



Health Care Licensing USA



Degree Mills & Axact Update



Secondary in Scandinavia

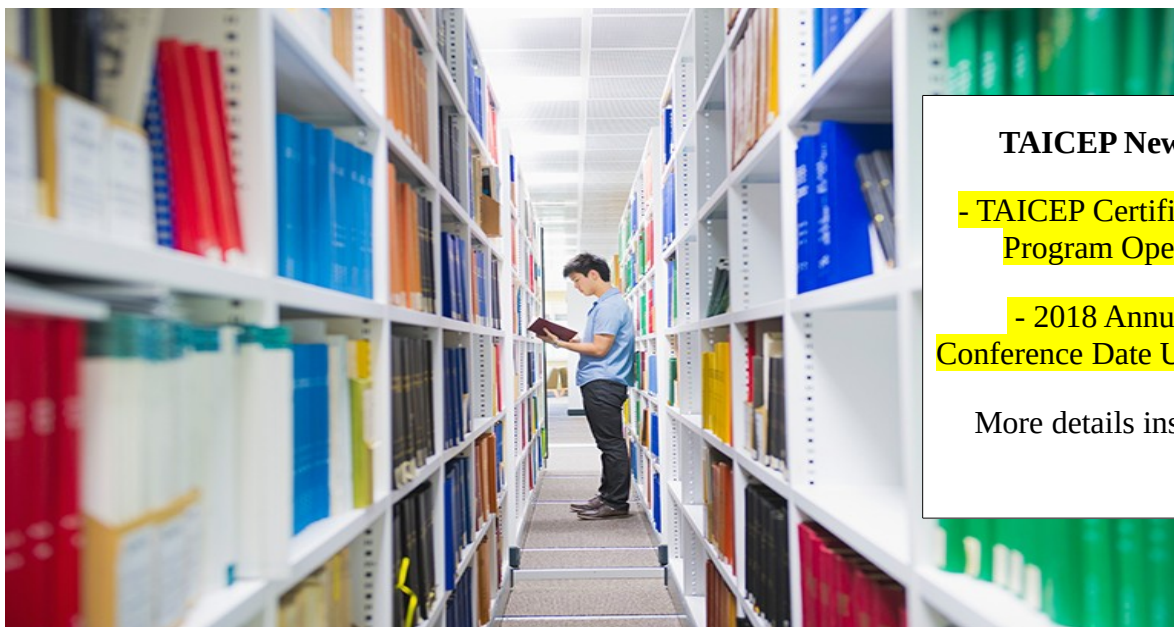


Academic Research

TAICEP TALK

November 2017

Volume 3, Number 4



TAICEP News:

- TAICEP Certification Program Open!

- 2018 Annual Conference Date Updated

More details inside!

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President's Welcome

Welcome to TAICEP Talk. One would think that with many of us returning from summer holidays and after the successful conference in Rome that TAICEP members would be concentrating on their day jobs. Luckily, TAICEP members don't take time off from helping one another and sharing information. This edition of the newsletter includes updates on the conference, important information on our association's Strategic Plan, and useful information on joint studies and joint degrees through EMREX. This edition of our Newsletter also includes an overview of fraud and degree mills including an update on the Axact degree mill scandal, and useful information on working with secondary school education that differs from the local education system. As if that was not enough, we also have articles education and licensure of health care professionals in the US, secondary education in Scandinavia with a comparison to the US system, an exploration of a virtual organization for assessing international credentials in Sweden, a good-bye to a long-standing supporter of the profession, and more!

Members will be especially interested in the article on the new Certificate Program. This was a high priority for members and we are excited about moving forward on the pilot of this important initiative. Will you or a colleague be in the first class of TAICEP Certificate holders? Please read more about it in our TAICEP News section.

Margit Schatzman, Educational Credential Evaluators
2017 TAICEP President

Committee Updates

Governance and Finance

The Committee for Governance and Finance has been working on a number of issues to support the strength and growth of TAICEP. These include:

Bylaws – At the annual conference the membership approved bylaws changes that will clarify leadership succession. We have identified a few more areas where we can improve elections and will be drafting changes for submission to members next year.

Budget – The Committee is currently finalizing the budget for the coming year. This is in direct support of one of the association's strategic initiatives to further strengthen our financial position.

Margit Schatzman, Educational Credential Evaluators

Standards Committee

The Standards Committee is delighted to announce that we have strengthened our committee with a new member: Diana Stevens. She is Associate Director, International Admissions and Student Relations at the Australian Catholic University. With her on board, the committee members now span three continents: Australia, Europe and North America. It is especially valuable for the committee and our work that we now have a member that can bring in the institutional perspective as all the other members represents agencies.

Together with the Executive Board we are now planning our priorities for the year to come.

Stay tuned – we hope to have more exciting news for next newsletter!

Rolf Lofstad, Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

Resources for Members

One more TAICEP successful year is coming to an end! This is the time for transition in the leadership, for new ideas to blossom, for TAICEP members' energy to be revitalized! In this transition, we congratulate LesLee Eicher, AACRAO, a long time committee member, for her election as TAICEP President, and we welcome Chris Adams, Indiana University, as the new Chair for the Resources for Members Committee for the upcoming year!

The accomplishments of the Resources for Members Committee have been notable! Our newsletter, *TAICEP Talk*, has been systematically praised, offering the TAICEP membership and other potential members updates on a variety of topics on credential evaluations. Our Verification Sources for Educational Documents has been greatly praised as well, and our *Recommended Publications* and *Available Resources Online*, both free and paid resources, have been a reliable source of information for the membership.

As the new year of activities approaches, the committee will continue to invest in and improve the existing resources and new features will come about! We are looking for a year of great deeds with the active contribution and participation of TAICEP members. Let us know of your needs and suggestions, and we will work to incorporate them in our discussions for committee action. We count on you! If you wish to be part of our dynamic committee, please contact the current chair at drloununes@gmail.com or the upcoming chair at adamschr@iu.edu.

As the Chair of the Resources for Members Committee, before leaving office, I would like to recognize the amazing committee members with whom I had the opportunity to work with throughout this past year, namely, Peggy Hendrickson (Transcript Research), LesLee Eicher (AACRAO), Annetta Stroud (AACRAO), Anu Soin (International Credential Assessment Service of Canada), Rebecca Chamula (Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators), and Lile Jandreska Gjorcheska (WES). Thank you all for your dedication to TAICEP!

Lou Nunes, Academic Evaluation Services

Marketing and Communications

Please welcome Elizabeth Tyrie, a recent TAICEP member, to the Marketing and Communications committee. Our committee is responsible for the branding and messaging of TAICEP by collaborating with other TAICEP committees on design and production of TAICEP marketing; developing relationships with international education organizations and higher education media; managing communications for the organization, including the TAICEP Talk Newsletter and marketing the annual conference; and developing a communications calendar of activities. If you are interested in assisting with these goals, please contact me for more information at Shereen.Mir-Jabbar@alliancept.org.

Follow TAICEP on our various social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn to stay current with the latest TAICEP events and important news relevant to our industry!

Shereen Mir-Jabbar, Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators

Professional Development and Training Committee:

The Professional Development Committee just organized TAICEP's fourth webinar this year on "Using the Internet for Verification of Academic Documents", which was given by Peggy Bell Hendrickson and Annetta Stroud. The webinar was well-attended and a recording of it is available to TAICEP members on the website.

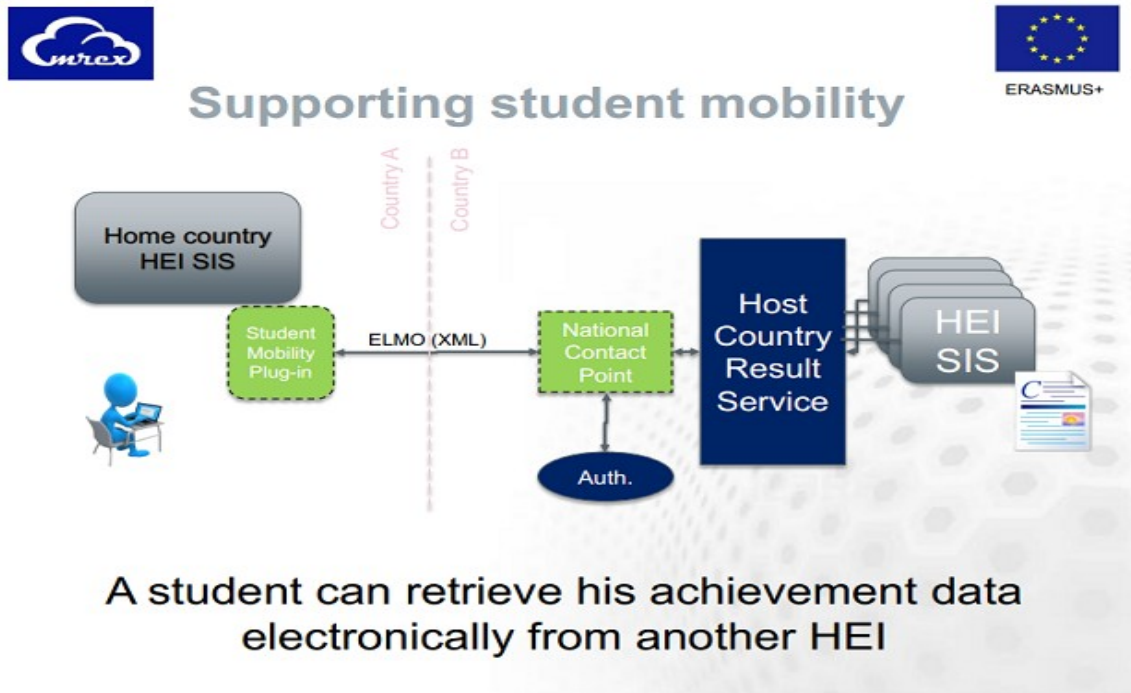
Since the Rome conference, 2 new members have joined our committee: Ildiko Bors of SpanTran and Amy Arcario of St. John's University.

The PDC is working hard on the call for proposals for the 2018 conference, and hopes to publish it before the end of the year, if not sooner. We encourage everyone to start thinking about topics for pre-conference workshops and sessions so you'll be ready to submit your proposals by the time the call is announced!

We are hoping to offer one more webinar this year if time and availability permit. Stay tuned!

Jessica Stannard, NUFFIC

Digital Transfer of Achievements with EMREX Supports Joint Studies and Joint Degrees



The EU 2020 strategy targets that 20% of higher education students should be mobile during their studies. This creates a challenge to all European Higher Education Institutions as student mobility often generates time-consuming manual tasks.

One such task is the administration of students in joint programmes and when a joint, multiple or double degree is expected to be issued.

In 2016, the EMREX project (<http://www.emrex.eu>), co-funded by Erasmus+, presented a solution for the electronic transfer of student records between higher education institutions in Europe and beyond. After a successful field trial with the Nordic countries, Italy and Poland, the network is ready to roll-on, and new partners such as Netherlands and Germany are joining. EMREX is also expanding into supporting admission and credential evaluation with transferring electronic achievement records.

EMREX also offers a more effective and efficient data delivery reducing the administrative work related to issuing joint, multiple and double Degree diplomas. All in a legal, fast and secure way, taking into account local routines and student data integrity.

A joint, multiple or double degree includes the courses from two or more institutions in two or more countries (see definition below) that students following a joint programme have participated in. A joint degree means the participating institutions divide the courses needed for a degree. A double degree or a dual degree is a way for the institutions to provide an opportunity to get the two degrees in a streamlined way resulting in a shorter study time than when getting the degrees separately.

The issuing of the Degree Certificate or Diploma Supplement, required to present all courses included in the degree, is usually manually managed and based on signed originals for credentials transfer. It is a time consuming process both for a student — to receive the transcript and to deliver it the home institution — and for the administrator there — to register the records in the local study documentation system.

The EMREX solution simplifies the administrative processes around issuing joint, multiple or double degrees by enabling the secure transfer of study records between institutions without the need of paper. With the help of EMREX a student can initiate the transfer of all data available from the original transcript digitally (including course names, credits, grades, levels etc.) to the home institution system from which a combined Certificate or Diploma Supplement (DS) is produced. The secure, double verification process means that no original papers will be needed and thus the administration can be fast and minimized. The digital handling and transfer of the course information to the Certificate or DS also excludes the possibility of human errors, which increases the security of the process.

It should be pointed out that the EMREX solution only provides a transferring mechanism. It is not a Student Information System, and it doesn't issue diplomas. Instead, requiring only a minimum of adherence to international standards for the communication, it connects to virtually any system to supply the information. The programming needed to connect a local system is reasonable for the purpose, and the generic code produced within the EMREX project is available as open source.

Case scenarios in Sweden and Poland

EMREX has been introduced in Sweden and Poland. Both countries are represented as partners in the EMREX project (the Ladok Consortium in Sweden and the University of Warsaw in Poland) and have had the solution tested and put into production.

The administrative scenarios including join/multiple and double degrees may vary between countries and even within countries. Let us have a look at these two examples.

Sweden

According to a report from the Swedish Council for Higher Education, "A picture of the internationalization of the University Sector"

(<https://www.uhr.se/globalassets/uhr.se/publikationer/2015/uhr-en-bild-av-hogskolans-internationalisering.pdf>), more than half of the Swedish institutions (23) states in their ECHE applications that they have agreements with foreign institutions regarding "double/multiple/joint degrees". A few more (25) indicate that they have students "involved in double/multiple/joint degrees".

The exact number of joint programs Swedish institutions are involved in is not possible to determine as it may be that the same programme involves multiple Swedish institutions. According to the available data, 2 372 students participated in joint programmes at Swedish

institutions during the academic year 2012/13. Of these, 1 749 were international students and 623 domestic ones.

It is not always a Swedish institution that issues the certificate resulting from studies within a joint program as this depends on how the agreement is stated and if the degree issued should be a joint/ multiple or double degree.

When a Swedish institution does issue the certificate, in almost all cases, the Swedish student information system Ladok is used. Integrated in the EMREX network, Ladok can download student records transferred from any connected source. If there is no need for crediting or assessment of what the foreign courses correspond to locally, the data can be used directly in a certificate.

Poland

The Polish law on higher education states that:

1. First and second degree studies and unified master's studies may be jointly conducted by different universities and research institutions, including foreign universities and research institutions, on the basis of their agreements.
2. The object of the agreement may be to conduct studies in the field of education and training, in which the basic organizational units of Polish universities, which are parties to the agreement, have the right to conduct studies at the level of education not lower than the level specified in the agreement.
3. Graduates of the studies referred to in p. 1, may receive a joint diploma (...).

In practise, however, still more popular are multiple diplomas, issued separately by each involved institution — one of the reasons might be an extra administrative burden involved in issuing a really joint diploma.

According to <http://erasmusplus.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/wspolne-studia-BSkibinska.pdf> (data from November 2014), a total of 933 foreign students studying at 40 universities were implementing part of the path of joint study in Poland. The study also states that 273 local (domestic) students studying at 38 universities were implementing joint studies.

More than 50 Polish Higher Education Institutions use the Student Information System USOS (<http://usos.edu.pl>). The developers of USOS integrated the EMREX solution with the system. In Poland, differently than in Sweden, there is no one central system like Ladok, every HEI keeps own installation of USOS. The EMREX still works very well —the students of the institutions participating in the joint programme can transfer their achievement data and thereby make it easier to issue diploma and diploma supplement containing courses from all institutions.

Definition of a joint degree

The Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee has tabled a definition of a Joint Degree with three possibilities:

A joint degree should, for the purposes of this recommendation, be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as:

- a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas,
- a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma,
- one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.
-

In other contexts only option b, a model without national diploma, is called a "real" joint degree while the others are called double or multiple degrees.

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<https://www.nuffic.nl/en/publications/find-a-publication/joint-programmes-from-a-to-z-a-reference-guide-for-practitioners.pdf>

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Pamela Engstrom, University of Gothenburg and Janina Mincer-Daszkiewicz, Uniwersytet Warszawski, with assistance from Mats Lindstedt, CSC IT Center for Science Ltd

An Overview of Fraud and Degree Mills with Updates on the Axact Degree Mill Operation

Almost every credential evaluator has or will come across a document that is either fraudulent or was issued by a degree mill institution. Advances in technology are making it easier for fraudulent documents to be produced, and slick online marketing is making it easier for fake institutions to issue “credentials” that require little to no coursework.

Fraud

According to the terminology guide produced by the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC), a fraudulent credential is defined as “a document that has been modified or reproduced without authorization of the original issuing body. A fraudulent document is also considered forged if it is claimed that it was issued by a legal entity that did not issue it.” Various types of fraud include: alteration of documents, such as grades on a transcript, or substitution of a name on a degree where the degree belongs to a different person; completely fabricated or counterfeit documents; institutional fraud, which could involve bribing officials in legitimate institutions to produce authentic-looking documents;

and misleading or interpretive translations, such as taking a translator's word that a Latin American *Bachiller* credential is a university-level Bachelor's degree. It is important to keep in mind that instances of fraud like the ones noted above are different from degree or diploma mill credentials, which will be further discussed below.

There are several warning signs that can help you detect if a document could be fraudulent. Things to look out for include: too many fonts appearing on the document, several spelling errors, unusual signatures or stamps, age or biographical discrepancies, and evidence of white out/erasure. Unfortunately, advanced technology that is readily available online has made it increasingly easy for people to either obtain or produce fraudulent documents. Tools and tricks such as authentic-looking degree templates, fake stamps, editing software, and website spoofs can often go unnoticed by even experienced credential evaluators. Some of the best ways to combat fraud are to be familiar with various educational systems and have access to reliable resources to locate this information; implement strong documentation requirements at your institution, such as requiring official documents to be sent directly from the issuing institution, or by using original documents; and making use of online verification tools where possible.



Degree Mills

Credentials issued by degree mills are another set of problematic documents that are becoming increasingly prevalent. Allen Ezell, former FBI agent and degree mill expert, estimates that 50% of PhDs issued in the U.S. are fake. Allen Ezell and John Bear co-authored the book *Degree Mills: The Billion-Dollar Industry That Has Sold Over a Million Fake Diplomas*, and define the following characteristics of degree mills in their book:

- “Degree-granting authority does not come from a generally accepted government agency;

- Procedures for granting credit for prior learning and for determining the amount and quality of work done to earn the degree, do not meet generally accepted standards, and;
- Those who make the decisions on credit, and on quantity and quality of work, do not have the credentials, experience or training typically associated with people performing these tasks.”

In other words, degree mills are institutions that operate without proper accreditation and offer credentials that require little to no work to obtain, and are run by individuals who do not have the appropriate qualifications or experience to evaluate credit and coursework.

There are several red flags that will help you determine if an institution is a degree mill. These include: similar or almost identical names to legitimate institutions (i.e. the accredited and recognized University of Wolverhampton vs. degree mill University of Wolverhamton, without the “p”), offering credits or an entire degree based solely on life experience, little information about the physical location of the institution, and a strong emphasis on discounts or payment of the credential (i.e. for only \$3000, the institution will throw in a PhD degree along with the Master’s degree). It is crucial to check the institution’s recognition or accreditation status and to be aware that, in addition to degree mills, accreditation mills exist as well, with the sole purpose of appearing to legitimize degree mill institutions and the “credentials” that they issue. Other ways to prevent degree mill credentials from being accepted into your institution include: keeping a checklist that identifies warning signs, maintaining or reviewing lists of known degree mills and fake institutions, reviewing online credentialing community forums (such as degreeinfo.com), and asking questions and sharing your knowledge of degree mills with others in the credential assessment community.

**An estimated 50% of PhDs issued
in the US are fake.**

**Allen Ezell, co-author of Degree Mills: The Billion-Dollar
Industry That Has Sold Over a Million Fake Diplomas**

The aftermath of Axact: A Summary of the Investigation on the Degree Mill Operation and Current Updates

Axact, located in Karachi, Pakistan, identifies itself as a leading IT company but is one of the world's largest degree mill operations. An article published by the New York Times in May 2015 revealed that Axact earned millions of dollars in sales of fake credentials from over 300 online "institutions". Over the past decade, Axact has taken money from approximately 217,000 people from 197 countries, with about a third of their customers located in the United States of America. At least \$140 million were collected by Axact with US-based bank accounts from thousands of individuals from about 2006 to around May 2015. After the New York Times article, the Axact offices in Pakistan were shut down and hundreds of documents were confiscated. Axact's CEO, Shoaib Ahmad Shaikh was charged during this time, along with other executives, but all were later acquitted by Pakistan officials in late 2016. Even after the company shut down in May 2015, Axact Vice-President, Umair Hamid, continued to sell degree mill credentials, particularly to American customers. Hamid was arrested by the FBI in December 2016 for his role in the Axact operation, and on April 6, 2017, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud; in August 2017, he was sentenced to 21 months in prison and ordered to forfeit over \$5 million. In Pakistan, one of the sitting judges who acquitted Axact CEO Shaikh and other officials in 2016 allegedly admitted to receiving a bribe of over 5 million rupees; this judge may be undergoing disciplinary proceedings, but there are no further details regarding the proceedings or further investigation into this matter.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's show "*Marketplace*" recently investigated phony credentials related to Axact, and have found that over 800 Canadians could have purchased a fake degree from an Axact-based institution. The journalists even successfully purchased PhDs, transcripts, and attendance records from Almeda University and Gatesville University, both linked to Axact, proving just how easy it was to obtain fake degrees and transcripts. The CBC Marketplace investigation also revealed several individuals who possess fake credentials from institutions tied to Axact including a counsellor named Gilbert Correces with a fake PhD in Biblical counselling from Almeda University, a professor named Dubravko Zgrablic who has taught at four post-secondary institutions in Ontario who claimed to have a Master's degree in Computer Science from Almeda University, a business consultant named Erwin Sniedzin who paid \$8100 with no course work or exams to obtain a Master's degree in Education from Kings Lake University, and a person named Inayat Kassam acting as a lawyer with a fake law degree from the University of Renfrew and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Axact-linked institution Ashwood University.

Most of these individuals have claimed that they weren't aware that their credentials were fake, or removed these credentials from their social media profiles after the Marketplace investigation. It is often difficult to prove intent of such individuals, but many experts do claim that most people are aware of what they're purchasing and what it will help them achieve. Despite the international headlines Axact has made from 2015 until now, one Pakistani publication commented that the case appears to have been forgotten in Pakistan itself. This likely means that Axact, and other degree mill institutions, will continue to operate unchecked.

The Impact of Fraud and Degree Mills in our Society

Unfortunately, fraudulent documents and degree mill operations are a problem that do not seem likely to disappear anytime soon. There have been several doctors, educators, lawyers, professionals, and even ministers of government who have been caught using fake credentials to obtain their positions, or to work with clients or practice on patients. Fraudulent documents pose a substantial risk of harm to society. If we are entrusting a doctor to save a life, and he or she has a fake credential, it could cause serious harm or even death to one individual or more. If you have a legitimate Master's degree in Education and are passed over for a promotion in favour of someone who obtained a fake Master's or PhD credential, your hard-earned education is not being rewarded or recognized. The acceptability of forged or fake credentials also signals an unethical message to society – that you can cheat and fake your way to get what you want.

Those who have not rightfully earned their credentials should not be rewarded. It is up to credential evaluators, employers, and governments to do their part to prevent fraudulent documents from entering their systems. If we can work together to implement procedures to catch fraudulent credentials and policies that show serious consequences for committing fraud, perhaps over time we can reduce fraud, or even prevent it from occurring in the first place.

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Shereen Mir-Jabbar, Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators

VO – A Virtual Organization for Assessment of International Credentials for Admission in Sweden

A unique cooperation between Swedish universities.

VO is an organization that connects admission officers from most universities in Sweden in the assessment of international credentials. Expertise are shared. Resources are used in a cost efficient way. The VO does the assessment, giving the universities the highest possible quality. We believe that the applicant and the university get a perfect match!

VO was established in 2006 and consists of specialists from the Swedish Council for Higher Education and most Swedish university participating in the national admissions system. The organization assesses all applications to both bachelor and master levels, regardless of which university the applicant has applied to!

Why did the universities in Sweden and the Council decide to cooperate in a virtual organization?

In 2004, many universities opened up master programs in English for foreign students. Since there were no student tuitions fees at that time, there were many applications to handle. Today, Higher education in Sweden is free of charge for Swedish students and students from the European Union, European Economic Area and Switzerland.

Each university handled their own applications and assessed documents from all over the world. Some admission offices had no one that had the knowledge required to work with international credentials. Something had to be done and fast!

In 2006, we started cooperating regarding international secondary school credentials, and in

2007, we added the admission to master level programs.

It was very helpful that we already had a national admissions system developed by the Swedish universities together with Swedish Council for Higher Education. All admissions officers have access to it and can view and assess all applicants regardless of which university he or she has applied to. We have a common web site, universityadmissions.se, where the student can make an application.

How the work is organized

To organize the work in VO, we have divided the world in to five groups that roughly represent continents. Two team leaders in each group are appointed to lead the work in the group. The whole organization meets physically twice yearly.

VO officers are hired for longer or shorter periods depending on the need. Officers usually work half their working week for their university, and the other half for the virtual organization. There are about 90 admissions officers working in the organization.

The introductions of newcomers are often held in a smaller group, either as part of one our kick-off meetings or when a new admission round starts. Most of the time, senior VO officers teach other VO officers. Sometimes we may have to take in external experts, for example, from our ENIC-NARIC office. Colleagues also participate in study visits and conferences. The decisions on how to accept and translate foreign qualifications form the Assessment Handbook. Colleagues in the VO also have guidelines and instructions for their everyday work. VO strictly follows the regulations that have been decided upon by the universities together. Only merits that have been agreed upon will be registered into the system.

VO does all the basic assessments needed in order for the universities to make the final decisions in the processing of a student's application.

Along these steps, student who do not meet the requirements do not pass on in the process. They will receive a message on the web with information about what they need to do in order to complete their application.

In the last major admission round, VO administered and assessed approximately 40,000 applications from 183 countries.

Has it been all smooth sailing? - No – we have encountered problems along the way.

When we opened the first joint Masters admission round in 2007, the computerized admissions system was not as developed for admissions to advanced level studies, as it is today. This meant that officers had to perform many unnecessary tedious tasks in the system that, on one hand, almost risked the health of the officers and, on the other hand, took much too long. This resulted in us not being able to keep to our planned timetables despite officers working overtime. Now the system is more optimized to our needs. In fact, constant work is

done in the field of system management and development.

We were overly optimistic in the beginning as to how much an expert was able to do in a working day. We have now come down to quantities that are more realistic and can thereby calculate the time needed in a more accurate way.

We experienced a slight amount of friction between colleagues in the beginning. We did not know each other and were not completely comfortable with the fact that complete strangers were going to handle applications to our own university.

Staffing the organization was and is a challenge. We are usually just on the brink of having enough people working. We experience that it is easy to start to regard the VO as an organization detached from the universities.

To summarize:

VO provides the necessary preconditions to obtain highest quality possible and a uniform assessment process. All resources are used in a cost efficient way so that all participating universities can better manage their time and receive a qualified assessment of the applicants' qualifications.

Karin Sikström and Elisabeth Sundelin, Swedish Council for Higher Education

Education and Licensure of Health Care Professionals in the USA

Unlike many countries, all health care professionals in the United States, from nursing assistants to medical doctors, are trained and educated at the post-secondary level. A high school diploma is the minimum entrance requirement for educational programs, except for programs of study that train medical doctors, dentists, and veterinarians. These programs require a bachelor's degree with appropriate coursework for admission.

Licensure of health care professionals is the responsibility of the states and not the federal government. Each state has a separate licensing board for each profession, and each licensing board sets the educational and examination requirements for licensure in that profession. Applicants for licensure must be a graduate of a program that is accredited by a recognized accrediting body. Once licensed, continuing professional education is required to maintain the license. Most states have license reciprocity; this means the state will recognize licenses awarded by other states. Some states, namely California and Florida, do not have license reciprocity and require applicants to go through the entire licensure process.

NURSES

Education

All first-level general nurses (RNs) in the United States are first trained as general nurses. There are many pathways to being an RN:

- Two-year programs leading to an Associate of Science in Nursing/ASN. 58% of RNs are trained in these programs. Most of these programs are offered at community colleges.
- Three-year programs, usually based in hospitals, that lead to a Diploma in Nursing. At one time, this was the most common pathway to becoming an RN, but the number of Diploma in Nursing program has steadily declined, and only 4% of RNs are currently trained in these programs.
- Four-year university programs leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing/BSN. 38% of RNs are trained in these programs.
- Two- to three-year “RN to BSN” programs for nurses who hold an Associate of Science in Nursing or a Diploma in Nursing who wish to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.
- 18-month accelerated BSN programs for students who hold a bachelor’s degree outside of nursing.

Graduate programs in nursing are two to three years. These programs train students in nursing specialties such as nurse anesthetist, midwifery, and advanced clinical care. Doctoral programs in nursing focus on research and/or continued advanced study of a nursing specialty. Currently, 13% of RNs hold a master’s or doctoral degree in nursing.

Licensure of Nurses Educated in the USA

After graduating from an accredited nursing program, students sit for the National Council Licensing Examination/NCLEX. The NCLEX is the same for all nursing students no matter which educational pathway they have completed. Passing the NCLEX is required for nursing licensure in all states and territories of the USA. States and territories may have additional licensure requirements.

Licensure of Nurses Educated Outside of the USA

Nurses who have been educated outside of the USA and who wish to be licensed as a nurse in the USA must meet these standards:

- Trained as a first-level general nurse and not as a specialty nurse or a medical doctor
- Nursing program that was at least two years and at the post-secondary level
- Nursing programs must have included sufficient hours in the main areas of nursing: medical, surgical, maternity/obstetrics, pediatrics, psychiatric, and geriatrics

Foreign-educated nurses must pass the NCLEX to apply for nursing licensure, but each state has its own requirements before it will allow foreign-educated nurses to sit for the NCLEX. Some states will complete their own internal credentials evaluation, some will accept outside credentials evaluation, but most will require foreign-educated nurses to submit a certificate earned after going through the CGFNS Certification Program which includes a qualifying examination, credentials evaluation, and demonstration of English language proficiency.

PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

Education

Previously, the first professional degrees for physical therapists were four-year programs leading to a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy/BSPT that was last awarded in 2002, and until 2008, two-year Master of Science in Physical Therapy/MSPT programs for students who held a bachelor's degree in a field outside of physical therapy. Currently, the only first professional degree is the Doctor of Physical Therapy/DPT. There are 3 pathways to a DPT:

- Three-year programs following a bachelor's degree with the appropriate coursework
- Three-year programs following three years of undergraduate study
- Six-year programs that are a direct admission after high school

Licensure of Physical Therapists Educated in the USA

After graduating from an accredited physical therapy program, students sit for the National Physical Therapy Examination/NPTE. Passing the NPTE is required for physical therapy licensure in all states and territories of the USA, although there may be additional licensure requirements.

Licensure of Physical Therapists Educated Outside the USA

Eligibility of foreign-educated physical therapists to sit for the NPTE varies by state. However, all states will only consider applications for licensure from foreign-educated physical therapists who have been trained in post-secondary program that was at least four years in length. Some states complete their own internal credential evaluations, but most require foreign-educated physical therapists to submit a credentials evaluation using the National Association of State Boards of Physical Therapy Coursework Tool/CWT. The CWT has six versions which are based on the year diploma or degree was awarded; each version uses the physical curriculum that was in place in that timeframe. The CWT looks for sufficient hours in basic science and physical therapy coursework as well as sufficient clinical hours.

MEDICAL DOCTORS

Education

There are several academic pathways for doctors in the U.S. All are four-year programs that lead to a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), Doctor of Osteopathy (O.D.), or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.M.). All of these programs include basic medical sciences and clinical rotations. Although the minimum educational requirement for admission to medical programs is completion of three years of undergraduate study, nearly all medical schools require a bachelor's degree and sufficient scores on the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). There are a few six-year accelerated programs that admit students directly from high school. Following completion of medical school, new doctors complete a one-year general medical internship before beginning a multi-year residency in a medical specialty. These residency programs range from three years in the case of internal medicine to seven years in neurosurgery. The one-year general medical internship is declining and is being combined with the residency.

Licensure of Medical Doctors Educated in the USA

Medical students must pass the US Medical Licensing Examination/USMLE which is a three-step examination process. The Step 1 examination is usually completed after the 2nd year of medical school. The Step 2 examination has two parts - clinical skills and clinical knowledge – and is taken after the 4th year of medical school. Step 3 is usually taken during the 1st or 2nd year of the internship or residency. Most licensing jurisdictions require completion of all steps within 7 years of beginning medical school.

Licensure of Medical Doctors Educated Outside the USA

International medical graduates (IMGs) must also pass the USMLE and must also earn certification from the Educational Commission on Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). ECFMG certification includes verification of the foreign educational credential(s), passing USMLE Step 1 examination, and the clinical knowledge portion of the Step 2 through online testing centers around the world. After passing these examinations, the IMG must take the clinical skills portion of USMLE Step 2 at one of four testing centers in USA. An ECFMG certificate allows the holder to apply to residency programs in the USA and sit for the USMLE Step 3 examination. Between 1991-2010, 60.7% of applicants earned ECFMG certification. It is interesting to note that ECFMG currently does not require an IMG to be a graduate of a recognized or accredited medical education program; the only requirement is that their medical school is listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools. However, beginning in 2023, ECFMG will require that applicants be graduates from a medical school that has been appropriately accredited or recognized in the country or region where the school is located. The accreditation or recognition authority will have to be accredited by an agency that has been recognized by the World Federation for Medical Education through its Programme for Recognition of Accrediting Agencies.

DENTISTS

Education

Dental education programs are four years and lead to either a Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.) or a Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.). Dental programs are accredited by the Commission of Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association (ADA). Admission to dental programs technically requires completion of three years of undergraduate study, but the vast majority of dental schools require a bachelor's degree for admission. Dental programs consist of two years of basic medical and dental sciences and two years clinical training. Graduates of accredited U.S. and Canadian dental education programs are eligible for licensure in the United States. Dental specialties are offered as advanced dental education programs at the post-graduate level leading to a Master of Science.

Licensure of Dentists Educated in the USA

The National Dental Board Examination (NDBE) Part I is taken after the 2nd year of the dental program and Part II is taken after the 4th year. To apply for licensure a dentist, applicants must pass Parts I and II of the NDBE, and most licensing jurisdictions require applicants to pass a clinical examination which is offered at five regional testing agencies. Some states, including California, Colorado, Delaware, Minnesota, New York, Ohio and Washington have other specific requirements for licensure.

Licensure of Dentists Educated Outside the USA

Most states require that foreign-educated dentists first obtain a D.D.S./D.M.D. degree from a CODA-accredited program by attending an advanced standing program in the United States. The advanced standing program can be completed within two to three years and grants eligibility for the National Dental Board Examination (NDBE) and subsequent licensing procedures.

PHARMACISTS

Education

Previously, the United States had a five-year, post-secondary school Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy which was last awarded in 2002. Since January 1, 2003 the first professional degree in pharmacy is a Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.). The Pharm.D. is a four-year professional program that requires at least two years of specific undergraduate coursework or a Bachelor of Science in a non-pharmacy field for admission. Some institutions offer six-year accelerated Pharm.D. programs that admit students directly from high school.

Licensure of Pharmacists Educated in the USA

All pharmacy graduates must take and pass the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX), and all states require the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE) or the state's own jurisprudence examination. Each state may have additional licensing requirements.

Licensure of Pharmacists Educated Outside the USA

Graduates of pharmacy schools outside the USA must first earn Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee (FPGEC) Certification from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy before applying for licensure. Some states exempt graduates of Canadian pharmacy schools from this requirement. The certification process includes:

- Verification and evaluation of the foreign credential(s) by Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE)
- Graduation from an accredited or recognized post-secondary pharmacy program
- Program of study must be at least four years if the pharmacy degree was awarded December 31, 2002 and earlier, and at least five years if the pharmacy degree was awarded January 1, 2003 and after. Coursework and internships completed after the degree was awarded are not included when determining the length of the program of study.
- Applicants must be currently licensed or registered to practice pharmacy in a foreign country without restrictions.
- Once all of the steps listed above have been completed, the applicant is eligible to sit for the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Examination (FPGEE)

After passing the FPGEE and submitting sufficient TOEFL iBT scores, FPGEC Certification is awarded. Applicants are then eligible to apply for state licensure. States may have additional internship and licensing requirements.

Kate Freeman and Ildiko Bors, SpanTran: The Evaluation Company

International Secondary Schools: Whose Educational System Is It, Anyway?

What do you do when the educational system reflected by the secondary education documents you are looking at doesn't match the system of the country where the school is located? If you are responsible for evaluating documents from secondary schools in other countries, read on! This article is based on an international admissions training module developed by the authors. We hope that this article will help you to identify some of the principles of best practice in applied comparative education, apply those best practice principles to the evaluation of secondary education, and enhance your skills in researching secondary education.

For international credential evaluators, it's becoming increasingly common to see academic documents from secondary schools that are not a part of the educational system of the country in which they are located. Their presence may be a physical one: a brick-and-mortar school. Or it may be a school that imports or exports its curriculum. Or something in between, a hybrid that teaches a foreign curriculum alongside a local curriculum.

ISC Research (<https://www.iscresearch.com/>), a British organization that keeps statistics on international schools world-wide, reports that there are currently 8,789 international schools around the world. Nearly five million students attend them, and 444,323 staff are employed at these schools. The schools bring in over forty billion dollars per year. In just five years, from 2011 to 2016, the number of K-12 global international schools rose nearly forty-three percent. (<https://www.iscresearch.com/news/isc-news/isc-news-details/~post/demand-for-international-school-education-continues-to-expand-globally-20170427>)

With such a growing presence, it's inevitable that credential evaluators who work with secondary-level credentials are going to encounter documents from one or more of these models of international schools. The number of models, the varied missions of the schools, myriad country-combinations, and the variety of leaving-certificates awarded all complicate the analysis process.

Consider the example of the Senegalese-American Bilingual School in Dakar, Senegal. Reviewing a "12th Grade Yearly Recapitulation of Grade", we see that it is issued in English and shows some characteristics of US high school education, such as the terminology "completed all of the requirements for high school graduation", notations of "Advanced Placement" subjects, references to "Brigham Young University" for some subjects, and "Carnegie units" for subject credits. So is this school American? Or Senegalese? Or both? And what does "bilingual" mean? Who is this school intended to serve? What is its mission? Is this school "recognized" in Senegal? Is there any North American organization that quality assures it? What options for higher education do its graduates have?



The Senegalese-American Bilingual School

Shaping the world leaders of tomorrow!

Student's Name:
 Grade: 12TH
 School Year: 2008-2009
 Homeroom teacher: Mr.

YEARLY RECAPITULATION OF GRADE

1 st Semester			2 nd Semester			
Subjects	Carnegie Units	Semester Grade	Subjects	Carnegie Units	Semester Grade	Yearly Grade
Advanced Placement French Literature	.5	84	Advanced Placement French Literature	.5	85	84.5
World Literature	.5	90	Creative Writing (Brigham Young University)	.5	77	...
American Government	.5	87.5	Race, Class and Gender	.5	84.5	...
Advanced Placement Environmental Science	.5	75	Advanced Placement Environmental Science	.5	77.5	76.5
Precalculus (Brigham Young University)	.5	62.5	Precalculus (Brigham Young University)	.5	80.5	71.5
Entrepreneurship	.5	82.5	Entrepreneurship	.5	78	80.5
Computer Science V	.25	98	Computer Science V	.25	92	95
Physical Education	.25	94	Physical Education	.25	95.5	95
Swimming	.125	85	Swimming	.125	85	85
Club	.125	99	Club	.125	88	93.5
Total / Average	3.75	83	Total / Average	3.75	82.5	83

100-90 = A 89-80 = B 79-70 = C 69-60 = D 59 and below

has successfully completed all of the requirements for high school graduation.

13, rue de Fatick Point E Dakar Senegal * Tél. : 33 824 35 06 * Fax : 33 864 05 52 * Email : sabs@orange.sn www.sabs.sn

Another example is The British International School in Shanghai, Puxi, China. A School Transcript issued in English for a student enrolled in “School Year 13” in 2016 lists British IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) subjects for School Year 11, “End of Year Examinations” subjects at “Higher” and “Standard” levels for School Year 12, and “Final IB Predicted Grade” subjects in Year 13. The school is called a “British” school, but after Year 12, is it still the British secondary system at work? What does “End of Year Examinations” refer to? And how does the 12-year “IB” program fit into Year 13? Is this school recognized in China? To what types of further education is a graduate of this school going to have access?



School Transcript for [REDACTED]

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1998

Years Attended: August 2011 – May 2016

Date Taken	School Year	Qualification	Subject	Grade
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	English 1st Language	A*
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	Geography	A*
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	Mathematics (Additional)	A
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	Chinese (First Language)	A*
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	Mathematics	A*
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	Science (Double Award)	A*A*
Jun-14	11	IGCSE	Business Studies	A*
Jun-15	12	End of Year Examinations	Business (Higher)	6
Jun-15	12	End of Year Examinations	Economics (Higher)	6
Jun-15	12	End of Year Examinations	English B (Higher)	6
Jun-15	12	End of Year Examinations	Mathematics (Higher)	6
Jun-15	12	End of Year Examinations	Biology (Standard)	7
Jun-15	12	End of Year Examinations	Mandarin A (Standard)	7
May-16	13	Final IB Predicted Grade	Business (Higher)	7
May-16	13	Final IB Predicted Grade	Economics (Higher)	7
May-16	13	Final IB Predicted Grade	English B (Higher)	6
May-16	13	Final IB Predicted Grade	Mathematics (Higher)	7
May-16	13	Final IB Predicted Grade	Biology (Standard)	7
May-16	13	Final IB Predicted Grade	Mandarin A (Standard)	7

Final IB Predicted Grade: 44

I confirm that this is a certified copy of the academic record for the above named student

CERTIFIED

Andrew Joy
Head of IB Academy
15th June 2016



www.bisspuxi.com

These two examples reflect transnational secondary school models that commonly cross credential evaluators' desks around the world. There are many variations on this theme.

For instance, the school in question:

- Might not belong to the educational system of the country in which it is located
- Could be a school that is a - you fill in the blank with a national adjective - “Canadian / French / American / Turkish, etc.” - school located outside of that country
- Could be accredited by a US regional accreditor but isn’t located in the US, or could be accredited by some other accrediting organization in a different country
- Could possibly be a government-funded or private school that calls itself an “international school”
- Might be a religious school that teaches a denominational curriculum across the world
- Might be an “IB school”, teaching the International Baccalaureate curriculum, which doesn’t belong to any country
- Could be an “A-level college” run on a British model, an imported curriculum, outside of Britain
- Might be a school for refugees from another country

How does each of these work? In some cases, the schools offer their own country’s curriculum in a physical school in a foreign country, not only to expatriates, but to citizens of the foreign country as well. This type of model could be called an “international school,” a “[name of country] school,” or go by another name.

Some schools may purchase or subscribe to a non-indigenous curriculum and offer it locally. This model, as exemplified by the British IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) or GCE A-Level (Advanced-Level) model, is perhaps the most widespread around the world.

In some countries, one might find a school offering the curriculum of a foreign country to its expatriates living abroad, as well as to locals, but due to government regulations in the host country, the school must also be required to offer the indigenous curriculum alongside the foreign one. In some cases, students might be required to fulfill the requirements for the host country’s secondary school leaving credential, as well as the requirements for the credential given in the foreign system.

And then there are the curriculums that are not indigenous to any one country, and that are offered in any school in any country that chooses to subscribe to (purchase) and offer the curriculum. “IB (International Baccalaureate) schools” would be an example.

Given the variety of models of transnational and international schools, how do we evaluate these schools and their programs? The answer is: We follow the same principles and methodologies we employ when evaluating postsecondary education.

Principles of best practice in applied comparative education require us to find the answers to these questions:

- Where is the school located? (We’ll call that “Country of Location”.)
- Who runs the school? Is it part of the government-funded educational system or a private entity? If private, is it operating legally or legally recognized? Who quality assures it? (We’ll call that “Legal Status”.)

- What does the school teach? Who are its students? Are they headed for higher education in the Country of Location or somewhere else? What curriculum content will they need to achieve their goals? Is it the curriculum that is taught in public schools in that locality? If not, what is it? (We'll call that "Type of School / Curriculum Offered".)
- Is the completion credential awarded at the school legally an indigenous credential? Is it legally valid in another country? Who regulates the validity of the completion credential? (We'll call that "Graduation Credential".)
- What options for further education are available to the "Graduation Credential" holder? (We'll call that "Access to Further Education".)
- What does the school say about itself? Where can the evaluator find reliable, accurate information to confirm the information? (We'll call that "Resources".)

To answer all of these questions, an evaluator needs to rely on his or her knowledge of the educational system of the country of the school's location, as well as be able to recognize clues in the documentation. Many transnational or international schools have Web sites to provide parents, guidance counselors, admissions offices, and the local community with the information noted above, especially if the school is not part of the local education system. The school's Web site can be a valuable starting point for research. Using the documentation and reliable credential evaluation resources, the evaluator should confirm factors such as the curriculum taught at the school, benchmarks in that system, terminology, grading scales, and recognition bodies, and then apply standard credential evaluation methodology.

Now let's look at the details of each components to be examined in the evaluation process.

Country of Location:

- Where exactly is the school located?
- If it is an online school, where is the school legally registered to operate? Under what legal jurisdiction in what location?
- Is the school operating in its own country, but offering a different country's academic curriculum?
- Is it a school operating in a foreign country, that is, a country other than the one whose curriculum it teaches?
- Is the school part of a network offering instruction in many locations, such as a refugee program sponsored by a non-governmental organization, or a religious denomination that runs schools all over the world?

Legal Status of the School:

- What is its legal status vis-à-vis the public education authority in the legal jurisdiction in the Country of Location? Is the school public (government-funded), private (privately-funded), or something else, possibly a hybrid?
- Does the public education authority allow private education providers?
 - If so, is the school authorized as a private education provider?
 - If not, what is its status? Is it operating with a status that allows it to offer private education legally?
 - Does it have recognition / accreditation in another country's system? If so, what type of recognition / accreditation?

Type of School / Curriculum Offered:

- Who is this school intended to serve? What type of school is it?
- What type of curriculum does the school offer? The indigenous one in the educational system of the locality? A non-indigenous one? Both?
- Does the school offer a curriculum from a non-national entity, such as IB or a transnational curriculum provided by a religious denomination?
- If more than one curriculum is offered does the school offer students/parents a choice?
- For the curriculum completed by the person whose credentials you are evaluating, what are the key elements of the curriculum that you need to know for evaluation: structure (school year, content, use of quantitative measures such as credits or units, assessment methods/grading, requirements to earn the “Graduation Credential”)?
- What is the structure of the system of which the curriculum is a part (level of the education, number of years, benchmarks, access to further education)?

Graduation Credential:

- What is the name of the “Graduation Credential”?
- Is it the same “Graduation Credential” earned by students in the indigenous system of the “Country of Location”?
- If not, is it a recognized “Graduation Credential” in another country or system of education?
- Does the student receive more than one “Graduation Credential” for completion of one curriculum?

Access to Further Education:

- Does the “Graduation Credential” give access to higher education in the country in which the school is located? Is it an indigenous credential or is it a “foreign” credential?
- Does it give access to higher education in the country whose educational system it comes from, as a native credential, or is it a “foreign” credential?
- For admission to your institution, are there be additional factors that you would look for to determine whether the “Graduation Credential” meets your requirements?

Resources:

- What does the school say about itself? Does the school have a profile sheet? Is the information accurate? (How do you determine if it’s accurate? Is there information online? Is it official? Trustworthy?)
- What kinds of official and reliable resources would you need to consult in order to confirm information about the legal status, curriculum offered, graduation credential and access to further education?

An Example: The Senegalese-American Bilingual School (SABS)

Now let’s ask these questions of our first example, The Senegalese-American Bilingual School (SABS). On the basis of our research, we have some answers, but have also identified some further questions.

Country of Location: Senegal

Legal Status: SABS opened in 1993 as a preschool with just a few students. According to documentation obtained from the school by the EducationUSA advisor at the US Embassy in Dakar, Senegal (<https://www.educationusa.state.gov/>), in 1994 the school received authorization from the Senegalese *Ministère de l'Éducation nationale* (<http://www.education.gouv.sn/root-fr/files/index.php>) to operate as a private institution in the Senegalese educational system. It offered primary education (“*primaire*”, years 1-6) and in 2008 was authorized to extend its offerings to “*moyen complet*” (4 years) and “*secondaire complet*” (3 years). The school is authorized to award the Senegalese *Baccalauréat* in the L and S streams. In the ministry legislation, the school is called “*Le Petite Ecole Bilingue*”.

Type of School / Curriculum Offered: The school draws American, Senegalese and other families who wish their children to have a bilingual education and prepare for higher education.

- Evaluator questions: American? Senegalese?
 - How do the American-style courses shown on the transcript relate to the indigenous curriculum taught in Senegalese public schools?
 - The transcript shows “Carnegie units” and percentage grades with a concordance to a letter grade, not co-efficients and a 20-grade scale as we would expect to see from a Senegalese school. Where do the units and grade scale come from?

Graduation Credential: *Baccalauréat*, L and S streams

- Evaluator question: The 12th grade transcript states that the requirements for “high school graduation” have been met. Does the graduating student receive a US-style high school diploma, or a Senegalese *Baccalauréat*, or both?

Access to Further Education: The school profile lists several institutions that have accepted graduates of SABS.

- Evaluator question: On the basis of which credential have institutions outside of Senegal accepted graduates of SABS? Do graduates present the Senegalese *Baccalauréat*?

Resources consulted for information about SABS:

- Ministère de l'Éducation nationale (Ministry of National Education): <http://www.education.gouv.sn/root-fr/files/index.php>.
- AACRAO EDGE Senegal profile: <http://edge.aacrao.org/country/overview/senegal-overview>
- EducationUSA Senegal, advisor at the US Embassy in Dakar: <https://dakar.usembassy.gov/resources/education-advising-service.html>. Was able to contact the school directly and obtain a copy of the legislation authorizing the school and the school profile sheet.
- Interview with school founder and director, Stephanie Kane, in The PIE News: <https://thepienews.com/pie-chat/stephanie-nails-kane-sabs-senegal/>. Includes background and history of the school.

The same process of analysis should be applied to the documentation from the British International School in Shanghai, Puxi, China, and other schools for which it is not clear at first glance at the transcripts “whose system is it, anyway?” We hope that what we have outlined here will help you to identify some best practices in credential evaluation and apply them to evaluating secondary education, especially in the cases of schools whose status in the country in which they are located is not clear cut or may be complicated to discern. As the number of these schools increases, it behooves evaluators who work with secondary-level documents to become familiar with the approaches we have presented here.

- Using trusted resources, confirm the location of the school, the legal recognition authority for that location, and the status of the school. To whose system does it belong?
- Use clues in the documents to help you.
- Confirm the completion credential and what it gives access to.
- Check information provided by the school. Save useful information in your resources file.
- Apply your institutional admissions policies.
- If you have several students from the same school, track their progress.

RESOURCE COLLECTIONS COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY IN ENGLISH FOR EVALUATING SECONDARY EDUCATION

The following resources focus specifically on information about elementary and/or secondary education.

1UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), World Data of Education 2010/11 (data from the ministries of education):

<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/services/online-materials/world-data-on-education/seventh-edition-2010-11.html>

IERF Index of Secondary Credentials (2010): <http://www.ierf.org/for-institutions/ierf-publications/index-of-secondary-credentials/>

2NAIA International Academic Published Standards:

<https://www.playnaia.org/page/intldirectory.php>

NCAA International Standards:

<http://www.ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/IS1516.pdf>

3UK UCAS International Qualifications for Entry to University or College (in the UK), 2015:

<https://wwwucas.com/sites/default/files/2015-international-qualifications.pdf>

LesLee Clauson Eicher and Ann Koenig, AACRAO International

Academic Research and International Credential Evaluation; Broadening Horizons?

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself” - John Dewey

INTRODUCTION

This essay is the result of months of discussion between the two authors, enriched by input from conference participants at the 2017 TAICEP annual meeting in Rome, Italy. These discussions focused on the relationship between comparative and international education (CIE) as an academic field, on the one hand, and international credential evaluation, on the other. They have hinged on the ways in which the former may inform the future development of the latter as a growing (and increasingly complex) field. As international credential evaluation becomes ever more critical in a globalizing world, new perspectives will be needed to shape policies and practices. As such, the questions we raise include: can academic research shed new light on the work we do as evaluators? Can such research help provide more holistic perspectives of educational systems and credentials – in turn asking us to evaluate more and providing recommendations beyond what is “typical” in our field? In this way, we hope to broaden our field by investigating forums that may provide greater depth and breadth of perspective to our collective work. We invite you to consider these possibilities - and welcome any and all feedback.

ACADEMIC VS. APPLIED COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Academic

The academic side of CIE stems from research associated with the development of mass schooling systems in the 19th century. These systems developed out of nation-building projects – particularly in Europe and the United States. Research was needed to better cultivate and administer such systems, as well as learn from other systems to improve one’s own. Research allowed for the adoption or development of policies and practices. In the case of the US, Horace Mann (considered the founder of modern American education), spent time in several European countries, notably Prussia and Great Britain, investigating those systems in order to advance US education (Peterson, 2010, p. 27). Such ideas greatly shaped education, centering on the ideals of a “common school” model that would support education for citizenship—a model that became widespread. As such, the basic practice of research became foundational to the field, particularly for purposes of policy development, educational practice, as well as educational reform.

In the European context, such work entailed a focus on “lifelong education” or, more recently, “lifelong learning” – understanding the larger trajectories of learning within educational systems. In the 1960’s and 1970’s “lifelong education” became a key policy concept. This concept emerged in connection to the development of mass education and was accompanied by an ideology of social justice. For the individual, the emphasis was on personal development and ability to adjust to changing circumstances. Practices of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) were developed in close relation to this policy, in order to create possibilities for non-traditional applicants to higher education.

In the 1980's, focus shifted somewhat towards economic benefits for society and employability for the individual. RPL and PLA similarly became more about employability and mobility for the sake of economic development. Since then, the two perspectives have more or less merged, as seen in policy documents such as the European Commission's 2009 Strategic Framework for Education and Training, where personal, social and professional fulfillment are closely intertwined. (Andersson, Fejes, Sandberg, 2013). Since the 1990s, the policy concept has been called "lifelong learning" to encompass informal and non-formal learning as well as formal education.

Much of CIE research is based on comparative perspectives, some of which may be of use in recognition practice. It can be argued, at least in the European context, that recognition of foreign qualifications is carried out within a fairly clear legal framework consisting of national law as well as international agreements such as the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC). In that way, it may seem as though recognition practice would consist solely of legal interpretation. However, the essence of the LRC can be summed up as an obligation for the signing parties to recognize educational qualifications issued by another signing party in the same way as they would an equivalent qualification issued within their own education system, unless substantial differences between said qualifications can be shown. The EAR Manual gives some further clues as to how "substantial differences" should be understood, in its effort to establish a common practice under the LRC. Thus, even in this legal context, comparison is at the heart of recognition practice.

CIE research can be used for any number of purposes. It can be used as social and historical inquiry to gain greater understanding of educational systems and experiences. Yet it can also can be used as a means of governance, to better administer and/or reform education. In any case, such research is central to the policy, practice, reform, and general understanding of education globally. Such research provides insight to the ways in which mass schooling systems are operating, developing, or changing.

Furthermore, within a great deal of CIE research exists a theoretical tension between world culture theory and local variation. World culture theory posits that "not only has the model of modern mass education spread from a common source, but schools around the world are becoming more similar over time" (Anderson-Levitt, 2003, p. 1). In this way, instead of diverging, "schools around the world are converging toward a single global model" (Anderson-Levitt, p. 1). Conversely, proponents of local variation argue that national variation as well as "radiation from district to district and from classroom to classroom" (Anderson-Levitt, 2003, p. 1) is the appropriate framework to understand education globally. "From that point of view, the nearly 200 national school systems in the world today represent some 200 different and diverging cultures of schooling" (Anderson-Levitt, 2003, p. 1). As such, although the orientation of many scholars differ, such perspectives reveal the contradictions inherent in educational systems around the world.

Applied

Applied comparative and international education focuses on the work (as opposed to the research) of the field. This work entails the policies and practices that students, administrators, employers, and employees have done in relationship to student and workforce mobility across international borders. The development of such efforts,

particularly in the US and Europe (as elsewhere), demonstrate the shifts in population in relationship to the demands for education and employment globally.

In the US, these efforts began mainly after World War II with the development of foreign aid to study overseas (e.g., Fulbright Program), the emergence of newly independent formerly colonized nation-states, and the sending of students to the US – leading to the rise of international enrollments. Furthermore, the rise of area studies centers at colleges and universities, as well as government and non-governmental institutions assisting students and workers for study, including involvement in credential evaluation, advising, etc., shaped a new educational landscape. Since the 1980s, the rise of globalization has witnessed increased international student and worker mobility to the US, increased study abroad programs, increased partnerships among institutions and companies globally, and the internationalization of higher education curricula (Merkx, 2003). These developments point to the ways in which the role of applied comparative/international education has become a major force in US culture and globally, supporting the global economy in the areas of education and business. With new technologies and the rise of developing countries in Asia and elsewhere, one can expect the applied field of international education to continue its growth.

In Europe, the emergence of mass education, from the 1960's onwards, prompted the development of stronger formal structures for evaluation of credentials and access to further education within the national systems. In the same period, the European Union developed closer cooperation between European countries in many different areas, including education. In order to facilitate student and workforce mobility, the EU has of course contributed to the development of mechanisms for credential recognition, and to supporting CIE research. However, the arguably most important contribution to recognition practice in Europe and beyond, the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) was actually elaborated by the Council of Europe (not an EU body) together with UNESCO. UNESCO has been – and continues to be – a major driving force globally for the development of recognition practices as well as CIE research.

Today, the work of international education involves advising students on colleges, admissions policies and procedures, credential evaluation, funding, and language testing, among other things. This work is an outcome of the development of the field, in ways to support institutional integrity yet also student and worker success.

GOVERNANCE AND CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION

Educational systems are subject to laws and policies that govern their functioning. Governance, as a concept, can be defined in multiple ways. In the context of this article, we view governance as, “the institutional capacity of public organizations to provide the public and other good demanded by a country's citizens or their representatives in an effective, transparent, impartial, and accountable manner, subject to resource constraints” (Quoted in Kjaer, 2004, p. 11). Moreover, “...governance is about managing rules of the game in order to enhance the legitimacy of the public realm. Legitimacy may be derived from democracy as well as from efficiency (Kjaer, 2004, p. 15).

As such, governance of educational institutions (by a national government through its ministry of education and/or by a transnational governing body, as example) encompasses the work we do as evaluators, particularly our research into institutional recognition and quality assurance among institutions. Accountability is a key component here. Accountability of educational institutions and systems to key stakeholders - government, citizens, etc. - is a major component of governance and should help us consider the ways in which institutional recognition actually functions in the contexts of nation-states. Globalization is a challenge to institutional governance and clearly a challenge in our work to determine what is recognized, official, and legitimate.

Curriculum and instruction, including assessments, are central features of educational systems and subject to governance structures within institutional, national, and/or transnational contexts. Conversely, curriculum and instruction also shapes the governance structures as work (e.g., policies, acceptable teaching practices, etc.). In this way, educational systems, comprising governance, curriculum, and instruction, constitute cultural systems that may vary from institution to institution or country to country.

As the chart below (Fig. 1) indicates, the features of global educational systems, specifically teaching and curriculum, may range from decentralized to standardized (or centralized), two ends of a spectrum. This captures the contradictions central to educational systems globally, and that are reflected in debates surrounding world culture theory and local variation, as previously mentioned. For the purposes of this essay, we refer to two national education systems that are distinct and represent two differing educational models. While certainly one can find similarities between the two, here we wish to point out the distinct cultural differences.

Germany has a decentralized, state-based system that entails a great deal of teacher autonomy and creativity in the classroom. This stands in juxtaposition to China, which has a centralized, national education system that entails a great deal of teacher control and less creativity in the classroom. These are two perhaps extreme examples, but other systems may lie somewhere on the spectrum, including ones that mix elements that are both centralized and decentralized (e.g., arguably, France).

OUTCOMES: BETWEEN FORMAL RECOGNITION AND ASSESSMENT OF REAL COMPETENCE

A question that emerges from this discussion: what are the outcomes associated with differing educational systems, including programs, curricula, and instruction? According to the European Qualifications Framework, outcomes are defined as 1) knowledge, 2) skills, and 3) competence (2017). Thus applicants should possess the appropriate content knowledge needed in the field they are applying to, as well as the “soft skills” (e.g., critical thinking, ability to collaborate effectively with peers, etc.), and competences (e.g., professional knowledge of an industry), in order to be given full consideration for degree programs or employment. These are factors evaluators, admissions staff and hiring officers are sensitive to likely in most international contexts. They shape the policies, processes, recommendations and decisions made that impact the educational and employment trajectories of applicants. While these form the basis of credential recognition for admission to higher education

institutions as well as access to the job market, there remains a gap between formal recognition, on the one hand, and the assessment of applicants' real competence, on the other. Admissions officers and hiring committees often consider credentials along with other criteria in forming their decisions, yet there always exists additional information not outlined in recommendation letters, resumes, etc.

If credentials represent a material manifestation of an individual's learning experiences, what is not readily captured is precisely what is needed to holistically assess an individual's competencies – and translate those into our own educational and employment environments.

Fig. 1: Features of Centralized and Decentralized Education Systems

Decentralization	But Also	Standardization
Decentralization of services, site-based management, school choice, market, or “liberal” reforms		Educational standards, standardized testing, quality assurance, performance-based management, local accountability
Teacher Autonomy	But Also	Control of Teachers
Teacher professionalism and autonomy		Deprofessionalization, detailed national curricula, mandated textbooks, scripted lessons
Student-centered instruction	But Also	Content-centered instruction
Learner-centered pedagogy, “participation,” democracy in the classroom, “active learning,” “hands-on” learning, projects, small cooperative learning groups, relevance of content to child’s experience, emphasis on child’s interests, increased use of local languages, reading for meaning		Content-based reforms, e.g., Core Knowledge, standards movement, increased teaching in world languages, especially English, focus on skills in reading instruction

Source: Anderson-Levitt, 2003, p. 9

DISCUSSION

Given these dynamics, several questions emerge. How can we, as international credential evaluators, use theoretical, methodological, and contextual insights from CIE research to achieve greater breadth and depth of perspective to our applied comparative education work? How might this work potentially shape admissions and hiring policies and practices for institutions? How might this also expand the limits of what is deemed comparable and what

is evaluated? Lastly, might a closer familiarity with academic research contribute to the development of policies that are more sensitive to the cultural contexts of educational systems?

Using a holistic approach, perhaps with greater amounts of data (e.g., syllabi, applicant interviews, CIE research, etc.), may help connect the philosophical and social dimensions of education to the technical aspects (e.g., content, skills, competencies, etc.). Such connections may help shape what we evaluate, how we evaluate, and what recommendations we make. In Ireland, a system of credential evaluation is being developed to include different types of evaluations, based upon applicant or employer/university need, which may look at different aspects of an individual's educational history. This may prove a helpful starting point in considering the potential for broadening the foundations of our collective work.

During the Rome conference, these ideas were discussed and debated. Here we list some of the questions and comments that emerged and, if applicable, our responses.

Will we consider how the background of the evaluator may influence or color how a foreign education system is perceived?

We argue that we are constantly making judgments of educational systems and credentials as we “translate” these into our own systems. These judgments, in many ways, are enshrined in policies and practices. Individual judgments are helpful insofar as they may help adjust or change guiding policy frameworks.

Funding is a factor to consider in making these sorts of evaluations. Who is paying and why? How does this shape policies, processes, and recommendations made?

We agree this is a concern. Does this put standards of evaluation at risk? Should those standards, across contexts, be negotiable or adapted to context? Arguably, funding should not put our standards at risk, no matter if the standards are broad or context specific. Of course there is always this danger, we believe.

Access to educational records, from syllabi and course description to actual transcripts, can be a problem for many applicants.

For the authors this is an important limitation to keep in mind; one that has the potential to shape the type of evaluation that can be conducted. Other sources of information may need to be considered, such as academic essays, news articles, website information, applicant interviews, or administrator or teacher interviews, to help create a more robust picture of the applicant's background.

Here are further questions for exploration:

Perhaps offer value judgments/perspectives on the positives or negatives of each education system or degree programs (e.g., instruction as rote vs. constructivist) in relationship to our own education systems or workplace environments?

Should we make differing recommendations about placement of applicants into jobs and/or degree programs, based upon the educational system they participated in?

Would we require applicants to submit syllabi and/or course descriptions to better make judgments? ENIC/NARIC (based on Irish model) considering different levels of detailed assessments based on applicants' interests.

*Should we evaluate the means of instruction (e.g., content-centered)?
Should teaching recommendations be made if clear applicant participated in an educational system that is “rote” based and they are moving into one that is “creativity” based? For the purposes of political correctness and cultural sensitivity, it may be worth using a different terminology – perhaps “content-based” education versus “student-centric” education? Or something along those lines?
Would this kind of work shift what are considered the “basic essentials” of international credential evaluation?*

CONCLUSION

This essay serves as a starting point for further discussion on ways to broaden our field, without losing sight of the important standards and shared values that are essential to the work we do. It is our belief academic research holds the potential for crafting a broader, more holistic perspective on international credential evaluation, coupled with additional resources (e.g., syllabi, course descriptions, interviews, etc.). But more than this, we believe that keeping up with theory development in the academic disciplines concerned with CIE can provide valuable insight in keeping recognition practice vital. In the future, closer ties between networks for recognition professionals, such as TAICEP, and academic research networks could prove mutually beneficial.

In short, these particulars provide a way to move our field forward, creating more dynamic evaluations that cater to differing needs. We invite you to continue this discussion. Such efforts will assist us in thinking through these issues carefully from multiple perspectives, including from the vantage point of credential evaluation companies, education institutions, and businesses, among others. Such conversations, we believe, may help provide a more equitable way forward, supporting the mobility of students and workers, in our increasingly globalized world.

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Secondary Education in Scandinavia: Denmark, Norway, Sweden, plus the U.S. Perspective

Education in Europe is currently undergoing many changes. Scandinavia has often been at the forefront of these changes. At the 2017 TAIEP conference in Rome, a panel of international credential evaluators came together to introduce the various types of secondary-school curricula and leaving-certificates (academic, vocational, and the varied streams within each) currently available to students in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The panel focused on updates and changes to the systems, as evidenced in credentials, curricula, and grading scales. Participants were shown sample documents and learned about available resources. This is a summary of that discussion.

Denmark

Primary and Lower Secondary Education

Danish schoolchildren attend *Folkeskole* (“Folk” School – Elementary and Lower Secondary School), a free, public school system with a comprehensive (un-streamed) curriculum. Compulsory education lasts 10 years, with one year of pre-school, plus grades one through nine, typically ages six through sixteen. An optional grade ten also exists in the *Folkeskole*. Student who successfully complete the *Folkeskole* curriculum receive the *Afgangsbevis* (School-leaving examination certificate)

Upper Secondary School System – Legislation, Financing, and Management

The Ministry of Education sets the regulatory framework by which all schools are structured. Schools throughout Denmark are self-governing institutions (within the federal framework) that offer one or more of the upper secondary education programmes by means of grants from the Ministry of Education. These size of these grants vary based on student numbers. The head of the school answers to a board, the composition of which reflects the school’s specific profile. The teachers and students of the school appoint representatives to the board. The school board appoints and dismisses the head teacher and has overall responsibility for the running of the school and its activities. (<http://www.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Gymnasiale%20uddannelser/Proever%20og%20eksamen/~media/DB75101C3715482AAD7D1B0D11B8E771.ashx>)

Upper Secondary Education – General Information

Curricula and exams at each type of upper secondary school must follow national standards. The curricula of the HHX and HTX differ from those of the STX and the HF. In addition to some general upper secondary subjects, the HHX offers financial and business subjects, while the HTX offers technical subjects. Admission requirements for the STX, HHX, and HTX are the *Folkeskole Afgangsbevis*, plus certain subject requirements. The HF requires ten years of basic school. This type of schooling attracts both young people and adults.

Upper Secondary Education – Types

There are four types of upper secondary school leaving examinations in Denmark:

The 3-year *Studentereksamen (STX)* (Upper Secondary School Leaving Examination) is awarded after successful completion of study at a *Gymnasium* (Academic Upper Secondary School). The STX leads to higher education. It must include at least four subjects at A-level and normally three B-level and seven C-level subjects.

- Compulsory subjects and levels: Danish A, English B, 2nd foreign language B or A, history A, classical studies C, physics C, physical education (PE) C, an artistic subject C, mathematics C, religion C, social science, and in addition at least two of the subjects biology, chemistry and natural geography at C-level.
- Most students must also complete biology, physics, chemistry or natural geography at B-level.

The curriculum for this credential requires a minimum of 2,470 60-minute lessons.

The 2-year *Højere Forberedelseksamen (HF)* (Higher Preparatory Examination) is awarded by a *Gymnasium* or adult education center. It also leads to higher education.

- It requires Danish A, English B, mathematics C, physical education C, practical/musical subject C, natural science group of subjects (which includes biology C, geography C and chemistry C), and the culture and social science group of subjects (history B, social science C and religion C).

The curriculum for this credential requires a minimum of 1,625 60-minute lessons.

The 3-year *Højere Handelseksamen (HHX)* (Higher Commercial Examination) can be obtained by successfully completing the curriculum of a *Handelsskole* (Business School/College). This credential leads to higher education, with compulsory subjects

- Danish A, English A, 2nd foreign language B or A, business economics B, marketing B, international economics B, contemporary history B, mathematics C, commercial law C and social science C.
- There is also an intensive one-year HHX program for students who have already completed an STX or HF program.

The curriculum for this credential requires a minimum of 2,470 60-minute lessons.

The 3-year *Højere Teknisk Eksamen (HTX)* (Higher Technical Examination) is awarded upon completion of the curriculum at a *Teknisk Skole* (Technical School/College). It leads to higher education. Students must complete

- Danish A, technical science A, English B, physics B, chemistry B, mathematics B, technology B, biology C, communication/IT C, social science C and history of technology C.

The curriculum for this credential requires a minimum of 2,630 60-minute lessons.

Vocational Education

Denmark also boasts a robust vocational education track. The following credentials may be earned:

EGU (*Erhvervsgrunduddannelsen*) – Vocational Basic Training

The EGU is “sandwich training” targeted at young adults who did not complete compulsory education, are unemployed, and/or are academically weak. It alternates between school-based periods and periods of practical training in one or more companies. It typically lasts two years. There is no formal qualification awarded upon completion.

VET (*Erhvervsuddannelser*) – Initial Vocational Education and Training

The VET program is “sandwich training” targeted at school-leavers and adults with prior vocational experience. It is typically two to five-and-a-half years in duration, with the most typical being three-and-one-half to four years. Trainees are awarded a journeyman’s certificate (*Svendebrev*) or similar. Some programs qualify trainees for admission to certain types of short-cycle higher education programs.

EUX (*Erhvervsuddannelse og gymnasial eksamen*) – Vocational Education and Training + General Secondary Examination

This program was introduced beginning with the 2010/2011 school year. It is a general upper secondary education (STX) program which VET students can attend while completing their VET program. Not all VET programs will offer this option. The EUX leads to higher education.

Grading

Note that the old system was in use through August of 2007; the new system came into effect as of September 2007.

Current 7-point scale	Old 13- point scale
12	13, 11
10	10
7	9, 8
4	7
02	6
00	5, 03
-3	00

Norway

Primary and Secondary Education Regulation

Regulation of primary and secondary education in Norway is governed by the Education Act, which was originally passed in 1998 and has been amended five times, in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. It has been in effect since 2014. It is decided by the parliament, contains the general provisions for all school forms, and covers both compulsory education and upper secondary education.

The curriculum is determined by the Government. It states the tasks, overall goals and the values that should underpin teaching in the upper secondary school. There are both public and private schools in Norway, but all that receive financial support are governed by the same regulations.

Governance of primary and secondary education

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and training has the overall responsibility for supervising kindergarten, education, and the governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations. The Directorate is responsible for all national statistics concerning kindergarten, primary and secondary education. On the basis of these statistics it initiates, develops, and monitors research and development.

Structure of Primary and Lower Secondary Education

At the primary and lower secondary level, students attend a *Grunnskole* (Basic School) for grades one through ten, ages six through sixteen. Compulsory education lasts ten years, grades one through ten (typically ages six to sixteen). Prior to 2003, compulsory education was nine years in duration, ages seven through sixteen.

After completing grade ten, *Grunnskole* students sit for a school-leaving examination; the final certificate is the *Vitnemål fra Grunnskolen* (Basic School Certificate).

Primary and Secondary Education – Tracks

There are thirteen tracks:

Five general study programs	Eight vocational programs
They give access to higher education.	These usually last two years in school followed by a two-year apprenticeship.
They are attended by 60% of the pupils.	Bridging to general study program is possible.
60% of these pupils have parents with higher education.	62% of these pupils have parents with lower- or upper secondary education

Documentation

The below tables show vocabulary used on *Vitnemål* and/or *Kompetansebevis* from lower- and upper secondary school documentation.

Headings on the *Vitnemål* and/or *Kompetansebevis*

• <i>Navn</i>	• Name
• <i>Fødselsnummer</i>	• Personal ID no.
• <i>har i åååå bestått</i>	• Has in yyyy passed
• <i>har i åååå gjennomgått grunnskoleopplæringen</i>	• Has in yyyy completed his/her compulsory education
• <i>har gjennomført opplæring som omfatter</i>	• Has completed education/training in
• <i>i utdanningsprogram for</i>	• In the education programme for
• <i>fullført</i>	• Completed
• <i>bestått</i>	• Passed
• <i>og har oppnådd generell studiekompetanse</i>	• And has achieved general university admissions certification
• <i>og har bestått fagopplæring</i>	• And has passed vocational training
• <i>og har oppnådd yrkeskompetanse</i>	• And has achieved vocational competence
• <i>Fortsettelse fra side 1</i>	• Continued from page 1

Headings on the subjects on the *Vitnemål* and/or *Kompetansebevis*

• <i>Omfang</i>	• Hours
• <i>Kode</i>	• Code
• <i>Fag</i>	• Subject
• <i>Standpunktkarakter (Standpunkt-karakter)</i>	• Final assessment grade (Final grade)
• <i>Eksamens-karakter (Eksamens-karakter)</i>	• Examination grade (Exam grade)
• <i>Eksamensform (Eks. form)</i>	• Examination form (Exam form)
• <i>År</i>	• Year
• <i>Merknader</i>	• Comments
• <i>Fellesfag</i>	• Common core subjects
• <i>Felles programfag</i>	• Common programme subjects
• <i>Valgfag</i>	• Elective subject

Grading

Indigenous scale	Verbal
6 - exceptionally high degree of competence in the subject	seks
5 - very high degree of competence in the subject	fem
4 - high degree of competence in the subject	fire
3 - fair degree of competence in the subject	tre
2 - low degree of competence in the subject	to
1 - very low degree of competence in the subject	en

Timeline of Educational Reforms: School and Credential Names

Upper Secondary Education

1976

- Schools called *Gymnas* (Gymnasium – Academic Upper Secondary School)
- Qualification: *Examen artium*

1976

- Schools called *Videregående skole* (Upper Secondary School)
- Qualification: *Vitnemål fra den videregående skolen* (Certificate from Upper Secondary School)
- *Grunnkurs* (Basic Course) VKI, VKII building on each other; four streams

1985 - 1992

- Qualification: *Vitnemål fra den videregående skolen*
- *Grunnkurs* VKI, VKII building on each other; no streams, more freedom in choosing subjects

1994 (Reform 94 [R94])

- Qualification: *Vitnemål videregående opplæring* (Certificate – Upper Secondary Education) issued from 1997 until 2010
- *Grunnkurs*, VKI, VKII building on each other
- 6 streams + VKII General subjects bridging for vocational streams

2006 *Kunnskapsløftet* (KL)

- Qualification: *Vitnemål for videregående opplæring* (Certificate for Upper Secondary Education), issued from 2009
- VG1, VG2 and VG3 replaces *Grunnkurs*, VK1 and VKII
- Periods of 60 minutes and total number of hours replaces periods of 45 minutes per week

Sweden

Sweden has gone through several educational reforms in the last 25-30 years. The current curriculum, which has been used since 2011, is the fifth major reform since the early 1990's. This makes Swedish education a difficult topic to summarize.

In the session at TAICEP 2017, we briefly touched upon the regulations that govern Swedish education, grading scales over the years, program formats, and graduation requirements. We also looked at some statistics of secondary school graduates, admissions requirements for university studies in Sweden, and samples of Swedish grade documents.

Education in Sweden is nationally standardized, and generally free for all students at all levels. The overall Education Act, the school curriculum, subject syllabuses, as well as a number of ordinances and regulations, apply to all education regardless whether a school is public or privately owned. In upper secondary school you choose between two types of programs, higher education preparatory or vocational. The Swedish curriculum uses a course and credit system where each subject has a number of courses, in most cases building on the previous course. And, although the current curriculum has meant several changes in the content of subject syllabuses, graduation requirements, course codes/names, and grading scale, this overall principal has remained the same.

Upper secondary school students in Sweden can generally receive two different documents upon graduation. The Diploma Certificate (*Slutbetyg*) is awarded to students who have met the diploma requirements. If you have studied a higher education preparatory program, this certificate will automatically meet the general entry requirements for undergraduate studies in Sweden. If you have studied a vocational program, your diploma certificate will generally not meet the general entry requirements for university studies, unless you have studied additional courses in English and Swedish. If you have finished a program, but not met the diploma requirements, you will receive a Study Certificate (*Studiebevis*). This does not meet the general entry requirements for university studies, but you can study additional courses at upper secondary school or municipal adult education, and then receive your Diploma.

If you are a credential evaluator or an admissions officer and have Swedish credentials to assess, you should know that Swedish school can issue documents in both Swedish and in English. And as for the validity of the documents, they must always be signed by the principal to be considered valid in Sweden. If a grade document is signed by an administrator or teacher, it will generally not be accepted when applying for universities in Sweden.

Grading scales in Sweden

2011 Scale	Pre 2011 Scale	Translation	Point conversion, scale 10-20
A	<i>Mycket väl godkänd (MVG)</i>	Pass with special distinction	20
B			17,5
C	<i>Väl godkänd (VG)</i>	Pass with distinction	15
D			12,5
E	<i>Godkänd (G)</i>	Pass	10
F	<i>Icke Godkänd (IG)</i>	Failed	0

The U.S. Perspective

Contrary to how the Scandinavian systems are structured, with a high level of involvement by the respective governments in regulating education, the U.S. federal government has placed the responsibility for the majority of educational regulation on the individual state governments. Because of this, each U.S. state, and even individual institutions, determine how their own educational systems are structured. The “standard” secondary system in the U.S. is completed following 12 years of study, resulting in the issuance of a high school diploma. There is no standard, federal or state examination that a student must complete in order to qualify for this diploma. Thus, most U.S. universities rely simply on the 12 years of study plus award of the High School Diploma for admission consideration. However, non-traditional students (primarily school leavers) have the ability to complete the General Education Development (GED) examination if they are otherwise unable to complete secondary school and receive a regular high school diploma. There are also third-party exams, such as ACT and SAT, which take the place of standardized university entrance exams utilized by other countries.

Because of the structure of the U.S. educational system, each undergraduate institution evaluates international credentials differently; relying on their own university policies and needs when reviewing candidates for admission. Usually, this review utilizes both year counting and benchmarking, to varying degrees. For Sweden and Denmark, this method is easily applied since the benchmark credential indicating completion of secondary school in those countries lines up with the 12 years of instruction in the U.S.

However, for Norway, this isn’t the case. Instead of the benchmark school-leaving credential being completed following 12 years, it is completed after 13 years. Thus, U.S. institutions must decide whether to admit with 13 years of schooling, and disregard that the student has completed an additional year compared to U.S. applicants, or to admit to first-year standing and grant advanced-standing credit for the 13th year of study. Some institutions have policies prohibiting the award of undergraduate credit for secondary school work and are instead bound to only reviewing benchmarks. Ultimately, each individual institution determines its own evaluation policies due to the decentralized nature of the U.S. educational system.

*Included with the PowerPoint presentation are results from a poll sent out to institutions and agencies involved with international credential evaluation. As the results show, there are varying responses to review of Scandinavian credentials among these peer institutions.

Resources

Denmark

Danish Agency for International Education, The Danish Education System

http://ufm.dk/en/publications/2016/files/the_danish_education_system_pdfa.pdf

Eurydice: National System Overviews on Educational Systems in Europe and Ongoing Reforms - Denmark, 2016

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Denmark:Overview>
Undervisnings Ministeriet [Ministry of Education] - Formerly 2011-2013 the Ministeriet for Børn og Undervisning and 2015-2016 Ministeriet for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling (Governs primary, secondary, and adult education.)

<http://www.uvm.dk/>.

UddannelsesGuiden, Undervisnings Ministeriet (Information about educational programs available in Denmark. In Danish only.

<http://www.ug.dk/> .

Eksamensbeviser på engelsk (Diplomas in English – translation of educational terms and good overview in English of Danish upper secondary education)

<http://www.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Gymnasiale%20uddannelser/Proever%20og%20eksamen/~media/DB75101C3715482AAD7D1B0D11B8E771.ashx>

Norway

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, The Education Mirror: Facts and analysis of kindergarten, primary and secondary education in Norway

<http://utdanningsspeilet.udir.no/2016/en/>

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, Dictionary Norwegian/English and English/Norwegian for the Primary and Secondary Education Sector

<https://www.udir.no/arkivmappe/Ordbok/>

Information about the different types of certificates (Kunnskapsløftet), the Norwegian grading scale, and validity

<http://www.udir.no/in-english/certificates-and-grading-scales/>

Sweden

Questions about an individual's documents should be directed to the issuing school in question. For questions about the school system in general, contact Skolverket (the National Agency for Education).

<https://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/andra-sprak/in-english>

For questions about admissions and evaluation of Swedish grades in Sweden, contact Universitets- och högskolerådet (Swedish Council for Higher Education).

<https://www.uhr.se/en/start/>

Other source documents

National Agency for Education, Upper Secondary School 2011 overall commentary, diploma goals and programme structures

[https://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/publikationer/visa-enskild-publikation?
xurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww5.skolverket.se%2Fwtpub%2Fws%2Fskolbok%2Fwpubext
%2Ftrycksak%2Fblob%2Fpdf2801.pdf%3Fk%3D2801](https://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/publikationer/visa-enskild-publikation?_xurl_=http%3A%2F%2Fwww5.skolverket.se%2Fwtpub%2Fws%2Fskolbok%2Fwpubext%2Ftrycksak%2Fblob%2Fpdf2801.pdf%3Fk%3D2801)

Swedish-English Dictionary of Higher Education

<https://www.uhr.se/publikationer/svensk-engelsk-ordbok/>

Common terminology for translation of upper secondary education grades

[https://www.skolverket.se/polopoly_fs/1.191540!/Common%20terminology%20when
%20translating%20upper%20secondary%20school%20grades.pdf](https://www.skolverket.se/polopoly_fs/1.191540!/Common%20terminology%20when%20translating%20upper%20secondary%20school%20grades.pdf)

English explanation of Swedish grades

https://www.skolverket.se/polopoly_fs/1.259628!/swedishgrades_bilaga.pdf

Translated Course Syllabuses

[https://www.skolverket.se/laroplaner-amnen-och-
kurser/gymnasieutbildning/gymnasieskola/oversattningar](https://www.skolverket.se/laroplaner-amnen-och-kurser/gymnasieutbildning/gymnasieskola/oversattningar)

In this session, participants became familiar with the secondary education systems in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and learned to recognize the similarities and differences. They learned to identify the various types secondary school leaving certificates, representing the available tracks in these three countries, and discussed best (and common) practices in the U.S. for placing students holding these certificates. Finally, session attendees engaged in a dialogue about university admissions among US and Scandinavian admissions officers and higher education officials.

Christopher Adams, Indiana University, LessLee Clauson Eicher, AACRAO International, Erik Kyhlberg, Swedish Council for Higher Education, Rolf Lofstad, Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education

Memoriam to Sandy Gault

Sandy Gault, formerly of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, died on September 8 after a long battle with liver disease. She was a beloved force in international admissions, and will be sorely missed. Here are some thoughts from people who knew her:

Sandy Gault was an exceptional person among us, and I am very much saddened at her passing. The memories I have of Sandy over the years are ones filled with laughter and fun as well as hard work. As "iron sharpens iron", she tempered me with her professionalism, intellect and common sense. In the days when Sandy and I were both very active in NAFSA, someone commented that we appeared to be joined at the hip. I can't think of a better person to be closely associated with. Sandy, I'll miss you...dear colleague, dear friend.

Robert Prather, TAICEP Executive Director

Sandy was a force of nature. She had a quiet, gentle voice that commanded attention. She had a wicked sense of humor, especially when it came to others in the profession. I was so sad to hear that she has left this world.

Kate Freeman, SpanTran: The Evaluation Company

It is probably not widely known that Sandy was an early advocate and supporter of the idea that became known as TAICEP. She was one of a small group that came together and generated many of the ideas that were core to our goals and values. Sadly, she was not in a position to be active in the association, but we all have her to thank for being a consummate professional with the vision to see the need. True to her gentle and unassuming nature, she cared for and supported the profession in a way that has benefited all of us.

Margit Schatzman – Educational Credential Evaluators/ECE

Sandy was smart, diplomatic, energetic, insightful and a workhorse! Her family and dogs meant the world to her. She was soft spoken, but her words were powerful.

Nancy Katz – Evaluation Service, Inc.

TAICEP Elections

I am pleased to announce the results of the 2018-19 elections. They are:

- President – LesLee Eicher
- Vice President for Membership – Marshall Houser
- Vice President for Standards – Cloud Bai-Yun
- Secretary – Diana Hense
- Treasurer – David Haynes
- Committee for Standards – Rolf Lofstad
- Committee for Membership Outreach – Jeremy Mixell
- Committee for Resources for Members - Christopher Adams
- Committee for Professional Development – Denise Benz

Your elected and appointed leaders have already begun planning for the leadership transition. Elected leaders will begin their two-year terms on 1 January 2018. Please join me in congratulating our new leaders.

Margit Schatzman, TAICEP President

TAICEP Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The Association for International Credential Evaluation Professionals (TAICEP) conducted strategic planning on 5 September 2017 in Rome, Italy, in conjunction with their third annual meeting. With input from TAICEP members via the member survey, leaders of the association identified three goals that will provide focus for association growth and development in the years ahead. These are:

- Certificate Program
 - By the end of 2019, have in place the Foundation Certificate and at least 3 subject-specific certificates to meet the needs of TAICEP members at all levels
- Professional Development
 - By the end of 2019, offer a comprehensive package of professional development programs that supports TAICEP members at all levels
- Finances
 - By the end of 2019, support the continued development of the Certificate Program, professional development and other programs, and maintain fiscal responsibility through a variety of revenue streams such as the annual conference, sponsorship, and program fees.

TAICEP will continue to serve its members as they contribute to the world community by doing work that supports the movement of people across borders for educational, commercial and personal reasons, building a stronger and better world.

Introduction

The Association for International Credential Evaluation Professionals (TAICEP) was incorporated in 2013. In the relatively short span of time from incorporation until now, our association has grown and contributed to our field at an impressive pace. Official membership has topped 200, we represent over 15 countries and have held three successful international conferences. We have provided resources and training to people who do the important work of international credential assessment.

In order to meet the needs of our membership and continue to contribute to the world community by doing work that supports the movement of people across borders for educational, commercial and personal reasons, we need to plan. In September 2017 we completed a comprehensive process that resulted in this plan that will set the strategic direction of the organization in the years ahead.

Process

The strategic planning process included the following:

Stakeholder input and information gathering: In order to understand the needs and goals of the association members and to review the association's position in the international education environment, we collected data. We surveyed the TAICEP membership, all current TAICEP leaders, and all candidates for elected TAICEP positions. We gathered data on the current state of our association, on our external environment, and the international education community in which our members do their work.

Analysis of issues and trends by association leaders: TAICEP leaders and leader candidates met for an all-day retreat as part of the third annual meeting in Rome. At the meeting we reviewed our mission and operational principles, financial condition and accomplishments. Leaders reviewed member survey results, committee priorities and issues facing the association. An environmental scan and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis provided a context for our future direction.

Areas of Focus

After sifting through all the data, discussion and analysis, the group identified three major areas of focus. These, along with overarching goals, are:

- Certificate Program
 - By the end of 2019, have in place the Foundation Certificate and at least three subject-specific certificates to meet the needs of TAICEP members at all levels
- Professional Development
 - By the end of 2019, offer a comprehensive package of professional development programs that supports TAICEP members at all levels
- Finances
 - By the end of 2019, support the continued development of the Certificate Program, professional development and other programs, and maintain fiscal responsibility through a variety of revenue streams such as the annual conference, sponsorship, and program fees.

Next Steps

Next steps in implementing the strategic plan include:

Setting priorities and identifying organizational goals: The three areas of focus will help the association set priorities and used resources wisely to achieve goals.

Setting committee goals – Committee chairs will use the three areas of focus to help them develop committee action plans.

Managing performance: Association leaders will set up systems of accountability and communication to ensure that goals are met and results are communicated to TAICEP members.

Summary

The strategic planning process was successful due to the active participation of TAICEP members and leaders. A great deal of thoughtful detail and input by members not included in this report, but nonetheless recorded and noted, will help to guide leaders in their work. Continued input and volunteer contributions by many members have and will continue to make TAICEP a successful association. The strategic plan will help us remain focused on the needs and wishes of membership.

Notes:

Those attending the strategic planning retreat included current leaders and 2018 leader candidates (Board and Committee Chairs): Christopher Adams, Cloud Bai-Yun, Jeanie Bell, Denise Benz, LesLee Eicher Clauson, Kate Freeman, Diana Hense, Rolf Lofstad, Shereen Mir-Jabbar, Lou Nunes, Margit Schatzman, and Jessica Stannard

Leaders unable to attend, but who contributed to the preparation and success of the strategic planning process include David Haynes, Marshall Houserman, George Kacenga, Ken Warren, and Robert Prather (Executive Director).

TAICEP News

TAICEP Conference Planning Structure

Now that TAICEP has held several annual conferences, the TAICEP Executive Board has decided that it is time to create a solid structure around conference planning and has approved the creation of a conference committee. We are actively searching for someone who is interested in being chair of this committee. This position will provide a great professional development opportunity, and if you are interested in becoming the chair of this committee, please let Robert Prather know at robertpprather@gmail.com.

Conference Committee

This ad-hoc committee is responsible for multi-year conference planning and oversight, and reports to the Executive Director, liaison to the Executive Committee. The committee has at least these members:

- Chair (2-year term, appointed by the EB): Responsible for overall conference planning, which includes sourcing future locations and making location recommendations (ensuring a local Coordinator can be found), creating and adhering to timelines, overseeing conference coordinators, maintaining the conference planning manual, ensuring a conference budget is created by the Coordinators so that the EB can establish conference fees, providing periodic updates to the EB, participating in monthly EB calls with other committee chairs, and ensuring conference coordinators stay on plan. Recommends conference coordinators to the Executive Director for Executive Board consideration and approval.
- Conference Coordinator 1 (about 1.5 year commitment...identified by no later than March 1 the year prior to the conference he/she is responsible for and ends after the final report of the conference and financial settlements are made): Acts as head of a local arrangements group for the next conference.
- Conference Coordinator 2 (about 1.5 year commitment...identified by no later than March 1 the year prior to the conference he/she is responsible for and ends after the final report of the conference and financial settlements are made): Acts as the head of a local arrangements group for subsequent conference.

Local Arrangements Groups

Conference coordinators establish and oversee their own separate local arrangement groups (LAG). LAG members are appointed by the conference coordinators for the duration of planning and executing conferences. The conference coordinators should each establish a team to ensure that the following functions are covered:

- Establishing conference logistics (i.e. what happens when, including session times, meals/breaks, committee and board meetings, outings, etc.). Liaise with Professional Development Committee chair in establishing pre-conference workshop and session lengths and schedule placement.
- Conference registration management and communication
- Conference budget projections and financial tracking and reports
- Conference sponsorship plan and execution (including recommending conference sponsorship categories, seeking sponsors, communications with sponsors, and recognition of sponsors)
- Working with the TAICEP Marketing and Communications Committee chair for conference promotion
- Producing the conference program, assembling member registration packets
- Ensuring IT and room arrangements meet needs of presenters, the EB, etc.
- Managing volunteers as needed to man registration tables, etc.
- Creating and summarizing conference session reviews and an overall conference feedback survey.

At this time, there is no provision or means to provide conference committee and local arrangement group members with conference travel and registration discounts.

TAICEP Certificate Program

We are proud to announce that our Foundation Certificate is now here, and is based on the core competencies of evaluation, research, communication, and professional responsibility. This certificate will attest that the holder has foundational knowledge of credential evaluation and assessment.

Candidates for the Foundation Certificate must be members of TAICEP. Experience in credential evaluation is not required, but strongly encouraged. To learn more about the program and how to apply, please go [here](#). Extracts from the website are listed below.

Our Foundation Certificate will initially only be open to a pilot group of 20 candidates so that the process and content can be continually evaluated by the Certificate Committee based on the experiences of the pilot group. **The first 20 applications and payments received by TAICEP will be part of this group. The pilot group will have a reduced program fee of US\$125** and the fee will be non-refundable.

TAICEP will be introducing additional subject-specific certificates in 2018, including certificates that can be earned through attendance at the annual conference. Please be aware that the Foundation Certificate must be earned before you can apply to additional certificate programs.

Foundation Certificate

The Certificate Program begins with the Foundation Certificate. This certificate attests that holder has a foundational knowledge of credential evaluation and assessment. It is based on the core competencies of evaluation, research, communication, and professional responsibility. Sub-topics of the competencies are the basis for the Foundation Certificate.

To earn a Foundation Certificate, a candidate must earn at least 100 points through three consecutive steps: professional development, an on-line assessment of knowledge, and a capstone evaluation.

Foundation Certificate Sequence

Step One is professional development. A candidate must earn at least 60 professional development points in the following ways: webinars, conference sessions, workshops, publishing articles in the field, and/or shadowing an experienced credential evaluator. More details about the point distribution and requirements are on the Certificate webpage.

Once at least 60 professional development points have been earned, candidates are eligible to move on to Step Two: an on-line knowledge assessment. This is a web-based examination of the core competencies.

Step Three is the capstone examination. This requires the evaluation of six credentials which includes identifying the credential, the issuing institution, admission requirements, an equivalency, and a rationale for the equivalency.

Add to Your Library

Verification Resources

Here is a sampling of some of the newest resources added to our Verification Database:

Philippines: Malayan Colleges Laguna: <http://mcl.edu.ph/admissions/ExamResults2.aspx>

Sri Lanka: University of Peradeniya, Faculty of Arts: http://www.arts.pdn.ac.lk/results_llb/

Pakistan: NED University of Engineering and Technology:

<http://www.neduet.edu.pk/examination/results.html>

Tanzania: Dar-es-Salaam Institute of Technology: <http://www.dit.ac.tz/results>

Poland: Central Examination Board, Maturity Exam: <https://www.cke.edu.pl/egzamin-maturalny/egzamin-w-nowej-formule/wyniki/>

Canada: University of Windsor, registrar: registrar@uwindsor.ca

Jordan: Current Tawjihi results: <http://www.tawjihi.jo/>

Iraq: new authentication procedures from Iraqi Cultural Office since September 2017:

http://www.iraqiculture-usa.com/degree_authentication_verification

Be sure to send your favorite verification resources to Annetta Stroud at strouda@aacrao.org so they can be added to the TAICEP verification database.

In the News

Documentation in times of crisis: [https://blog.thepienews.com/2017/10/documentation-in-times-of-crisis/?](https://blog.thepienews.com/2017/10/documentation-in-times-of-crisis/?utm_content=bufferdodbo&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

[utm_content=bufferdodbo&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer](https://blog.thepienews.com/2017/10/documentation-in-times-of-crisis/?utm_content=bufferdodbo&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

Rwanda education council closes 5 universities: <https://t.co/zlkg48ofIK>

Nordic countries aim for automatic recognition for higher education:

<http://www.nokut.no/en/News/News-2017/Aims-for-automatic-recognition-of-higher-education-in-the-Nordic-countries/>

Degree forgery scandal at Makerere University in Uganda:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20170915135929598>

Almost half of Libyan universities remain closed: [https://www.al-](https://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2017/09/libyas-civil-disorder-closed-8-universities/)

[fanarmedia.org/2017/09/libyas-civil-disorder-closed-8-universities/](https://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2017/09/libyas-civil-disorder-closed-8-universities/)

Pakistan Higher Education Commission stops four universities from admitting students:

<http://nation.com.pk/24-Aug-2017/hec-bars-admissions-in-four-universities>

Universities in Australia and New Zealand digitizing academic credentials:

<http://hes.edu.au/news/my-equals-gathering-momentum/>

Progress is being made on the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees:
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/recognition-of-refugees-qualifications>

Kenya looks like it could become a growth market for international student recruiters:
<http://monitor.icef.com/2017/10/kenya-become-growth-market-outbound-mobility/?platform=hootsuite>

The blockchain in education: <https://www.slideshare.net/cjagers/the-blockchain-in-education-81211613>

Digital Diploma debuts at MIT: <http://news.mit.edu/2017/mit-debuts-secure-digital-diploma-using-bitcoin-blockchain-technology-1017>

Malaysian Higher Education Ministry is building a central database of diploma and degree holders to combat fraud: https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/10/295239/central-database-diploma-degree-holders-will-root-out-pretenders-fake?utm_content=bufferce9fe&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

History and current status of higher education in Jordan: <http://qswownews.com/higher-education-jordan-history-present-status-future/>

Two recent articles on “Essay Mill” sites from the UK:
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/09/universities-urged-to-block-essay-mill-sites-in-plagiarism-crackdown> and
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/10/12/inside-essay-mills-offering-do-students-work/?utm_content=61630767&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter

Jamaican universities are partnering to reduce shortage of engineers: <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20171001/universities-join-forces-ease-shortage-engineers>

In Vietnam, more students are attending vocational school than universities:
http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/education/187644/more-students-attending-vocational-school-instead-of-university.html?utm_content=buffer33fae&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Studying abroad directly impacts needed career skills: <https://www.iie.org/Why-IIE/Announcements/2017-10-02-Gaining-an-Employment-Edge>

How Arab countries regulate quality in higher education:
http://www.chronicle.com/article/How-Arab-Countries-Regulate/241248?utm_content=60623738&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter

Publications and Webinars

The European Baccalaureate described and compared with the Dutch system. NUFFIC, 2017. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/publications/find-a-publication/education-system-european-baccalaureate.pdf>

Bringing the Groningen Declaration to Canada. Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2017. <https://www.arucc.ca/en/resources/task-force-groningen.html>

Study to Support the Revision of the Diploma Supplement and Analyse the Feasibility of Its Digitalisation at European Level. European Commission, 2017. <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1ae19aac-6a9a-11e7-b2f2-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

Mobility, Mutual Recognition and ASEAN Community Building: The Road to Sustainable ASEAN Integration. UNESCO International Centre for Higher Education Innovation, 2017. <https://jice.um.edu.my/index.php/JICE/article/view/4Chao/jice.2017.6.2.105>

Combating Corruption and Enhancing Integrity: A Contemporary Challenge for the Quality and Credibility of Higher Education. UNESCO, International Institute for Educational Planning, and Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2017. https://eadtu.eu/images/publicaties/Advisory_Statement_Corruption-Eng.pdf

Webinar Series on Quality Assurance and Combating Academic Corruption: Webinar #1: What Might the International Quality Assurance Community Do? Council for Higher Education Accreditation. http://www.chea.org/4DCGI/cms/review.html?Action=CMS_Document&DocID=1063&MenuKey=main

Webinar Series on Quality Assurance and Combating Academic Corruption: Webinar #2: Focus on Plagiarism. Council for Higher Education Accreditation. http://www.chea.org/4DCGI/cms/review.html?Action=CMS_Document&DocID=1061&MenuKey=main

Webinar Series on Quality Assurance and Combating Academic Corruption: Webinar #3. Quality Assurance and the Challenge of Addressing Academic Corruption. Council for Higher Education Accreditation. http://www.chea.org/4DCGI/cms/review.html?Action=CMS_Document&DocID=1085&MenuKey=main

Recognition and Validation of Qualifications and Skills for Refugees – Selected Practices from Europe. European Training Foundation, 2017. https://connections.etf.europa.eu/blogs/fo62de46-649f-4ccf-80a9-190ab49938fe/entry/Recognition_and_validation_of_qualifications_and_skills_for_refugees_selected_practices_from_Europe?lang=en

Recent TAICEP Events

2017 Annual Meeting in Rome!

TAICEP members can download the session presentation materials from the Rome conference by going to <https://www.taicep.org/taiceporgwp/meetings/rome-conference-overview/session-presentation-materials/> and entering the password: Rome!

Check out the pictures from the conference!

<https://www.taicep.org/taiceporgwp/meetings/rome-conference-overview/pictures/>

Webinar on Verification of Academic Documents

The Resources for Members Committee recently partnered with the Professional Development and Training Committee to produce a new TAICEP webinar on, “Using the Internet for Verification of Academic Documents.”

If attended this webinar, or simply want to share ideas, please send your favorite verification resources or your best tips to the presenters, Annetta and Peggy, at strouda@aacrao.org and peggy@transcriptresearch.com to be included in the next edition of *TAICEP Talk*!

If you did not have the opportunity to attend and want to watch the recording, or if you want to download the slides, both are available on the TAICEP Webinar Archive at <https://www.taicep.org/taiceporgwp/professional-development/webinars/webinars-for-members/>

Upcoming TAICEP Events

Brown Bag Lunch at NAFSA Tri-Regional Conference in Denver

Join us at our Brown Bag Lunch at the NAFSA Tri-Regional Conference in Denver!

Where: Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel, Room TBD

When: November 7, 2017 from 12 to 1 p.m.

We hope that you join our TAICEP Leaders for a brown bag lunch at the NAFSA Tri-Regional Conference in Denver on November 7th from 12 to 1 p.m.

You'll learn more about TAICEP, get the latest information on upcoming initiatives, and a chance to network with other professionals. If you're a member, please invite colleagues that you think would benefit from the organization. If you're not a member, don't worry, you are absolutely welcome at our lunch!

For questions contact Jeanie Bell at Jeanie.bell@colorado.edu or text [720-280-9676](tel:720-280-9676).



TAICEP's 2018 Annual Conference in Philadelphia

We previously announced that the 2018 annual conference held at the **DoubleTree by Hilton Philadelphia City Center** would take place from September 17-20, 2018.

Due to feedback from our membership about the original timing of our Philadelphia conference in 2018, we decided to adjust the conference dates to better suit the needs of our members.

Please note that the conference dates are now October 1-4, 2018.

Stay tuned for further updates on the conference, and save the date!

We hope to see you next year in Philadelphia!

From the TAICEP Website

Changes to the Website

You may have noticed some changes to our [website](#). We have been working on improving our website to make it easier for our members to access information and resources.

If our website is not looking quite right, you will need to clear the cache on your browser to see the new changes. When you visit a website for the first time, the browser saves pieces of the site because it's easier for the browser to display the page using the files stored in its cache. That means when a change happens to the website, your browser will keep showing the old version of the site unless you clear your cache.

To clear your cache, go to your browser (Chrome, Explorer, Firefox, etc) and hold down Control/Shift/Delete at the same time, and then delete your browsing history and cookies.

Once you have done this, you should be able to view our website correctly.

If you have any further troubles with our website, or have suggestions for improvement, please e-mail Robert Prather at robertpprather@gmail.com

Notes from the Field

Best Practices and Guidelines for Assessing the Qualifications of Refugees

The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) has just published a set of best practices and guidelines that can be used by organizations to put in place an alternative qualifications-assessment procedure without access to verifiable documentation.

Such a procedure could be made available to refugees and those in refugee-like situations who may not have access to the documentation normally required for these procedures. These best practices and guidelines are the fruit of discussions held during a two-day workshop in November 2016 and additional consultations with key sectors in and outside Canada. These led to the identification and development of:

- five different approaches that may be used, depending on the situation and type of organization;
- 13 recommended best practices and guidelines that are consistent with the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) in the context of international best practices; and
- a practical worksheet developed to support organizations that are thinking of developing new policies or refining existing ones.

The pan-Canadian academic credential assessment community can now access the [Best Practices and Guidelines – Final Report](#) and a [new section](#) of CICIC's Assessor Portal.

This initiative was financed by the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

CICIC serves as Canada's national information centre and fulfills Canada's obligations under the LRC. It has become a key resource for students and skilled professionals wishing to settle in or outside Canada, and for the community of academic credential assessors working for Canadian professional regulatory authorities and associations, educational institutions, and assessment services.

Last year alone, CICIC's Web site received close to 650,000 visits (73 per cent of which were from first-time visitors), and CICIC staff responded to over 4,300 inquiries. In December 2014, CICIC launched its updated Web site. This site includes a feature that allows individuals to generate a report tailored to their particular situation by answering a few questions. In 2016, this feature was used to generate almost 9,000 reports. In February 2017, CICIC launched a new Assessor Portal—Assessor.CICIC.ca—to support the pan-Canadian community of academic credential assessors in connecting the dots on recognition.

CICIC is a unit of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

Need more information? Visit our Web site—CICIC.ca—or contact Michael Ringuette, CICIC Coordinator, at [416-962-9725](tel:416-962-9725), or m.ringuette@cmecc.ca.

Thanks!

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