



Requirements to add an Approved Subject Area to a Teaching Certificate Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit

General Information:

Approved subject areas are added to Elementary, Middle Grades, Secondary, or Special Education (Birth-Gr. 12 or K-12) teaching certificates and authorize the holder to teach the subject area in a departmentalized (single subject) classroom within the grade range of the prerequisite certificate. Approved areas are renewed automatically with the certificate to which they are attached.

Most approved subject areas require passing the Arizona Teacher Proficiency Assessment (AEPA/NES) exam approved in the subject area, or qualification for a waiver of the exam requirement. Please visit <https://www.azed.gov/educator-certification/testing-information> for further information on the AEPA/NES exams.

Administrative Requirements Checklist:

The following items must be submitted for the ADE Certification Unit to complete a substantive review of your application. Fees are non-refundable.

- Prerequisite Certificate.** The applicant holds a valid Arizona Standard Professional, International Teaching, Alternative Teaching, or Classroom-Based Standard Teaching certificate in elementary education, middle grades education, secondary education, or special education (Birth-grade 12 or K-12).
- Application & Fee:** A completed [Application for Certification](#) and submission of the appropriate fee.
- IVP Fingerprint Card:** A photocopy of your valid [Arizona Department of Public Safety](#) Identity Verified Prints (IVP) fingerprint card (plastic).
- Documentation of Subject Knowledge Proficiency.** Proof that you meet the subject knowledge proficiency requirements under one of the options listed below. Please see the “Required Documentation” under the option for instructions on providing proof of subject knowledge proficiency.

Substantive Requirements

1. **Prerequisite Teaching Certificate.** A valid Arizona Standard Professional, International Teaching, Alternative Teaching, or Classroom-Based Standard Teaching certificate in elementary education, middle grades education, secondary education, or special education (Birth-grade 12 or K-12).
2. **Subject Knowledge Requirement - One of the following**
 - Option A. Arizona Educator Exam (AEPA or NES):** A passing score on the appropriate [Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment \(AEPA\) or National Evaluation Series \(NES\) Subject Knowledge Exam](#).
 - **Required Documentation:** The official AEPA/NES exam score report or exam score report.
 - Option B. Arizona Educator Exam NOT offered.** If an Arizona Subject Knowledge Exam is not offered, 24 semester hours of coursework in that subject area is required.
 - **Required Documentation:** Official transcripts documenting the degree in the subject area. Electronic official transcript must be sent directly by the college or university to certification@azed.gov. Paper official transcripts must be original and mailed to Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit, P.O. Box 6490, Phoenix, AZ 85005. If you completed college courses from an institution outside of the United States, a foreign credential evaluation from a [Department approved agency](#) must be submitted directly to certification@azed.gov or the original evaluation mailed in to the Certification Unit.



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Option C. Out-of-State Certificate: A valid, comparable teaching certificate in good standing with the approved area in another state.

- **Required Documentation:** A copy of the out-of-state certificate.

Option D. Out of State Exam: Verification of a passing score on a substantially similar subject knowledge exam from another state.

- **Required Documentation:** A completed [Verification of Out-of-State Exams](#) completed and submitted by the state agency that accepted the exam to Certification@azed.gov. If using a Praxis subject knowledge exam, submit a copy of the score report and request that scores be reported by ETS to the Arizona Department of Education (8517).

Option E. NBPTS Certificate: A valid, comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

- **Required Documentation:** A copy of the NBPTS certificate.

Option F. Degree in the Subject: A Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate degree from an accredited institution in the appropriate subject area.

- **Required Documentation:** Official transcripts documenting the degree in the subject area. Electronic official transcript must be sent directly by the college or university to certification@azed.gov. Paper official transcripts must be original and mailed to Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit, P.O. Box 6490, Phoenix, AZ 85005. If you completed college courses from an institution outside of the United States, a foreign credential evaluation from a [Department approved agency](#) must be submitted directly to certification@azed.gov or the original evaluation mailed in to the Certification Unit.

Option G. Teaching Experience: Three years of full-time, contracted teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, in the appropriate subject area. To qualify for a waiver of an AEPA or NES exam in the secondary subject areas of Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, or English at the high school level, you must have three years of full-time experience teaching the subject in grades 9-12. *NOTE:* Per Arizona Board of Education rules, teaching experience in a foreign school and substitute teaching do **not** meet this requirement.

- **Required Documentation:** A [Verification of PreK-12 Teaching Experience](#) form signed and completed by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director and submitted by the HR office to certification@azed.gov.

Option H. Post-Secondary Teaching: Experience teaching courses relevant to the appropriate subject area for the last two consecutive years and a total of at least three years at one or more regionally or nationally accredited postsecondary institutions.

- **Required Documentation:** A letter, on official letterhead, from a department chair, dean, or personnel director verifying employment for the specific durations from one or more qualifying postsecondary institutions.



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Option I. Work Experience: Verification of a minimum of five years of work experience that is relevant to the subject area.

- **Required Documentation.** One of the following:
 - i. A letter, on official letterhead, from a superintendent or personnel director verifying that the applicant demonstrates knowledge or skill in the subject area that is comparable to holding a bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, or doctoral degree in that subject area through five years of work experience, as identified in a resume; **or**
 - ii. A letter, on official letterhead, from a public or private school superintendent or personnel director in this state or in another state, verifying that the applicant has five years of experience teaching the most advanced Arizona academic standards, or comparable out-of-state standards, in the subject area sought; **or**
 - iii. If an applicant is unable to obtain a letter from a superintendent or personnel director described above, the applicant may submit a letter (on official company letterhead) from a current or former supervisor detailing their work experience. The Department will review the letter to determine if the applicant has five years of work experience that demonstrates knowledge and skills in the requested subject area that is comparable to holding a bachelor’s degree, masters degree, or doctoral degree in that subject area.

Option J. Foreign Language Proficiency: If an AEPA/NES in a foreign language has not been adopted, a minimum passing score of Advanced Low on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) speaking and writing exams may be used in place of the 24 semester hours of coursework.

- **Required documentation:** An official score report for the speaking and writing exams issued by ACTFL.

Option K. Native American Language Proficiency: Individuals seeking an approved area in a Native American Language may use verification of proficiency in the language verified by a person, persons, or entity designated by the appropriate tribe in place of the 24 semester hours of coursework

- **Required Documentation:** A letter signed by the designated tribal entity verifying proficiency in the Native American language.

Approved Areas requiring AEPA/NES Exam

The approved areas listed below require passing an AEPA or NES exam in the subject area (Option A) **or** qualification for a waiver of the exam requirement under Option C, D, E, F, G, H, or I.

Art	General Science	Middle Grades/Early Secondary Mathematics
Biology	Geography	Music
Business*	German	Physical Education
Chemistry	Health	Physics
Chinese-Mandarin	History	Political Science/American Government
Dance	Middle Grades General Science	Social Studies
Drama/Theatre	Middle Grades Language Arts	Spanish
Economics	Middle Grades Mathematics	
English	Middle Grades Social Studies	
French		



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Approved Areas requiring 24 semester hours of courses

The approved areas listed below require 24 semester hours of coursework in the subject area or qualification under Options C, E, G, H, I, H, or K.

Accounting*	Greek	Piipaash
Akimel O'odham	Havasupai-Hualapai	Portuguese
American Sign Language	Hebrew	Psychology
American Indian Language	Hopi	Quechan/Yuma
Anatomy and Physiology	Humanities	Recreation
Anthropology	Indic Language	Romance/Italic Language
Apache	Industrial Arts*	Russian
Arabic	Industrial Technology*	Semitic and Middle Eastern Languages
Balto-Slavic Language	Italian	Sociology
Botany	Iranian/Persian Language	Southeast Asian Language
Celtic Language	Japanese	Speech
Cocopah	Journalism	Swahili
Communications	Korean	Tohono O'odham
Computer Science*	Latin	Turkic/Ural Altaic Language
Criminal Justice*	Malayo-Polynesian Language	Turkish
Earth Science	Marketing	Urdu
East Asian Language	Mathematics	Ute
Educational Technology/Technology	Media Arts	Vietnamese
Engineering*	Mohave	Yaqui
Environmental Science	Navajo	Yavapai
Ethnic Studies	Non-Semitic African Language	Zoology
Family and Consumer Sciences*	Philosophy	
Filipino	Photography*	
Gender Studies	Physical Science	
Global Studies		

*This subject is frequently taught through a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. Teachers who are assigned to a CTE classroom must hold the appropriate CTE certificate.