

FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

WHAT ACCREDITORS WANT

All of the regional accrediting bodies speak to the concept of a “qualified” faculty. Some accreditors provide detailed explanations of what constitutes a qualified professional while others are more vague. Accrediting bodies vary in how detailed they want institutions to be as they document and report faculty credentials. For some regional and professional accrediting bodies, a list of faculty and their terminal degrees may be sufficient, while others require much more detail. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is generally viewed as the most detailed in its specified requirements and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) region has also provided a great deal of guidance on the guidelines for faculty credentialing.

QUALIFICATIONS, THEN AND NOW

Historically, the primary way for a faculty member to be considered qualified has been an academic credential [i.e., you are qualified to teach Molecular Biology because you have a Ph.D. in that field]. However, in a changing world, more and more institutions and the bodies that accredit them are recognizing that experience, research and other types of training can be just as compelling and rigorous a reason as a formal credential.



While the majority of your faculty are likely still qualified based on their terminal degrees, as these other justifications and experiences come into play, it becomes vital that institutions create appropriate policies, processes and documentation of how they determine appropriate qualifications for their teaching faculty.



SCHEDULE A CREDENTIALING CONSULTATION

The way your institution documents faculty qualifications will depend on the level of detail needed to satisfy accreditors and other stakeholders.

We're here to help. **Contact us today for free a credentialing consultation.**

REGIONAL ACCREDITOR

**Higher Learning
Commission (HLC)**

**New England Association of
Schools and Colleges (NEASC)**

**Middle States Commission
on Higher Education (MSCHE)**

**Southern Association
of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
(SACSCOC)**

**Western Association of
Schools and Colleges (WASC)**

**Northwest Commission on
Colleges and Universities
(NWCCU)**

QUALIFICATION STANDARD

3.C.2 All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

6.3 The preparation and qualifications of all faculty and academic staff are appropriate to the nature of their assignments. Qualifications are measured by advanced degrees held, evidence of scholarship, advanced study, creative activities and teaching abilities, as well as relevant professional experience, training and credentials.

3.2.B. An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates student learning experiences that are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do.

6.2 For each of its educational programs, the institution
a. justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members

3.1 The institution employs faculty and staff with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution. The faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualification, and diversity to achieve the institution's educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic and co-curricular programs wherever and however delivered.

2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.