

Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse (AODA) Frequently Asked Questions



Do you have a degree in a related field but don't have the 360 hours needed from one provider?

Gateway can evaluate your coursework and tell you which of the eight courses you have already earned, and don't need to enroll in. Then, after completing the remaining courses, Gateway will give you a certificate that meets the DRL "360 hours from one provider" requirement. Some of these courses are offered online.

Are you a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), an Advanced Practice Social Worker (APSW), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) or Marriage & Family Therapist looking for the education necessary for Substance Abuse Specialty authorization?

Gateway courses can be used toward the 180-hour requirement established by the Department of Safety and Professional Services. We offer four (4) AODA courses online that have been used for 45-60 hours each, including an online Psychopharmacology course that meets the entire 45 hour Pharmacology requirement. Students can take as many of the four (4) courses as they need without submitting a transcript for evaluation. The information regarding the 360 hour requirement does not apply to your situation - your LPC, ACSW, LCSW & MFT credential exempts you from needing to follow that format. However, if you'd like to seek the SAC or CSAC credential instead of the specialty authorization the information below is applicable. Some people prefer to get the specialty authorization first, getting their SAC or CSAC afterward. One benefit from using that option is you will be able to use the specialty authorization in lieu of the 360 hour education requirement, thus ultimately getting your SAC or CSAC with the 180 hours of education needed for the specialty authorization and dodging the 360 hour requirement.

Do you have a degree in a related field but don't have a LPC or social work license and need the 360 hours from one preapproved provider?

Gateway can evaluate your coursework and tell you which of the eight courses you no longer need. Then, after completing the remaining courses, Gateway will give you a certificate that meets the Department of Safety and Professional Services "360 hours from one provider" requirement. Four of these courses are offered online.

To officially evaluate your degree and/or transcript, students need to apply to the program and submit official documentation. Learn more: [Transfer to Gateway](#).

If your degree is in Social Work or Counseling, you are eligible for our Advanced Standing. This means that you will be exempt from a minimum of four (4) of our eight courses. The remaining courses are all offered online and in the classroom. Below is an explanation of Gateway policy regarding Advanced Standing for our AODA certificate.

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AODA Certificate Advanced Standing

Students applying with a transcript from a MSW or Doctoral Program:

- Submit a transcript from your degree granting institution and proof that the school is accredited by EPAS for MSW programs and CACREP for MS in Counseling or Doctoral Program to the Office of Advanced Standing.
- Students will be awarded the Following credits:
 - 520-105, Interviewing and Record Keeping, 3 Credits
 - 520-115, Intro to Counseling, 3 Credits
 - 520-140, Group Counseling, 3 Credits
 - 520-127, Professional Practices, 3 Credits
- These credits will appear on the student's transcript with the grade of "PR". Students will pay 40 percent of the tuition for these courses to be applied to their transcript plus a \$15 processing fee. If a student has completed a comparable course they will receive credit for the course without the 40% fee. Student is responsible of completing at least 25 percent of the certificate at Gateway Technical College so they will have to take at least two courses at gateway to get our AODA certificate

Students applying with a BSW degree:

- Submit a transcript from your degree granting institution and proof that the school is accredited by EPAS for possible transfer of credits to Human Services program counselor.
- If requesting advanced standing for:
 - 520-105, Interviewing and Record Keeping, 3 Credits
 - 520-115, Intro to Counseling, 3 Credits
 - 520-140, Group Counseling, 3 Credits
 - 520-127, Professional Practices, 3 Credits
- Student will request an advanced standing packet for the AODA certificate which includes the following:
 - Employer Evaluation of Competencies for each course
 - Resume' indicating 1-3 year of work experience in the Human Services field
 - Letter of recommendation from current employer

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Once submitted to the Office of Advanced Standing documents will be sent to the department for approval. Credits will be awarded with the grade of "PR". Student will pay 40 percent of the tuition for these courses to be applied to the transcript plus a \$15 processing fee unless they have taken a comparable course. **Once you have decided to apply for advanced standing the process cannot be reversed. You will be charged the 40% even if you decide to pursue the specialty designation instead.**

Thus the maximum number of courses you would need to take is four (4): AODA Rehabilitation, Mental Health & Substance Abuse, Psychopharmacology, and Family & Chemical Abuse. These can be taken online or in a traditional classroom setting.

Multiple online sections will be offered in the fall, spring and summer semesters.

The following links may help you:

- [SAC-IT Information](#) | [SAC-IT Application](#)

To obtain the SAC-IT you need 100 hours of AODA education which can be gotten from a variety of sources. You can use our courses towards some or all of the 100 hours required. The Department of Safety and Professional Services does not pre-approve individual courses, only complete programs. However when Gateway submitted our AODA certificate for approval we broke down our eight courses in the manner listed below:

Course (Hours): Breakdown

- AODA Rehabilitation (60): 15 case management, 15 professional responsibility, 15 counseling, 15 education
- Psychopharmacology (45): 15 assessment, 30 education
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse (45): 25 case management, 15 assessment, 5 professional responsibility
- Family and Chemical Abuse (60): 15 case management, 15 assessment, 20 education, 10 counseling
- Interviewing Principles & Record Keeping (60): 30 assessment, 10 professional responsibility, 20 case management
- Intro to Counseling (60): 10 professional responsibility, 15 case management, 35 counseling
- Group Counseling (60): 10 professional responsibility, 35 counseling, 5 assessment, 10 education
- Professional Practices In Human Services(45): 40 professional responsibility, 5 education

Note: We ask for 60 hours for classes that are four hour classroom classes and 45 hours for classes that meet for three hours.

- [SAC Information](#) | [SAC Application](#)

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- [CSAC Information](#) | [CSAC Application](#)
- [I.C.R.C. exam schedule](#)
- [Clinical Supervisor in Training information](#)
- [Intermediate Clinical Supervisor information](#)
- [Independent Clinical Supervisor information](#)

The Department of Safety and Professional Services has created new names for the old credentials. The list below will show you the previous WCB credential and the new Department of Safety and Professional Services credential equivalent.

| WCB credential | New DSPS Credential |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Registered Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor (RADC I) | Substance Abuse Counselor-in-Training |
| Certified Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor II (CADC, CADC-D, and CADC II) | Substance Abuse Counselor |
| Certified Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor III (CADC III) | Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor |
| Registered Clinical Supervisor (RCS) | Clinical Supervisor-in-Training |
| Certified Clinical Supervisor I or grandpersoned (CCS-I, CCS-G) | Intermediate Clinical Supervisor |
| Certified Clinical Supervisor II | Independent Clinical Supervisor |

Frequently Asked Questions

- **I had the RADC I credential before the Department of Safety and Professional Services took over. How will the new educational requirements impact me?**
When the Department of Safety and Professional Services took over they established special provisions for those with the RADC I credentials and gave them a five year period to progress to the next level. That five year window has expired and now people who had the RADC I credential are treated just like everyone else who is beginning the process.
- **I let my RADC I credential lapse. Can I contact the Department of Safety and Professional Services to get reinstated as a Substance Abuse Counselor-in-Training?**
No, you'll have to go through the process as if you were never an RADC I. For most, this will be relatively simple: Proof of the appropriate 100 hours of education (as outlined on the educational requirements link listed earlier on the homepage) and have supervision by either an Independent

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Clinical Supervisor or a Master's level Chapter 457 credential holder who holds the AODA practice specialty under MPSW 1.09. The Clinical Supervisor-in-Training (formerly RCS) is no longer sufficient to supervise Substance Abuse Counselor-in- Training credential holders.

- **I passed the Elements exam given by the WCB but never received the RADC I credential. Can I use my elements test instead of the 100 of education to become a SAC-IT?**

No, you must go through the new requirements.

- **Who decides if my education fulfills the 100 hours in areas needed for the Substance Abuse Counselor-in-Training credential?**

Your clinical supervisor, after reviewing your education, will make the initial determination. The Department of Safety and Professional Services will then make the final determination.

- **I have the Substance Abuse Counselor credential as I was formerly a CADC II. I don't have a degree but will soon have my 7,000 hours. Will I need to get a degree now, even though I didn't need one before?**

Yes, everyone will need at least an associate degree to become a Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor. You may want to review our associate degree in Human Services as a viable option. Learn more: [Human Services Associate](#) program page.

- **I have the Substance Abuse Counselor credential and am moving out of the state. Will I receive reciprocity?**

No. There is no reciprocity for either the SAC-IT or the SAC credentials. Reciprocity is available only to those credential holders who have a degree. You will need to become a Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor to become eligible for reciprocity. Then it would depend on if the state you're moving to grants reciprocity. Generally if the state you're moving to uses the I.C.R.C. and you meet the degree requirements of the state you can receive reciprocity.

- **I have an associate, bachelors and masters degrees that were all approved by the WCB. Can I get occupational experience for all of them?**

No, you can only use educational experience from one degree. That would be the highest degree that you have in an area related to AODA. However the degree does not need to be preapproved By the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services. For example a Master's in Counseling or Social Work will count regardless of which college it came from.

- **My degree is in an area related to substance abuse counseling. Does this mean I will be able to use it for occupational experience?**

Yes. The Department of Safety and Professional Services approves certain degrees to meet the requirement that one must have a degree to obtain the Clinical Substance Abuse level of certification. Unlike the 360 hour AODA program that needs preapproval individual degrees do not need preapproval. For example, if the Department of Safety and Professional Services states that Social Work is an acceptable degree then all Social Work degrees from all colleges will meet that requirement. Likewise all Social Work degrees would count for occupational experience listed in the box below. They have not yet announced all degrees that will count but we've been told that Human Services, Criminal Justice, Nursing, Psychology, Social Work and Counseling degrees all count. Many of our students

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pursue Gateway's Human Services degree which when combined with the AODA certificate qualifies for the occupational credit listed in the next question.

- **What occupational credit do I qualify for based upon my degree?**

The tables for educational credit and degrees are below

| Substance Abuse Counselor | Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Associate degree 500 hours | Associate degree 1000 hours |
| Bachelor's degree 1000 hours | Bachelor's degree 2000 hours |
| Master's degree 2000 hours | Master's degree 4000 hours |

Thus, with your Master's degree you will qualify for the Substance Abuse Counselor credential with 2,000 hours of additional work experience and the Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor certification with an additional 1000 hours (a total of 3,000 hours) work experience. This is true regardless of whether or not your school was approved or the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services doesn't pre-approve degrees for occupational experience; they only approve programs/degrees/certificates for the 360 hour education piece.

I have a degree in Counseling (or Social Work) but the program wasn't preapproved by Department of Safety and Professional Services as being a comprehensive, 360 hour program. How do I go about getting Gateway's AODA certificate?

You will need to apply for our AODA certificate to be enrolled in the program. The application process includes transfer credit and prior degree evaluation. After your degree evaluation is complete, you could connect with an academic advisor to discuss your remaining coursework. [Start the application process online](#). You may register for a course before you apply to the program. Any courses that you have taken that are similar to our eight (8) courses will transfer in at no charge. For the four (4) courses that we offer Advanced Standing where you haven't taken a similar course there is a 40% charge per course. For the four (4) courses we don't offer Advanced Standing you would be expected to take them unless you have previously taken a similar college-level course. As an example let's say you have taken an Ethics course (our Professional Practices equivalent), a counseling course and a Psychopharmacology course in your studies. Those three (3) courses would transfer in at no charge. You would pay the 40% Advanced Standing fee for both Group Counseling and Interviewing and Record Keeping and you would be required to take AODA Rehabilitation, Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and Family and Chemical Abuse either in the classroom or online.

- **This sounds too easy, especially compared to other ways of becoming certified. Does the Department of Safety and Professional Services know that students are completing some of the coursework necessary for obtaining your AODA certificate at other institutions?**
Absolutely! All colleges allow students to transfer in coursework. We notified DRL (now the Department of Safety and Professional Services) before we put our Advanced Standing policy into practice and they had no objections.
- **I've heard that I will no longer have to take the oral exam to get the Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor credential. Is that true?**
Yes. This is because the ICRC now includes material that was previously covered in the oral exam.
- **I have a degree in Psychology that is not preapproved and want to become a CSAC. I understand that I must get 360 hours from one preapproved program and also have a degree in a related area. Does this mean I need to get Gateway's Human Services degree rather than the AODA certificate?**
No, your degree is in a related area and doesn't need to be preapproved - only the 360 hours need to come from a preapproved program. I recommend that you contact our program advisors and find out which of our courses you need to take to obtain our AODA certificate. That would meet all of the educational requirements for the CSAC. If you had a degree in an unrelated area such as History or Accounting you would need to get a related degree such as Gateway's Human Services degree.
- **Which degrees does the Department of Safety and Professional Services consider to be related?**
Excellent question! I've asked the State this myself and have not gotten a definitive answer - I'll post the list when (if) it becomes available. For now the best I can say is that it must be at least an Associate Degree in "behavioral health". I've been assured by the Department of Safety and Professional Services that the following degrees qualify: social work, counseling, nursing, psychology, sociology and criminal justice. If your degree is not listed and you are wondering if your degree qualifies as a "behavioral health" degree I suggest you contact the State.
- **What do I need to do to take the ICRC examination?**
You will need to fill out an application and send it with payment to the Department of Safety and Professional Services. Here is a link for exam dates: <http://internationalcredentialing.org/testing> In order to be eligible to take the ICRC you must supply proof that you have completed the 360 hours of education required. There is no employment requirement to take the ICRC examination.
- **I have 7,000 hours as an AODA counselor but have never had an RADC I or SAC-IT. Do I need to get that credential before becoming a C-SAC?**
Although most people become SAC-ITs first there is no requirement that you do so. You will still need to have your 7,000 hours supervised by someone with the proper credential, complete a comprehensive 360 hour program and pass the ICRC.

- **I have the LPC credential (or a Social Work license) and want to get the Substance Abuse Specialty Authorization. What do I need to do?**

You will need to fill out the application for the credential - here's the link to the forms.

<http://dsps.wi.gov/Default.aspx?Page=742bf5eb-3d51-4f0a-a446-eb1a41480422> . As you can see by the application you will need to pass the ICRC examination before you can obtain the credential. You'll also need your supervisor to fill out the form. You'll need to verify that you have completed 45 hours of Pharmacology and that you've met their total 180 hour AODA education requirement (135 + 45 in pharmacology). For the forms for social workers this link will provide links to all of the needed forms <http://dsps.wi.gov/Default.aspx?Page=21d883a2-8046-4a1e-9d44-185f19f5eabc> The requirements for the AODA Specialty designation are the same regardless of which Social Work license you hold.

- **The 360 hour requirement for those without an LPC states it must come from one provider. Is that true for those with an LPC or Social Work license that are seeking the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization?**

No, any training or coursework that you've had may be used if the Department of Safety and Professional Services agrees that it covers what you say it does. This is another reason why it is much easier to get the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization than the SAC or CSAC credential.

- **It sounds too easy to get the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization through Gateway's online courses, especially considering how much more difficult it is to get certified for those without the LPC or Social Work license. Are you certain that the Department of Safety and Professional Services will accept Gateway courses?**

As certain as anyone can be. The State does not preapprove any individual courses or trainings; they only preapprove 360 hour comprehensive programs like ours. All of the four (4) online courses are part of our approved program and they're all AODA - specific. LPC students have used our courses to meet both the 180 hour and 45 hour pharmacology in the past and have never been turned down. I can't imagine why they ever would be.

- **I have an LPC (or Social Work license) and want to work with AODA clients. Should I complete a preapproved AODA program that requires 360 hours of AODA education or get the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization?**

For most people with the LPC credential or Social Work license the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization is much easier to obtain. Few of our LPC students decide to get our AODA certificate; most simply take the 1-4 courses they need to get the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization. The Specialty designation can then be used as proof of education when applying for the SAC/CSAC, making it an effective way of reducing the education needed to get those credentials. If I had an LPC and would be faced with additional time and expense to get the CSAC rather than the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization I doubt if I would commit to the extra effort unless my employer requested me to. Later I may then use my Specialty designation as a way of getting my SAC/CSAC. Having said that there may be individual employers who would prefer the CSAC and some of our students get the Specialty designation on their way to getting the CSAC. However we've never had anyone with the Substance Abuse Specialty authorization who later decided they needed to complete a 360 hour program and returned to take additional courses.