



EDISON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY QUALIFICATION POLICY

The Higher Learning Commission requires institutions to justify and document qualifications of faculty as part of its accreditation process. Specifically, in order to receive and maintain accreditation, institutions must demonstrate compliance with Criterion 3.C.3 of the Accreditation Guidelines. The following is an overview of the guidelines presented in the [*Determining Qualified Faculty through HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices, 2020.*](#)

HLC Policy: Guidelines and Expectations for Faculty Qualifications

Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

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

General Education

Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

Subfield

- HLC's focus is on alignment between courses being taught and the general appropriateness of faculty qualifications.
 - HLC asks: Is the degree in the field (or a focus in the specialization) held by a faculty member appropriately matched to the courses the faculty member teaches in accordance with the conventions of the academic field?
- Chief Academic Officer and peer reviewer judgment will apply in determining the appropriate alignment between faculty members' qualifications and such programs.

Technical Education

Faculty teaching in career and technical education college level: certificate and occupational associate's degree programs, including when such courses transfer into baccalaureate programs, should hold a bachelor's degree in the field or a combination of education, training and tested experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree.

Tested Experience

Refers to breadth and depth of real-world experience outside the classroom and relevant to the discipline and equivalent to the degree in the field to be taught. Teaching experience cannot be substituted as experience. Tested experience can be combined with credentials to meet the requirement.



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Tested experience qualifications should be established for specific disciplines and programs and could include skill sets, types of certifications or additional credentials, and experiences. Documented qualifications would ensure consistency and transparency in hiring and human resources policies. The faculty hiring qualifications related to tested experience should be reviewed and approved through the faculty governance process at the institution. (pg. 4)

In response to the requirements set forth by the Higher Learning Commission, Edison State Community College requires the following faculty qualifications.

Required Educational Background for Faculty

General Education

Master's degree in the discipline or subfield or a master's degree in any field with at least 18 graduate credits in the discipline or a subfield

- Any courses in a subfield must have explained connection to the discipline and specific courses for alignment by the program coordinator
- Content experts such as approved faculty currently teaching in the department, who is not the coordinator, should be consulted when possible.

Developmental course faculty must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a related discipline.

Professional and Technical Education

A Bachelor's degree in the discipline or a subfield

- Any courses in a subfield must have explained connection to the discipline and specific courses for alignment by the program coordinator and/or Dean.
- If the appropriate coursework is not present, tested experience will be considered. If approved, the justification form must be completed.

Tested Experience Policy

Tested experience may substitute for an earned credential or portions thereof for professional and technical education only. Classroom experience and/or evidence of students' achievement alone is not a substitute for content knowledge. A faculty member is qualified based on experience that the institution determines is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for a faculty position. Approved certifications and skill sets will be determined by the program coordinator. Program Coordinators will set a standard tested experience criteria for each of their program courses in the Course Credentialing spreadsheet. These will be reviewed and approved by the Dean of Professional and Technical Programs. It is understood that tested experience requires case-by-case examinations and will not always match the standard set for each program.

Example Tested Experience Expectations include:

- An Associate's Degree in the field plus at least **three years** of applied experience OR



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- **Five years** of applied experience and equivalent certification or licensure in areas directly related to the learning objectives of the courses the faculty will teach are required

CCP Faculty Qualifications

The institution requires the same level of credentials and qualifications for faculty in dual credit courses or programs that it does for its regular higher-education courses. The same review process will be conducted for CCP instructors during certification as adjunct faculty

Qualification Review Process

Full Time Faculty

- A search committee, including discipline faculty, upon initial hiring shall review full time faculty qualifications.
- Chair of the search committee and discipline faculty, in collaboration with the academic dean, will complete the faculty qualification form and submit to the Chief Academic Officer for the final signatures.
- Upon completion, the original form will be put into the faculty member's file in Human Resources. A copy will be provided to Academic Dean and Dean of Accreditation and Academic Effectiveness.

Adjunct Faculty

- The discipline coordinator shall review adjunct faculty qualifications.
- The Academic Dean, in collaboration with the discipline coordinator, shall complete the faculty qualifications form identifying what courses the adjunct faculty are qualified to teach.
- The form will be submitted to Chief Academic Officer during the hiring process for review and approval.
- Upon completion, the original form will be put into the faculty member's file in Human Resources. A copy will be provided to Academic Dean and Dean of Accreditation and Academic Effectiveness.

CCP Faculty

Evaluation of faculty qualifications for CCP faculty will depend on the type of course being certified.

- The Academic Dean or CCP administrator shall review the faculty qualifications for all perspective CCP faculty in collaboration with the discipline coordinator.
- The dean will complete the faculty qualifications form identifying what courses the CCP faculty are qualified to teach.
- Once approved by the coordinator, the form will be submitted to the Chief Academic Officer for the final signatures.
 - o Any CCP who are not yet qualified, may be approved to teach provisionally until September 1, 2025. Instructors who are provisionally approved will create, with their academic dean, an educational plan. Instructors must submit unofficial



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transcripts each at the end of each semester to provide evidence of progress completion.

- Upon completion, the original form will be put into the faculty member's file in Human Resources. A copy will be provided to Academic Dean and Dean of Accreditation and Academic Effectiveness.

Appeal Process

If an instructor does not agree with the decision of their qualifications, they may ask for an appeal. The instructor must follow the chain of command to have their credentials re-evaluated.