

Postsecondary CBE and CBL: Defining Terms

CBE is a distinct form of CBL. CBE is distinguished by being a full program of study, offered by an accredited postsecondary institution, that leads to a recognized educational credential.

Competency-Based Learning

Structured and unstructured opportunities for learning and/or assessment of learning, both self-created and those designed by employers, educational institutions, and training providers, that are aligned to competencies.

- Courses or modules offered by institutions
- Prior learning assessment
- Military learning
- Apprenticeships and other work-based learning
- Industry certifications
- Government licensures

Competency-Based Education

Definitions vary, but core components include: **structured** learning opportunities designed by **postsecondary institutions** that **lead to recognized educational credentials**, created by **backward design** from a disciplinary perspective on what a credential-holder should know and be able to do, and **assessed authentically**.

- Direct assessment programs
- Non-direct assessment CBE programs

Developed by the National Research Collaborative on
Competency-Based Education & Learning hosted by the
American Institutes for Research.

For more information about CBL and CBE:

Visit: cberesearch.org

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