

CHILD CARE WORKFORCE EDUCATION EVALUATION: CRITERIA AND POLICY

North Carolina's child care licensing system establishes education standards for the child care workforce. Staff in all child care positions must meet minimum education requirements. All staff have the potential to contribute to a higher star rating for their facility by completing post-secondary education (university, college, community college coursework) beyond the minimum requirements.

Education evaluators in the Child Care Workforce Standards Section of the North Carolina Division of Child Development assess the education of individuals working in child care to determine their qualifications. They do this by reviewing transcripts and identifying applicable course credits, based on specific criteria. Here is a guide to these criteria:

WHAT COUNTS AND WHAT DOESN'T?

- Only post-secondary credit is counted in education evaluations. This credit must appear on official transcripts from post-secondary schools that have received nationally recognized regional accreditation.
- Continuing education and inservice training hours are never counted in determining an individual's education qualifications.

ACCREDITATION

- The college awarding post-secondary credit (including schools offering distance education such as on-line coursework) **must** be accredited by one of the following nationally recognized regional accreditation agencies:
 - Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
 - New England Association of Schools and Colleges
 - North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
 - Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
 - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
 - Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- Accreditation can be checked at www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.asp.
 1. Enter the name of the institution of higher education.
 2. Select it from the Institution list.
 3. Click on the name to see what Institutional Accreditation it has.
 4. Look for one of the above accrediting agencies under Agency Name.

ACCREDITATION (CONTINUED)

- For higher education institutions outside of the United States, the recognized system of the specified country's accreditation process will be accepted.

GUIDELINES FOR TRANSCRIPT SUBMISSIONS

- The transcript must be "official" with a raised seal or on distinctive paper and with the registrar's signature, as specified by the college. Photocopies, computer print-outs, unofficial student copies and grade reports are not accepted.
- The transcript does NOT need to arrive at DCD in a sealed envelope. However, if the transcript does not look official or if the name of the college is not clearly noted on the transcript, it is helpful to include the original envelope from the college when sending the official transcript to DCD. Make sure the transcript you submit shows all of your coursework at that college.
- Individuals are encouraged to make a copy of the transcript for their own records before sending the original to DCD.
- Transcripts from foreign countries: Official foreign transcripts in English may be submitted to DCD for evaluation. If the coursework cannot be determined to clearly compare with the United States semester system of credits and degrees awarded, DCD will send the applicant a request for an international education evaluation.*

Foreign transcripts in any language other than English will need to be assessed by an international education evaluation service* that will report the educational equivalencies of the courses and degrees shown on the transcript. (*Literal translations into English are not acceptable.*) The report from the international education evaluation service should be submitted to DCD in place of a transcript. Cost for this service is the responsibility of the individual requesting the evaluation.

* An internet search for international education evaluators will provide multiple sources for this service.

ACCEPTABLE DEGREES AND COURSEWORK

- The following degrees** are accepted for lead teacher equivalency and for the Early Childhood/Child Development (EC/CD) coursework component for administrators:
 - AA/AAS in Early Childhood/ Child Development;
 - BA/BS in Early Childhood/ Child Development/ Human Growth & Development/ B-K Education/ Early Childhood Special Education

** The degree earned must be shown on an official transcript, including the major and the date the degree was awarded. Copies of diplomas are not accepted as verification of degree completion.

- For those who want to qualify as lead teachers but do NOT have one of the degrees listed or have no degree at all, the following criteria apply to coursework***:

When reviewing transcripts for coursework to meet lead teacher equivalency and extra hours, evaluators look for courses that emphasize a developmental understanding of young children and developmentally appropriate educational approaches for the early years. This is why elementary education degrees and coursework often do not qualify for credit, and why such courses as Introduction to Education, Education in Society and Foundations of Education are also not given credit as EC/CD coursework. *For the same reason, general education courses required for a degree are NOT counted.*

***For child care administrators: the same criteria apply to evaluations of coursework to satisfy the EC/CD component and extra hours.

- If an individual has not achieved a certificate, diploma or post-secondary degree, the coursework must be no more than ten years old at the time they submit their first application (an Education and Equivalency Form for any position) in order to be counted.
- Courses routinely counted as Early Childhood/Child Development include:
 - most EDU courses in the NC Community College System **except** a group of vocational courses (EDU 175, 176, 178, 179, 240, 245, 250, 285)
 - some ASL (American Sign Language) prefixes [*limited to developmental language and communication skills*]
 - DDT 120 Teaching Developmental Disabled (in NC Community Colleges)
 - courses with Kindergarten (K) in the name
 - some Psychology courses, including General, Introduction, Child Psychology and Child Development

ACCEPTABLE DEGREES AND COURSEWORK, CONTINUED:

- Additional courses counted for School-Age positions include:
 - the same EDU prefixes in the NC Community College System that count for EC/CD **except** EDU 234 Infants, Toddlers and Twos
 - the same Psychology courses plus Child/Adolescent Psychology and Child/Adolescent Development
 - Elementary Education courses and degrees
- Practicums, internships and student teaching experiences are never counted as EC/CD courses, although they may have earned course credit toward a degree.
- Other courses may be considered for appropriateness, usually through review of course descriptions. If such coursework is deemed appropriate, credit will be given on a case by case basis.