



**California Department of Human Resources
Merit System Services
Memorandum**

TO: Department Directors

SUBJECT: Verification of Minimum Qualifications Prior to Appointment	REFERENCE NUMBER: 2022-002
DATE ISSUED: August 18, 2022	SUPERSEDES:

This memorandum should be forwarded to:

Human Resources Directors
Personnel Officers
HR Analysts

FROM: California Department of Human Resources
Merit System Services (MSS) Program

CONTACT: Alysa Stockdale-Hollis, Manager
MSS Program
Email: Alysa.Stockdale-Hollis@calhr.ca.gov

This policy memorandum sets forth the responsibility and guidelines for verification of Minimum Qualifications (MQs) prior to appointment.

Prior to the examination process, MSS will conduct a preliminary review and evaluation of each candidate’s education and experience listed on the application to determine if the candidate appears to meet the MQs, or entrance requirements, of the examination. The review conducted by MSS is based on candidate self-certification and the information listed on the application. MSS does not review resumes, cover letters, reference letters, school transcripts, certificates of degree completion, or any other documentation that may be submitted with an application.

It is the responsibility of the county personnel department to evaluate the education and experience listed on the application of the selected candidate(s) and verify that MQs are met prior to appointment to a program position.

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Calculating Experience

When evaluating experience to determine if MQs are met, consideration shall be given to work experience gained in a paid or volunteer position that is either part-time or full-



time. When determining if a candidate's work experience satisfies the minimum amount of experience (or time) that may be required to satisfy the MQs for a classification specification, the following shall apply:

- The time required shall have been full-time or its part-time equivalent.
- If part-time experience is listed, one must convert part-time experience (time) to its' full-time work experience equivalent. 173.33 ($40 \text{ hours} \times 52 \text{ weeks} = 2080 \text{ hours}$, $2080 \text{ hours} / 12 \text{ months} = 173.33$) hours of actual work time equals one month. To calculate the years and months worked, a county personnel department should perform two separate calculations, one that **factors 52 weeks to equal one year and another that factors 4.35 to equal the number of weeks in one month**. Use the candidate's total amount of qualifying work experience time for performing MQ experience calculations. **Accept, and give credit for, whichever calculation results in a greater amount of time. (Refer to attachment for part-time calculation tool)**

- Examples of converting Part-time Work Experience:

Applicant has three years of qualifying, part-time work experience averaging 10 hours per week. Below are the two calculations that were performed to determine the amount of qualifying work experience Applicant has:

52 Weeks Calculation:

- The 52-weeks yearly calculation would be: $3 \text{ years} \times 52 \text{ weeks} \times 10 \text{ hours} = 1560$
- Divide 1560 by $173.33 = 9.00$ months of experience

4.35 Weeks Calculation:

- The 4.35-weeks calculation would be $(3 \text{ years}) 36 \text{ months} \times 10 \text{ hours} \times 4.35 \text{ weeks} = 1566 / 173.33 = 9.03$ months of experience.
- Because the 4.35-weeks per month calculation results in greater time worked for the candidate, the amount of time produced by factoring work experience time by 4.35 weeks per month calculation, must be used.

When a candidate works more than one job concurrently, the hours worked in each job shall be added together, if the experience gained in the jobs relates to the same or substantially the same requirements listed in the classification specifications.

To receive work experience credit, the job responsibilities or duties must be performed on a routine basis, either daily, weekly, monthly or at certain times of the year. Work experience gained as an occasional or incidental aspect of the job is not acceptable work experience.

Overtime hours worked in a job where the employee is entitled to pay for the additional hours worked under the Fair Labor Standards Act shall be credited as additional time on an hour- for-hour basis.

Evaluating Experience for Current County Employees



When evaluating the experience of current county employees, credit shall be given for duties within the scope and level of the employee's current classification. If an employee lists duties that are beyond the scope of their current classification, those duties shall only be accepted toward satisfying the MQs with approved documentation of an out-of-class assignment.

Work experience gained in an out-of-class assignment shall be accepted when all of the following criteria are met:

1. Out-of-class experience must have been performed for a minimum of 30 consecutive calendar days.
2. The employee's supervisor submitted a written request to the county personnel department for certification that the employee accepted and performed duties assigned by the county personnel department that were not consistent with the employee's class of appointment. Requests shall not be made prior to performing out-of-class duties a minimum of 30 consecutive calendar days, nor later than one year after the ending date of the out-of-class duties.
3. The county personnel department under whom the claimed out-of-class experience was gained shall document by a written statement the employee's request for certification of out-of-class experience. The statement shall include a description of the type and level of duties performed; a conclusion regarding whether the duties are or are not consistent with the employee's class of appointment and, if not consistent, an identification of the class to which such duties are appropriate; the beginning and ending dates of the out-of-class experience; the title of the examination for which the employee is applying, if applicable; and any further information applicable to the request.

All out-of-class documentation shall remain on file with the county personnel department for a period of five years and is subject to audit by the MSS Program.

If a candidate's position in county service has been reclassified, credit for time in the new class may be given from the date the reclassification was officially approved by MSS, even if the actual appointment did not occur until a later date.

Evaluating Education

The county personnel department is responsible for obtaining official transcripts (or certified equivalency evaluations for foreign education) to evaluate and verify educational requirements.

For the purpose of evaluating MQs, an undergraduate degree is considered a bachelor's degree. A graduate degree is considered a master's degree.

When evaluating education, it is not enough to assume that a degree was earned because the candidate listed 120 semester units or 180 quarter units. Always look for evidence of a degree conferred, usually found on an official transcript. In some cases, a candidate may have earned a degree which was not conferred (officially issued) yet. This is usually the result of an outstanding bill or university procedure. The candidate should be asked to



provide a letter from the university certifying that the degree was in fact earned. This is considered equivalent to the possession of a degree. Also, in most cases you should never accept a bachelor's degree from a 2-year college, with the exception of colleges with accredited bachelor's programs.

All colleges must be accredited to meet the educational requirements of the class specification.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and training hours are not acceptable as substitution for education requirements unless stated on the classification specification.

It is not unusual for a candidate to provide foreign degrees to satisfy MQs. It is the candidate's responsibility to provide translated evidence to prove the education when required, including an equivalency determination (not all degrees have US equivalents). The county personnel department should still verify that the college or university that issued the degree or certificate was accredited for that specific degree. Accreditation websites and the International Handbook for Universities are great resources for verifying the school's credibility. Organizations that provide foreign education credential evaluation services can be found at www.naces.org. The county personnel department should accept verification of degree and/or course equivalency from any of the listed member agencies.

If a candidate lists a higher degree on their application than the one that is required to meet the MQ, but has not listed the required degree, the required degree must be verified. It is not enough to only verify the higher degree that was listed on the application. Some Classification Specifications may require a "specialization in" a subject or "major coursework in" a particular field as part of the educational pattern. To fulfil this requirement, a candidate may provide evidence of completion of an academic major in the field specified or completion of enough courses in the subject to constitute a major. Completion of a minor in the required field and a major in a field closely related to the one required may be accepted. A Master's degree can also be used to satisfy this requirement if it is in the same field or specialization.

If one of the educational requirements is the equivalent to graduation from high school, the county personnel department must verify the candidate meets this requirement. Other evidence of graduation from high school include evidence of passing the California High School Proficiency test, possession of a GED, or a foreign high school diploma (must be translated). Possession of 12 units of college credits can also be accepted as evidence

Substituting Experience and Education

If the classification specification allows, education may be substituted for experience as specified.

When dealing with substitutions, it is important to remember that one year of college is considered 30 semester units or 45 quarter units. To convert quarter units to semester units, multiply the number of quarter units by 0.66667. Multiplying the semester units by 0.4 provides you the number of months of experience. (Refer to the college credit calculation tool)



Quarter units x 0.66667= semester units

Semester units x 0.4= education in months

GUIDELINES FOR DENYING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

If a candidate is found not to satisfy the MQs, the county personnel department shall provide written notice to the candidate specifying which MQs are not satisfied and the reason(s) why and provide an opportunity for the candidate to establish that he or she satisfies the MQs of the classification. The candidate shall have five working days to respond.

When a candidate fails to respond within the specified timeframe, the candidate may be considered to have abandoned the selection process. If such a determination is made, the county personnel department shall contact their assigned MSS Analyst to remove the candidate's name from the eligible list. MSS shall promptly inform the candidate in writing that their name has been removed from the eligibility list. The notification shall also inform the candidate of their appeal rights.

If the candidate responds timely but fails to establish that he or she satisfies the MQs, the candidate shall not be allowed to continue in the selection process and the county personnel department shall contact their assigned MSS Analyst to remove the candidate's name from the eligible list. The MSS Analyst will inform the candidate in writing of the determination and any actions taken by the county personnel department related to the determination, including removing the candidate's name from the eligible list. The notification shall also inform the candidate of their appeal rights.

DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD RETENTION

Local Agencies approved to operate all or any part of their personnel system for program employees shall retain records pertaining to personnel management of program employees, including MQ determination documentation. A copy of the policy on retention of personnel and related human resources records or a written advisement of the county personnel department's plan to preserve the records shall be provided to MSS upon request. If the county personnel department has no such policy, the county personnel department shall agree to retain records for seven (7) years from the date of the action or the date of the employee's separation, whichever is longer.

Please direct questions regarding information provided in this memorandum to your assigned MSS Analyst via email at MSSProgram@calhr.ca.gov.

/s/Alysa Stockdale-Hollis

Alysa Stockdale-Hollis, Manager
MSS Program