

CREDIT APPLICABILITY INFORMATION

IHE ACCREDITATION

MSDE will recognize credits and degrees earned at any education institution that has been accredited by one of the regional accrediting associations. States allow schools to operate under the law, but that does not mean that courses or degrees from such are accepted by MSDE toward certification or by MCPS toward salary advancement.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

An official transcript is a dated transcript, bearing the seal of the institution or the appropriate color coding, and signed by the registrar. Only an official transcript is acceptable. Many colleges and universities are converting to systems that issue grade reports online. This kind of documentation is not considered official; therefore, official transcripts must be requested from these institutions.

FOREIGN TRANSCRIPT

When an applicant has earned credit outside of the United States, MSDE and MCPS require an official course-by-course evaluation from an agency approved by MSDE. MSDE and MCPS will accept the course work only as designated by the approved evaluating agency. Please refer to the [Approved Foreign Evaluation Agencies Information](#).

MSDE APPROVED CPD GRADE SLIPS

Grade slips for MSDE approved CPD courses are issued in a variety of formats. MCPS issues these credits on pink colored half-sheet paper. CPD credits also may be issued on a three-part carbon form that must be routed through the Office of Organizational Development (formerly Office of Staff Development) for review, signatory approval by our MSDE CPD liaison, and appropriate distribution.

DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE WORK

Any distance learning course work awarded graduate or undergraduate credit through a regionally accredited IHE will be acceptable toward certification requirements. As a reminder, only graduate credits apply toward salary advancement.

ACCEPTABLE CREDIT

Post-baccalaureate course work taken at a regionally accredited IHE or through MSDE approved CPD credits related to a school assignment; earned within five years immediately preceding the date on which the certificate is issued or renewed; and unless exempt, earned in reading course work not yet completed.

EQUIVALENT ACTIVITIES CREDIT

Equivalent activities credit can be used for the renewal of the APC only. They do not apply toward salary advancement. Acceptable options for equivalent activities are listed on MCPS [Form 440-37](#), Five-year Certificate Renewal Plan for the Renewal of the Advanced Professional Certificate (APC) and on MCPS [Form 440-34](#), Verification of Equivalent Activities for Advanced Professional Certificate (APC) Renewal Purposes. The MCPS Form 440-34 must be completed and submitted, along with the appropriate documentation, to the OHR, Certification Unit, for consideration and approval.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICABILITY OF CREDIT

Because many professionals complete course work through a regionally accredited college or university, there may be questions about the applicability of the course(s) toward certification requirements, employment contingency requirements, or salary advancement. These inquiries should be submitted to the Certification Unit for review via submitting an Outlook email to a certification unit member. Please allow sufficient time for the Certification Unit to respond to this type of request.

SUBMITTING CREDIT

It is the employee's responsibility to maintain an accurate record of post-baccalaureate course work with the Office of Human Resources, Certification Unit. Credit must be reported by submitting official transcripts. The college or university **does not** automatically forward these official documents. Even if the employee takes the course through MCPS in partnership with a college or university that issues the credits, it is the responsibility of the employee to request the official transcript and submit it to OHR, Certification Unit. MSDE approved CPD grade slips for courses offered through MCPS are automatically forwarded to OHR, Certification Unit, by the Office of Organizational Development.

Changes in degree status must be verified on an official transcript. The official transcript must show the degree awarded and the date conferred. A statement from the college/university on its official letterhead verifying the degree is not acceptable for certificate changes. Records cannot be updated and certification requests cannot be processed without official documentation.

MSDE will only change degree status at certificate renewal or when adding an additional area to your certificate.