

**Title of Regulation:**

**Regulation No.:**

**R 43-51**

**CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Effective Date:**

**06/27/03**

**Constitutional and Statutory Provisions:**

Section(s):

59-5-60.

General powers of [State] Board.

59-25-110.

System for examination and certification of teachers.

Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

**State Board Regulation:**

Certification Requirements.

**I. Requirements for Certification**

The applicant must meet all requirements for certification that are in effect in the current application year (July 1-June 30). The responsibility for providing accurate and complete documentation of eligibility for certification is that of the applicant. To qualify for certification in South Carolina, the applicant must fulfill the following requirements:

A. Earn a bachelor's or master's degree either from an institution that has a state-approved teacher education program and is accredited for general collegiate purposes by a regional accreditation association, or from a South Carolina institution that has programs approved for teacher education by the State Board of Education, or from an institution that has programs approved for teacher education by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Professional education credit must be earned through an institution that has a teacher education program approved for initial certification.

1. Graduate degrees acceptable for certificate advancement include academic or professional degrees in the field of education or in an academic area for which a corresponding or relevant teaching area is authorized by the State Board of Education.

2. All credit at the graduate level must be earned through the graduate school of an institution that is accredited for general collegiate purposes by a regional accreditation association and that has a regular graduate division that meets regional accreditation requirements. Graduate credit can also be earned through a South Carolina institution that has graduate programs approved for teacher education by the State Board of Education or through an institution that has graduate programs approved for teacher education by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

B. Submit the required teacher area examination score(s) as adopted by the State Board of Education for purposes of certification. Effective July 1, 2006, the required score on the examination of general professional knowledge (pedagogy) as adopted by the State Board of Education for purposes of certification will be required for initial certification. Until that date, the general professional knowledge (pedagogy) examination will be required only for professional certification.

C. Be at least eighteen years of age.

D. Undergo a criminal records check by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and a national criminal records check supported by fingerprints conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If the applicant does not complete the initial certification process within eighteen months from the original date of application, the FBI fingerprint process must be repeated. Eligible applicants who have prior arrests and/or convictions must undergo a review by the State Board of Education and be approved before a certificate can be issued to them. Background checks from other states are not transferable to South Carolina.

## II. Acceptable Credits

A. All credits are computed by semester hours; three quarter hours are equivalent to two semester hours.

B. Duplicate credit will not be allowed for courses with the same title unless approved by the Office of Teacher Certification of the State Department of Education.

## III. Out-of-State Applicants

A. To be eligible for a South Carolina teaching certificate, the out-of-state applicant must submit the teaching area examination score(s) and the score on the examination of general professional knowledge (pedagogy) that are required for certification in the state in which he or she holds a valid standard out-of-state certificate. If no tests were required for certification in the state where the individual holds a valid standard certificate, the applicant for South Carolina certification must submit the required teaching area examination score(s) as adopted by the State Board of Education for purposes of certification. If the applicant has less than twenty-seven months of successful teaching experience within the last seven years in the state in which he or she holds a valid standard certificate, he or she must also submit the required score on the examination of general professional knowledge (pedagogy) as adopted by the State Board of Education for purposes of certification.

B. Initial or advanced certification will be awarded only in the area(s) of certification held by the out-of-state applicant that most closely conform(s) to corresponding or relevant South Carolina area(s) of certification.

## IV. Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (Alternative Teacher Preparation).

An individual who qualifies under the Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE) guidelines as adopted by the State Board of Education may be issued an alternative route certificate. Successful completion of certification requirements as prescribed in the PACE guidelines will qualify the applicant for a professional certificate.

## V. Student Teachers

A. All individuals pursuing undergraduate or graduate programs leading to initial teacher certification must complete the student teaching requirement adopted by the State Board of Education.

B. An individual who has met all requirements for certification except student teaching may request that three years teaching experience be used in lieu of student teaching for certification purposes under the following conditions:

1. The teaching experience must be at least three full years as the teacher of record and earned in an accredited public or private school in grades K-12 or at a postsecondary institution. Combinations of

partial year teaching assignments may be used. Experience must be post baccalaureate to be eligible for consideration.

2. The teaching experience must be in the area of preparation and in the area in which the applicant is applying for certification.

3. The individual must submit a letter or letters of recommendation, attesting to the successful evaluation of teaching in the certification area, written by the administrative authority of the school or school district where he or she has taught for the specified period.

4. The individual must submit copies of school or school district evaluations providing evidence of his or her successful teaching.

5. The individual must submit evidence from the institution of higher education affirming that he or she has met all requirements for the approved teacher education program with the exception of student teaching.

C. Applicants for certification in work-based career and technology education are not required to complete student teaching.

## VI. Required Examinations.

A. All applicants must submit the required teaching area examination score(s) as adopted by the State Board of Education for purposes of certification. Effective July 1, 2006, the required score on the examination of general professional knowledge (pedagogy) as adopted by the State Board of Education for purposes of certification will be required for initial certification. Until this date, the general professional knowledge (pedagogy) exam will be required only for professional certification.

B. An initial certificate will be issued to individuals who seek certification in areas for which no teaching area examination exists and who meet all requirements for certification in effect on the date that the Office of Teacher Certification receives all required documentation other than a certification test score. Once a test for the particular area of certification is adopted by the State Board of Education, these individuals will be required to present a passing score on the test within one year following the Board's action.

C. Certification in work-based career and technology education requires the successful completion of all sections of the basic skills examination and the trade competency examination adopted by the State Board of Education for work-based career and technology education.

## VII. Verification of Eligibility

The Office of Teacher Certification of the State Department of Education may verify the eligibility of an applicant for certification by ascertaining

(a) that the applicant has verified his or her completion of a state approved teacher preparation program

OR

(b) that the applicant has a valid corresponding certificate from a state with which South Carolina has reciprocity through the Interstate Agreement on Qualifications of Educational Personnel

OR

(c) that the applicant has met the requirements for the Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE) for certification.