



Frequently Asked Questions Required Credentials for Certified Positions

1) Am I eligible to be certified to teach in South Carolina?

For new certification, you must complete an educational program through an accredited college, hold at least a bachelors degree, and pass the appropriate content area examinations. If you have not completed an educational program you may apply to teach through the PACE program (Program for *Alternative Certification*). If you are already certified to teach in another state you must submit your out-of-state certificate with your certification application to the state department.

2) What is the PACE program?

The PACE program is the South Carolina Program of *Alternative Certification* for Educators. The eligibility criteria that must be met is: a) an earned bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university, b) passing score on the content area examination(s), c) two years full-time work experience defined as two years of postsecondary work that includes one continuous year of full time work and no more than one year of combined part-time work experience, and finally d) employment as a full or part-time teacher in a South Carolina public school. See PACE handout or go to www.ed.sc.gov for more information regarding PACE.

3) What are the requirements to be a teacher?

All teachers must hold a South Carolina Educators Certificate. In addition, a majority of teachers fall under No Child Left Behind regulations and must meet all criteria listed below to be deemed Highly Qualified to teach:

- a) Hold at least a bachelor's degree;
- b) Hold full state certification; and
- c) Demonstrate content competency in the subject areas taught.

4) Which positions must adhere to No Child Left Behind regulations?

Core Academic Subjects taught, such as: English, reading/language arts, mathematics, and science. Also included are foreign languages, civics, government, history, economics, geography and the Arts (art, music, and dance). Positions not included are physical education, guidance, speech, home economics, business education, etc.

5) If I teach in a core academic area and have not yet demonstrated content competency (see 1-c above), how may I do this?

You may demonstrate content competency by a major in the subject area (*excluding elementary, early childhood and special education*), passing the appropriate Praxis exam, or completing a HOUSSE evaluation in a given content area.

6) What is HOUSSE?

HOUSSE stands for high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation in a content area. It is a team comprised of highly qualified teachers and/or administrators that evaluate your teaching to determine your competence in the content.

7) What is the first step of the certification process?

The State requires the Application Materials for Educator Certification be completed and mailed to them for review. We recommend you send it certified mail. You may pick up this application at our office or download from www.ed.sc.gov.

8) How long does the certification process take?

The required information that must be submitted before the application can be reviewed, i.e. transcripts, fingerprints, score reports, verification of teaching experience, etc., can take some time. Once it reaches the state department the processing time could take up to 12 weeks, depending on what time of year you send it in.

9) Whom do I call for more information?

You may contact the Personnel Department at 981-1024 for general information. For questions regarding your certification status call the Office of Teacher Education and Certification at 1-877-885-5280 Mon-Fri, 1:00-4:30pm.