

Foreign Credentials Approach

This certification approach is for individuals who have completed an educator preparation program in another country and meet the requirements for Alabama professional educator certification in a teaching field. ***This is not an application;*** this document provides general information and outlines requirements.

GENERAL INFORMATION

An applicant whose degree was earned at a college or university in another country that is not a United States (U.S.) Territory and is seeking Alabama certification must obtain an evaluation of his/her credentials from a foreign credential evaluation agency approved by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE).

The ALSDE does not interpret foreign credentials but relies on certain agencies to provide an analysis of the applicant's records to assist in correctly interpreting those records. The applicant must forward records to the agency which will produce an analysis of the credentials for a fee. The agencies that are approved for certification purposes in Alabama are those that are members of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES).

The evaluation must include all of the following:

1. An accurate course-by-course and credit hour-by-credit hour translation of the coursework completed.
2. A statement indicating at the time the degree was earned the college or university did or did not hold accreditation equivalent to that granted by a regional accrediting agency in the United States.
3. A statement indicating the degree earned was or was not equivalent to a bachelor's or higher degree conferred by a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States.
4. A statement indicating the program completed was or was not equivalent to an educator preparation program in the United States. If the program was equivalent to an educator preparation program, the specific teaching field must be identified. If the program was not equivalent to an educator preparation program, the major(s) of the program must be identified.
5. A statement indicating the overall grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0-point scale. The overall GPA must be the GPA that was used as the basis for granting the degree.

APPROACHES TO ALABAMA CERTIFICATION FOR APPLICANTS WHO HOLD DEGREES FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES THAT ARE NOT U.S. TERRITORIES

1. An applicant who has completed an educator preparation program in a teaching field and has earned a degree at a college or university in another country that is not a U.S. Territory, may apply for Alabama professional educator certification through the Foreign Credentials Approach. The degree must be equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States. If Alabama issues a certificate in a teaching field that is comparable to the educator preparation program completed, the appropriate Professional Educator Certificate may be issued after requirements have been met. ***You may only submit the online application if you meet this option.***
2. An applicant whose bachelor's degree was earned at a college or university in another country that was not a U.S. Territory at the time the degree was earned and the degree was **not** equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States OR the university did **not** have accreditation equivalent to that granted by a regional accrediting agency in the United States, must earn a bachelor's or higher degree from a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States. Certification through another approach may be pursued once an acceptable degree is earned.
3. An applicant who has earned a degree at a college or university in another country that is not a U.S. Territory, and that degree is equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States, **and** also holds a valid professional educator certificate issued by another state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. Territory, or the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) may apply for Alabama professional educator certification through the Certificate Reciprocity Approach. Information regarding this approach may be found on the OTH General Information document at [ALSDE - Alabama Achieves](#) (click *Out of State Certificates*). The evaluation prepared by a foreign credential evaluation agency approved by the ALSDE must be submitted with the application.

APPROACHES TO ALABAMA CERTIFICATION FOR APPLICANTS WHO HOLD DEGREES FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES THAT ARE NOT U.S. TERRITORIES

1. An applicant who **has not** completed an educator preparation program but has earned a degree at a college or university in another country that is not a U.S. Territory, and that degree is equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States may pursue Alabama certification through the approaches below. Each approach requires the evaluation prepared by a foreign credential evaluation agency approved by the ALSDE be submitted with the application.
2. Completion of a State-approved educator preparation program at an Alabama college or university. Information regarding State-approved programs in Alabama may be found at [ALSDE - Alabama Achieves](#) (click *Teachers & Administrators* ▾ *Teacher Center* ▾ *Teacher Preparation Programs*).
3. Completion of an alternative or provisional certification approach through an Alabama local school system or nonpublic/private school. Information regarding alternative certification may be found at [ALSDE - Alabama Achieves](#) (click *Teachers & Administrators* ▾ *Teacher Center* ▾ *Teacher Certification* ▾ *Alternative Certificates*).

TEST REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of the Alabama prescribed Praxis subject area test(s) and Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching test(s) of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) are required. Required tests will be individually prescribed by the Educator Certification Section only after the application has been received, reviewed and eligibility for certification has been determined. **Individuals who choose to test prior to receiving a letter of eligibility from the Educator Certification Section of the ALSDE do so at their own risk. This Office will assist an applicant only after the applicant has received a letter of eligibility from the Educator Certification Section.**

REQUIREMENTS

	A \$38.00 nonrefundable application fee. Each additional certificate for which an applicant is determined to be eligible will require a \$38 nonrefundable fee for issuance. A transaction fee will be applied.
	Verification of United States citizenship or lawful presence in the United States.
	Background clearance based on a fingerprint review.
•	For applicants seeking initial certification, additional certification, or certificate renewal to teach in Alabama, your criminal history background checks must have been completed by both the Alabama State Bureau of Investigation (ASBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). You can check the status of your background checks and confirm whether you meet the state's suitability requirements for teaching at Certificate Search .
•	For Applicants who have not been cleared by both agencies through the Educator Certification Section of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), you will need to undergo fingerprinting for a criminal history background check. Details on how to complete the background review process can be found at Alabama Achieves – Teacher Certification . If you have any questions about our criminal history background check process, you can contact us at (334) 694-4557 or bgr@alsde.edu
•	Applicants may verify receipt of their criminal history results at the ALSDE by visiting Certificate Search . If your results are not located, or you have questions about your status, please allow 10 business days from the date of fingerprint submission before making an inquiry.
	Foreign Credential Evaluation. The complete evaluation prepared by a foreign credential evaluation agency may be mailed or emailed to the ALSDE. If mailed, it must be in the sealed envelope from the evaluation agency . It should be mailed to the address at the top of page 1. If emailed, it must come directly from the evaluation agency, not the applicant. It can be emailed to edcertexternalforms@alsde.edu .
	A passing score on the appropriate Alabama-prescribed Praxis Subject Assessment(s) and Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching test(s) of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP).

Applicants are encouraged to read this document in its entirety to ensure requirements are met to apply. To apply through this approach, visit [Alabama Achieves - Teacher Certification](#) (click *Other Approaches: Foreign Credentials*) and follow provided instructions.