

## Procedures for Qualifying for Teacher Qualification Service Categories Five (5), Five Plus (5+) and (6) After a First Degree

Teachers who hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree and have been assigned category four (4) have several options for qualifying for TQS categories five (5), five plus (5+) and six (6).

If a teacher has completed a degree and has been issued a *Standard* teaching certificate by the BC College of Teachers, they may meet the requirements of category five (5) by qualifying for a *Professional* teaching certificate (issued on the basis of the BC College of Teachers *Professional certification* requirements which came into effect September 1, 2000) or by completing a TQS integrated program as set out below. They can then qualify for category five plus (5+) by completing an acceptable undergraduate degree, diploma or integrated program or they can qualify for category six (6) by completing a graduate degree acceptable to the TQS.

Alternately, if a teacher has completed a degree, has been issued a *Professional* teaching certificate by the BC College of Teachers **prior to September 1, 2000** (when the BC College of Teachers revised its Professional certification requirements), and has been placed in category four (4) they may qualify for TQS category five (5) by completing an additional program acceptable to the TQS. Completion of two acceptable additional programs which may be degrees, diplomas or integrated Programs would qualify the teacher for category five plus (5+). In order to obtain TQS category six (6), two complete programs are required beyond category four (4), one of which must be an acceptable graduate degree. The other program can be a second acceptable graduate degree **or a TQS "integrated program"**. It is immaterial to TQS which of these programs is taken first; however, the usual pattern is to complete an integrated program followed by an acceptable graduate degree.

TQS Regulation 4.05 states that an "integrated program" contains a minimum of 30 semester credits (or equivalent) 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 (or equivalent), 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.**

Some typical integrated program themes are Special Education, Library Science, Counselling, Language Arts, and Curriculum Development. Although all courses in an integrated program (except for a Post-Baccalaureate Diploma program) must be senior and/or graduate level (third year university or above) and must be undertaken at an accredited degree granting institution, the courses need not create a formal university degree or diploma program. It is therefore possible to complete the requirements for a TQS integrated program at more than one accredited institution. However, when more than one institution is involved care must be taken **not** to duplicate course content.

Most formal pre-master's programs that contain at least thirty semester credits (or equivalent) are generally acceptable for category five (5) or category five plus (5+). This would also be true for most formal diploma programs which contain sufficient course credit. As well, **course work required by the BC College of Teachers for certification purposes can be used toward an integrated program, provided it is consistent with the requirements of an integrated program.**

When thirty semester credits (or equivalent) of course work from an incomplete but approved master's degree is used for an acceptable integrated program to award category five (5), the completed master's does not then affect the assigned category; it simply satisfies the requirement for one of the two programs needed to progress from category four (4) to six (6). When this same program is used for a category five plus (5+), then completion of the degree will qualify the applicant for category six (6).

In order to qualify for TQS categorization credit, an approved graduate degree must be completed at an accredited university and must contain at least thirty semester credits (or equivalent) of graduate course content applicable to teaching in the BC public school system. Most Master of Education degrees would be acceptable and most MA's or M Sc's in an academic subject taught in the public school system of BC would also be approved. Graduate degrees designed for other professions or specific purposes may **not** be appropriate for TQS categorization purposes. **It is advisable to consult with TQS to ensure the graduate degree you are considering is acceptable.**

**It should be noted that although TQS established a minimum thirty semester credit (or equivalent) requirement for acceptable graduate programs, there is no upper limit. This means the completed graduate degree counts as a single program for one step on the TQS scale and in itself does not guarantee eligibility for category six (6). Holders of acceptable master's degrees may be assigned category four (4), five (5), or six (6) depending on previous qualifications. Courses beyond the thirty semester credit minimum *cannot* form part of another program counting toward a higher category.**

**In order to avoid misunderstandings and disappointment it is strongly recommended that proposed "integrated" pre-master's, and diploma programs be submitted in writing to TQS for prior approval. A written commitment from TQS is the only one with any official status. Due the risk of misinterpretation, please note that arrangements made by telephone or in person are not considered binding by TQS.**

In order to seek a change in category, a formal application must be submitted along with official transcripts which document the new program, as well as proof of employment in the BC public school system. If a valid BCCT issued teaching certificate is not on file at TQS, a copy of that certificate must also be submitted.

Individuals seeking a category upgrade should check the three deadline dates in articles 7.06, 7.07 and 7.08 of the TQS regulations or item 5 under general information on the TQS application form. Application forms are available from the TQS office or on the web at [www.tqs.bc.ca](http://www.tqs.bc.ca).

## SOME SUGGESTED THEMES FOR TQS INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

GUIDANCE STUDIES  
SPECIAL EDUCATION  
EDUCATION OF THE HEARING IMPAIRED  
EDUCATION OF THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED  
EDUCATION OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN  
SPECIAL EDUCATION OF INFANTS  
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY  
ENGLISH EDUCATION  
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE  
FRENCH EDUCATION  
LIBRARY EDUCATION  
READING EDUCATION  
BUSINESS EDUCATION  
COMPUTER STUDIES EDUCATION  
INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION  
MATHEMATICS EDUCATION  
MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE EDUCATION  
SCIENCE EDUCATION  
CANADIAN STUDIES  
NATIVE STUDIES  
EDUCATIONAL STUDIES  
MULTICULTURAL AND MINORITY EDUCATION  
SOCIAL STUDIES  
ART EDUCATION  
MUSIC EDUCATION  
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS EDUCATION  
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STUDIES  
EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN  
LAW RELATED EDUCATION  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION  
PRIMARY EDUCATION  
VALUES EDUCATION  
WOMAN'S STUDIES  
HUMANITIES  
PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES IN EDUCATION

SINGLE THEME OPTION: TWENTY CREDITS RELATED TO THEME PLUS TEN CREDITS  
"ELECTIVES"

DUAL THEME OPTION: EIGHTEEN CREDITS RELATED TO MAJOR THEME PLUS  
TWELVE CREDITS IN MINOR THEME (NO ELECTIVES)

