

Foreign Education

(This information was copied from the
Operating Manual for Qualification Standards,
General Policies and Instructions

on the Office of Personnel Management's website at:

<http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/policy/ApplicationOfStds-04.asp>

Date: 10/01/2009)

Foreign Education — Education completed outside of the United States must be deemed equivalent to that gained in conventional/accredited U.S. education programs to be acceptable for Federal employment. Most foreign education is not accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. A few medical schools are accredited under country standards that have been determined to be "comparable" to U.S. standards by the U.S. Department of Education's National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation. For foreign education that is not so accredited, agencies should follow the provisions below before considering such education for Federal employment.

Unless the foreign education meets the criteria in paragraph (a) above, applicants must submit all necessary documents to a private U.S. organization that specializes in interpretation of foreign educational credentials, commonly called a credential evaluation service. To be acceptable, the foreign credential evaluation must include/describe:

- The type of education received by the applicant;
- The level of education in relation to the U.S. education system, and state that its comparability recommendations follow the general guidelines of the U.S. National Council for the Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials;
- The content of the applicant's educational program earned abroad and the standard obtained;
- The status of the awarding foreign school's recognition and legitimacy in its home country's education system; and
- Any other information of interest such as what the evaluation service did to obtain this information, the qualifications of the evaluator, and any indications as to other problems such as forgery.

Foreign credential evaluations that do not contain the above information or that state there is insufficient information provided by the applicant on which to base an evaluation should not be accepted. If the requested evaluation shows the foreign education to be legitimate and comparable to that expected of a candidate with U.S. credentials, it may be accepted at the discretion of the agency. For further information on the evaluation of foreign education, refer to the U.S. Department of Education's web site at <http://www.ed.gov>.

Professional Licensure: Possession of a valid and current U.S. professional license by a graduate of a foreign professional school or program is sufficient proof that the foreign education has been determined to be equivalent to the requisite U.S. professional education in that occupational field.