



TAICEP TALK

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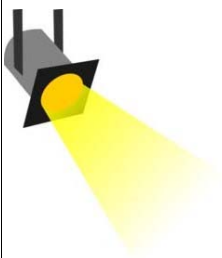
Annual Conference

For TAICEP's first online conference,
we have an exciting list of sessions on a range of topics:

- The European Qualifications Framework
- The New Education Policy of India
- Grade Comparison
- Qualifications for the Labour Market
- Approaches to Refugee Recognition
- Various Topics on Electronic Documents, Verification, and Blockchain

Find the list of sessions and descriptions at:

taicep2020.dryfta.com/program-schedule



Conference Spotlight

UNESCO's Convention on Global Recognition in Higher Education: National Approaches to Implementation

In November 2019 UNESCO's General Conference adopted the Convention on Global Recognition in Higher Education, known as GRC (Global Recognition Convention) for short. GRC aims to facilitate the recognition of educational qualifications of individuals relocating temporarily or permanently to another country anywhere in the world. It builds upon several earlier regional conventions, most

notably the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) of 1999 covering mostly Europe and North America. The GRC does not mandate automatic recognition; it provides autonomy to states, institutions, and organizations. It is a framework that emphasizes the importance of fair recognition processes, and hopefully it will shift the burden of proof from the applicant to the body responsible for recognition and take into account the diversity of educational providers and new models of learning. What are the prospects for GRC implementation in various national contexts? Possible pathways for GRC implementation, particularly in higher education within Norway, Canada, and the U.S., are examined, followed by a discussion of wider adoption in Europe.

Monday, October 5, 2020

...But Is It Accredited?

Authorized. Recognized. Accredited. Credential evaluators encounter these terms every day. At the same time we occasionally encounter some serious conundrums when trying to interpret the shifting meanings of these terms across the world's many higher education systems. Intended for evaluators of every experience level, though discussion and country-specific examples participants take a deep dive into the realm of higher education quality assurance systems.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

A Mechanism for Social Justice: From Community to Government - How We Have Developed a National Program in Scotland for Overseas Skills Recognition

Scottish education and qualifications are unique! We know that this causes confusion across the world; so, this session helps you understand how the educational system of Scotland is set up from nursery education to primary education, secondary education, college education and universities. We also cover the special position that the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) holds in relation to Scottish education and the range of SQA qualifications that are offered outside of the Scottish market. Insight into the interpretation of SQA certificates, essential for all you credential evaluators, are share. Presenters talk you through the range of SQA qualifications and their use and currency for admission to post-secondary education in Scotland, giving you the opportunity to reflect on how these qualifications might have currency in your own areas of expertise. Crucially, you will leave this session with a wealth of new knowledge and (hopefully) all of your questions about Scottish education answered!

Thursday, October 29, 2020

From the TAICEP Research Committee

Members of the TAICEP Research Committee are excited about how their work is translating into projects and services that will support all TAICEP members.

The purpose of the Research Committee is to manage professional research projects of interest to the Association. This includes ones offered by partners and collaborators and ones initiated by TAICEP. We exist to support the members and our energy comes from collaborating with other TAICEP committees to meet our Association's goals.

We are currently working on ways to gather information on research needs of members and the Association so that all TAICEP research interests and needs are coordinated and addressed most effectively.

The Committee is developing two projects initiated by TAICEP. The first is Francophone Africa. We are collaborating with the Certificate Committee to leverage the value of research activities in meeting Certificate goals. The research project itself will provide much needed information on this part of the world.

The second project is an Association-wide project to capture information on international credential evaluation and assessment Around the World. More information about this important initiative will be announced at the opening session of our Annual Conference. Attend the session to hear more about this exciting opportunity to get involved in research that will lift your spirits! More information will be posted on the Research Committee website page after the Annual Conference.

Digital Documents

Earlier this year, I helped shared some information about electronic verification and digital student records systems for the inspiring TAICEP At Your Desk (TAYD) series. If you missed those, they're still available [online](#). Verification has been an interest of mine since my early university admissions days when my colleague and I would squeal with delight when we'd get a response back from a distant country for a verification we'd sent off by mail months earlier. As technology has grown, so has my interest in verification and, its close friend, digital student documents.

One of the few silver linings of the pandemic that's upended the educational sector is the increase in availability of technical solutions to long-standing problems. While we might

disagree on the viability of long-term remote learning, hopefully we can agree that the increase in digital solutions for sending and receiving digital student data is timely and useful.

I can remember the days when we would have to send a fax request at specific times of day to someone in the UK who could verify West African Examinations Council (WAEC) examination results certificates. When scratch cards came into existence about fifteen years ago, we were ecstatic! For just a few dollars, the student could buy a scratch card and send the info to us, and we could immediately verify their results online. Amazing! Brilliant! Fast, cheap, and easy! Nothing could be better!

But fifteen years later, the age of technology has brought so many astonishing advances we could never have imagined back when email was still a relatively new tool for sending and receiving official student data. We're now working with national and global digital repositories, and blockchain (which I still don't understand despite my best research efforts!), and all sorts of one-off proprietary systems, programs, and mobile applications. Even WAEC itself has introduced new options, including e-pins, QR codes, and SMS delivery of verification to in-country phone numbers, though the scratch cards are still a revolutionary in the field.

In my office, we have long believed that electronic communication directly from the source of the educational records is even more valid than the old standby of "original documents in a sealed envelope mailed directly from the issuing institution" (which we do still require for several countries, even now). We love getting the documents sent directly to us via verifiable electronic means, or downloading them from a digital repository, or using a national or institutional results database to validate examination scores. Each of those electronic measures is removed from the student, increasing the likelihood of the student records being authentic. When we can access the records ourselves in a secure electronic environment, we have dramatically increased our confidence in those records. Plus, it's pretty cool!

Let me make it clear that I'm not talking about internal student records systems or customer relationship management systems. We're not accepting student printouts of unofficial reports of student grades. We're not logging in to the student account and taking screen-shots of their internal grade reports. By digital student data systems, I mean those platforms that are designed for use by others outside the institution, not internal registration systems. Some of these systems are privately owned and work hard to increase the number of colleges and universities using their software, while others are owned and operated by the Ministry of Education, a specific university, or an examination board.

Digital student data systems are offered by a variety of types of institutions. We see them in

examination bodies such as WAEC and Pakistan's intermediate, secondary, and technical education boards. We access international platforms that are used by hundreds of institutions across the globe, including Parchment, which is used by US and international institutions, and Digitary, a TAICEP sponsor of several years. Countries with massive educational systems, such as India and China, have more than one digital records service used for students and graduates to send their documents securely via government-approved online services. Countries like the United Kingdom and Canada have national databases to verify awarded degrees as requested by third parties with signed student release forms, while places like France, Sweden, and Norway have national databases where students log in and send a secure link to their digital documents, which have been loaded into the system by the educational authorities or educational institutions. Increasingly, we are seeing new tools such as blockchain certificates requested by students at all levels of education in Singapore and growing numbers of higher education institutions in Italy and Spain. Some institutions in Korea and Italy also utilize third-party programs to decode proprietary information generated on e-transcripts.

Verification has long been one of my organization's interests, and digital student records systems take that a step further. Some digital student records systems are initiated by the student, who then arranges to have the institution, exam board, or professional platform send the digital records via a secure system. Sometimes they're free, and sometimes the student can view it for free themselves but have to pay to send it a third party. Other systems allow a third party to directly request the records or verification of graduation information, though those systems typically also require signed consent forms from the student to protect their privacy. Generally, we prefer the systems that are initiated by the student since we can request that information up front, ensuring there's no confusion over what needs to be done, who is authorized to request the records, or who needs to pay.

While a PDF attachment from a verified (and headers-checked!) institutional email address is great, downloading digital records directly from a government-approved secure platform is even better. Adobe Acrobat signature validity is awesome, but it doesn't quite have the same thrill as downloading a student's official transcript directly from an Italian university's website. My organization has been increasingly accepting these types of digital student records over the last few years. The pandemic hasn't changed our documentation processes because we had already been accepting secure digital records, but some institutions may still be learning about some of these services.

We try to keep current on new digital systems, but this is an area where things are changing rapidly. We reach out to EducationUSA advising offices, ENIC-NARIC centres, and Ministries of Education to confirm things we hear from students or stumble across on our own. We read

industry news, attend professional development opportunities, and try to stay informed. We look at presentations and presenters for conferences we can't attend so that we know who to ask when we hear about the latest product or website. We don't accept emails, QR codes, or websites without doing our own research. We keep track of rumors that we hear (UAE is moving to blockchain for all educational records, CHESICC and CDGDC in China are merging, India is going to create a central national degree database, and rumors of a new verification database for Colombia, etc) so that we can keep an eye out for those new and exciting projects. Some of the rumors are just that and might have no bearing in reality, but now, we won't be so surprised when a student from the United Arab Emirates University or John Cabot University in Italy try to send us their digital academic passports, with educational records populated directly by the university.

When the pandemic threw everything into chaos, and many institutions were closed to in-person engagement for months or operating remotely, causing delays on all fronts, we were so grateful that we had already been using digital student records system. We broadened our knowledge of the availability of digital student data systems and verification resources around the world, which leads to greater confidence in student records during a time of rampant fraudulent activity while also making things easier on many of our students who didn't have access to their original documents to send us.

What are some of your favorite verification contacts and digital student systems?

Peggy Bell Hendrickson

Director, Transcript Research

Are Your Applicants Going to Get Their Certificates?

There is no doubt that the next few years will be a challenge for the international education industry, especially when it comes to obtaining the documentation needed for credential evaluation.

In our office, we require official documents to be mailed to our office. Depending on the country, the documents need to be mailed either by the applicant, or by the issuing institution. For applicants that are able to mail the documents that were issued to them at graduation or leaving, nothing has really changed. However, for applicants that need to either have documents mailed directly or that have to order replacements, this is not so simple. Between teachers striking, natural disasters, and a global pandemic, 2020 is proving to be

difficult for applicants to request records from the institutions they attended.

One of the first things our office did was to make a policy of what we would accept and who we would accept it from, within reason. The good news is that the majority of schools that have closed due to the pandemic still have staff working from home, and those staff members have access to student records. At our company, we have been able to obtain emailed documents, directly from the issuing institution, or verify unofficial scans.

It is important to note, that a shift in processing new applications was required. Previously, our office would send verification requests daily; however, it was usually within 2-3 days of receiving the application. We have had to shift to sending verification requests the day the application is received. This extra work has paid off as we are seeing an increase in responses to verification requests, as well as an increase in digital documents being sent directly from the issuing institutions. Depending on the policies in your office, this may be a viable option for you.

Countries with secondary leaving exams will pose a unique challenge with most exams being canceled or postponed until past admission deadlines. Thankfully, there have been several organizations keeping up with rescheduled and canceled leaving exams. Below is a list of the information for the most common countries with national secondary leaving examinations, as of 29 August 2020. It is recommended that you check the individual country's Ministry of Education sites weekly for any updates. EducationUSA is also a very useful source for information and assistance on the local situation.

Caribbean: For applicants who have not yet sat for exams (in Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos Islands), CXC delayed exams until July 2020 with results slips issued a month later & certificates expected the following month.

The July test was based on administering one Common Paper and moderated School-Based Assessments, and the essay was eliminated for this year. Students who already traveled to the U.S. before sitting their CXC exams will be required to return home to sit the exams if they want a CXC certificate. Some US universities may be able to be designated proctors for the CXC exams, but that's still yet to be determined.

For applicants who have already been issued the Certificate and transcripts, the CXC has resumed replacement ordering. All certificate and transcript requests for years prior to 2005 are taking approximately four weeks to process.

France: The written exams for May/June were canceled, so 2020 students receive their Bac on the basis of continuous assessment by teachers. No information is yet available on

whether the *Relevé de Notes* will be the standard format, or if it will be a school-issued transcript. Oral exams were also canceled.

Italy: There were only oral exams on June 17; no written exams. No delays on release of diplomas; schools award the final diploma on schedule with no delays, usually in late July. Schools can award a temporary supplementary certificate that has legal validity to enroll in higher education in Italy.

Kenya: For applicants who have not yet sat for exams: the KNEC website appears to be accepting registrations, with exams set tentatively for April 2021. Please note, schools in Kenya are not expected to reopen until 2021.

For applicants who need the Statement of Results to be mailed to a school or evaluation company: KNEC has begun processing requests received during the closure.

Nigeria: WAEC exams postponed since April 6, 2020. WAEC is not accepting registrations at this time. NECO exams appear to be proceeding with June/July exams moved to October/November.

Uganda: As of April 26, 2020, the Uganda National Examinations Board is has not yet opened up registration, or updated this notice.

United Kingdom: Pearson Edexcel: no exams in May/June, but teachers will be assessing students based on prediction & student rankings & issuing regular certs for anyone who was registered.

Cambridge (Assessment) International Education/CIE: no exams in May/June, but teachers will be assessing students based on prediction & student rankings & issuing regular certs for anyone who was registered

Scotland: exams canceled (National 2-5 courses, Highers, Advanced Highers, Scottish Bacc, National Certificates, National Progression awards); teachers worked with SQA to assign estimated grades for National 5, Higher, and Advanced Highers in order to issue standard certificates for those levels by May 29, 2020; National 2-4 qualifications, National Certificates, National Progress Awards are internally assessed as usual; official results August 4 as usual

Oxford International/AQA: exams canceled

For countries with no national secondary leaving examination, there should, in theory, only be a delay in getting final transcripts and convocation.

Now that we have covered how applicants are getting the documents, how do we make sure we our applicants are sending or requesting the correct documents we need? Trying to obtain

the correct documentation can be difficult with a language barrier. However, more often than not, you can overcome the difficulty with a simple shift in wording. If you have spent more than 6 months in the industry, you probably have already noticed that the best method is to use indigenous terms.

For example, if you have an applicant from France (or a Francophone country), asking for the *Relevé de Notes* and the *Attestation de Reussite* will likely alleviate confusion your applicant may have. Some other common terms are marksheets for India and Bangladesh, *certificado de notas / calificaciones*, *certificado de estudios academicos / certificado de notas / certificado de calificaciones de estudios* for Spanish speaking countries, and the academic extract / attachment to the diploma for Russian based countries.

In the United States, “college” and “university” are colloquially interchangeable terms for post-secondary institutions; this is generally not the case elsewhere. Similarly, if you request a diploma supplement from a U.S. transfer student, you will likely be met with confusion.

Keeping these terms straight can be a daunting task. Make a list of indigenous terms for documents, starting with the top 10 countries your office receives to evaluate.

Below is a sample of one provided to our Customer Service department:

Country	Secondary	Tertiary	Language	Method
Cameroon (Anglophone)	<u>Original</u> General Certificate of Education	<u>Original</u> transcripts and diploma or degree sent directly in a sealed envelope from the issuing institution	English	Secondary – applicant Tertiary – direct
Cameroon (Francophone)	<u>Original</u> Baccalaureat de l'Enseignement Secondaire/ Brevet de Technicien and releve de notes	<u>Original</u> releve de notes/transcripts and diploma or degree	French	Secondary – applicant Tertiary – direct
Canada (not Quebec)	<u>Original</u> high school transcripts and graduation diplomas	<u>Original</u> transcripts with degree posted on transcript	English	Applicant
Canada (Quebec)	<u>Original</u> diplome and transcript / releve des apprentissages	<u>Original</u> transcripts with degree posted on transcript	French	Applicant

DR Congo	Official Baccalaureat de l'Enseignement du Second Degre / Baccalaureat / Examen d'Etat with bulletin	Official releve de notes (transcripts) for each year and diploma/attestation de reussite	French	Applicant
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The most important thing to remember is to show yourself, your coworkers, and your applicants some grace. No one was truly prepared for how difficult this year would be, nor were we prepared for how quickly the situation would change.

Olivea Dodson

Senior Evaluator, Transcript Research

More COVID-19 Resources

The TAICEP Resources for Members Committee has compiled a list of web-based resources particularly for the COVID-19 era.

Education Response website, UNESCO, updated regularly

This website is a general resource on the impacts of COVID-19 around the world. In addition, it provides general country information on school closures and has additional helpful resources to explore.

<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

Covid-19 Organizing and Conducting Examination and Assessments during School and University Closures – Resources & References (Background Document), UNESCO, April 2020

This resource has links to country-specific information and articles that has been compiled, including exam rescheduling and how each country has dealt with COVID within their educational system.

<https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco-covid-19-ed-webinar-4-resources.pdf>

Covid-19 A glance of national coping strategies on high-stakes examinations and assessments (Working Document), UNESCO, April 2020

This resource outlines the countries that had chosen to keep their exams, cancel the exams, postpone the exams or offer alternatives to exams with brief detail regarding specific countries.

https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_review_of_high-stakes_exams_and_assessments_during_covid-19_en.pdf

Charting the Impact of COVID-19 on UK Admissions and Recruitment, UK NARIC, updated regularly – last updated September 21, 2020

This website also gives a history of school closures around the world and the re-opening schedule when available. It also includes information regarding school examinations, university entrance examinations and English examinations.

<https://uknaric.org/2020/08/19/charting-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-uk-admissions-and-recruitment/>

The Effects of COVID-19 on International Secondary Assessment, UK-NARIC, May 2020

This report details country-specific exam postponements, dates rescheduled or if the exams were reduced or cancelled and what document, if any, would be issued.

<https://www.naric.org.uk/downloads/The%20Effects%20of%20COVID-19%20on%20International%20Secondary%20Assessment%20-%20UK%20NARIC.pdf>

Network Compilation of data on upper secondary arrangements prepared by the network, ENIC-NARIC, June/July 2020

This ENIC-NARIC compilation answers three questions for each country reviewed – Will this year's upper secondary graduates received a final diploma and if yes, when?; Will the final Diploma have a calculated point average?; and Are there any consequences for admission to higher education in your country?

<https://www.enic-naric.net/fileusers/COVID-19%20INFO%20ON%20UPPER%20SECONDARY%20SCHOOL%20EXAMS%20-%20HIGH%20SCHOOL%20DIPLOMAS.pdf>

Transition from School to Higher Education, Impact of the COVID-19 Virus and Guidelines for Recognition of Qualifications, CIMEA, July 2020

This report provides detailed case studies on several individual countries. It also has links to several additional specific resources for each country studied. (Italy, China, France, Germany, IB, India, Iran, Ireland, The Arab World, Pakistan, Portugal, UK, Russia, USA, Turkey, Ukraine, WAEC).

http://www.cimea.it/files/fileusers/9932_NOTE_133_Impact_COVID19_TRANSITION_FROM_SCHOOL_TO_HIGHER_EDUCATION.pdf

Exam/Board/Country specific information:

International Baccalaureate

<https://ibo.org/news/news-about-the-ib/covid-19-coronavirus-updates/> [Regularly updated, last updated September 27, 2020]

<https://ibo.org/news/news-about-ib-schools/the-assessment-and-awarding-model-for-the-diploma-programme-may-2020-session/> [May 2020]

India – Central Board of Secondary Education and Council for Indian School Certificate Examination

<https://cbse.nic.in/newsite/attach/Notification%20dt.%2025.06.2020.pdf>

<https://www.cisce.org/news.aspx>

Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/Media/PR/DSE20_Press

Caribbean Examinations Council

<https://www.cxc.org/student-results/>

Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education

https://76e8ca5c-b0d6-41c1-a80e-fa1785909945.filesusr.com/ugd/e822df_d864b8e8b1e044f385ed35b79eec50ca.pdf

France – Baccalauréat and other external examinations

<https://www.education.gouv.fr/les-resultats-du-baccalaureat-2020-1124>

<https://www.education.gouv.fr/bac-brevet-cap-bep-bts-2020-les-reponses-vos-questions-303348>

Italy – Esame di Stato and higher education

https://www.istruzione.it/esame_di_stato/index.shtml

<http://www.cimea.it/it/servizi/pubblicazioni-e-banche-dati/documenti-doc-cimea.aspx>

Netherlands

<https://www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/news/2020/03/24/no-national-exams-this-year>

Israel – Matriculation Exams

<https://students.education.gov.il/matriculation-exams/explanations-matriculation-exams/press-conference>

The Philippines and the Elusive Special Order Number

When evaluating credentials from the Philippines, one of the main points of confusion can be the Special Order (SO) number. When do we need them? When do we not need them? Why doesn't this diploma have one? These are all common questions that can be easily answered by understanding the main function of the SO number.

In the Philippines, the government uses SO numbers to regulate and monitor private education. The SO number indicates that the program is approved by the government, and that the school has been given the authority to grant degrees to its students. When a cohort of students from a private education establishment (both secondary and tertiary levels) graduate from their program, the school must then request the SO number from the government. The SO number is then printed on the students' diplomas and permanent record (Form 137-A). SO numbers generally apply to private secondary, tertiary, and vocational programs. (<https://www.alberta.ca/iqas-education-guide-philippines.aspx>)

So is it as easy as public versus private for the SO numbers? Not exactly. As with most education systems, there are some exceptions that we have to take into consideration.

Private elementary schools are exempt from SO numbers. Private secondary schools are also exempt if they are affiliated with a higher education institution (HEI) that has been exempted from SO numbers.

The Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) allows some HEIs to be exempt from the SO number requirement. If a private HEI has been accredited at Level II, III, or IV, they can grant degrees without SO numbers. However, accreditation in the Philippines is

voluntary, so not all schools choose to go through this process. (<https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Manual-of-Regulations-for-Private-Higher-Education.pdf>)

CHED has also granted some HEIs an autonomous or deregulated status, which also exempts them from SO numbers. These are institutions that are considered to operate at very high standards and have a long history of excellence in education. (<https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Manual-of-Regulations-for-Private-Higher-Education.pdf>)

So how we do know which universities fall into these categories? Luckily, the internet is our friend, and most of this information is readily available. CHED regularly publishes a list of autonomous and deregulated HEI's, which can be found on their website.

(<https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/CMO-12-s-2019-Grant-of-Autonomous-and-Deregulated-Status-to-Private-HEIs.pdf>)

We can find the accreditation status of HEIs by looking at the website of the appropriate accreditation agency, which include the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) (<http://paascu.org.ph/>), the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA)

(<https://sites.google.com/ceu.edu.ph/pacucoa/home?authuser=0>), and the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities – Accrediting Agency (ASCCU-AA)

(<http://acscu.net/>).

By keeping these guidelines in mind, we can easily demystify the Philippine Special Order number.

Jenna Feedback

Account Manager, Scholaro, Inc.

Mongolia's Ever-Changing Documentation

If you have evaluated recent Mongolian documents, you probably noticed that they look a little different than in the past. This can be confusing if you are trying to compare current documents against prior samples. The image below, taken from [Wikipedia](#), demonstrates the different scripts that are commonly used in Mongolian writing:



Mongolia has had a long history of using a variety of scripts and alphabets. Up until 1941, Mongolia used the Latin alphabet but then switched to Cyrillic instead. Cyrillic has been the standard script used by Mongolia since then. [Currently](#), Mongolia is undergoing a change of issuing all official documents and correspondence in both Cyrillic and traditional Mongolian (script 1 in the above image.) [By 2025](#), the government plans to use Cyrillic and Mongolian together for all official communications.

Secondary and tertiary institutions are slowly making the change to dual-script documents. Up until very recently, the majority of documents issued in Mongolia were still only using Cyrillic. At Scholaro, we have seen dual-script documents from as early as 2017 that included all information in both Cyrillic and traditional Mongolian. Earlier than this, documents were issued in Cyrillic, often accompanied by English versions that were also issued by the institution. Most likely, we will continue to see both documentation formats in the coming years until at least 2025.

Like many countries, Mongolia is attempting to regain some of their tradition by protecting and promoting the use of their national language and script. Knowing this timeline can assist you when evaluating documents from Mongolia so that you can know what to expect based on the date of issue.

Jenna Feedback

Account Manager, Scholaro, Inc.

Homeschooling in the United States

Introduction

Homeschooling has increased in popularity in the United States since around the turn of the last century. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), roughly 1.7 million students, ages 5 through 17, were reported as homeschooled in 2016 in the United States. This is about 3 percent of the total number of students in elementary, middle (junior high), and secondary school. According to the American Institutes for Research, from 1999 to 2016 the number of homeschooled students increased from 0.9 million to 1.7 million students, nearly doubling. However, it is impossible to record a completely accurate figure given that some states do not require parents to provide notification that they are homeschooling. These students may not be detected when gathering data or conducting surveys.



Families opt to homeschool for a variety of reasons: a desire to focus on moral or religious education, worries about the environment of other schools, dissatisfaction with public school curriculums, a high-needs child who requires special resources, and many others. According to a survey from the NCES, worries about the environment of schools (safety, drugs, peer pressure, etc.) was the most prominent reason parents chose to homeschool, with 80% of parents selecting this as one reason to homeschool, and 34% selecting it as the most important reason to homeschool.

Homeschooling families are not restricted to following curriculums from their local or state Boards of Education. A variety of curriculums and resources may be used, depending on the needs of the family. Some parents adopt independently accredited curricula, including the increasingly popular online options, while other parents create their own.

Homeschooling regulations vary by state. There is strong debate between parties who support stricter regulations as well as those who favor lenient governmental oversight. There are some who believe the government has no role in homeschooling oversight at all.

Regulatory Oversight

Since purview of education in the United States rests largely on state governments,

regulations surrounding homeschooling vary throughout the nation. Some states have stricter guidelines, but many maintain very little oversight over homeschool education.

While there are typically fewer regulations surrounding homeschooling than public or private conventional schools, there are certain factors states may use to determine whether a child is permitted to homeschool. These factors include education level or preparedness of parents to teach, subjects taught, assessment requirements, vaccination requirements, criminal background of parents, and notification to the state that the child will be homeschooled.

HS Diploma Required	Other Requirements	No Parental Education Requirements		
Georgia	California ("capable")	Alabama	Louisiana	New York
New Mexico	Kansas ("competent")	Alaska	Maine	Oklahoma
North Carolina		Arizona	Maryland	Oregon
North Dakota		Arkansas	Massachusetts	Rhode Island
Ohio		Colorado	Michigan	South Carolina
Pennsylvania		Connecticut	Minnesota	Tennessee
South Dakota		Delaware	Mississippi	Texas
Virginia		Florida	Missouri	Utah
District of Columbia		Hawaii	Montana	Vermont
		Idaho	Nebraska	Washington
		Illinois	Nevada	West Virginia
		Indiana	New Hampshire	Wisconsin
		Iowa	New Jersey	Wyoming
		Kentucky		

Most states have no minimum education standards or other requirements for parents to homeschool their children. The following states are exceptions that require parents to have a high school diploma: Georgia, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. However, North Dakota, Ohio, Virginia, and the District of Columbia offer waivers if this requirement cannot be met. Two states legislate that parents must be “capable” (California) or “competent” (Kansas), but do not elaborate further.

Only two states regulate parents with criminal backgrounds: Pennsylvania and Arkansas. Pennsylvania prohibits parents from homeschooling until five years after certain criminal convictions. Arkansas prohibits homeschooling if a registered sex offender lives in the home.

Almost two thirds of states and the District of Columbia (a total of 31) require parents to submit annual notification that they will homeschool their children, while nine states require only one total notification. Eleven states do not require any notification at all.

Annual Notification Required			One Total Notification Required	No Notification Required
Arkansas	Minnesota	South Carolina	Alabama	Alaska
California	Mississippi	South Dakota	Arizona	Connecticut
Colorado	Montana	Tennessee	Florida	Idaho
Delaware	Nebraska	Utah	Hawaii	Illinois
Dist. Columbia	New Mexico	Vermont	Kansas	Indiana
Georgia	New York	Virginia	Nevada	Iowa
Kentucky	North Dakota	Washington	New Hampshire	Michigan
Louisiana	Ohio	West Virginia	North Carolina	Missouri
Maine	Pennsylvania	Wisconsin	Oregon	New Jersey
Maryland	Rhode Island	Wyoming		Oklahoma
Massachusetts				Texas

Roughly two thirds of states and the District of Columbia mandate specific subjects be taught to homeschoolers, while roughly one-third does not mandate specific subjects (33 states have mandated subjects; 17 states do not).

Mandated Subjects			No Mandated Subjects	
Arizona	Maine	New Mexico	Alabama	Mississippi
California	Maryland	New York	Alaska	New Jersey
Colorado	Massachusetts	North Carolina	Arkansas	North Carolina
Connecticut	Michigan	Ohio	Florida	Oklahoma
Delaware	Minnesota	Pennsylvania	Hawaii	Oregon
Dist. Columbia	Missouri	Rhode Island	Indiana	Tennessee
Georgia	Montana	South Carolina	Iowa	Utah
Idaho	Nebraska	South Dakota	Kansas	Virginia
Illinois	Nevada	Texas		
Kentucky	New Hampshire	Vermont		
Louisiana				

Twenty one states require either annual or periodic assessments, seven states and the District of Columbia require evaluations if requested, and twenty-two states require no assessment or evaluation at all. Massachusetts' requirements vary depending on the local school district.

Annual Assessment	Periodic Assessment	No Assessment	Evaluation Upon Request	Varies by District	
Florida	Colorado	Alabama	Nebraska	Dist. Columbia	Massachusetts
Louisiana	Georgia	Alaska	Nevada	Idaho	
Maine	Hawaii	Arizona	New Jersey	Illinois	
Minnesota	Maryland	Arkansas	New Mexico	Indiana	
New Hampshire	North Dakota	California	Oklahoma	Iowa	
New York	Oregon	Connecticut	Rhode Island	Kansas	
North Carolina	South Dakota	Delaware	Texas	Kentucky	
Ohio	Tennessee	Michigan	Utah		
Pennsylvania		Mississippi	West Virginia		
South Carolina		Missouri	Wisconsin		
Vermont		Montana	Wyoming		
Virginia					
Washington					

Attitudes Surrounding Homeschooling & Regulations

There is fierce debate surrounding homeschooling regulations in the United States. Some argue that it is the right of parents to educate their children as they see fit, without interference from any level of government. Others believe homeschooling families ought to meet the same standards and obligations as accredited schools.

Those who argue that parents should be free, or mostly free, from government oversight believe each family is best able to determine their children’s needs and abilities. They believe government oversight is restrictive and, at times, harmful. One of the most vocal advocacy groups for deregulation of homeschooling is the Home School Legal Defense Association. This group frequently lobbies local, state, and federal legislators to prevent implementation of new regulations or to roll back existing regulations. Involvement of educators and social workers is perceived as unnecessary and distracting from a family’s ability to independently drive the education of their children.

Those who argue that homeschooling families should be required to meet certain regulations and standards have two main concerns: ensuring that all children receive an adequate education, and identifying and aiding children in abusive or neglectful situations. Lax academic regulations mean homeschooled children who receive a meager education may face difficulties later in life, from applying for admission and succeeding academically in college, to competing for jobs. In addition, lax or nonexistent homeschooling regulations open up the



possibility that abusive parents may homeschool in order to avoid detection by teachers, social workers, or school counselors. While most homeschooling families are not abusive, studies have shown that a higher proportion of abused children are homeschooled, or never recorded in the education system at all, than that of the general population.

Admissions Advice for Higher Education Institutions

Because the quality and content of homeschool education varies so much, admissions professionals should utilize a holistic review of homeschooled applicants. Some students may provide a transcript that follows an accredited and standardized curriculum, but many may not. In any case, review of all subjects and coursework completed should be undertaken. Standardized tests and coursework taken outside of the homeschool curriculum should also be considered (for example: coursework completed at a community college, AP tests, and SAT or ACT scores may all be useful). Finally, extracurricular activities, jobs, hobbies, research projects, interviews, and writing samples may also be indicative of whether the applicant would be a good fit at an institution.

The only certainty surrounding homeschooled applicants is that their application materials will inevitably vary from each other and from students enrolled in accredited public



or private institutions. This should not be taken as an indication that they are ill prepared to succeed in higher education. Rather, the preparedness, skills, and attitudes of homeschooled individuals should be assessed by thoroughly reviewing all parts of their academic and extracurricular pursuits.

Emily Tally

Credentials Analyst Sr.

Indiana University, Bloomington

Resources & Further Reading

- 1.) American Institutes for Research: *Homeschooling in the United States*; statistics and

further reading

- <https://www.air.org/resource/homeschooling-united-states>
- 2.) American Institutes for Research: *School Choice in the United States: 2019*
 - <https://www.air.org/resource/school-choice-united-states-2019>
 - 3.) Coalition for Responsible Home Education: *Homeschooling by the Numbers*
 - <https://responsiblehomeschooling.org/research/summaries/homeschooling-numbers/>
 - 4.) Homeschool Legal Defense Association
 - <https://hsllda.org/>
 - 5.) National Center for Education Statistics: *Parent and Family Involvement in Education*; 2016 survey results
 - <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2017/2017102.pdf>
 - 6.) Propublica: *Homeschooling Regulations by State*; map and graph
 - <https://projects.propublica.org/graphics/homeschool>

Images

- 1.) Child writing
 - <https://pixabay.com/photos/child-kid-play-study-color-learn-865116/>
- 2.) Person reading/studying
 - <https://pixabay.com/photos/person-reading-studyin-bed-books-984236/>
- 3.) Pencil, sharpener, & notebook
 - <https://pixabay.com/photos/pencil-sharpener-notebook-paper-918449/>

Add to Your Library

Verification Resources

Uruguay: *Universidad de la Republica Uruguay*:
<https://titulos.udelar.edu.uy/public/index.xhtml>

Argentina: *Universidad de Buenos Aires*: <http://sietgraduados.rec.uba.ar/> and consultasiet@rec.uba.ar

Myanmar: Myanmar Institute of Theology: m.larip@mit.edu.mm

Somalia: Formal Private Education Network in Somalia (FPENS): exam.cert@fpens.org and fpensexam@Yahoo.com, abdi.omar@fpens.org and can verify certificate/transcript issued since August 2018 at <https://www.fpens.org/>

Somalia: Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education: info@moe.gov.so

Somalia: Somalia National Examination Board:
http://soneb.gov.so/verification/certificates_list.php?page=list1 (for certificates after August 2018)

Somalia: School Association for Formal Education: <https://safesomalia.org/alumni/>

Puntland Somalia: Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Puntland:
<http://www.moepuntland.com/result/>

Singapore: Singapore Management University: <https://alumni.smu.edu.sg/download-digital-certificates>

USA: MIT: Massachusetts Institute of Technology: <https://credentials.mit.edu/>

Caribbean countries: update URL to <https://ors.cxc.org/>

Germany: Technology Arts Sciences TH Koln / *Technische Hochschule Köln*: Nejda Yilmaz
<nejda.yilmaz@th-koeln.de>

Zambia: Examinations Council of Zambia: https://eservices.exams-council.org.zm/e-sor/gce_search_statement_can.php and <https://eservices.exams-council.org.zm/>

Canada: University of New Brunswick, Saint John: unbsjreg@unb.ca

Mauritius: University of Mauritius, degree authentication:

<https://apply.uom.ac.mu/verifycertificate/Certificate.aspx>

Ethiopia: Bahir Dar University list of graduates:

<https://studentinfo.bdu.edu.et/GraduatedStudents.aspx>

Nigeria: University of Ibadan additions: Deputy Registrar (Exams, Records, Administration): dr_era@mail.ui.edu.ng and Postgraduate College: postgrad@mail1.ui.edu.ng

Guyana: University of Guyana: Registry-Examinations Division:
examinations.registry@uog.edu.gy

Colombia: *Corporacion Universitaria del Caribe* / CEDAR: admisiones@cecar.edu.co,
cecar@cecar.edu.co

Canada: Trent University: registrar@trentu.ca

Nepal: Kathmandu University: controllerofexaminations@ku.edu.np, verification@ku.edu.np
and current year results: <http://exam.ku.edu.np/>

Uzbekistan: Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World
Language: rector@ablaikhan.kz

United Kingdom: Middlesex University: verifications@mdx.ac.uk

Spain: *Universidad Santiago de Compostela*: degree verification:
<https://sede.usc.es/sede/ferramentas/publicAPP/comprobarCSV.htm?csvId=632C-5D75-45BC-B150>

Spain: *Universidad de Zaragoza*: <http://valide.unizar.es/>

Spain: *Universitat Pompeu Fabra*: electronic version of the transcript:
<https://www.upf.edu/web/graus/sol-licitud-del-certificat-academic> electronic version of this
diploma here: <https://www.upf.edu/web/graus/sol-licitud-del-titol>

Saudi Arabia: Al-Rowad International Schools: info@arrowad.sch.sa

Colombia: *Universidad Icesi*: Director of Admissions & Registration, Jimmy Paz Chacon:
jpaz@icesi.edu.co

Thailand: Khon Kaen University: can verify graduation by faculty since 2011:
https://reg.kku.ac.th/registrar/graduate_date.asp

Australia: Monash University update: <https://graduate-search.monash.edu/> and
<https://www.monash.edu/connect/qualifications/graduate-search> and
<https://www.monash.edu/records-archives/archives/online-resources/graduation->

[ceremonies-database](#) and <https://www.monash.edu/connect/qualifications/confirm-student-qualifications>

DR Congo: Universite Catholique du Congo: sgac@ucc.ac.cd

Canada: Southern Alberta Institute of Technology/SAIT: Credentials.Transcripts@sait.ca

Kenya: Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinations Board/KASNEB: info@kasneb.or.ke, certificates@kasneb.or.ke, examprocess@kasneb.or.ke

Cameroon: University of Bamenda: info@uniba-edu.cm

Thanks to Peggy Bell Hendrickson of Transcript Research for these resources!

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.

Job Listings

TAICEP offers three options to assist you in your job search:

1. Job Postings Submitted to TAICEP

TAICEP will gladly post your open positions related to credential evaluation. If you would like to post a position on our site, please send your post to answers@taicep.org. It's best to

include a brief summary of the position and a link to additional information or contact information for the potential applicant. We will also send an email blast to our membership as well as publicize through social media.

[2. Other Recent Job Listings](#)

The Resources for Members Committee does a monthly search for positions open in our field and posts them in this area for you. Of course, you'll need to check the links to confirm position closing dates.

[3. Search Job Sites On Your Own](#)

We have listed some job search sites that we know about. If you have additional job search/listing sites, please email us at answers@taicep.org. Thank you!

Member Benefit Program

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.

For those who wish to provide a member benefit under this program, please see the guidelines here: [Member Benefit Program Guidelines](#)

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

Check the website for updated information about current member benefits at <https://www.taicep.org/taiceporgwp/professional-development/member-benefit-program/>

Thanks!

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<https://www.taicep.org/taiceporgwp/sponsorship/our-sponsors/>

