



TAICEP TALK

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TAICEP News:
 - 2019 Annual
 Conference Registration
 Open!
 More details inside!

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Annual Conference

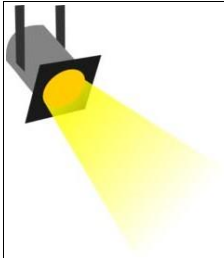


Registration is officially open for our 2019 annual conference!

Our list of 2019 sessions and pre-conference workshops are available [here](#). We have an exciting list of over 45 sessions and workshops ranging from topics such as:

- An Update on Education in Sudan
- China's New Gaokao and Changes on Verification Services of Credentials for Overseas Study
- Down the Rabbit Hole: Researching Credentials in the Internet Age
- Synergistic Programs: Best Practices for Evaluating Transnational Secondary Education
- Whose Reality Counts and Why It Counts? - Evaluation of Qualifications from Disputed Territories and Unrecognized States

You now have a great line-up of sessions to look forward to and a chance to save before prices go up after June 30th. We look forward to seeing you in Vancouver!



Member Spotlight

I started working in the credential evaluation field in 2011 at the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (CAPR). I did not know much about credential evaluation, but I had heard of assessment agencies such as World Education Services, so I had some idea about the field and knew the importance of foreign credential recognition. I had stumbled upon a job ad for a Credentialling Officer position and was intrigued by the opportunity to learn about foreign educational systems and credentials and decided to apply. I was always interested in knowing more about different people and cultures and thought that learning about credential evaluation would give me further insight into how various cultures worked by understanding how different countries structure their educational systems.

Prior to working in credential evaluation, I was working as an Outreach Liaison Specialist referring newcomers to Canada to settlement, employment, and language services. I also had volunteered as an Enhanced Language Training program mentor to newcomers in Canada, which meant that I had a lot of experience working with diverse populations that proved to be an advantage in helping me land my position at CAPR. Currently, as a Credentialling Officer, my job is to evaluate credentials from foreign-trained physiotherapists who wish to become licensed physiotherapists in Canada. This work is conducted on behalf of most of the physiotherapy regulatory bodies in Canada. Our role is to determine if an applicant's credentials and other criteria make them eligible to take the Physiotherapy Competency Exam (PCE) - an exam that involves a written and clinical component that CAPR also administers. Although I do not see engineering credentials or credentials from other fields, I see a lot of physiotherapy credentials from countries such as Australia, India, UK, Nigeria, Pakistan, Egypt, The Philippines, and many more. What I like about my job is that no two cases are exactly alike, and even after working in my job for almost 8 years, I feel that there is always something new to learn.

In 2015, I attended my first TAICEP conference in Toronto. I was excited to learn that there was an association just for credential evaluation professionals. I also met with others in the field who worked at universities and colleges and assessment agencies. As someone who works on behalf of physiotherapy regulators in Canada, I learned that a regulatory body's approach to credentialling is somewhat different than other institutions. We do not evaluate grades or work on converting credits like a university or college would. On the other hand, I learned that there are commonalities that bind all credential evaluation professionals together, such as striving to ensure that credentials are issued by recognized institutions, determining the appropriate level of study, and ensuring the credentials received are authentic. Attending the TAICEP conference helped me understand the importance of different credentialling perspectives while providing me with the opportunity to network with professionals from around the world.

After attending the 2015 TAICEP conference, I immediately signed up as a member. Out of all the conferences and workshops I attended, I felt that TAICEP was the most relevant to what I do on a day-to-day basis because of its emphasis on providing content specific to credential evaluation. At CAPR, we are currently using the tips we learned at TAICEP to build a better resource library, and I have personally used TAICEP resources found in conference presentations or the verification database on the TAICEP website to help me with assessing credentials.

Simply being a TAICEP member wasn't enough for me; I felt that I had more to contribute to this association. In early 2017, I received an email from TAICEP about an opportunity to join a new Marketing and Communications Committee. I have a bachelor's degree in psychology and communications and was excited for the opportunity to merge my current profession with my background and interest in communications. Once I replied with an enthusiastic "yes", a few months later I become the chair of the committee and haven't looked back since! As Chair of TAICEP's Marketing and Communications Committee, I learned how to use email marketing programs and became social media savvy while improving my leadership skills. As I diligently continued in my role as a Credentialing Officer, CAPR was working on a strategic plan that included a stronger emphasis on stakeholder engagement which involved more communications efforts than we had done in the past. I asked for an opportunity to work in a communications role alongside my current credentialing role and highlighted the work I was doing at TAICEP to improve its marketing and communications efforts. A few months later I was offered the opportunity to become a Credentialing Officer and Communications Coordinator with 50% percent of my time dedicated to each role. It's been over a year since my role change, and I am enjoying my dual career in credential evaluation and communications. I am grateful for the opportunity TAICEP has provided me to excel in my career.



Shereen Mir-Jabbar
Credentialing Officer and Communications Coordinator
Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators

Building a Resource Library V

Researching Institutions

Thank you for joining me for the latest installment in this series on building your resource library. Previous issues have included information about adding sample credentials to your collection, organizing your library, building a glossary, and more. This installment focuses on doing some of the research. In particular, we're going to focus on researching institutions.

There are several major reasons you would want to research an institution. First and foremost, you need to identify the recognition. In addition to recognition, you might need to look up information about the program to identify things like standard duration, entrance requirements, or the study plan and course requirements. The grading information might differ from what you have previously seen, or this institution may have different scales depending on the faculty, program, and time period. Finally, you might need to find contact information to ask questions or verify the credential. There are likely other reasons for institutional research, but these reasons will be the focus of this discussion.

Recognition

Recognition of an institution or program is of critical importance to compare a student's records to your own country's system. While TAICEP members are a varied lot from any number of countries, I personally am writing from a US perspective so many of my examples will be North American based. As a result, my goal when working with international educational institutions is to compare them to regionally accredited institutions in the US. If you are working for an institution that is not from the US, your goals when looking up an educational institution will be different. For more information about accreditation in the US, you can check out [an article](#) I wrote previously. Most countries outside the US do not have accreditation; their higher education authorities will confer recognition instead.

How do you identify the recognition of an institution (and program, when needed)? In the majority of countries, there will be a single central higher education authority that confers recognition of public higher education institutions (HEIs) like universities, institutes, post-secondary colleges, academies, and more. Private HEIs may be recognized by the same authority, or there might be a different body in charge of private education. The same may be true for non-university higher education institutions. It is also fairly common for teaching colleges, music or arts academies, technical institutes, nursing colleges, military academies, or medical universities to be authorized by a different higher education authority than the one recognizing general academic public universities.

Identifying recognition of public universities is generally the easiest because those are the ones most likely to be listed on the education authority's website. When I am trying to research an institution, the first thing I want to do is look at the higher education authority's website. In many cases, this is the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), but in some countries, all levels of education are handled by the Ministry of Education (MOE). In other places, the higher education authority goes by a different name like University Grants Commission, Ministry of University Education and Research, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Supreme Council of Universities, Secretary of Public Education, National Council for Higher Education, and other variations.

In a few places, the educational authority does not have its own website but is part of the website for the national government. In our technological age, I prefer going to the higher education authority's website rather than relying on books or databases that are issued by someone else if I am not totally confident what their criteria was for listing the institutions in those resources. Some of the print publications I used to include on my "save from a burning building" list 15 years ago are no longer even in my regular research rotation because I have come to learn that they have included diploma mills and unrecognized institutions. Also, many of the print publications and subscription databases focus on public universities, which means that I generally have to look elsewhere for the non-university higher education institutions anyway.

To try to find an educational authority, I usually conduct an internet search by typing the name of the country in the native language followed by "educational system." This will give me a great deal of totally unofficial – but still often useful – information, but it will frequently help me identify the educational authorities after scrolling through a few pages of results. I love research and can easily lose a few hours that way. Sometimes, though, it's nice to just have a list of those educational bodies already at hand so that you can go right to the source to look up your institution.

Every two or three years, my organization releases a publication called *Higher Education Authorities* (formerly, *Researching International Education Systems and Institutions*). We have updated that publication in conjunction with the release of this fifth installment in the *Building a Resource Library* series in order to give TAICEP members an updated list of tools for researching institutional recognition.

As always, this is not an all-inclusive list. There will be some countries who have newly implemented national accreditation agencies that we haven't learned about yet. There are countries on this list whose websites are currently being migrated, whose websites are down, whose websites are currently in progress. For some countries, we were unable to find any official website for government authorities covering education. For other countries, we have an entire page filled with different types of educational authorities but still might have missed something. In most cases, we have focused on academic higher education, but we have also included a large number of technical educational authorities and even some vocational bodies. This publication is identified as a draft because we will be making additional edits in the next few weeks and months as time permits. If you find we've left something out, or you

are able to track down working web-pages that we were unable to find (or if the url changes from the beginning of the month to the end!) please feel free to pass it along, and we will update the document on our website for other evaluators to use. You can access the draft version of *Higher Education Authorities 2019* here: <http://www.transcriptresearch.com/HEAR2019.pdf>.

Once you have your higher education authorities lists, you can navigate to the website if your institution is listed. If you are working with an older credential, there is a high likelihood that some institutions have changed names, merged, lost recognition, closed, been upgraded from college to university status, or other updates. In those instances, you would want to then refer to your print publications and educational advisors I talked about in previous articles in this series.

Remember, too, if you are dealing with translations, sometimes the hardest thing to figure out is how it's been translated on the documents compared to the educational authority's list. It is not a good idea to assume that the translator who translated the school's name is going to use the same exact translation that the ministry (or Google Translate) used. As a result, if you are working with documents that are not issued in the language(s) you read, and you do not initially find the institution on the higher education authority's list, it is a good idea to try to look it up in the native language. It's also important to note that while many educational bodies have multiple language versions of their websites, their native language version is generally going to be the most extensive. For example, it is very common for the English-language version of a site to have generalized information about the education system and might even contain a list of public universities, while the French-language main website also includes lists of the colleges of education, private universities, *grandes ecoles*, and other institutions.

In my office, we attempt to visit and save a local copy of each higher education authority's website every year or so. That way, if a new government decides to revamp the website and throw out all of that useful information, we still have it. If the country suffers from political unrest resulting in power fluctuations and websites that are down more often than not, we still have it. If the school closed last year or didn't pay to renew their domain, we still have the list from two years ago. You get what I mean. We typically save a PDF of the list in our country folder using the acronym for the higher education authority (MOE, for example) and append the year to the end. That way, if the website's address actually stays the same from year to year, we maintain our historical records and are not replacing what we had previously downloaded when we go to save the page.

Some countries also require programmatic accreditation, but that is beyond the scope of this article.(You can read more about programmatic accreditation in that same article about US education I linked above.) However, we have tried to include programmatic accrediting bodies in our *Higher Education Authorities* publication as often as we can track them down. For countries where this process is currently being developed, the information is not always available online, however.

Degree Program Information

You have tracked down the ministerial website. You have navigated through the twists and turns and finally found your institution. But now you look at the transcript and find that you have more questions! You have never heard of this kind of credential; it isn't in your resources so you are uncertain about its admissions requirements, standard duration, graduation requirements, or anything else that helps you fit it into the educational system of its home country so that you can then relate it to something you already know how to handle.

There are no credits, coefficients, hours, or any other weights to let you know if some classes are more intensive than others. Many academic records (transcripts) are issued without any type of course weight or credit, but most institutions do actually assign weights to the coursework, meaning you will need to track down that information if you need to assign hours to individual subjects or calculate a weighted average.

You may need to look up course names that are abbreviated in an unclear way, or perhaps the marksheet just has course codes, and the attested copy doesn't include the back (overleaf) which would have listed the subject names, too. You might need to find out if those language classes are language preparation rather than university level, or if that "prerequisite mathematics" course is remedial (pre-degree) and should not receive advanced standing. You may also be uncertain as to whether an incomplete program was taken on a full-time basis, or if the student was enrolled part-time, which would affect the amount of comparable credit you would recommend for a transfer student. Your student may have said that the program was offered entirely in your language rather than the standard language of instruction for that country.

For those of you at higher education institutions, your institution may need you to identify the more advanced coursework that is required later in the program. If you need to match the coursework to your own institution's coursework (catalog matching) to try to award transfer credit, you may hope to track down course descriptions if they have not been provided by the student. These are some of the reasons you might need information about the specific program of study. All of these situations require further information than what you will generally find on the academic documents themselves.

This is frequently accomplished by going to the institution's website and navigating through their offerings. Sometimes, though, a website is so huge or cumbersome, or so bare bones it has little more than an address and list of prices, that it may be difficult to find the things you need. There are strategies for using a search engine rather than directly seeking the information on the institution's website. Sometimes institution websites go down, or old curricular information is replaced, but people might upload curricular information, catalogs, or educational presentations to document storage services like Scribd, Doc Player, Issuu, or SlideShare. It is becoming more and more common for institutions to share their course catalogs, prospectus, degree brochures, graduation programs, and even presentation slides on these external sites, but these documents are uploaded by others as well.

When searching for course information, your search engine will be a fantastically helpful tool. With patience and a series of key words, you will be amazed at how much information is stored on the internet. It is critical to note that the proper terminology will give you the best results. If you are working with a US transcript for example, and you want to know the information about the course content, the hours required for graduation, the recommended outline of coursework, and other critical components of a degree program, you might use terms like degree plan or catalog. Less commonly, you might use such terms as planning chart, course of study, and degree completion program. If you were to try to look for this same information from India, you would use syllabus, though in the US, a syllabus generally refers to the requirements and schedule of a single course rather than the overarching blueprint for the entire degree program. From Canada, you might have better success looking for a catalog or calendar, and Canadian universities often maintain calendar archives on their websites of historical information. In Spanish-speaking countries, you may find that *plan de estudio*, *oferta*, or *estructura curricular* are more useful. You might also find useful information by searching for the *carrera* (academic career) or *carrera educativa*.

In Europe, they may use course structure, mentions of ECTS or Bologna, or just study plan. The diploma supplement itself will also have incredibly detailed information, and many institutions in Europe (and those who are modeling themselves on the Bologna system or applying to be signatories) may have sample diploma supplements posted online. At some institutions, the prospectus will be simply application information (but can still yield important information on entrance requirements and duration of study so we still want them), but other times, the prospectus will include detailed information about the courses, grading, weight, etc. Academic Regulations is another common phrase you can use when searching for this information and may also provide the program details or grading scale information. Student handbooks can also be incredibly helpful resources.

Using the Internet Archive, you can also look up historical information by copying and pasting the website address into the Wayback Machine to see what has been backed up from that domain. For older credentials, we sometimes find that the institution appears to have launched a new website at a new address, so you may also need to search for the old website. Resources for hunting down these older website addresses include print books as well as the electronic publication that I mentioned in previous entries in this series. Unofficial sources like wikipedia and online news websites also might point you to old institutional website addresses. For example, Indian universities now primarily use websites whose addresses look like this: `universityname.ac.in`. But when you go to that website and try to look up historical information in the Internet Archive, you see that nothing goes back further than a few years, and the documents you're examining are from eight years ago, recently enough that it's likely that they had a website. You can make the educated guess that they have changed their web address. If you look in the Universities Handbook, you will find that most Indian universities used to have addresses that looked like this: `universityname.ernet.in`. Now you can plug that old website into the Internet Archive and try to find the information about your student's program that is no longer offered. The Internet Archive can be incredibly useful, allowing you to look up entrance requirements, standard duration or full-time status, course requirements, course curriculum, and more, but from a historical context.

Another strategy for looking for this curricular information is to conduct an internet search with the institution's name and one of the course names or course codes. Ideally, you would want to select a subject or subjects that seem like they would be relatively unique to that program, such as courses that appear to be in the major, courses taken at what appears to be an advanced level, that sort of thing.

Sometimes, you might end up finding course descriptions, but frequently, this will allow you to track down a degree plan. As before, I encourage you to use quotes around the name of the institution and the name of the course (or the course number) and italicize it. You might be able to get some success by doing an internet search of the full degree name, but sometimes that information is too broad, and the purpose here is to identify more narrow information. As always, I encourage you to save the syllabi and degree plans (or whatever they're called for that country and institution) to your resource library. Even if you don't use it again for that specific degree program in the future, you may end up working with another student from that institution or even that country who has similarly named courses.

Grading Scales

Another situation where you may find that you have to do some serious research is when trying to identify the appropriate grading scale for use at that institution for that program at that moment in time.

The strategies used for searching for grading scales is very similar to those mentioned above when trying to track down the curriculum. In the majority of situations, an institution has a single grading system it uses throughout all of its programs, so you won't necessarily need to search for the grading scale or system specific to your student's program. There are certainly countries where that is not the case (India being the most obvious answer); in those scenarios, a single institution might have different grading scale for each program or even different grading systems in place for diploma, Bachelor, and Master graduate programs.

Regardless, you can follow the same steps as our earlier research. Conduct a search with your favorite search engine and search for terms like grading system, grading scale, grades, marks, marking system, marking scheme, assessment system, *media*, *calificacione*, *notes*, *nota*, *escala de calificaciones*, score, result, and others. Sometimes, only the highest and lowest grades are listed, without any information about the distribution of those grades. Searching by those grades may lead you to more detailed information. If the transcript is in another language, try to use the native language terminology from the header column for where the grades are listed. If the transcript shows verbal or descriptive grades (excellent, very good, good, etc), those are also key terms that may help you identify the grading scale.

You can also try searching for terms like minimum passing grade, minimum pass mark, and grade average. If the transcript shows multiple types of grades used (descriptive grades, percentage grades, letter grades, and/or grades on a 10-point or 4-point scale), you might have more success with searching by a different grading type. If degree classifications are used, you can search by "second class" or "degree classification" or guess about what you think the range of grades might be for that classification based on other grading scales from that country.

Sometimes there are common grading scales used by many institutions at that level within a country. You may be able to use that information as your starting point. Generic grading scales are listed in many of the resources that are identified in previous installments of this series as well as the resources shared in the Resources for Members section of the website. Once you have this starter scale, you can try searching by the name of the institution and its grade ranges, essentially reverse engineering the grading scale used by assuming that is the scale used at that institution and trying to find confirmation.

Hopefully, these different strategies help you find grading scales when needed. This is a gold mine of information that you definitely want to keep. Like so many things, the more often you practice searching for scales, the less intimidating and easier it becomes.

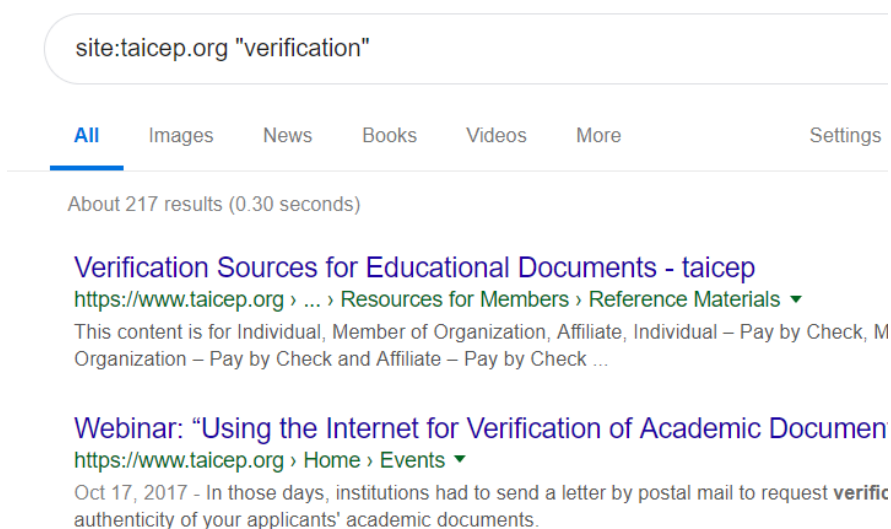
Verification

At our institution, we attempt to send all documents for verification if we are not able to verify them online. We find the TAICEP database of verification sources to be a great starting point, but we also end up seeking out new verification contacts ourselves. This often involves going to the institution's or exam body's website and trying to find contact information. For secondary leaving exams, many of the exam boards are now offering online databases that allow you to electronically verify the results of the most recent exam sitting; some boards maintain larger databases that extend further into the past. National exam boards often share their results lists with news outlets who post it online. Many institutions also maintain electronic databases of graduates to allow you to easily confirm graduation, and more and more are allowing digital verification or issuance of the complete academic record. Blockchain has the potential to revolutionize our industry in fascinating and challenging ways as more records are digitized and made available securely, but we are still taking small steps. Universities often publish their list of current or recent graduands or graduates on their convocation webpage. Growing numbers of countries are building national databases of degree holders in an effort to combat fraud. In 2017, the Resources for Members Committee presented a webinar on Using the Internet for Verification of Academic Documents, and both the recording and handout are still available for members in the TAICEP webinar archive section.

In addition to the other ideas listed here, there are other things you can do to try to find someone who will respond to your request. If the institution has a records, registrar, student records, or registration section, that is often a good place to start. You can also check under student administration, administrative units, examination and graduation division, and other categories that refer to recording student school data. In addition, you might get a faster response by looking for the particular college or faculty. While you want the documents to be issued by the central records office, the dean in the department of biology in the faculty of science might be more likely to respond to your request because they have a closer connection to the student. In addition, you can often find contact information for actual people rather than a generic email address to a large office.

When all else fails, many institutions have a generic email address like info@xxxx or help@xxxx. The same is true for things like registrar, rektor, rector, records so if you are not able to easily find an email address on the website, you can try searching for the native language term for the registrar followed by @universitydomain, like rektor@bgpu.ru, and see if that is a legitimate email address or directs you to something similar.

If the website has this option, you can use the built-in search feature to navigate directly to the person or office who processes degree validation, transcript verification, enrollment confirmation, transcript processing, document authentication, or other student services. If the website does not have a search feature, you can use Google Site Search syntax by going to [google.com](https://www.google.com) and typing in site:url "search term". For example, if you want to find the verification mentions on our website, you can go to google and type: site:taicep.org "verification"



Sometimes, you will notice that the documents themselves might have contact information. If the transcript lists an email address on it, it is always a good idea to search for that address using your search engine to see if that email is legitimate. Naturally, older email addresses might have been retired in more recent years as staff change and websites get updated, so failure to find a current use of that email address does not automatically mean it is not legitimate (but I would not recommend using it exclusively if you can't find any confirmation on the institution's website or other official resources that the email is tied to the institution.). It's also important to note that, in many countries in Francophone Africa and the Middle East as well as other parts of the world, the official email accounts might actually be gmail.com, yahoo.fr, yahoo.com, or other third-party email providers.

Ideally, when sending verification requests, you will want to send the email in the native language. We have email templates for common languages in an effort to increase the likelihood of getting a response. Sometimes an institution's website will have an international

students section where they might speak your language. You might also try contacting that office to see if they can point you in the right direction if you don't get a response to your initial request or are unable to find a contact person.

Due to privacy concerns, our application form has a section that specifically requires the student to agree to allow us to send their documents for verification, and they have to provide a signature release as proof. We also created a verification form that allows the institution to quickly and easily respond to whether or not the documents are legitimate by simply checking off yes or no (and explaining why if the documents are not authentic) and then adding their signature and stamp. When we send our verification requests, we send our language-specific email with a series of attachments: the signed release from the application granting us their permission to send their documents for verification, our easy-to-answer verification form, and copies of the applicant's documents in the native language.

When I'm searching for one degree plan, catalog, or grading scale, I often come across numerous others that I don't need right then. Students also sometimes provide copies of their study plans or course descriptions, graduation requirements, other things like that as part of their personal application packet. Transcripts will frequently include grading scale information or even information about the program curriculum or education system as a whole. This is especially true for Bologna signatories but is increasingly popular even outside of Europe to improve transparency. I save all syllabi, catalogs, grading scales, etc as I come across them in their respective country folder. When I'm searching for information about a new-to-me credential or institution, I check in the country folder first. If an institution has an online repository of degree plans, archived catalogs, or other extensive information, I also save that in the Additional Resources section of the wiki for that country (in addition to downloading all of the files in case they disappear with the next website revision or change in leadership.)

I know this was a rapid and broad take on researching institutions, but I hope that it pointed you in the right direction and helped you as you continue to grow your resource library.

Peggy Bell Hendrickson
Director
Transcript Research

Establishing Policy for Your Office

Strategies in Creation and Implementation of New Policy

Much of our work is governed by policy and duties set out in procedures. The most common include the following:

- The types of credentials required
- Type of credentials for application vs. for accepted students
- From what countries you require English proficiency
- English proficiency scores required
-

Do you know what your policies (and the resulting procedures) are? If not, can you create one? You will need to establish both policies and procedures to help ensure that you provide clear, consistent credential evaluation. Let's start by defining what policy and procedure means.

What is policy? A policy is a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s). Is this different from a procedure? **Yes**, this is different. *Policy* is the formal guidance needed to coordinate and execute activity throughout your office or institution, whereas *procedure* (sometimes called operating policy or process) is the operational process(es) required to implement the policy. The table below summarizes the differences between policy and procedure:

Policy	Procedure
Widespread application	Narrow application
Changes less frequently	Prone to change
Usually expressed in broad terms	Often stated in detail
States <i>what</i> and/or <i>why</i>	States <i>how</i> , <i>when</i> and/or <i>who</i>
Answers operational issues	Describes the process

The following steps summarize the key stages involved in developing policies:

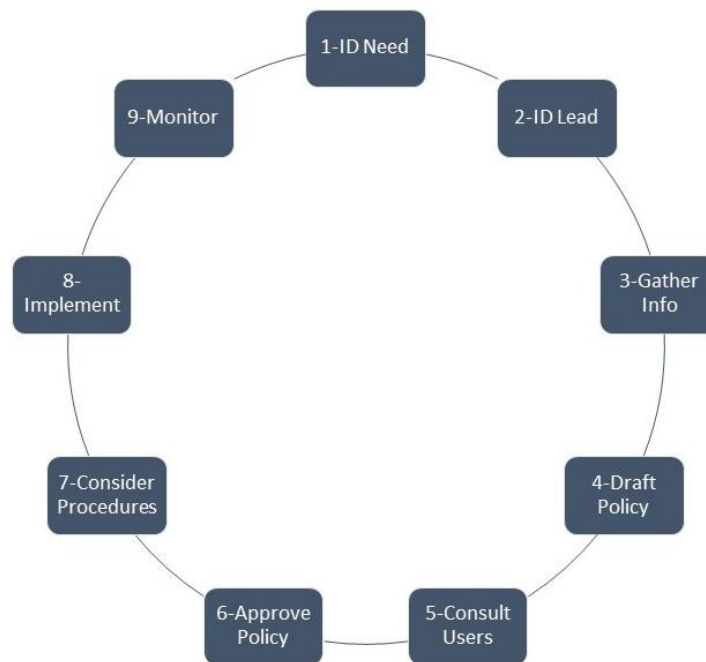


Figure 1: Steps to Create a Policy

The first step is to identify what need your organization may have. Policies can be developed in anticipation of and in response to need. Your organization should strive to constantly assess its activities, its responsibilities, and its environment to identify the need for policies and procedures.

Next, you need to identify who will take the lead responsibility for the policy. Then responsibility to an individual, working group, sub-committee, or to staff members, according to the expertise required.

After you determine who is responsible, it's time to begin gathering information about your topic. You need to do this in order to determine if your understanding of the topic is accurate and up-to-date. During this stage, you should also benchmark with your peers: have they tackled this issue already? If so, what have they done to address the issue, and is that something you can adapt for your own organization? You may find that another school has a policy that may work for you, which would save you a lot of time. While researching the topic, you may want to also consider what guidance may be available from national organizations (like TAICEP, AACRAO, NAFSA, AIRC, etc.) and from accreditation bodies. You should also confirm whether there may be any statutes (state or national) which may affect your future policy.

It will help to keep the following mind map in mind when putting your policy together:

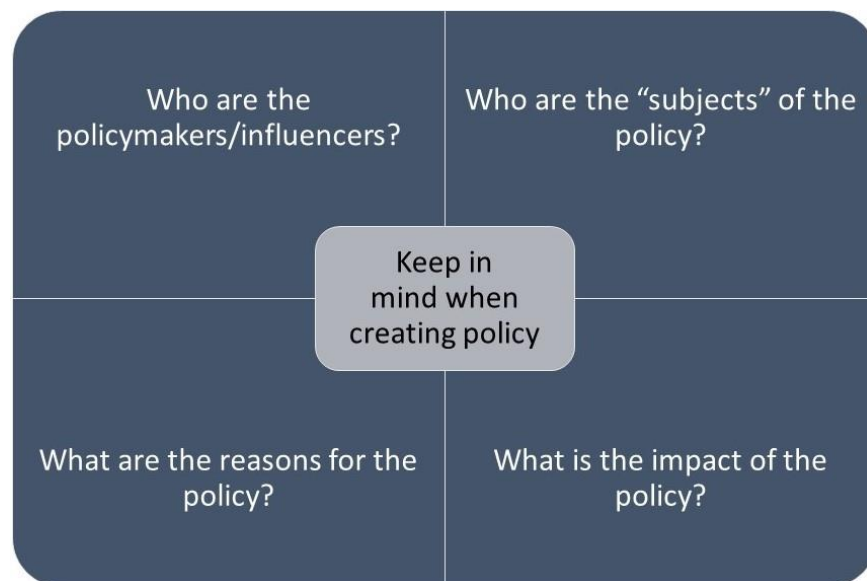


Figure 2: Policy Mind Map

Once you've completed your research, you will draft your policy. A very important thing to remember during this stage is that you make sure the wording, length and complexity of the policy are all appropriate to the people who will be expected to implement it. If you must include technical jargon, remember to include definitions for these terms. Perhaps the most important aspect of drafting your policy is to allow for what I jokingly call shades of puce: leave some ambiguity for people to make decisions. That's not to say that the policy should just let people do whatever they want, but it seems that there are simply too many instances in which people are allowed to use "that's policy" or "zero tolerance" excuses to avoid doing the right thing. If your policy leaves a little gray so that a person can make an on-the-fly decision, that's okay.

Now that you've created a draft of your policy, you need to consult with the people who will actually be affected by the policy. Think of who those people are and then ask them for their feedback. Also discuss the potential implications of the policy on your organization as a whole and on the intended users specifically. You may need to repeat the draft and consultation steps more than once.

The sixth step is to finalize and approve the policy. Approval of the policy will depend on your organization: some organizations have a specific office/person responsible for approving policies, while others may not. For those that do not have a specific office/person, should the policy be approved by administration, or is the committee which created the policy confident that this can be dealt with effectively by staff?

Now that your policy has been created and approved, you need to consider what procedure(s) may now be required to enforce the policy. Procedures are more likely to be required to

support internal policies. Consider whether there is a need for clear guidance regarding how the policy will be implemented and by whom. Like you did with the creation of the policy, you will need to consider who is responsible for developing the procedures, by when it needs to be done, and what the processes for consultation, approval, and implementation will be. In other words, it's very similar to creating the policy.

Once procedures needed to support the policy have been approved, it's time to implement the policy. There are several important things to consider during this stage: is there a communication plan or a mechanism in place to release the information to your organization (and advertise it to outside people, if it affects an outside population, such as prospective students)? Is training mandatory to support the implementation of the policy and any required procedures? If so, you will need to create a timeline by which the training should be complete and a tracking mechanism (even if it's only a spreadsheet or a checklist) to mark successful completion of the training(s) done by the required parties.

The last step is an ongoing step: monitor the implementation and use of the policy. Something you should build into the policy is a review date, a date by which you will determine how well (or not well, as the case may be) the policy is working. This can be quarterly, semi-annually, every two years, etc. – whatever you feel is appropriate for the policy, unless your organization has a mandatory timeframe for review. In addition to that, you may also wish to include a clause which states that policy can also be reviewed “as needed”; this will allow you to respond to sudden changes, changes to state and/or federal law, and accreditation body requirements, just to name a few. After that review, it may be necessary for you to make revisions to the policy.

- Sample Policy: Documents for Application versus Acceptance

Policy is often already in place, but procedures may not be. Often, it is those procedures you will need to create. In the example below, I will show how policy can lead to procedures and why flexibility in your policies and procedures is a good idea.

Cearley College has an international admissions policy:

<https://shelbycearley.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/Cearley-College-OP-Sample.pdf>. Their policy is for both international undergraduate and graduate admissions. For graduate applicants, they require official diplomas:

d. Official Post-Secondary Diplomas/Degree Certificates: This item is optional at time of application, but it will be required if the applicant is admitted. Admitted applicants are required to submit an official copy of the degree certificate, diploma, or official statement that the degree has been granted from each institution at which they earned a post-secondary credential. The diploma/degree certificate must be submitted by the twelfth (12th) class day of the term to which the applicant is admitted. In certain situations, this date can be extended. Contact the Cearley College admissions office for more information.

Figure 3: Diploma/Degree Certificate Requirement

Notice the highlighted sentences. These two sentences allow the office some flexibility as to when diplomas must be submitted. This is important since it may take several months to years for a final degree certificate to be issued. Some countries, such as India, issue provisional certificates after a student completes the degree requirements and before the convocation of degrees. This led to a procedure regarding provisional certificates:

When to Accept a Provisional Certificate from India Instead of a Diploma

There are occasions when you can accept a provisional/provisional passing certificate from India as a diploma instead of placing a hold for the final diploma, if that provisional/provisional passing certificate has six specific things on the certificate.

1. The **name of the institution** – who issued the certificate? We will **only** accept provisional/provisional passing certificates from **universities** or **autonomous colleges**, not from affiliated colleges.
2. The **name of the student** must be clearly written on the certificate.
3. The **type/level of degree and the major** must be listed on the certificate. These are sometimes listed in separate parts of the certificate, which is acceptable.
4. **When was the certificate completed and/or issued?** If listed, we will use the issue date as the degree award date. In some cases, the school will only list the month/year of completion of the program; we will use that if there is no issue date.
5. **Is the document you're looking at an original document or an attested/certified copy?** We will **NOT** accept unofficial certificates to clear a hold. If you are looking at the original, ensure that it's signed by the appropriate person(s). If it is not the original document, who certified or attested the copy of the document? It **must** be the Controller of Examinations, Registrar/Assistant or Associate Registrar, Principal, or someone from the office/entity responsible for issuing the academic documents for that institution. Professors or Heads of Department are not responsible for issuing academic documents, so these would not be acceptable.
6. **Were the degree requirements met, OR will the degree be conferred at the next convocation?** It is important that the certificate say that, or we will need the final diploma.

NOTE:
DO NOT write on the diploma.
 Just look for these six items!

Figure 4: Provisional Certificate in Lieu of Diploma Procedure

Another requirement is for official English translations:

e. **Official English Translations of Transcripts/Diplomas:** International undergraduate applicants must also provide an official English translation of all transcripts and diplomas/degree certificates if the documents are not provided in English by the issuing institution. Cearley College will not accept public notary-certified translations. If official English translations are not supplied by the applicant's institution(s), the applicant must provide a translation done by an American Translators Association-certified translator. A list of ATA-certified translators is available online at www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories. Exceptions may be made in certain situations if an applicant cannot provide a translation from their institution(s) or from an ATA-certified translator; contact Cearley College International Admissions for more information.

Figure 5: Official English Translation Requirement

This requirement also has some leeway built into it, and it led to two procedures. The first is a list of the countries which Cearley College knows issues official transcripts (not simply translations) in English:

Countries That Provide Academic Documents in English	
1. Antigua and Barbuda	40. Macau
2. Australia	41. Malaysia
3. Bahamas	42. Malawi
4. Bahrain	43. Malta
5. Bangladesh	44. Marshall Islands
6. Barbados	45. Mauritius
7. Belize	46. Montserrat
8. Bermuda	47. Namibia
9. Bhutan	48. Nauru
10. Botswana	49. Nepal
11. British Virgin Islands	50. New Zealand
12. Brunei Darussalam	51. Nigeria
13. Cameroon (English-speaking)	52. Niue
14. Canada:	53. Oman
a. Alberta	54. Palestine
b. British Columbia	55. Pakistan
c. Manitoba	56. Papua New Guinea
d. New Brunswick	57. Philippines
e. Newfoundland and Labrador	58. Qatar
f. Northwest Territories	59. Samoa
g. Nova Scotia	60. Saudi Arabia
h. Nunavut	61. Sierra Leone
i. Ontario	62. Singapore
j. Prince Edward Island	63. Solomon Islands
k. Saskatchewan	64. Somalia
l. Yukon	65. South Africa
m. Québec – <i>only</i> McGill University, Concordia University, and Bishop's University	66. Sri Lanka
15. Cayman Islands	67. St Kitts and Nevis
16. Cook Islands	68. St. Lucia
17. Dominica	69. St. Vincent & the Grenadines
18. Egypt	70. Sudan
19. Eritrea	71. Swaziland
20. Ethiopia	72. Taiwan
21. Fiji	73. Tanzania
22. Gambia	74. Thailand
23. Ghana	75. Tokelau
24. Gibraltar	76. Tonga
25. Grenada	77. Trinidad & Tobago
26. Guyana	78. Tuvalu
27. Hong Kong	79. Turkey
28. India	80. Turks & Caicos Islands
29. Ireland	81. Uganda
30. Israel	82. United Arab Emirates
31. Jamaica	83. United Kingdom
32. Japan	a. England
33. Jordan	b. Northern Ireland
34. Kenya	c. Scotland
35. Kiribati	d. Wales
36. Korea, South	84. Vanuatu
37. Kuwait	85. Western Samoa
38. Lesotho	86. Zambia
39. Liberia	87. Zimbabwe

Updated 30 March 2018

Figure 6: Official English Documents Procedure

The other policy this requirement inspired relates to the types of translations it may accept in lieu of one from the institution or from an ATA-certified translator.

Alternatives to Official School or ATA Translations

Applicants and admitted students whose credentials do not come from the U.S. (except for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) and countries on the current approved English proficiency exempt list must provide an official English translation of transcripts and diplomas/degree certificates that has been issued by the academic institution itself or by an ATA-certified translator. Translations are not required from countries on the current “Countries That Provide Academic Documents in English” procedure since those documents are not translations.

The American Translators Association certifies the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Danish, Dutch, French, Hungarian (from English to Hungarian only), Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, and Ukrainian (per http://atanet.org/certification/aboutcert_overview.php; last accessed 6 October 2018). Applicants and students may have documents in languages other than these, so they may not be able to provide an ATA-certified translation if their school does not provide the translation.

If an applicant/student cannot provide either a school-prepared English translation or an ATA-certified translation, we will accept one of the following if it is a literal, word-for-word translation:

- A translation done by an ATA active member
- A translation certified by an associate member of the International Federation of Translators
- A translation done by a certified interpreter or translator for the U.S. Federal or State Courts (per the National Center for State Courts)
- If the country in question has legal requirements for translators (such as Spain and Iran), then translations done by such translators are acceptable.

Updated October 2018

Figure 7: Alternates for Translations Procedure

Creating policies and procedures is time-consuming, but the long-term benefit far outweighs the initial time expense. Remember: proper preparation prevents poor performance!

References and Additional Resources

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Education in the US

A Brief Overview

Introduction

Education in the United States of America spans a variety of forms, as policy is dependent upon legislation by the federal government, states, local school districts, and regional accrediting bodies. The result of this complex interplay is a system rich with variety but lacking much sense of standardization.

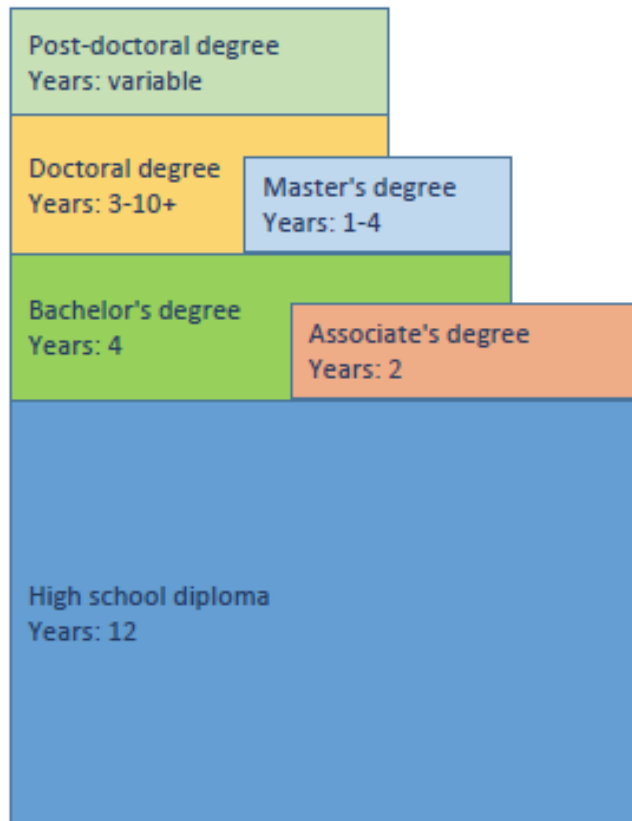
It is important to note that while the federal government influences educational policy, it has an indirect role. The reason for this is historical and lies in the 10th amendment to the country's constitution. While education is not specifically mentioned in the constitution, the 10th amendment grants states the autonomy to determine legislation for items *not* mentioned in the constitution. Thus, education rests largely under the purview of each of the 50 states.



While the federal Department of Education has limited oversight, it influences education through the authority to recognize non-governmental accrediting bodies, which in turn accredit individual schools within a multi-state geographical region. Each of the 50 states also creates their own regulations. To further complicate the system, states are divided into local school districts, which have authority over some aspects of education within that district. It is important to note that while all 50 states are covered by at least one regional accrediting body that is recognized by the federal government, there are a number of other accrediting bodies that exist for a variety of reasons. Types of programs or institutions that these bodies might accredit may be professional, vocational, or religious.

This article will review the general US education ladder, its alternative forms, and take a deeper look at the system of accreditation and recognition for both primary/secondary and post-secondary/higher education institutions.

General Education Ladder



Primary and Secondary Education

Public education for primary and secondary school is free and available to all students. Private schools are also available, but almost all require that students pay tuition. Students in the US generally begin their schooling career at age 5 or 6 in kindergarten or 1st grade, although the compulsory age to start school varies across the states between the ages of 5-8. Kindergarten may or may not be required: 17 states and the District of Columbia require full- or part-time kindergarten, while 13 of these require full-time kindergarten. After kindergarten, students begin 1st grade and continue through 12th grade. After successful completion of 12th grade, students are awarded a high school graduation diploma and become eligible to pursue postsecondary education.

While completion of 12th grade is required for high school graduation, students are allowed to leave school before graduation (known as “dropping out”) once they reach a certain age (age 16-19), depending on the state. Texas is the only state to require students to attend school until age 19 if they have not yet graduated. Because the ages for compulsory schooling vary, the required number of years of compulsory education also varies, with a range of 9-13 years.

The Kindergarten-12th grade curriculum is typically separated into three parts: elementary/primary school, junior high/middle school, and high school. The grades included in each level vary by state and by school districts within each state. Excluding kindergarten since it is optional in some states, a few variations are shown in the table below, with the number of years listed in each column.

College	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
Elementary School	4	5	6	6
Middle School	4	3	2	6 combined (middle + high)
High School	4	4	4	-
Total	12 years	12 years	12 years	12 years

Despite the variations, secondary school generally begins in grade 6-7 when teachers are assigned one subject taught to multiple groups of students. Before this level, most teachers instruct multiple subjects to the same group of students. To summarize, although compulsory education laws and the structure of primary, middle, and high schools may vary, all students must complete 12 grades (years) of primary and secondary education in order to graduate and become eligible to pursue post-secondary education.



Post-secondary Education

As with K-12 education, standards for post-secondary education vary across the country and from school to school. Noticeably different from K-12 education, however, is the tuition attached to higher education in the USA. While there are many publicly funded post-secondary institutions, students must pay to attend, and usually tuition is comparably expensive to institutions in other countries. Scholarships are available from multiple levels of government as well as private sources, but students must apply for these and not all are eligible to receive awards.

State governments pass legislation regulating higher education within their borders, and institutions must be approved to operate. Although these higher education institutions have much autonomy over internal governance, they must still meet certain state requirements. Post-secondary education typically begins after high school graduation and offers the following typical credentials: associate's degrees (2 years), bachelor's degrees (4 years), master's degrees (1-4 years), doctoral degrees (length of programs vary considerably, from 3-10 years or more), and post-doctoral degrees (length of time varies considerably). It is noticeable that undergraduate credentials tend to follow similar timelines, while graduate degrees vary greatly by field of study and institution.

Associate degree programs are two years in length and do not grant entry to a master's degree program. However, credits from an associate's degree will often transfer to a bachelor's degree program. This allows students to enter into the second or third year of a bachelor's degree program if they have already completed an associate's degree. Vocational and technical degrees are also available, but generally grant entry into the workforce rather than to further academic study. Vocational and technical accreditation is largely programmatic rather than institutional.

Degrees that are professional in nature in other nations tend to be more academic in the US. This includes medicine (all types: dentistry, optometry, clinical psychiatry, etc.), teaching, law, and others. These types of programs are generally overseen by a programmatic accreditor as well as being offered in regionally accredited institutions. A license to practice is usually only granted if the degree was completed through an accredited program.

As a side note, "university" and "college" are frequently, although not always, interchangeable terms. "University" often refers to a large institution that offers degrees at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels. A "college" typically refers to a smaller institution that offers undergraduate degrees. "College" is also used as a colloquial term to refer to higher education in general (for example, students say they "go to college" even if their institution is officially titled a university).

Recognition & Accreditation

The complex process of recognition and accreditation in the US involves multiple independent entities including the federal Department of Education, state governments, and

privately run agencies. In the US, the term “recognition” typically refers to federal approval of an accreditation body. The term “accreditation” typically refers to approval from a recognized accreditation body for an institution to operate at a specific level (institutional accreditation) or for a certain program to operate (programmatic accreditation). This article will focus mainly on institutional accreditation.

While there are no federal laws mandating that institutions attain accreditation, no federal funding is available to institutions that are not accredited. State funding for institutions is also often attached to accreditation. In addition to governmental approval, accreditation agencies for post-secondary institutions may also seek recognition from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). CHEA is the only non-governmental entity to recognize accreditors in the United States. In short, institutions in the United States are accredited by an agency that has been recognized by the federal Department of Education or CHEA. Institutions are not directly regulated by the federal government, but instead are accredited by these private agencies.



Department of Education

The Department of Education or similar office has existed in some form since 1867. However, from 1980 to present it has maintained cabinet status, meaning it is directly under the purview of the President of the United States. The Secretary of Education heads the department, and funding is approved by Congress. The stated mission of the Department of Education is, “to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.” It does so by distributing financial aid based on established policies, collecting and disseminating data, and creating policy to ensure all students access to education.

As mentioned above, the Department of Education recognizes regional accrediting agencies, which accredit individual schools or programs. A branch within the Department of Education called the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) performs an extensive evaluation to help determine whether or not to award recognition to an accreditor. Once the evaluation is complete, the NACIQI makes a recommendation to the Secretary of Education. The Secretary then makes the final determination regarding recognition.

Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

CHEA is the only non-governmental entity to recognize accreditors in the United States. Their leadership is self-described as a “board of college and university presidents, institutional representatives, and public members.” Membership is comprised of 3,000 degree-granting institutions. Their mission statement reads, “The Council for Higher Education Accreditation will serve students and their families, colleges and universities, sponsoring bodies, governments and employers by promoting academic quality through formal recognition of higher education accrediting bodies and will coordinate and work to advance self-regulation through accreditation.” While post-secondary institutions may obtain state and federally-recognized accreditation for funding purposes, accreditation from an agency recognized by CHEA confers a more stringent degree of academic integrity.

Regional Accrediting Bodies

Accreditors may be recognized by one of two bodies: the federal Department of Education or the privately run Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Recognition from both are valued, although federal recognition is mainly to ensure funding. Recognition from CHEA focuses instead on academic curriculum and integrity of instruction. There are currently six regional accrediting agencies recognized by both the federal government and CHEA. Most have separate divisions to accredit primary/secondary and post-secondary institutions with all approved institutions listed on their website(s). These regional accreditors are listed below with the states and territories under their purview:

- Higher Learning Commission
 - Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
 - Delaware, District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.), Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
 - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
 - Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
 - Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia
- Western Association for Schools and Colleges
 - California, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Federal States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands

It is important to note that while most esteemed institutions are accredited by a recognized agency, there are some institutions that are not accredited yet are still highly regarded and

produce competitive graduates. Evaluators may want to assess unaccredited institutions on a case-by-case basis using resources such as curriculum guides and syllabi. Since accreditation is not a universal requirement in the US, certain institutions choose to abstain from the process while still offering quality programs. Others will skip accreditation in order to offer lower-quality programs.

Conclusion

Education in the US presents itself in a variety of forms; the result of a nation comprised of 50 states, each with the autonomy to create their own policies, legislation, and expectations. Even though there is no central body with the oversight and authority to fully regulate the education system in the US, the entities in place succeed in working together—whether it be collaboratively or not—to uphold standards and ensure access to quality of education for students.

Resources

[Council for Higher Education Accreditation, *CHEA at a Glance*: https://www.chea.org/about](https://www.chea.org/about)

[Education Commission of the States, *50-State Comparison*:
http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquest4ci?rep=IT18A](http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquest4ci?rep=IT18A)

[Education Commission of the States, *50 State Review*: https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Age_Requirements_for_Free_and_Compulsory_Education-1.pdf](https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Age_Requirements_for_Free_and_Compulsory_Education-1.pdf)

[U.S. Department of Education, *About ED*: https://www2.ed.gov/about/landing.jhtml](https://www2.ed.gov/about/landing.jhtml)

[WES World Education and News, *Education in the United States of America*:
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Images

US Education ladder: Emily Tally, 2019

Schoolbus: <https://www.everypixel.com/image-18084403143514919078>

Kids in classroom: [https://media.istockphoto.com/photos/back-view-of-schoolboy-raising-hand-to-answer-the-question-picture-](https://media.istockphoto.com/photos/back-view-of-schoolboy-raising-hand-to-answer-the-question-picture-id670712598?k=6&m=670712598&s=612x612&w=0&h=Dt_Jx-Lm8io6UZf4u_fl4BiYwP757-j329JSH34H5gE=)

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Empty lecture hall: <https://www.kasu.org/post/study-ranks-asu-mountain-home-best-community-college-nation-arkansas-ranks-4th#stream/0>

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Remote Work for Evaluators

Talking to Your Boss about Working Remotely

To quote Bob Dylan, “the times they are a-changing”. With the advent of new technologies, jobs that were once relegated as office-only are now able to be done from anywhere. Evaluating a credential is no exception.

I realize not everyone has the same experience and set-up as I do. So, in the interest of fairness, I want to disclose my working conditions. Transcript Research is 100% remote work. I use my personal computer, but with company-provided software. We have collaboration software and a file sharing service, we message each other in group and individual chats, and we have a weekly teleconference staff meeting. With regard to documents, we provide a post office box that I check daily, and documents are inspected, scanned and logged. We have an online database that we use to log and track file progression. Every evaluator has access to our substantial resource library and an internal wiki that has been built over the years.

Before you talk to your boss about remote work, you need to have honest introspection. Are you motivated enough to work, or will the lure of movies and the couch be too much temptation? Can you handle most of your workday interactions being via chat, or will you become a person who orders pizza for lunch everyday just so you can have human interaction? For those who have kids, when they are home from school for a break are you able to maintain your productivity?

When approaching your boss, I suggest you have an honest and open conversation about all aspects of working from home. The two most important topics you must cover, and make sure all parties involved have clear expectations on, are productivity/performance and security. You should also discuss resources and scheduling. It is vital that you and your boss are in agreement on every aspect.

Productivity / Performance.



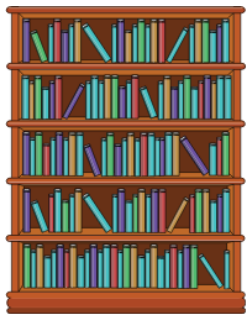
Many opponents to remote work think the only way to monitor employee productivity is to have everyone in the same building. With technology available today, that simply isn't true. Logins and created reports easily show when an employee was working and what work they completed. I am of the opinion that as long as everyone has everything done before or on the day it is due, I see no reason to put any importance on where it was done. However, your boss may have a different opinion.

Security.

Every device you own, regardless of its intended use, should be protected. However, it is wise to discuss what additional measures you will need to take for securing the data we handle. This is especially important given the amount of international websites for legitimate research. I cannot recall how many times I have been unable to reach a school website because something in that site has made my security protocols trigger an alert.



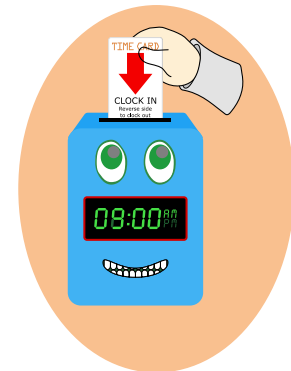
Resources.



This is a particular point that must be addressed. Your company probably has already determined where they stand on access to resources, and that should be a part of your conversation about working remotely. If your office has determined that a remote employee must have access to their own physical copy of print resources, this may be an issue that you, and your boss, will need to address. However, if your company provides resources in digital form and has no issue with you accessing those files remotely, this is already handled.

Scheduling.

Talking about when you are expected to be working may seem obvious, but you and your boss should discuss this at length. In our office, everyone is allowed to set their own schedule, and everyone is aware of each other's schedule. Since no one is truly dependent on anyone else to complete their daily tasks, this allows for unexpected days off or handling of emergencies without disrupting the work flow of the office. There needs to be a clear understanding of when you are expected to work and what protocols are in place for unexpected illness, internet and power outages, and any other issues that may arise.



It would be disingenuous of me to imply that remote work only has a positive side. There are some pitfalls that should also be talked about.

Questions.



Questions are not necessarily a downside, but they are something you should consider. For example, if I have a question that I need to have answered, I ask a person in chat, and then I have to wait for their reply. Normally, this is not a problem, but sometimes I cannot continue with the evaluation I am working on until I get the answer. If that person is unavailable to answer me, I have to stop what I am doing until they are available. To be fair, this is no different from emailing the person or coming by their cubicle and seeing they are not available. However, in both of those situations, there is no expectation of an immediate answer. Fair or not, you do expect an answer right away when you message someone. This can lead to frustration. You have to retrain your brain to not expect an instant response.

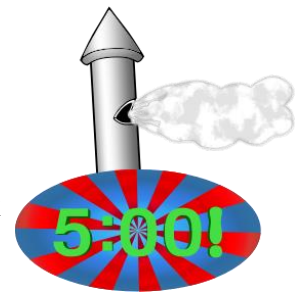
Isolation.



Remote work can lead to isolation. There is no denying that fact. You will miss out on birthday cakes in the break room, donuts because a co-worker felt like being nice, or random interactions with others. However, you will also miss out on that cold someone brought to the office, the chatty co-worker who stays too long at your desk, and judgment on how loud you are you playing music while you work. No one likes being lonely. You should have activities outside the home if only for your mental well-being. I personally have a fitness class that I take daily. Usually.

Shutting it off.

For some people, myself included, it is hard to turn the work day off when you don't change your surroundings. Right now, I have a built-in stopping point in my day: picking up my kids from school. I set a reminder 10 minutes before I have to leave because I am prone to getting wrapped up in my work and losing track of time. I also have timers set every two hours to remind me to get up and walk around, do some squats, or stretch out my legs and arms. Even if you work in a cubicle at an office, you should do this as well.



In summary, when you approach your boss about working remotely, whether it be full time or a few days a week, be honest with yourself about your ability to self-motivate and manage your time, a clear understanding of expectations from your boss, and a plan in place to avoid pitfalls.

All pictures used courtesy of openclipart.org

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Technical Examinations Unit (TEU)

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From the TAICEP Website

Events Calendar

<https://www.taicep.org>

Add your upcoming events to the TAICEP Website!

We invite you to submit relevant events and professional activities for our events calendar. Our calendar is visible to all credential evaluation professionals who visit the TAICEP website, and the current month is conveniently displayed in the right-hand corner of our homepage.

By sharing your event on our calendar with the TAICEP community, you can help increase the visibility of your networking events, webinars, or professional training activities. Adding your events to our calendar is fast and easy! You can click [here](#) to learn more.

If you don't have any events to add, please consider supporting fellow members by checking our calendar regularly for activities that may be of interest to you and that can help spread the word to other professionals. We are always looking for innovative ways to engage with and support our members and we hope that this new service will be helpful to you all.

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The primary reason for having member benefits is to provide TAICEP members with access to discounted or free products and services that will assist them with their jobs as international credential evaluators. A secondary reason for having member benefits is to develop productive and meaningful relationships with providers who support the mission and goals of TAICEP.

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Submissions for consideration should be sent to Robert Prather at robertpprather@gmail.com.

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