



REQUESTS FOR MINIMUM QUALIFICATION CHANGE

- Must be submitted in writing to the Chief of the Staffing Division
- May be proposed as part of job studies submitted to the Compensation Division. Such job studies:
 - Involve request for pay level changes
 - Involve comprehensive changes to job specifications
 - Involve changes in Minimum Qualifications
 - Often involve creation of new job titles
- Civil Service sets Minimum Qualifications for jobs after obtaining input from user agencies
- Regardless of whether proposed MQ changes are submitted as part of a job study or directly to the Staffing Division, the hiring agency should submit justification for their request. Possible factors to consider when determining justification include:
 - What problem is the proposed change in MQ's expected to solve? How does it solve it?
 - What percentage of current incumbents will meet the proposed new MQ? Individuals who will not meet it need to be counted and identified so it can be determined what to do with them if the new MQ is implemented.
 - From where do you expect to draw applicants for this job? Within the agency? Inside state service? Outside state service?
 - Will the applicants you want to reach qualify under the proposed MQ's?
 - What are the classified jobs, if any, from which you wish to consider applicants for this job? Will they qualify under the proposed MQ?
 - Are desired career paths for employees preserved under the proposed MQ's?
 - Is there an impact on other similar job classes or changes that will have to be made to qualifications in other job classes as a result of the proposed change?
 - How many vacancies have you filled in this job in the past year? Were there any specific problems with the applicant pool (not enough applicants' available, poor quality applicants, inability to reach the good quality applicants, etc)?
 - Have there been specific problems with the quality of applicants? What are they lacking?
 - If a particular certification (e.g., by some nationally recognized organization) or a specific educational credential is requested on the basis that it is required by law, documentation of this must be submitted with the request. In cases where the requirement is not one of law, information on the availability of the certification or credential (e.g., where it can be obtained, the percentage of applicants likely to have it) as well as testing or other requirements for obtaining the certification or credential should be submitted.

EVALUATING WORK EXPERIENCE

The [Minimum Qualifications Toolkit](#) is a searchable catalog of qualification determinations made by the Staffing Division. These qualification determinations cover detailed decisions within Staffing on varying types of qualifying experience, education and training relating to certain classified job titles. The Minimum Qualifications Toolkit organizes these qualification determinations so that human resources personnel will be able to use them in making decisions in qualifying applicants. The toolkit is accessible via the [HR Info Portal](#) which can be found on the [main SCS website](#). As agencies use the toolkit, a need may arise to add certain qualifying experience or education or make other changes. In order to maintain the integrity of the data, only the Department of Civil Service can currently make changes. Agencies wishing to change or add current information should submit a written request to the Staffing Division.

- **Determining Professional Level:**

- For jobs in State service, only those jobs with an EEO code of PR (professional) or OA (officials and administrators) are professional level. The EEO codes can be found in the View Pay Plan option available on the OPEN System or by searching for the job title using Job Information and Test Finder.
- For jobs outside of State service, jobs with comparable duties to jobs in State service that are considered professional will also be considered professional.

- **Qualifying Education**

It has always been the policy of the Staffing Division to allow a master's degree in a specialized field to substitute for a required baccalaureate degree in the same specialized field. Please refer to the following as stated in the Minimum Qualification Toolkit:

- When an MQR requires a specialized baccalaureate degree, and an applicant has a non-qualifying baccalaureate, but has a master's degree in the specialized field, allow the master's degree to substitute for the specialized baccalaureate degree.
Example: The MQR requires a baccalaureate degree in English; the applicant has a bachelor's degree in mass communications, but has a master's degree in English. We would qualify the applicant on the basis of the master's degree.
- When an applicant lists their experience gained during an internship that was also used as part of their degree program, this cannot be credited as qualifying work experience. This is considered coursework and is already credited toward their educational requirement. We do not allow double credit as both coursework and work experience.

- **Employment Dates**

- When reviewing employment dates for applicants, please note that applicants are only able to enter the beginning and ending month and year of employment. We are no longer able to capture the "day". When calculating dates in this manner, you will only credit **either** the first month or the last month in addition to the months in between.

- **Crediting Full-time and Part-time Experience**
 - 32 hours or more worked per week is credited as full-time work experience
 - Any work experience less than 32 hours per week must be pro-rated based on a 40 hour work week.

- **Percentage of time spent performing duties**
 - The LA Careers online application does not provide a specific space for applicants to indicate percentage of time spent on different tasks or duties.
 - Qualifying duties must be performed a **substantial** amount of time.
 - For jobs where we have used the 100% standard, the requirement will now be that qualifying duties be the **sole** duties performed. Jobs in these fields requiring duties to be the sole duties performed are law enforcement, planning and human resources/personnel.

- **Crediting Military Experience**
 - Experience gained in enlisted ranks of E-1 through E-4 is credited with non-professional level experience.
 - It is our policy to credit experience gained in qualifying fields in Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) ranks, i.e., E-5, E-6, E-7, E-8, and E-9 enlisted grades as professional level experience provided there are no licensure or industry-standard requirements that would serve as a barrier in the career series, such as Licensed Practical Nurse, non-degreed engineers, Paralegals, etc.
 - All experience in Warrant Officer or Commissioned Officer grades is also considered professional level.
[For a chart listing military rank and associated titles, click here](#)

- **Crediting Duties Within the Job Specification**
 - The employee is routinely credited with duties claimed and contained in the job specifications of the jobs he/she has occupied. In the absence of other information, he/she is assumed to have performed only these duties. However, if he/she is in a supervisory job and needs direct-line supervision to qualify for the job for which he/she is applying, he/she must also claim the number and titles of subordinates on his application in order to be credited.
 - When duties are claimed that are not contained within the scope of the class specification, they must normally be substantiated by an official position description contemporary to the time the duties are claimed. The position description must be an official document filed as an update or reallocation appeal and signed by our Classification Division or approved delegated authority. The duties are credited from the date the updated position description is stamped “Received” by Civil Service. There is no retroactive credit given for time the duties may have been performed prior to receipt of the position description.

- **Crediting Duties in the absence of a Position Description**
 - In the absence of a position description, other evidence will be considered. When evidence is contradictory, greater weight will generally be given to official documents over unofficial ones and to detailed and specific information over more general information. Although there is no definitive list of the types of evidence that may be accepted from an applicant to credit experience outside the job specification, the evidence must normally satisfy these criteria:
 - The document must be contemporary to the time duties are claimed. Testimonials written today claiming duties were performed in the past are not acceptable.
 - The dates that the duties were performed must be clear from the documents presented.
 - The document must clearly identify the applicant as the one who performed the duties and support the claim that the qualifying duties were a substantial duty assignment.

- **Examples of documents accepted in lieu of a position description**
 - Performance appraisals written on the applicant contemporary to the time duties are claimed and describing the duties in sufficient detail for credit to be given.
 - Performance appraisals signed by the applicant as evidence of performing supervisory duties.
 - Work orders describing duties.
 - Internal memoranda contemporary to the time duties are claimed which indicate assignment of duties.

INTERPRETING EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Accreditation of Schools**
 - The United States has no centralized authority exercising sole national control over educational institutions.
 - Institutions of post-secondary education are permitted to operate with considerable independence and as a result, they vary considerably.
 - Accreditation is generally considered the most reliable indicator of the quality of an institution.
 - U. S. Department of Education recognizes approximately 70 accrediting bodies.
 - In higher education, accreditation is granted by one of the six regional accrediting bodies authorized by the United States Department of Education.
 - Regionally accredited institutions of higher education normally do not accept outside coursework unless it is completed at an institution of higher education that is accredited by one of the regional accrediting bodies.
 - Acceptable college degrees are those that are accredited by one of the following regional accrediting associations found on the [Regional Accrediting Associations Information Page](#). If a college or university is not listed, we will **not** recognize the degree/hours as qualifying.

- **Accreditation of Social Work Education**

For social worker positions, the required master's degree must be from an accredited school of social work.

- [The Council on Social Work Education](#) is a national association responsible for developing accreditation standards that define competent preparation and ensuring that social work programs meet them. We accept social work degrees only from colleges that are accredited by this association, either master or baccalaureate level as required by the Minimum Qualification requirements. Once you have accessed the site, click on “Membership,” then “Database of Affiliated Programs,” and complete the requisite information. You do not have to log in with a membership number to get this information.

- **Evaluating Degrees From Foreign Universities**

- Applicants must have their educational background evaluated.
- Applicants must receive a statement of educational equivalency from one of the evaluation services accepted by the Department of Civil Service. A list of the accepted evaluation services can be found on the [NACES website](#).

- **Verification of College Transcripts**

- Official transcripts must be maintained by the hiring agency when college training was used to qualify the applicant.
 - When verifying college coursework OR college degrees, you must look for an original official transcript in either of the following 2 formats:
 - Official paper transcript issued by the university
 - When verifying the transcript, you must look for obvious signs of possible falsification such as:
 - different size or style of type or font
 - wrong social security number
 - university name misspelled
 - white out
 - hand written corrections
 - Official electronic transcript e-mailed by the university directly to the hiring agency’s human resources office
 - Documentation required for e-transcripts include:
 - A printed copy of the e-mail from the university to the hiring agency
 - A printed copy of the cover form included with the e-transcript
 - A printed copy of the e-transcript
 - The following statement written on the printed e-transcript: “This transcript was received by (receiver’s name) directly from the university as an e-transcript and has not been altered in any form.” This statement

must be followed by the signature of the recipient of the e-mail.

- Electronic transcripts printed or forwarded electronically by a student are not official transcripts.
 - Overall GPA when appointing under the provisions provided in Rule [22.8 \(c\)](#) particularly when applicant has attended several schools.
 - Difference between a “degree in” and a “degree with”: When a Minimum Qualification states a “degree in”, the official transcript must reflect that field as the major field of study; when a Minimum Qualification states a “degree with”, any major will be accepted as long as the applicant has the number of hours in the required field.
 - Difference between “a degree plus” experience and “a degree followed by” experience: When the minimum requirement states, “a degree plus experience”, applicant obtains work experience and degree in no certain order. When the minimum requirement states, “a degree followed by experience”, applicant receives degree *then* obtains work experience.
 - **Documents which will NOT be accepted as verification of educational qualifications include grade notices, student records, diplomas, teaching certificates or any transcripts marked “UNOFFICIAL.”**
 - When using semester hours to substitute on the basis of 30 semester hours for one year of experience, click on this link for [Educational Equivalency Chart](#).
 - For universities awarding quarter hours, multiply the number of quarter hours earned by 2/3 to get the semester hour equivalency.
- **Claims that transcripts cannot be obtained:**
 - Sometimes when transcripts are required to verify college, applicants will claim they are unable to obtain a transcript. When dealing with such claims, it is our policy to determine the reason why the applicant cannot obtain a transcript by contacting the institution granting the degree or hours.
 - If the reason the applicant cannot obtain his transcript is because he/she has defaulted on student loans, failed to pay fees or parking tickets, or failed to meet other financial obligations due to the university, we will not accept any other document as proof of obtaining required degrees or hours.
 - **Admitting Prior to Graduation**
 - Should you have the need to recruit for a hard to fill position that requires a baccalaureate or master’s degree as the requirement as outlined in the minimum qualifications, the Staffing Division will allow you to indicate on your job posting that applicants may apply 90 days prior to receipt of the baccalaureate / master’s degree. You may move these applicants to the eligible list, interview and make an offer contingent upon verification of receipt of the required degree. The effective date of the appointment cannot be prior to the graduation date.

- This does not mean we will credit persons who have completed all but the thesis requirement on a master's degree. If the thesis is part of the degree requirement, a person will not be credited with the degree until the thesis is completed.