AICE Credential Evaluation Standards 2025

Objectives for Foreign Credential Evaluation in the United States:

1. Ensure thorough assessment and research for all evaluations;

2. Encourage professional accountability for all recommendations;

3. Promote consistent but adaptive evaluation philosophy over time;

4. Provide transparency in the credential evaluation process;

5. Allow AICE members access to a proprietary database of U.S. academic equivalency recommendations for world education systems and international credentials.

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Note: All AICE criteria and requirements listed apply as of June 17, 2025

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I. AICE Minimum Criteria for Senior Credential Evaluators:

AICE recognizes senior credential evaluators as individuals who have met the following criteria as determined by vote of AICE Membership Committee.

Minimum Criteria for AICE Senior Credential Evaluators:

1. Completion of formal education comparable to the level of a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher;

2. Proven understanding of the major education frameworks, including typical structure, historical and cultural context, as well as current implementation of the following:

   a. U.S. Framework

   b. European Framework

   c. Latin American/Spanish Framework

   d. British Framework

   e. French Framework

   f. Soviet Framework

   g. German Framework

3. Proven understanding of U.S. educational system in detail, including:

   a. Types of credentials

   b. Matriculation Structure (Ladder)

   c. Educational levels

   d. Institutional/Program accreditation structure and transfer credit practices

   e. Grading system

   f. Languages of instruction

   g. Common curricula and syllabi

   h. Historical changes and current structure

   i. Instruction methodologies - distance vs. in-person, classroom instruction vs. practice and experience-based instruction

4. Ownership or unlimited and immediate access to a sufficient library of comparative education resources and sample documents (as recognized by AICE).

5. Author or Co-Author of at least one AICE-recognized publication;

6. Presenter or Co-Presenter at least one presentation, training session or other event at an AICE-recognized conference;

7. On-going commitment to research and education proven by authorship/co-authorship or presentation/co-presentation of at least one AICE-recognized publication or at least one presentation, training session at an AICE-recognized conference every two years.

II. AICE Recognition of Specialized Credential Evaluation Expertise

AICE recognizes specialized credential evaluation expertise in specific areas, including the following (as determined by AICE).

AICE Recognition of Specialized Expertise

1. Detailed understanding of specific country/regional educational system(s), including:

    a. Types of credentials

    b. Matriculation structure (ladder)

    c. Educational levels

    d. Institutional/Program recognition structure and Transferability*

    e. Grading scales

    f. Languages of instruction

    g. Common curricula and syllabi

    h. Historical changes and current structure

    i. Languages of instruction

    j. Instruction methodologies - distance vs. in-person, classroom instruction vs. practice and experience-based instruction, etc.

2. Detailed understanding of specific U.S. fields/professions, including

    a. Recognition structure (including reciprocity agreements, etc.)

    b. Professional requirements - local, regional and/or national

    c. Types of credentials/qualifications - local, regional and/or national

    d. Grading/scoring system

    e. Sequence of qualifications if applicable

    f. Common curricula, syllabi and/or exam content

    g. Historical changes and current structure

III. AICE Methodology Requirements for Credential Evaluation

AICE requires that all members apply the following methodology guidelines to all credential evaluations produced for use in the United States.

Credential Evaluation Methodology Requirements

1. Review foreign credentials with appropriate language competency and use extreme caution in dependence on third-party translators, such as providers certified by the American Translators Association, representatives from fully recognized institutions of education, and/or governmental agencies;

2. Explicitly describe the nature of foreign documents being evaluated in final evaluation document (i.e. original documents submitted by individual, official documents received from issuing institution or governmental body, documents verified via correspondence with issuing institution or governmental body, etc.);

3. Review documents submitted for evaluation with consideration of an applicant's biographical information, sample documents from the same country and/or school, and historical context in order to identify any discrepancies that may be evidence for falsification/fraud. For individuals whose documents are found to be fraudulent, email an alert including at least the individual's name, date of birth, place of birth (as indicated by application and documentation), academic history to all other AICE members' email addresses as designated on the AICE website (www.aice-eval.org), and to U.S. institutions to which the individual indicated he/she was applying (if available). For individuals whose documents or intentions are suspected to be fraudulent but not proven to be so, it is highly recommended that an alert including at least the individual's name, date of birth, place of birth (as indicated by application and documentation), academic history be sent to all other AICE members' email addresses

4. Consider the following issues/factors in all comparative education decisions and credential evaluation recommendations:

    a. Identification of appropriate foreign educational structure as context for U.S. equivalency recommendation;

    b. Issuing institution specifics

        i. Recognition and transferability*

      ii.   Grading system(s)

    iii.   Instruction details – distance vs. in-person, classroom instruction vs. practice and experience-based instruction, etc.

c.   Program specifics

      i.   Recognition and transferability*

     ii.   Level

    iii.   Admission requirements

    iv.   Program duration

     v.   Completion requirements

    vi.   Language of instruction

   vii.   Grading system

  viii.   Instruction details – distance vs. in-person, classroom instruction vs. practice and experience-based instruction, etc.

d. Course specifics

      i.   Content

     ii.   Level

    iii.   Field of study

    iv.   Language of instruction

     v.   Duration (clock hours, units, etc.)

    vi.   Full time vs. part-time vs. intensive

   vii.   Instruction details – distance vs. in-person instruction, classroom vs. practice and experience-based instruction, etc.

5. Issue final evaluation reports ONLY after reviewed and signed by an AICE-recognized senior evaluator. The individual evaluator who reviews an evaluation must be prepared to explain and defend decisions and recommendations made in the report based on, but not limited to, the issues/factors listed above in item 3, or revise decisions and recommendations based on additional but scrutinized information;

6. Support decisions and recommendations made by providing bibliographical citation in all issued evaluation reports, including, but not limited to, the following:

i.   At least three AICE-recognized publications not authored by the evaluator or the entity issuing the evaluation report;

ii.   Information available directly from educational institutions, recognition bodies, government agencies, or reputable non-governmental organizations;

iii. Original research and/or publications authored by evaluator or the entity issuing the evaluation report;

iv.   Both historic and up-to-date research.

IV. AICE Outcome Requirements for Credential Evaluation Reports

AICE requires that all members issue completed credential evaluation reports that include the following information.

Credential Evaluation Report Requirements

1. Include the name of the credential(s) being evaluated, transliterated or written in the source language when possible, with English translation when applicable;

2. For each credential evaluated, provide the name of the institution that issued the document(s) along with a description of the institution's recognition status and its location;

3. For each credential evaluated, describe the educational program represented by the documentation in terms of duration, entrance requirements and recognition status (if applicable);

4. For each credential evaluated, provide the dates of attendance/study if available;

5. Provide a clearly stated U.S. educational equivalency statement for each credential evaluated with explicit mention of comparability to regional-accreditation if applicable;

6. Provide proper bibliographical citation for sources used to derive descriptions and recommendations in each credential evaluation report;

7. When including a course-by-course analysis in an evaluation report, provide the grade conversion scale used to determine U.S. equivalent grades;

8. When including a course-by-course analysis in an evaluation report, describe U.S. equivalent credits in terms of semester or quarter hours for higher educational programs, and in terms of appropriate units for secondary educational programs such as Carnegie Units, clock hours, or other units acceptable to U.S. institutions.

NOTE

*Definition of transferability for purposes of this document = level of acceptance by other educational institutions/programs and/or professional licensing bodies with consideration of formal academic education vs. vocational training and general educational requirements vs. field-specific requirements. Transferability is closely related to recognition, as "official recognition" usually signifies a high level of transferability; in addition, documented evidence of transferability can be used to prove or question recognition of an institution or program.

Note: AICE Credential Evaluation Standards 2025 replaces all prior versions of this document.