school for review and approval.

Source: [Vermont Adult Education and Literacy Adult Diploma Program Web site](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_adulted/adp.html)  
([http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm\\_adulted/adp.html](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_adulted/adp.html))

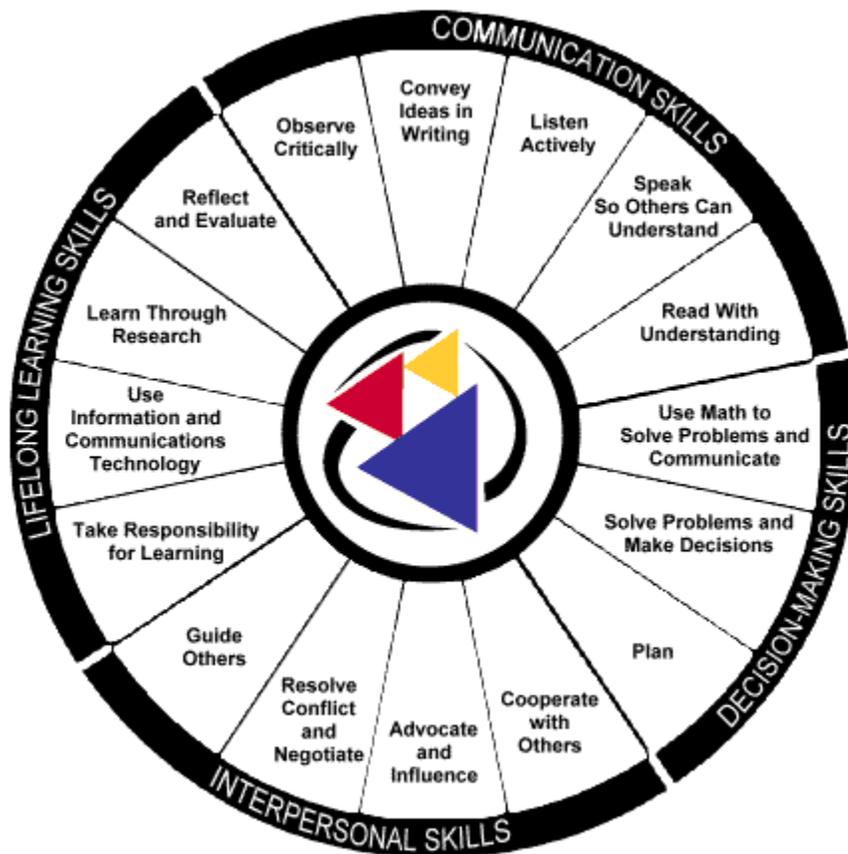
### **Model: Equipped for the Future (EFF)**

Starting in 1994, the National Institute for Literacy began an initiative called Equipped for the Future (EFF) to develop a framework for adult learning based on content standards were constructed to strengthen the ability of adult education providers to improve their programs to better meet the needs of adult learners and the wider community. EFF is now managed by the University of Tennessee – Knoxville Center for Literacy Education and Employment (CLEE).

Here you will find information on the foundational pieces of the EFF framework including the [four purposes for learning](#), the [three role maps](#), the [13 common activities](#) that overlap the roles, and the 16 [EFF Content Standards](#).

## EFF Content Standards

The [EFF Content Standards](#) are the fundamental tools in facilitating the EFF approach to teaching, learning, & assessing and for program improvement. The standards represent a consensus of what is important for learners to know and be able to do and are linked to the primary purposes that motivate adult learning. [**Note:** Click on the image below to go directly to the EFF Skills Wheel.]



## Four Purposes for Learning

The tools that make up the Equipped for the Future (EFF) Content Framework include Four Purposes for Learning:

- **ACCESS**  
To gain access to information and resources so that adults can orient themselves in the world

- **VOICE**  
To express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account
- **ACTION**  
To solve problems and make decisions without having to rely on others to mediate the world for them
- **BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE**  
Learning to learn so that adults can be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes

**Putting the Focus on Fundamental Purposes for Learning.** Adult learners helped the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) identify the Four Purposes for Learning in the initial stage of EFF. In 1994, NIFL invited teachers, tutors, and adult learners across the country to help answer the question behind National Education Goal 6:

*What do adults need to know and be able to do in order to be literate, compete in a global economy, and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?*

Written responses came from over 1,500 adult students, participating in 149 programs in 34 states and Puerto Rico. They reflected the full spectrum of adult education students, in terms of age, race, culture, and ethnicity, as well as the full spectrum of programs, including community-based organizations, community colleges, volunteer programs, and vocational and public schools. They described: 1. What students saw as the chief responsibilities of their primary life roles and 2. What students expected to gain from formal learning opportunities to help them fulfill those responsibilities.

The students' responses presented a remarkably consistent vision of what adults want literacy programs to prepare them to do. They provided EFF with a strong starting point for building a purpose-based framework grounded in how adults expect literacy - and, more broadly, education - to prepare them to carry out their roles as parents, workers, and citizens. Starting with what adults do - with what they need literacy for - provided the foundation elements that led EFF to identify sixteen skills and a set of content standards. The EFF Standards, published in 2000, completed the content framework development.

**Adopting a Purposeful Approach to Education.** Purposeful teaching and learning is the first key research principle underlying the EFF initiative. The tools that make up the EFF Content Framework support a purposeful approach to education because they make explicit the core knowledge and skills adults need to meet their goals and purposes. Learning for access and

orientation; learning for voice; learning for independent action; learning in order to build a bridge to the future. All EFF work is anchored in helping adults accomplish these four purposes.

***Further reading:***

The Four Purposes for Learning research and development is fully described in Section 4 of the [\*EFF Research Report: Building the Framework, 1993-1997\*](#) (Merrifield, 2000)

[\*Equipped for the Future: A Customer-Driven Vision for Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning\*](#) (Stein, 1995) contains a synthesis of adult learner perspectives on Goal 6 and examples of the actual essays submitted to NIFL.

[\*EFF Research Principle: A Purposeful and Transparent Approach to Teaching and Learning\*](#) (Gillespie, 2002) summarizes the research basis for this key EFF principle; includes examples of EFF program practices.

[\*Results That Matter: An EFF Approach to Quality\*](#) (Bingman and Stein, 2001) presents five program practices that reflect the theoretical foundations of the EFF initiative, including a purposeful and transparent approach to education.

## **Three Role Maps**

**The Equipped for the Future Content Framework includes three role maps.** The Equipped for the Future (EFF) Role Maps describe what adults do when they are effective in carrying out three primary roles -- citizen/community member, worker, and parent/family member. Each role map includes a central purpose for the role, broad areas of responsibility that are critical to achieving that purpose, and key activities that further define the broad areas of responsibility.

**The role maps represent the first step toward developing standards for adult education.** EFF took a different route from other standards-based initiatives established to improve the quality of public education. Rather than beginning by defining knowledge and skills within key academic subject areas like science, math, English, and social studies, EFF began by defining what adults do in the three primary roles reflected in the national education goals. Using the same methods that are used in work analysis to identify critical work functions and key activities, EFF research partners developed maps for all three roles. The three role maps were finalized in 1997. Then EFF identified role indicators -- what effective performance looks like in those roles and used that as a starting point to identify necessary knowledge and skills. The role

indicators help to clarify what knowledge and skills to look for to determine whether an activity is being performed well.

**The role maps are simple tools to use.** With the aid of the role maps, adult education teachers and programs can organize and assess curriculum and instruction. Students can use the role maps to clarify their purposes for enrolling in an adult education program; to develop both long- and short- term goals; to revisit goals in light of what they are learning; and to discuss how teaching and learning is situated in an authentic, real-life context that has meaning for the student. The role maps are also important tools for promoting the transfer of learning and the active application of knowledge and skills.

## Worker Role Map

Effective workers adapt to change and actively participate in meeting the demands of a changing workplace in a changing world.

### Broad Areas of Responsibility

			
<p><b>Do the Work</b> Workers use personal and organizational resources to perform their work and adapt to changing work demands</p>	<p><b>Work With Others</b> Workers interact one-on-one and participate as members of a team to meet job requirements</p>	<p><b>Work Within the Big Picture</b> Workers recognize that formal and informal expectations shape options in their work lives and often influence their level of success</p>	<p><b>Plan and Direct Personal and Professional Growth</b> Workers prepare themselves for the changing demands of the economy through personal renewal and growth</p>

### Key Activities

<p>Organize, plan, and prioritize work</p> <p>Use technology, resources, and other work tools to put ideas and work directions into action</p> <p>Respond to and meet new work challenges Take responsibility for assuring work quality, safety, and results</p>	<p>Communicate with others inside and outside the organization</p> <p>Give assistance, motivation, and direction</p> <p>Seek and receive assistance, motivation, and direction</p> <p>Value people different from yourself</p>	<p>Work within organizational norms</p> <p>Respect organizational goals, performance, and structure to guide work activities</p> <p>Balance individual roles and needs with those of the organization</p> <p>Guide individual and organizational priorities based on industry trends, labor laws/contracts, and competitive practices</p>	<p>Balance and support work, career, and personal needs</p> <p>Pursue work activities that provide personal satisfaction and meaning</p> <p>Plan, renew, and pursue personal and career goals</p> <p>Learn new skills</p>
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## Citizen/Community Member Role Map

Effective citizens and community members take informed action to make a positive difference in their lives, communities, and world.

### Broad Areas of Responsibility

			
<p><b>Become and Stay Informed</b> Citizens and community members find and use information to identify and solve problems and contribute to the community</p>	<p><b>Form and Express Opinions and Ideas</b> Citizens and community members develop a personal voice and use it individually and as a group</p>	<p><b>Work Together</b> Citizens and community members interact with other people to get things done toward a common purpose</p>	<p><b>Take Action to Strengthen Communities</b> Citizens and community members exercise their rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of groups to improve the world around them</p>

**Key Activities**

<p>Identify, monitor, and anticipate problems, community needs, strengths, and resources for yourself and others</p> <p>Recognize and understand human, legal, and civic rights and responsibilities for yourself and others</p> <p>Figure out how the system that affects an issue works</p> <p>Identify how to have an impact and recognize that individuals can make a difference</p> <p>Find, interpret, analyze, and use diverse sources of information, including personal experience</p>	<p>Strengthen and express a sense of self that reflects personal history, values, beliefs, and roles in the larger community</p> <p>Learn from others' experiences and ideas</p> <p>Communicate so that others understand</p> <p>Reflect on and reevaluate your own opinions and ideas</p>	<p>Get involved in the community and get others involved</p> <p>Respect others and work to eliminate discrimination and prejudice</p> <p>Define common values, visions, and goals</p> <p>Manage and resolve conflict</p> <p>Participate in group processes and decision making</p>	<p>Help yourself and others</p> <p>Educate others</p> <p>Influence decision makers and hold them accountable</p> <p>Provide leadership within the community</p>
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## Parent/Family Role Map

Effective family members contribute to building and maintaining a strong family system that promotes growth and development

### Broad Areas of Responsibility

		
<p><b>Promote Family Members' Growth and Development</b> Family members support the growth and development of all family members, including themselves</p>	<p><b>Meet Family Needs and Responsibilities</b> Family members meet the needs and responsibilities of the family unit</p>	<p><b>Strengthen the Family System</b> Family members create and maintain a strong sense of family</p>

### Key Activities

<p>Make and pursue plans for self-improvement</p> <p>guide and mentor other family members</p> <p>Foster informal education of children</p> <p>Support children's formal education</p> <p>Direct and discipline children</p>	<p>Provide for safety and physical needs</p> <p>Manage family resources</p> <p>Balance priorities to meet multiple needs and responsibilities</p> <p>Give and receive support outside the immediate family</p>	<p>Create a vision for the family and work to achieve it</p> <p>Promote values, ethics, and cultural heritage within the family</p> <p>Form and maintain supportive family relationships</p> <p>Provide opportunities for each family member to experience success</p> <p>Encourage open communication among the generations</p>
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## 13 Common Activities

**Thirteen activities are important in all three roles.** The Equipped for the Future (EFF) Framework includes a set of Common Activities, defined as those that occur in all three roles - parent/family member, worker, and citizen/community member. The following list comprises the 13 Common Activities. In each, a full description of the Common Activity is shown with examples of role specific activities and the list of skills that adults need to use to carry them out.

[Gather, Analyze, and Use Information](#)

[Manage Resources](#)

[Work Within the Big Picture](#)

[Work Together](#)

[Provide Leadership](#)

[Guide and Support Others](#)

[Seek Guidance and Support from Others](#)

[Develop and Express Sense of Self](#)

[Respect Others and Value Diversity](#)

[Exercise Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Create and Pursue Vision and Goals](#)

[Use Technology and Other Tools to Accomplish Goals](#)

[Keep Pace With Change](#)

**The Common Activities are simple tools to use.** With the assistance of the Common Activities, teachers and students can:

- find a common focus for instruction that supports learning across individual goals and participants' lives;
- discuss how teaching and learning is situated in an authentic, real-life context that has meaning for the student;
- explore the potential transfer of learning across the primary adult roles.

**Building a common framework.** By the end of June 1997, EFF development partners had accomplished a great deal: They had refined and validated role maps describing broad areas of responsibility and key activities. For each role they had developed a set of skills and knowledge based on the research literature. They had created linkages between the role activities and the skills and knowledge needed to carry them out.

As a basis for standards, however, the separate roles needed to be linked and brought into one coherent framework. Developing one framework that crosses the three roles is consistent with life experience. There may be three roles but one individual carries out all three, and that individual does not keep his or her life in separate compartments. Although the roles are distinct in many ways, there are many areas of overlap and interconnections. There is a great deal of evidence of transfer and interconnections between learning in one role and performance in another.

The three roles also needed to be linked from the perspective of the adult education system. One set of standards rather than separate role-based standards will serve the field better. While some programs focus particularly on work-related learning, or parenting, most support individual goals across students' lives. Policymakers and teachers alike need the clarity and simplicity of a single set of standards.

***Further reading:***

The Common Activities research and development is fully described in Section 6 of the [EFF Research Report: Building the Framework, 1993-1997](#) (Merrifield, 2000)

[EFF Research Principle: A Contextualized Approach to Curriculum and Instruction](#) (Gillespie, 2002) summarizes the research basis for this key EFF principle; addresses how the EFF approach can encourage transfer of learning and active application of knowledge and skills.

The EFF model is popular with some school districts throughout Minnesota.

Source: [Equipped for the Future Web site, Center for Literacy, Education and Employment, University of Tennessee – Knoxville](http://eff.cls.utk.edu/) (<http://eff.cls.utk.edu/>)

## **Policy**

Vermont state statute and rules are very flexible regarding graduation standards for adults and are currently in flux. However, state the adult diploma model and programs will continue in their current form.

## **For more information**

[Equipped for the Future Web site, Center for Literacy, Education and Employment, University of Tennessee – Knoxville](http://eff.cls.utk.edu/) (<http://eff.cls.utk.edu/>)

[Vermont Adult Education and Literacy Adult Diploma Program Web site](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_adulted/adp.html)  
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