

## American Council on Education Validates IBM Apprenticeship Program, Recommends College Credit to Participants

**New validation from the American Council on Education (ACE) allows IBM apprentices to earn up to 45 college credits from participating academic organizations, helping to fast-track their postsecondary degrees**



ARMONK, N.Y., Aug. 19, 2021 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Today, IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) announced that its 21<sup>st</sup> century apprenticeship program has earned official recognition from the American Council on Education (ACE) which, for the first time, will allow IBM apprentices to translate their 12 months of on-the-job training for up to 45 college credits, or roughly three semesters of college coursework, from participating academic institutions.

IBM's technical apprenticeship in software engineering will allow past, current and future IBM apprentices to apply their credits at participating two and four-year institutions across the country. This offers a unique opportunity for apprentices to fast-track their progression toward an associate's or bachelor's degree in pursuit of their career goals.

Earlier this year, ACE launched its [Apprenticeship Pathways project](#), in partnership with the Charles Koch Foundation, to expand the range of alternative educational experiences eligible for college credit and better leverage the impact of high-quality apprenticeships. As a result, IBM's software engineering apprenticeship will be represented in ACE-endorsed badges and transcripts on the Credly Acclaim platform, which translates learners' knowledge, skills, and achievements into digital credentials.

"Amid the pandemic, industry leaders nationwide are rethinking their approach towards education, skills training

and hiring. Apprenticeships have become an increasingly critical element in the country's skills portfolio because they can rapidly provide more people with access to new career opportunities, all while continuing to earn a paycheck," said Kelli Jordan, Director of skills, career and performance at IBM. "This validation by ACE reaffirms the impact of IBM's apprenticeship model and its ability to provide an opportunity to learn in-demand technical skills that can lead to some of technology's fastest growing careers without taking on student debt or taking time away from the workplace."

To date, IBM has trained nearly 1,000 apprentices across 17 states and 30 cities through its earn-while-you learn model. Their learning spans 25 apprenticeship career tracks, and the company also has made expanded access to apprenticeship a hallmark of its public policy advocacy, supporting, for example, Congressional passage of [The National Apprenticeship Act](#).

ACE, through its Learning Evaluations program, seeks to facilitate seamless pathways for learners, schools and employers to intersect – creating economic mobility and a skilled workforce. The ACE-endorsed badges and transcripts are designed to allow learners to easily transition between work and postsecondary education while retaining a record of all their learned skills.

"We are proud to validate programs like IBM's Software Engineering Apprenticeship, which provide opportunities for underserved student populations to improve their economic mobility through postsecondary education and professional advancement," said Michele Spires, executive director for Learning Evaluations at ACE. "This program empowers students to further their education while helping colleges and universities grow and diversify their student body."

According to the World Economic Forum, closing the global skills gap could add US\$11.5 trillion to the global GDP by 2028, but education and training systems need to keep pace with market demands. The ACE Software Engineer Apprenticeship validation can help support this future of work by allowing learners to leverage their skills across every available channel, and help them achieve their goals.

**For more information on IBM's Software Engineering Apprenticeship visit here:** <https://www.ibm.com/us-en/employment/newcollar/apprenticeships/>.

**For more information on credit recommendations for IBM's Software Engineering Apprenticeship visit here:** <https://www.acenet.edu/National-Guide/Pages/Organization.aspx?oid=ca1a01fd-c538-eb11-a813-000d3a33232a>.

## **About ACE**

The American Council on Education (ACE) is a membership organization that mobilizes the higher education community to shape effective public policy and foster innovative, high-quality practice. As the major coordinating body for the nation's colleges and universities, our strength lies in our diverse membership of more than 1,700 colleges and universities, related associations, and other organizations in America and abroad. ACE is the only major higher education association to represent all types of U.S. accredited, degree-granting institutions: two-year and four-year, public and private. Our members educate two out of every three students in all accredited, degree-granting U.S. institutions.

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