

# Regulations of the Teacher Qualification Service

A Joint Project of the BC Teachers' Federation  
and the BC School Trustees Association

Teacher Qualification Service  
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## **THE TEACHER QUALIFICATION SERVICE**

The Teacher Qualification Service was incorporated under the Societies Act of British Columbia on January 27, 1969. Its purpose is to provide an advisory service for teachers, teachers' associations, and school boards, with respect to the evaluation of teachers' professional and academic qualifications for the assignment to teachers of categories based upon qualifications.

Decisions of the TQS are not binding on any school board or teachers' association, except where so provided in a collective agreement or the policies of a school district or teachers' association.

## **THE TEACHER QUALIFICATION BOARD**

The Teacher Qualification Board implements the policies of the TQS. The Board is composed of five members: two appointed by the British Columbia School Trustees Association, two appointed by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, and a Chair named by these four.

The day-to-day business of the Board is conducted by the Director of Evaluation. The Director is appointed by the Board on such terms and conditions of employment as the Board may decide.

The Board will hear and rule on appeals arising from the decisions of the Director.

## **REGULATIONS**

### **1.00 General**

1.01 In these regulations:

- a) "TQS" means the Teacher Qualification Service;
- b) "Board" means the Teacher Qualification Board;
- c) "Director" means the Director of Evaluation; and,
- d) "acceptable" means acceptable to the Teacher Qualification Service.

1.02 The TQS evaluates only the academic and professional qualifications of teachers who hold a valid teaching certificate issued by the BC College of Teachers.

- 1.03 The TQS does not evaluate the qualifications of individuals who hold a Letter of Permission issued by the BC College of Teachers.
- 1.04 A category assigned to a teacher by the TQS is valid only so long as the teaching certificate issued by the BC College of Teachers to the teacher is valid.
- 1.05 A category assigned by the TQS does not constitute proof of a valid teaching certificate from the BC College of Teachers.

## **2.00 Category Structure**

- 2.01 There are seven TQS categories. Each category is determined on the basis of programs completed after meeting the university entrance requirement (Grade 12) in British Columbia or its equivalent (at the date of first certification in this province) and on the requirements set out below:

### Category One (1)

This level is no longer granted.

### Category Two (2)

The requirements for this category are one of:

- a) An acceptable program of at least two years of post-secondary academic and professional training; or,
- b) A demonstrated record of knowledge, skills and experience (in an area not generally taught in a university setting) that qualifies an individual for a teaching certificate in a specialized field of teaching in the public school system.

### Category Three (3)

The requirement for this category is an acceptable three-year program of post-secondary academic and professional training, including an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation.

### Category Four (4)

The requirements for this category are one of:

- a) An acceptable four-year B Ed degree or an acceptable three-year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation or an acceptable one-year B Ed degree; or,

- b) An acceptable three-year diploma program containing academic and professional preparation followed by an acceptable degree; or,
- c) Fourth year standing in an acceptable five-year B Ed program, or the completion of an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation and third year standing in an acceptable four-year baccalaureate degree program.

#### Category Five (5)

The requirements for this category are one or more acceptable programs totalling five or more years of academic and professional studies.

The requirements may be met with one of:

- a) An acceptable five-year B Ed degree or an acceptable four-year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation; or,
- b) An acceptable four-year B Ed degree plus either an acceptable graduate degree or an acceptable integrated program (note Regulation 4.05); or,
- c) An acceptable three-year baccalaureate degree plus either an acceptable professional year of teacher training or an acceptable one-year B Ed and either an acceptable integrated program (note Regulation 4.05) or another acceptable degree; or,
- d) An acceptable three-year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable two-year B Ed; or,
- e) A program **of five or more years** of study which contains not less than 150 **acceptable** semester credits (or their equivalent) including an acceptable degree and an acceptable professional year, and which meets the requirement for Professional Certification by the British Columbia College of Teachers (see Transition Rules 6.00).

#### Category Five Plus (5+)

The requirements for this category are two or more acceptable programs totalling six or more years of academic and professional studies.

The requirements may be met with one of:

- a) An acceptable five year B Ed degree plus an acceptable integrated program (note regulation 4.05) or an acceptable four year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation and an acceptable integrated program; or,
- b) An acceptable four year B Ed degree plus two acceptable integrated programs (note regulation 4.05); or,
- c) An acceptable three year baccalaureate degree **plus** either an acceptable professional year of teacher training or an acceptable one year B Ed **and** two acceptable integrated programs (note regulation 4.05); or,
- d) An acceptable three year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable two year B Ed and an integrated program (note regulation 4.05); or,
- e) A program **of five or more years** of study which contains not less than 150 **acceptable** semester credits (or their equivalent) including an acceptable degree and an acceptable professional year, and which meets the requirement for Professional Certification by the British Columbia College of Teachers (see Transition Rules 6.00) and an acceptable integrated program (note regulation 4.05).

#### Category Six (6)

The requirements for this category are two or more acceptable programs that total six or more years of academic and professional studies and include an acceptable graduate degree.

The requirements may be met with one of:

- a) An acceptable five-year B Ed degree or an acceptable four-year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation followed by an acceptable graduate degree; or,
- b) An acceptable four-year B Ed degree followed by an acceptable integrated program (note Regulation 4.05) and an acceptable graduate degree or an acceptable graduate degree and another

acceptable degree; or,

- c) An acceptable three-year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable professional year of teacher preparation followed by an acceptable integrated program (note Regulation 4.05) and an acceptable graduate degree or an acceptable graduate degree and another acceptable degree; or,
- d) An acceptable three-year baccalaureate degree plus an acceptable two-year B Ed and an acceptable graduate degree; or,
- e) A program **of five or more years** of study which contains not less than 150 **acceptable** semester credits (or their equivalent) including an acceptable degree and an acceptable professional year, and which meets the requirement for Professional Certification by the British Columbia College of Teachers (see Transition Rules 6.00), plus an acceptable graduate degree.

### **3.00 Category Upgrades**

- 3.01 A teacher who has been assigned category three (3) may qualify for a higher category only by enrolling in an acceptable degree program and fulfilling all of the requirements of the higher category.
- 3.02 A teacher who has been assigned category four (4) and who holds an acceptable baccalaureate degree may qualify for category five (5) by completing an acceptable integrated program (note Regulation 4.05), a second acceptable baccalaureate degree, or an acceptable graduate degree.
- 3.03 A teacher who has been assigned category four (4) and who holds an acceptable baccalaureate degree may qualify for category five plus (5+) by completing two acceptable Integrated Programs (note Regulation 4.05), or a second acceptable baccalaureate degree and an acceptable integrated program.
- 3.04 A teacher who has been assigned category four (4) or five (5) who has already completed an acceptable graduate degree may qualify for category five (5) and/or six (6), respectively, by completing one or two integrated program(s) (note Regulation 4.05) or acceptable degrees.

### **4.00 Terms and Definitions**

- 4.01 Thirty (30) semester credits are equivalent to 45 quarter credits or 15 units.
- 4.02 An accredited university or college is an institution sanctioned by an accrediting authority recognized by the TQS.
- 4.03 An academic "year" is one containing a minimum of 30 semester credits (or equivalent) of acceptable course work completed at an accredited university or college.
- 4.04 A professional "year" is one that contains a minimum of 30 semester credits (or equivalent) of acceptable course work completed at an accredited university or college or teacher training institution and includes a professional component of practice teaching that is acceptable preparation for teaching in BC. Regardless of length, a professional year will count as only one year in assigning a category.
- 4.05 An "integrated program" contains a minimum of 30 semester credits of **senior level and/or graduate level** courses which make up a program **containing a common theme or purpose, or** a degree or post baccalaureate diploma **containing a common theme or purpose** and a minimum of 30 semester credits, 24 of which must be senior level. Senior level courses are usually courses numbered 300 and above undertaken at an accredited university or college. An Integrated Program may be all in one academic subject area, or all in Education, or a combination of both Education and one academic subject area applicable to teaching in the BC public school system. At least 20 of the total of 30 credits must be eligible for inclusion in a degree or diploma as part of a major area of study. **Courses included in an Integrated Program must be completed within a ten year time period.** (See TQS policy 4.1).
- 4.06 An integrated program acceptable for use in qualifying for category five (5) may also be made up of 30 semester credits (or equivalent) from an on-going graduate degree program. However, applicants qualifying for category five (5) in this manner will not be eligible for a further category upgrade until after the graduate degree has been conferred and either a second integrated program or second acceptable degree has been completed.

## **5.00 General Principles**

- 5.01 Categories are assigned on the basis of the "completed programs" approach as determined by standards applicable in British Columbia under the following conditions:

- a) With an acceptable British Columbia degree program, only the completed years of university study within the program shall be counted;
- b) With a partially completed acceptable British Columbia degree program the category assigned shall be based upon the number of "years" by which the training is removed from the category assigned to the completed program;
- c) With an acceptable non-degree program only completed "years" of university study or equivalent "years" shall be counted. "Equivalent years" shall be determined by the Board. The maximum category assigned to such a program shall be 3; and,
- d) With an acceptable degree or non-degree program partially or totally completed outside British Columbia only those university or equivalent "years" taken beyond current university entrance requirements in British Columbia shall be counted.

5.02 The qualifications of teachers who have studied outside the province will be assessed on a basis that is no less favourable but no more favourable than that applied to the qualifications of teachers prepared within British Columbia.

5.03 All credits granted or recognized by a post-secondary institution will not necessarily be accepted for the purposes of assigning a category.

5.04 Where the content of one part of a program overlaps the content of a second program, the common portion shall not be counted twice in assigning a teacher's category.

5.05 a) Categories are assigned on the basis of completed programs taken after meeting university entrance requirements in British Columbia. The acceptable university entrance equivalents are:

Alberta	Grade 12
Saskatchewan	Grade 12
Manitoba	Grade 12
Ontario	<i>(prior to 2004)</i> Grade 13
	<i>(as of 2004)</i> Grade 12
Quebec	1st year of CEGEP
New Brunswick	Grade 12

Nova Scotia	Grade 12
Prince Edward Island	Grade 12
Newfoundland	Grade 12

or 1st year of Memorial University

- b) In jurisdictions within Canada where entrance requirements have differed from that indicated above, the university years completed beyond university entrance will be recognized if they are part of an acceptable program at an accredited college or university.
- c) In jurisdictions outside Canada, secondary school completion will be evaluated in terms of university entrance standards in British Columbia at the time the category is assigned.

5.06 Where an applicant is registered in an acceptable four or five-year degree program but where no degree has been conferred, the category assigned shall not exceed category four (4).

5.07 With the exception of five-year Bachelor of Education programs, baccalaureate degrees shall be evaluated as representing not more than four years of academic and/or professional preparation.

5.08 When the regulations are revised no previously issued category or credit for courses or programs completed shall be reduced because of the adoption of new regulations.

## **6.00 Transition Rule**

6.01 Paragraph e) of Regulation 2.01, categories five (5), five plus (5+), and six (6) respectively, is only applicable to applicants who have obtained Professional Certificates from the BC College of Teachers under acceptable degree requirements implemented September 1, 2000.

## **7.00 Procedures for Obtaining a Category**

7.01 A category or category upgrade is assigned only upon the formal application of the teacher concerned.

7.02 An applicant is fully and solely responsible for ensuring that all of the

official documents required for an evaluation of the applicant's qualifications are obtained and submitted to the TQS office.

- 7.03 Evaluations are made in accordance with these regulations and are based upon transcripts, letters, or documents, bearing the official seal of the issuing institution and the signature of the responsible issuing officer. Diplomas, certificates, and statements of marks, as issued to students are not acceptable.
- 7.04 An application for a category or a category upgrade must be accompanied by:
- a) A completed TQS application form;
  - b) Proof of the highest BC teaching certificate to which the applicant is entitled; and,
  - c) Official documents (or notarized copies thereof) from all universities and colleges attended by the applicant.
- 7.05 A separate transcript is required from each institution attended. A secondary school transcript may be necessary, but is generally not required of individuals who have enrolled in or completed a British Columbia college and/or university undergraduate program.
- 7.06 Subject to a grace period, applications with all supporting documentation which are received in the TQS office after November 30 and **before March 31** are assigned a category effective the intervening January 1 provided all of the academic and professional work required for the category is completed by December 31 (January 31 for graduate students).
- 7.07 Subject to a grace period, applications with all supporting documentation which are received in the TQS office after March 31 and **before June 30** are assigned a category effective May 1 of that calendar year provided that all of the academic and professional work required for the category is completed by April 30 (May 31 for graduate students).
- 7.08 Subject to a grace period, applications with all supporting documentation which are received in the TQS office after June 30 and **before November 30** are assigned a category effective September 1 of that calendar year provided all of the academic and professional work required for the category is completed by August 31 (September 30 for graduate

students).

## **8.00 Reviews and Appeals**

- 8.01 A teacher, the teachers' association, the teacher's school board, or the Board, may at any time request the Director to review the category assigned to that teacher by the TQS and the Director shall carry out that review and shall notify the requesting party that the teacher's category has been confirmed or revised and the reasons for that decision.
- 8.02 The Director may at any time undertake a review of the category assigned by the TQS to a teacher upon being apprised of or discovering that an error has been or may have been made in assigning a category to a teacher. If as the result of such review the Director determines that an incorrect category has been assigned, the Director shall revise the category and issue a new category card.
- 8.03 If following a review by the Director a teacher, the teacher's association, or the teacher's board of school trustees, is not satisfied with the decision of the Director regarding the category assigned the teacher, the party may appeal that decision to the Board.
- 8.04 An appeal must be in the form of a letter clearly marked "Appeal" addressed to the Chair, Teacher Qualification Board, at the Teacher Qualification Service office. The letter should outline the grounds on which the appeal is based.
- 8.05 All appeals will be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Board.
- 8.06 The Board will review the entire case and may confirm, raise, or lower, the category that has been appealed. Following the Board's consideration of the appeal, the Chair of the Board will advise the appellant of the Board's decision and the reasons for it.
- 8.07 In the event a review or appeal results in the assignment of a different category, the effective date of the new category shall be established in accordance with Board policy in effect on the date of such new assignment. (A copy of the policy is available from the Director.)
- 8.08 The Board will reconsider an appeal decision only upon presentation of new evidence.