



The **STANDARD**

**AICE**

a monthly newsletter by AICE

## AICE Newsletter

November 2019

*Message from the Editor:*

Greetings from AICE.

Thank you for opening this edition of the AICE Standard, the periodic newsletter of AICE, the Association of international Credential Evaluators. Since our last newsletter in May 2019, AICE Members were busy participating in important events such as the annual conference of NAFSA (Association of International Educators), EAIE (European Association of International Educators), and for the first time, the EducationUSA Forum in Washington DC. In addition to our partnership with [AACRAO](#) which we celebrated earlier this year, I'm also excited to announce new partnerships between AICE and [PESC](#) (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) and [AIRC](#) (American International Recruitment Council) for mutual recognition of standards and cooperation in research and marketing initiatives.

There is much to celebrate moving forward, but the credential evaluation community continues to face new challenges, including technological advancement of unrecognized institutions and diploma mills, assisting refugees and displaced persons with limited access to documents, and murky US immigration regulations and border control directives that undermine established credential evaluation practices. Should we choose to stay the course, the need for Standards in our profession is ever-present.

In this issue, we feature two articles from the United Kingdom about recently developed or updated non-traditional credentials. In addition, our third piece discusses the potential implications of Brexit on the education community. These are just a few items that prove the dynamic nature of this profession. Finally, I am excited to share information about AICE's upcoming 2020 Symposium: "Setting the Standard: Evaluating Professional Qualifications in Law and Medicine from Around the World." With help from AICE's partner organization AACRAO, the [2020 Symposium](#) will be held on April 4th in New Orleans, before the start of AACRAO's annual meeting. We hope to see you! More information further in this issue.

Sincerely,



Aleks Morawski  
Chairman of Scholarship and Publications, Association of  
International Credential Evaluators (AICE)<sup>®</sup>  
Director of Evaluation Services, Scholaro, Inc.

## Brexit: A Credential Evaluation Perspective



With all the tense conversations and potential looming fallout from the now January Brexit, clearly, there are many reasons that people are unnerved by the uncertainty. But as far as international credential evaluation is concerned, there may not really be all that much about which to be concerned. For credential evaluators, and those interested in the impacts that this will have on international education, we at Scholaro echo the sentiments expressed by the British Consul General in Chicago, John Saville, during a panel in April of 2019:

“It will be alright in the end.”

### Ancient and Consistent Inconsistency

In credential evaluation, we have long been prepared with tools and online resources available to students and institutions in order to help them navigate the complex terrain of education in a pre- and post-Brexit United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom has an extensive history of variety and independence in their educational system, from the Welsh Joint Examinations Committee (WJEC) and Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland to the Scottish Highers and Ancient Universities. To expect a move to consistency now, after 500 years, is inconsistent with history.

The UK is a signatory on to the Bologna Accord, but their higher degrees have retained an independence through their traditional structure, because they largely mirrored the Bologna initiatives. However, due to a unique primary and secondary education system, Brexit will not change the unique way we look at credentials coming out of or moving into the British educational system, which is not always consistent with the credentials from other Bologna signatories. Inherent to the process of seeking education abroad, and important to the very point of international study for the student, is the task of figuring out how to make it work. Making one's way through a political, educational, and linguistic environment which differs from the one in which you live is crucial to the learning process. No matter what happens concerning Brexit, this quality of international education is expected to remain the same. Overcoming the challenges and hurdles integral to this process is part of the benefit of a global educational experience.

While there are clearly major impacts implicit to Brexit for many sectors of life, education will likely not be as heavily impacted. And while there is absolutely some question of mobility and funding for students in programs like Erasmus, many negative pressures on education in the UK have taken place in the last decade, with increases of student fees or the cutting of courses among other austerity measures.

## The Worst Already Came to Pass

Carl, former A-level instructor in Surrey who wished to be referred to by his first name only, currently a college instructor in Canada, expresses some of this past political climate as a primary drive for his permanent move to Canada. Asserting that while isolation is never good for education, many of what he sees as damaging trends within British education have been going on for some time. And though there are murmurings of new fee hikes, this is not news.

The economics of university costs have and still factor into school choice, with destinations like Germany, Finland, France and the Netherlands being popular choices due to the higher cost of UK studies. With a separation from continental Europe, he expects there may be some shift in outbound international education toward locations like Australia, Canada, and the United States. However, as an instructor of primarily international students, he does not foresee a large increase in the proportion of UK international students in his classes, where the lion's share of students come from India, China, and South Korea. Carl, feels that part of the reason education is not central to the discussion of Brexit is that the subtleties of the impacts do not make for good sound bites, and few media outlets are able to allot the screen time requisite to a relevant discussion of Brexit's implications for education. For inbound study, this demographic matches the demographics of many international student bodies in the UK.

## Rhetoric or Reality?

Uncertainty is a major source of anxiety, where organizations such as UCAS provide outlooks for the next

year, the degree-seeking student may be spooked by a lack of assurances for what are long-term educational commitments. Students may be left wondering if they will analogously close the road before they start making changes to the bridge.

Like Carl, Éamon McDonagh, a former teacher and educational administrator, a dual Irish-UK citizen living and working in Spain, does not see Brexit as having a direct impact on his life. While he sees the potential major implications for the Irish border with Northern Ireland, education does not seem to be central to this separation. Éamon points out that the Erasmus program may be an important element for many international students, who could be left wondering if their funding will suddenly evaporate mid-term.

Despite the rhetoric, we feel confident that this will not be all that disruptive to the overall system. Even in schools with a sizable international student body, we expect to see the impacts on international education to be limited. No matter the outcome, our institution has been well-prepared to enable students and institutions navigate the subtleties of international education in the UK and EU just like for any other country, and we will continue to provide these services regardless of the outcomes of Brexit. One of the fundamental priorities of international credential evaluation is to treat each country's education system independently, regardless of political or economic alliances, or lack thereof. International evaluators have successfully researched and assessed the British education system pre- and post-Bologna, and pre- and post-European Union. They will apply the same methodologies to post-Brexit UK credentials, ensuring an accurate assessment of British credentials wherever they may go.

Matthew Cwiklinski, MFA  
Scholaro, Inc.  
*Endorsed Member of AICE*



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## The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)



The [Scottish Qualifications Authority](#) (SQA) is the executive non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government responsible for accrediting educational awards. It is partly funded by the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate of the Scottish Government. SQA's functions are set out in the education (Scotland) Act 1996 as amended by the Scottish Qualifications Act 2002.

### **SQA has two main roles: accreditation and awarding qualifications.**

#### *SQA Accreditation:*

- Accredits qualifications other than degrees
- Approves, and quality assures awarding bodies that plan to enter people for these qualifications

#### *SQA Awarding Body:*

- Devises and develops qualifications

- Validates and reviews qualifications
- Arranges for, assists in, and carries out, the assessment of people taking SQA qualifications
- Quality–assures education and training establishments which offer SQA qualifications
- Issues certificates to candidates

## Official Standing

Recognized as a global awarding body, SQA offers qualifications and related services to employers, training providers, professional bodies and colleges internationally. SQA Advanced qualifications are for use in markets outside Scotland, providing learners and delivery partners with a variety of course choices.

## SQA International Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma Program Review

In 2018, at the request of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the [Academic Credential Evaluation Institute, Inc. \(ACEI\)](#) completed a detailed review and evaluation of SQA's international Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma programs in three subject areas to assist institutions of higher education to have a better understanding of SQA and its programs as it explores education exchange opportunities in the United States.

Since its inception in 1994, ACEI has set out to promote the relationship building and knowledge exchange between people and communities in the U.S. and around the world. One way of achieving this goal is through the mutual understanding of world education systems to facilitate education exchange programs. The Program/Curriculum Review offered by ACEI's Advisory Services is designed as a



guide for U.S. institutions of higher education to have a better understanding of another country's education system with focus on a specific certificate/ diploma/degree program at an institution of higher education or examination body.

## **Diploma to Degree: A Global Progression Pathway Made in Scotland**

On October 30, 2019, the Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc. (ACEI) hosted a free webinar on the Scottish Qualification Authority's international Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma offerings. Our guest presenter was Ms. Margaret Hutchinson, International Articulation Manager at SQA.

The webinar, titled "Diploma to Degree: A Global Progression Pathway Made in Scotland," provided an introduction to SQA, its domestic and international markets, SQA qualifications included a brief overview of the domestic Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) and the international SQA Advanced Certificate (AC) and Advanced (AD) Diploma programs. In addition, the attendees learned more about the US, Canadian, and UK NARIC benchmarking of these credentials. ACEI has a recording of this webinar presentation. If you are interested in working with an international leader in education such as the SQA to deliver an internationally recognized higher education qualification, wish to seize the opportunity to diversity your student population, and offer your students a range of progression pathway to higher education institutions around the world, please click on [here](#) and enter the password: YxNjpGq8.

Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert  
President & CEO

*Charter & Endorsed Member of AICE*



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## BTEC Qualifications



BTECs are career-focused qualifications, developed in partnership with educators, employers and governments. BTECs provide a flexible pathway – combining knowledge, skills and can be applied real-life scenarios. They are delivered to over 1 million learners, in 70 countries, across various specialist subjects, each year. They were introduced in 1984 and were originally awarded by the Business and Technology Education Council, hence the name “BTEC”.

Students study BTEC as the qualification provides a combination of academic and vocational learning, while promoting a clear route to employment. Centres across the world run the qualification as it assists in bridging the gap between education and employment, while allowing the learner to progress into further and higher education. BTEC’s are delivered and recognised internationally,

therefore students also have the choice of mobility between countries.

BTECs are taught at UK levels 1 through to 7 and can also vary in size of award. In this piece we will explore BTEC Higher Nationals (HNs) as they provide advanced entry to UK universities. HNs are delivered at both universities and colleges around the world. They are an ideal choice for students seeking an affordable and relevant route to a degree or employment.

They are a sub-degree qualifications that are recognised as equivalent to university level study. The Higher National Certificate (HNC) aligns to the first year of study at a UK institution, and Higher National Diploma (HND), the second. When progressing to higher education (HE), learners studying HNs, seek advanced entry onto a degree programme depending on the award they have achieved, i.e. HND – third year entry (in a similar style to a transfer student).

BTEC HNs are regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (OFQUAL), the English qualifications' regulator, and are prescribed qualifications of HE in the UK as designated by The Office for Students (OfS); developed on the [Regulated Qualifications Framework \(RQF\)](#) and are aligned to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each subject is written, developed and validated by industry and academic specialist to meet both the demands of HE and employment.

There are over 350 universities that have formally recognised BTEC HNs as a progression qualification towards a degree, in more than 30 countries; including the UK, USA,

Australia and Canada. They are delivered in 25 different subject areas which contain numerous specialist pathways.

HND students traditionally look to progress from their qualification to university, to complete their degree, therefore it is essential that universities understand the qualification and its value and equivalence in the world of education. Pearson support HE institutions, ministries and employers in evaluating BTEC HNs for credit and recognition and have a dedicated Progression and Recognition team whose purpose is to create formalised pathways into industry and HE.

For more information on BTEC HNs, please contact [progression@pearson.com](mailto:progression@pearson.com)

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Learn more at [qualifications.pearson.com/higher-nationals](https://qualifications.pearson.com/higher-nationals)

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## **AIRC (American International Recruitment Council) Annual Conference**

**December 11–14, 2019, Miami, FL.**

Please join several AICE Endorsed Members (ACEI, AERC, FCE, InCred, Scholaro, SDR, and Ucredo) who will be exhibiting their companies at the AIRC Conference in collaboration with AICE.

## **AICE Credential Forum**

**November 21, 2019 and December 19, 2019**

Join us in tackling credential challenges, reviewing tricky documents and sharing interesting topics. Contact [info@aice-eval.org](mailto:info@aice-eval.org) for guest access.

## **AICE Symposium**

**April 4 2019, New Orleans, Louisiana**

The AICE Symposium Planning Committee cordially invites you to the 2020 AICE Symposium, taking place on April 4, 2020 in New Orleans, Louisiana. We are pleased to welcome you to this vibrant city right before the start of the AACRAO

Annual Meeting. In this Symposium, AICE continues our collaboration with AACRAO on mutual research to set standards in evaluating professional qualifications in law and medicine from around the world. See below for module descriptions.

Past AICE Symposia have resulted in the publication of Symposium Reports that continue to be used as valuable resources for credential evaluators and academic institutions alike. This year, we will produce guidelines for evaluating professional programs. Along with these resources, the AICE Symposia proved effective in showcasing the products and services our Symposium Sponsors, who were featured in person, electronically, through various social media platforms and in the Symposium Reports. There are still opportunities to become a sponsor of the 2020 AICE Symposium and showcase your organization to leaders of the credential evaluation industry. More information can be found after the Symposium module descriptions and [www.aice-eval.org](http://www.aice-eval.org).

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## **AICE New Orleans Symposium – April 4, 2020**

### ***“Setting the Standard: Evaluating Professional Qualifications in Law and Medicine from Around the World”***

The 2020 Symposium will take place on April 4, 2020 in New Orleans, Louisiana, prior to the start of AACRAO’s 106th Annual Meeting. This symposium will strive to answer questions, generate discussion, and update the AICE Standards on the topic of evaluating international professional qualifications in law and medicine and the U.S.

educational and professional comparability. The Symposium will explore how professional degrees in law and medicine differ from academic degrees and determine what standards may be employed in their evaluation. Discussion will revolve around the criteria used by US institutions of higher education for the admission of professional degree holders to undergraduate or graduate degree programs and transfer credit considerations.

AICE invites all those registered to attend a reception on the evening of April 4th from 6:00 PM–7:30 PM following the symposium.

## SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

### Module 1: Evaluating foreign Law programs for admission to law schools

Law is a professional field of study in the United States that usually requires completion of a bachelor's degree for admission. The first professional degree is a Juris Doctor, a three-year full-time program. In other countries, Law can be studied at the undergraduate level, with many programs requiring completion of secondary school for admission, and completion of a first degree as short as three years to practice. Foreign law graduates have several options for studying law in the United States, including Juris Doctor (JD), Master of Laws (LLM). This module examines academic requirements for admission to US law programs for holders of foreign law education credentials.

- *What are the academic admission requirements for international students to JD programs?*
- *What are the academic admission requirements for international students to LLM or other law programs?*
- *Can a first professional degree in law from a foreign country expedite the study of law in the United States with*

*the intent of professional practice?*

- *What kinds of legal education is available to international students who do not expect to practice law in the United States?*
- *What are the primary factors in international credential evaluation for admission to law programs in the United States?*

## **Module 2: Evaluating foreign Law programs for university admission**

International professional Law degrees are not uniform and determining their US equivalency may not always be straightforward. Insufficient understanding of this type of degree could put applicants with international qualifications at a disadvantage because professional programs in law are not offered at the undergraduate level in the United States. This module will examine the eligibility of international Law degrees for university admission at various levels.

- *Do US institutions have a standard procedure for evaluating international Law degrees for undergraduate or graduate admission?*
- *Are individual academic departments involved in setting the admission requirements for applicants with international Law degrees?*
- *Can coursework in law be evaluated for transfer credit? If so, is this transferred as general education, or as subject-specific credit?*
- *Are five-year or more undergraduate international Law degrees eligible for transfer credits at the graduate level? If yes, to what extent is the type of graduate degree they are pursuing an important factor in this decision?*

## **Module 3: Evaluating foreign Medicine programs for admission to medical school**

Medicine is a professional field of study that usually



requires completion of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution for admission, including specific premedical coursework requirements that vary from school to school. In other countries, medicine can be studied immediately after completion of secondary school at the undergraduate level, with curricula varying across countries. There are several types of first professional degree credentials awarded in the United States, including the Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), and Doctor of Medicine and of Philosophy (MD-PhD), but all of these require completion of a bachelor's degree or pre-professional undergraduate studies for admission. This module examines the academic requirements for admission to medicine programs in the United States for holders of foreign medical education credentials, specifically first professional degrees that allow them to practice medicine.

- *What are the admission requirements for international students to medicine programs in the United States?*
- *Can a first professional degree in medicine from a foreign country expedite the study of medicine in the United States with the intent of professional practice?*
- *What kind of medical education is available to international students who do not expect to practice medicine in the United States?*
- *How to evaluate off-shore medical programs geared for professional practice or licensure in the United States?*
- *What are the primary factors in international credential evaluation for admission to medicine programs in the United States?*

#### **Module 4: Evaluating foreign Medicine programs for university admission**

Medicine (Dentistry and Pharmacy included), is perhaps one of the most disparate degrees around the world, with each country establishing their own degree structure and

professional licensures. In the United States, these fields of study are not offered at the undergraduate level, as they are in most other countries. Additionally, as a professional degree with the potential of incurring personal liability, degrees in medicine may also be under more intense scrutiny by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Evaluating international medical credentials for admission to graduate school would need to consider these aspects when determining its suitability for entry requirements. This module will try to determine the factors involved in how universities review for admission applicants with international undergraduate medical degrees.

- *How do US universities evaluate medical degrees for admission? Is it based on degree description, qualification framework, entry requirements and core curriculum or on year benchmarking?*
  - *Is the USCIS interpretation of international medical degrees a factor in reviewing this credential?*
  - *Are additional qualifications obtained by the applicant — medical residency or professional internships — considered to determine admissibility to graduate school?*
  - *Can coursework in medicine be evaluated for transfer credit? If so, is this transferred as general education, or as subject-specific credit?*
  - *Are five-year or more medical degrees eligible for transfer credits at the graduate level? If yes, to what extent is the type of graduate degree they are pursuing an important factor in this decision?*
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## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### Opening Reception (April 4, 2020)

- One (1) Free Registration
- Feature on AICE website with link to your site
- Showcase during the Symposium
- Display banner during Reception
- Feature on AICE's social media platforms\*
- Feature in Annual Symposium Report\*
- 5-minute address at Reception

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- Feature on Annual Symposium Report\*

Price: \$1,000 (2 available)

*\*Mutual promotion of your company/organization through AICE's social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) leading up to and completion of the Symposium.*

*\*All sponsors will be featured in the Annual Symposium Report that will be posted on the AICE website and used as a resource in international education credential evaluation.*

Have something else in mind? Reach out to us at [info@aice-eval.org](mailto:info@aice-eval.org) to discuss additional opportunities!



ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIAL EVALUATORS

## 2020 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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## EVENTS

- Opening Reception (April 4, 2020)      \$1,000.00
- Technology/AV Equipment (April 4, 2020)    \$1,000.00
- 2020 Symposium Sponsor                      \$ 500.00

## TOTAL

You may fax this form with credit card payment to 1-310-275-3528. Please do not mail contracts with Credit Card payment that have been sent via fax.

**PAYMENT:** Full payment together with this completed form must be received by February 1, 2020.

Deadline for recognition in the Symposium Program, banner and website is February 1, 2020.

**AICE Right of Refusal of Sponsors:** AICE reserves the right to reject a potential sponsor for any reason including, but not limited to a mission that is not consistent with AICE's mission or business practices. AICE reserves the right to accept only sponsors of its choosing.

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## Resources and Blogs

ACEI hosts "ACEI -GLOBAL," a blog on education-related topics:

[Visit Blog!](#)

## For more information

Visit the AICE Website at [www.aice-eval.org](http://www.aice-eval.org) or contact [info@aice-eval.org](mailto:info@aice-eval.org).

Submission of events, notifications, research items, and original content to the AICE Standard can be sent directly to [aleks@aice-eval.org](mailto:aleks@aice-eval.org).

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