

Principles for the Evaluation of Years of Teacher Education for Salary Purposes

(Adopted by the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board on 2004 05 17)



**The Alberta
Teachers' Association**

Teacher Qualifications Service

Established in 1966, the Teacher Qualifications Service (TQS) provides Alberta teachers with an evaluation of their educational qualifications for salary purposes. Evaluations are made according to the *Principles for the Evaluation of Years of Teacher Education for Salary Purposes* established and reviewed annually by the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board (TSQB). The statement of qualifications issued by the service is accepted by all public, separate and Francophone school jurisdictions in the province for the purpose of determining educational placement on salary scales set out within the collective agreement of the jurisdictions.

The application form for a statement of qualifications may be obtained by contacting The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) TQS office or may be downloaded from the ATA website www.teachers.ab.ca under Teacher Salary Qualifications. Instructions are contained on the form. The completed application form must be mailed and must contain original signatures.

Teacher Salary Qualifications Board

The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board (TSQB) was established under a memorandum of agreement signed on 1967 03 23, by The Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association (now the Alberta School Boards Association) and the Department of Education. The ten-member board includes representatives of the parties to the agreement and the three Alberta universities having faculties of education. One of the three ATA representatives is the chair who may make motions and vote.

The mandate of the board is to adopt bylaws for its own operation, to develop and establish principles for the evaluation of years of teacher education for salary purposes that guide the evaluations completed by the TQS, and to hear and rule on appeals of evaluations completed by the TQS.

In accordance with the memorandum of agreement, the ATA agrees to operate its TQS under the governing principles adopted by the board, to cooperate with the registrar of Alberta Education in matters of evaluation, to publicize the principles and to receive representations in writing, by telephone or in person, regarding evaluations.

The Alberta School Boards Association agrees to publicize the principles, to advise its member boards of the agreement and to request boards to inform immigrant teachers to apply to the ATA TQS for evaluations.

Alberta Education agrees to restrict its evaluations service to that required for teacher certification, to advise immigrant teachers to apply to TQS for evaluation, and to facilitate the exchange of information between Teacher Development and Certification, Alberta Education and the ATA TQS.

The memorandum of agreement may be amended by unanimous consent of the parties to it and may be terminated by any of the parties on one year's notice.

Teacher Salary Qualifications Board

Principles for the Evaluation of Years of Teacher Education for Salary Purposes

The TSQB has final decision on the interpretation and application of the principles contained in this document.

A. DEFINITIONS

- (a) “academic year” means a year of study as defined by the institution.
- (b) “applied degree” means a degree focusing on postsecondary study in career, vocational or technical fields offered by a college and/or technical institute.
- (c) “combined or conjoint degrees” means degrees completed at the same time and in combination with each other.
- (d) “course” means a minimum of three semester credit hours or four and one-half quarter credit hours successfully completed through a recognized institution.
- (e) “diploma program” means a program offered by undergraduate faculties of education of Alberta universities.
- (f) “distance learning” means learning acquired by other than on-campus instruction and includes independent and correspondence study.
- (g) “graduate program” means a program offered by the faculty of graduate studies or designated faculties of the recognized institution.
- (h) “minister of education” means the Alberta minister of education.
- (i) “non-recognized institution” means an institution not meeting the requirements of definition (o).
- (j) “online learning” means learning acquired using the Internet or the World Wide Web as the method of instructional delivery.
- (k) “postsecondary program” means a program beyond secondary schooling.
- (l) “prevailing evaluation” means the evaluation contained in the most recently issued Teacher Qualifications Service statement of qualifications.

- (m) “prior-learning assessment” means a process that involves the identification, documentation, assessment and recognition of non-traditional learning.
- (n) “program” means a sequence of learning approved by the institution.
- (o) “recognized institution” means an institution meeting the requirements of Principle 2.01.
- (p) “self-directed program” means a program in which the offering institution does not predefine the structure or the evaluation and graduation criteria.
- (q) “statement of qualifications” means a statement issued by the Teacher Qualifications Service of The Alberta Teachers’ Association.

B. PRINCIPLES

1.0 Qualifications Evaluation

- 1.01 The evaluation of educational qualifications is based on comparability to Alberta programs.
- 1.02 Educational qualifications from institutions outside Alberta will be assessed neither less nor more favorably than Alberta qualifications.
- 1.03 A statement of qualifications will be issued to an individual who possesses Canadian citizenship, permanent resident status or lawful authorization to work in Canada and who holds an Alberta teaching authority for the current school year.
- 1.04 A statement of qualifications will be issued to an individual who possesses Canadian citizenship, permanent resident status or lawful authorization to work in Canada and who has been recommended upon completion of their current studies for Alberta certification by the dean of the faculty of education of an Alberta university under contract with the minister of education to prepare teachers for Alberta certification.
- 1.05 Students admitted to Alberta faculties of education with transfer credit in programs leading to eligibility for certification may apply for and be issued a statement of qualifications.
- 1.06 An educational qualification will be assessed according to the status accorded to it at the time and by the institution at which the program was taken.

2.0 Recognized Institutions

- 2.01 A recognized institution is considered to be an institution, at the time of student enrolment, which is:

- a) a university or college in Canada that holds ordinary membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada prior to October 1994 or after October 1994, institutional membership in the association, or
- b) a university or college in the United States whose programs are generally accepted by member institutions of the following accrediting associations:
 - The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
 - The New England Association of Schools and Colleges
 - The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
 - The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
 - The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
 - The Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or
- c) a member institution of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, or
- d) a member institution of the International Association of Universities, or
- e) a university or college holding degree-granting status and deemed acceptable to the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board.

3.0 Base-Level for Counting

- 3.01 An entry program equivalent to that required of Alberta universities will be considered the base for counting years of teacher education.

4.0 Advanced Secondary Programs

- 4.01 Advanced Placement Programs and the International Baccalaureate may be considered for recognition beyond the base-level for counting requirements (see Base-Level for Counting) if:
 - a) the program has been given credit on a degree by a recognized institution, and
 - b) the level of the courses within the program is considered equivalent to first year or higher level courses of recognized Alberta universities, and
 - c) the program is not used to fulfill admission requirements to a postsecondary institution.

5.0 Postsecondary Programs

- 5.01 A postsecondary program will be considered for salary recognition if:
 - a) the program is successfully completed through a recognized institution (see Recognized Institutions), and
 - b) the program is completed beyond the base-level for counting (see Base-Level for Counting), and

- c) the professional teacher preparation component of the program has been recognized by the minister of education for certification purposes, and
- d) the program is considered to be university degree credit by a recognized institution, and
- e) the degree program has a minimum of one year, generally the final year, completed through the degree-granting institution, and
- f) the program complies with the principles for recognition of self-directed programs (see Self-Directed Programs), and
- g) the program complies with the principles for recognition of online learning (see Online Learning), and
- h) the program complies with the principles for recognition of distance learning (see Distance Learning), and
- i) the program complies with the principles for recognition of prior-learning assessment credits (see Prior-Learning Assessment Credits), and
- j) the program complies with the principles for recognition of applied degree programs (see Applied Degree Programs), and
- k) the program complies with the principles for relevancy to teacher education (see Relevancy to Teacher Education), and
- l) the program content does not overlap or duplicate its own or another program.

5.02 All postsecondary programs will be assessed based on the academic year requirements of the program.

6.0 Transfer and College Programs

6.01 Transfer and college programs of recognized institutions will be considered for salary recognition in accordance with the principles on postsecondary programs.

6.02 Transfer and college programs from non-recognized institutions will be considered for salary recognition in accordance with the principles on postsecondary programs if:

- a) the transfer or college program originates from an institution within Alberta and the assigned credits are deemed to be university degree credit study and generally accepted by Alberta recognized institutions, or
- b) the transfer or college program originates from an institution outside Alberta and within Canada and the assigned credits are deemed to be university degree credit study and generally accepted by same province recognized institutions, or
- c) the transfer or college program originates from an institution within the United States and the assigned credits are deemed to be university degree credit study and generally accepted by same state recognized institutions, or

- d) the transfer or college program originates from an institution outside North America and the assigned credits are deemed to be university degree credit study and generally accepted by same country recognized institutions, and
- e) the recognition given to the transfer or college program does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

- 6.03 Where the transfer or college program of the non-recognized institution is not offered by a recognized institution as outlined in 6.02(a) through 6.02(d), the program will be assessed based on its comparability to an Alberta university degree credit program of a recognized institution.
- 6.04 Where there is an articulation agreement between a recognized and a non-recognized institution, the study covered under the articulation agreement will be considered in accordance with the principles on postsecondary programs:
- a) on the same basis as if the study was completed at the recognized institution,
 - b) on its comparability to an Alberta university program, and
 - c) on the basis the recognition given does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.
- 6.05 Transfer or college programs from non-recognized institutions will be assessed on an independent basis if:
- a) transfer credit has been given toward a degree program of a recognized institution, and
 - b) no actual course study has been completed through the recognized institution, and
 - c) the recognition given to the transfer or college program does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

7.0 Self-Directed Programs

- 7.01 Self-directed programs of recognized institutions will be considered for salary recognition if:
- a) the program is comparable to an intramural degree program of an Alberta recognized institution, and
 - b) the professional teacher preparation component is acceptable to the minister of education, and
 - c) the program has a common structure and common evaluation and graduation criteria for all students, and
 - d) the program complies with the principles pertaining to base-level for counting, advanced secondary and postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, online learning, distance learning, prior-learning assessment credits, applied degree programs and relevancy to teacher education, and

e) the recognition given to the self-directed program does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

7.02 The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board has the right to deny recognition to any portion or all of the self-directed program considered unacceptable.

8.0 Online Learning

8.01 Online learning programs of recognized institutions will be considered for salary recognition if:

a) the program is comparable to an intramural degree program of an Alberta recognized institution, and

b) the professional teacher preparation component is acceptable to the minister of education, and

c) the program has a common structure and common evaluation and graduation criteria for all students, and

d) the program complies with the principles pertaining to base-level for counting, advanced secondary and postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, self-directed programs, distance learning, prior-learning assessment credits, applied degree programs and relevancy to teacher education, and

e) the recognition given to the online learning program does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

8.02 The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board has the right to deny recognition to any portion or all of the online learning program considered unacceptable.

9.0 Distance Learning

9.01 Distance learning programs of recognized institutions will be considered for salary recognition if:

a) the program is comparable to an intramural degree program of an Alberta recognized institution, and

b) the professional teacher preparation component is acceptable to the minister of education, and

c) the program structure and the evaluation and graduation criteria are identical to that required of an intramural student, and

d) the program complies with the principles pertaining to base-level for counting, advanced secondary and postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, self-directed programs, online learning, prior-learning assessment credits, applied degree programs and relevancy to teacher education, and

e) the recognition given to the distance learning program does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

9.02 The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board has the right to deny recognition to any portion or all of the distance learning program considered unacceptable.

10.0 Prior-learning Assessment Credits

10.01 Prior-learning assessment credits will be considered for salary recognition if:

- a) the recognition was not previously given for salary purposes, and
- b) the assigned credit given was based on factors other than sole recognition of life-experiences, and
- c) the assigned credit was given on a degree program of a recognized institution, and
- d) the professional teacher education component of the program was acceptable to the minister of education, and
- e) the credits comply with the principles pertaining to base-level for counting, advanced secondary and postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, self-directed programs, online learning, distance learning, applied degree programs and relevancy to teacher education, and
- f) the recognition given to the prior-learning assessment credits does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

10.02 The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board has the right to deny recognition to any portion or all of the prior-learning assessment credits considered unacceptable.

11.0 Applied Degree Programs

11.01 An applied degree program of a non-recognized institution will be considered for salary recognition if:

- a) the program is comparable to an intramural degree program of an Alberta recognized institution, and
- b) the program credits are given for other than solely work-related experiences, and
- c) the program complies with the principles pertaining to base-level for counting, advanced secondary and postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, self-directed programs, online learning, distance learning, prior-learning assessment credits and relevancy to teacher education, and
- d) the recognition given to the applied degree program does not violate Principles 1.01 and 1.02.

11.02 The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board has the right to deny recognition of applied degree programs that it considers unacceptable.

12.0 Relevancy to Teacher Education

- 12.01 Subject to all other principles contained within this document, programs in liberal arts and science and in education will be considered acceptable.
- 12.02 Subject to all other principles contained within this document, programs other than those in liberal arts, science or education considered equivalent to liberal arts, science or education will be considered acceptable.
- 12.03 Programs not meeting the requirements of Principles 12.01 and 12.02 may be considered on a limited basis.
- 12.04 The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board has the right to determine relevancy of any and all programs as teacher education for purposes of salary recognition.

13.0 Undergraduate Programs

- 13.01 Recognition of any undergraduate program is subject to:
 - a) the principles pertaining to base-level for counting, advanced secondary and postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, self-directed programs, online learning, distance learning, prior-learning assessment credits, applied degree programs and relevancy to teacher education, and
 - b) the academic year requirements of the degree, and
 - c) the value assigned for salary recognition being no greater than the value assigned by the offering institution.
- 13.02 Incomplete undergraduate programs where the academic year requirements are not identified or where the courses are not part of a program will have each course assessed as .1 of a year (see course definition).
- 13.03 Combined or conjoint degrees of a recognized institution will be assessed no greater than the academic year value assigned to the degree programs.

14.0 Faculty of Education Diploma Program

- 14.01 A completed diploma program of a faculty of education of a recognized institution will be assessed at one year unless a course-by-course assessment permits an assessment in excess of one year.
- 14.02 Each undergraduate level course will be assessed as .1 of a year (see course definition).
- 14.03 Each graduate level course will be assessed as .125 of a year (see course definition).

15.0 Graduate Programs

- 15.01 Recognition of any graduate program is subject to the principles pertaining to postsecondary programs, transfer and college programs, self-directed programs, online learning, distance learning, prior-learning assessment credits and relevancy to teacher education.
- 15.02 A graduate level course or its equivalent from a recognized institution will be assessed as .125 of a year (see course definition).
- 15.03 A completed graduate degree not composed of courses or its equivalent will be assessed according to its academic year value.
- 15.04 A completed graduate degree composed of courses or its equivalent where the academic year value is unknown will be assessed based on a statement of equivalency from an Alberta recognized institution.

16.0 Surplus Credits to a Program

- 16.01 Acceptable credits documented as being surplus to a program of a recognized institution will be considered for credit based on the following ratio value:
 - a) each course at the undergraduate level will be assessed as .1 of a year (see course definition).
 - b) each course at the graduate level will be assessed as .125 of a year (see course definition).
- 16.02 Acceptable credits documented as being surplus to a program of a nonrecognized institution yet deemed equivalent to university degree-credit study of a recognized institution will be considered for credit and accorded equivalent value as undergraduate or graduate level credits of a recognized institution.

17.0 Limitations

- 17.01 Where no degree has been conferred by a recognized institution, the assessment issued will not exceed four years.
- 17.02 Where no graduate degree has been conferred by a recognized institution, the assessment issued will not exceed six years, except if doctoral level studies of a recognized institution has been completed.
- 17.03 Where a master's degree has been conferred by a recognized institution, the assessment issued will not exceed seven years, except if doctoral level studies of a recognized institution has been completed.
- 17.04 The maximum assessment issued will be eight years.

18.0 Grandfathering

- 18.01 When principles and/or procedures are revised, recognition previously granted to a program that forms the basis of the prevailing evaluation will not be reduced unless the recognition was granted in error.
- 18.02 When principles and/or procedures are revised that detrimentally affect the recognition to be accorded to a program of study previously approved and documented in writing by the Teacher Qualifications Service, the projected recognition of the approved study will be honored for a period not exceeding three years from the date of approval (errors and omissions excepted).

19.0 Individual Responsibility

- 19.01 It is the responsibility of the applicant to ascertain if future changes of principles and their application may affect the evaluation of qualifications for salary recognition.
- 19.02 It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the Teacher Qualifications Service of The Alberta Teachers' Association within 90 days of the date on the statement of qualifications if it is believed the statement contains any errors or omissions. Failure to do so will result in the statement of qualifications being regarded as final and correct.

C. EVALUATION DISPUTES

There is a two-stage dispute mechanism for any assessment made by the Teacher Qualifications Service.

Stage 1—Reassessment

Teachers receiving an evaluation with which they are dissatisfied may request in writing, within three years of the date of the statement of qualifications, a reassessment by the Teacher Qualifications Committee. All correspondence should be addressed to the Chair, Teacher Qualifications Committee, 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1. Following a review by the committee, the committee secretary will advise the applicant, in writing, of the decision.

Stage 2—Appeal

Once the Teacher Qualifications Committee has considered and made a ruling on a request for reassessment or a decision not to reassess, the teacher, if still dissatisfied, may lodge an appeal with the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board.

Information Concerning Appeals

1. Appeal requests must be registered with the chair of the board within three months following the reassessment decision of the Teacher Qualifications Committee.

2. An application for the hearing of an appeal must be made in writing and addressed to the Chair, Teacher Salary Qualifications Board, 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1.
3. The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board will consider only appeals against reassessments of the Teacher Qualifications Committee or against a decision of that committee not to reassess a statement of qualifications. An application for the hearing of an appeal must clearly identify which principle(s) has/have allegedly been misapplied. Questions pertaining to the application of the principles should be directed to the Teacher Qualifications Secretary.
4. An appeal of a Teacher Qualifications Committee decision denying a reassessment may be made only on the grounds that the documentation provided to the committee constituted new evidence.
5. The Teacher Salary Qualifications Board will not hear an appeal based on documentation not previously considered by the Teacher Qualifications Committee.
6. An appeal designed to raise an evaluation should contain evidence that qualifications not accepted by the Teacher Qualifications Committee do in fact meet the criteria of the established principles. Alternatively, an appeal designed to reduce an evaluation should present evidence that qualifications accepted by the Teacher Qualifications Committee do not meet the criteria of the established principles.
7. An appeal based on simple disagreement with a principle or principles will not succeed. However, the board will consider written representations requesting changes in principles. Such representations are not deemed to be appeals. Proposed amendments should be clearly stated and accompanied with a rationale.
8. Appeals may be heard by any regular or special meeting of the board called in accordance with the provisions of the bylaws.
9. The appellant may present the case in person or in writing or both and may be accompanied and/or represented by a spokesperson. Where neither the appellant nor the appellant's representative appears as scheduled for an appeal, the appeal will be rescheduled. Where neither the appellant nor the appellant's representative appears as scheduled a second time, the board may consider the appeal on the evidence provided.
10. The board assumes no responsibility for an appellant's expenses or loss of salary in connection with an appeal.

11. The board may, on the basis of the evidence presented, decide to confirm or vary the evaluation of the Teacher Qualifications Committee or, in the case of an appeal against a decision of that committee not to reassess a statement of qualifications, refer the case back to the Teacher Qualifications Committee for reassessment.
12. The decision of the board and the basis on which it is reached will be communicated in writing to the appellant.

Please direct correspondence or address requests for application forms or information to—

The Alberta Teachers' Association
Teacher Qualifications Service
11010 142 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T5N 2R1

phone—from Edmonton calling area, 447-9400

from elsewhere in Alberta, 1-800-232-7208

e-mail: tqs@ata.ab.ca

website: www.teachers.ab.ca.

Because of concerns about confidentiality, TQS staff will not respond by e-mail to requests for advice about individual situations. Such requests should be made in writing, by phone or in person.