

Excerpt from US Personnel Office, Education Issue:

Agencies should use the following criteria to determine the acceptability of post high school education or training at an accredited business or technical school, junior college, college or university. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide documentation or proof that he or she has met the applicable educational provisions described in this subsection. An official transcript; statement from the institution's registrar, dean, or other appropriate official; or equivalent documentation is acceptable.

Agencies must ensure that the applicants' education or credentials meet the criteria below.

*a. Acceptability of Higher Education for Meeting Minimum Qualification Requirements*

**1. Accredited and Pre-Accredited/Candidate for Accreditation**—This category includes only those institutions that grant academic degrees. Such institutions must meet one of the General Schedule Qualification Policies following criteria for Federal employment:

- **Conventional/Accredited Institutions** — At the time the education was obtained, the entire institution, applicable school within the institution, or the applicable curriculum was appropriately accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. Military schools or military educational programs that meet this criterion are also acceptable. For additional information, refer to the U.S. Department of Education web site at <http://www.ed.gov> . A complete listing of all institutions accredited by recognized agencies, including those located outside of U.S. territories may be found in *Accredited Institutions of Post-Secondary Education*, a handbook published annually by the American Council on Education (ACE). Institutions located within the United States that have attained accreditation as well as recognized accrediting agencies are listed on the U.S. Department of Education web site at <http://www.ed.gov> .

- Correspondence or distance learning course work is also acceptable if the applicable school within the institution or applicable curriculum is accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. The distance learning courses should indicate the credit hours for each course and be indicated on the degree transcript together with traditional course work and credits.

- **Pre-Accredited/Candidate for Accreditation Status** — **At the time that the education was obtained, the entire institution, applicable school within the institution, or applicable curriculum had acquired "preaccreditation" or "candidate for accreditation status" that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.**

***If Student Loan Repayments are required for the education obtained, the institutions at the time the education was obtained are considered fully accredited by an accrediting body and recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.***

*Foreign Education* — Education completed outside of the United States must be deemed equivalent to that gained in conventional/accredited U.S. education programs to be acceptable for Federal employment. Most foreign education is not accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. A few medical schools are accredited under country standards that have been determined to be "comparable" to U.S. standards by the U.S. Department of Education's National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation. For foreign education that is not so accredited, agencies should follow the provisions below before considering such education for Federal employment.

Unless the foreign education meets the criteria in paragraph (a) above, applicants must submit all necessary documents to a private U.S. organization that specializes in interpretation of foreign educational credentials, commonly called a credential evaluation service.

**To be acceptable, the foreign credential evaluation must include/describe:**

- **The type of education received by the applicant;**
- **The level of education in relation to the U.S. education system, and state that its comparability recommendations follow the general guidelines of the U.S. National General Schedule Qualification Policies Council for the Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials;**
- **The content of the applicant's educational program earned abroad and the standard obtained;**
- **The status of the awarding foreign school's recognition and legitimacy in its home country's education system; and**
- **Any other information of interest such as what the evaluation service did to obtain this information, the qualifications of the evaluator, and any indications as to other problems such as forgery.**

Foreign credential evaluations that do not contain the above information or that state there is insufficient information provided by the applicant on which to base an evaluation should not be accepted. If the requested evaluation shows the foreign education to be legitimate and comparable to that expected of a candidate with U.S. credentials, it may be accepted at the discretion of the agency. For further information on the evaluation of foreign education, refer to the U.S. Department of Education's web site at <http://www.ed.gov>.

**Professional Licensure: Possession of a valid and current U.S. professional license by a graduate of a foreign professional school or program is sufficient proof that the foreign education has been determined to be equivalent to the requisite U.S. professional education in that occupational field.**

[www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-policies/#url=General-Policies](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-policies/#url=General-Policies). Retrieved: 10/4/13