



Instructions for Completing the Institutional Certification Application for Institutions of Higher Education

All materials must be TYPED. Handwritten materials may be returned.

READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING

- By applying for certification to operate an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia, you attest that the institution will operate in compliance with Article 3 (§23.1-213 to §23.1-229) of title 23.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and with 8VAC 40-31 et seq. of the *Virginia Administrative Code* (Regulations).
- After you have attended a New School Orientation Session, submit an “Intent to Operate a Postsecondary School in the Commonwealth of Virginia (Institutions of Higher Education)” form. Wait to receive approval from SCHEV before you proceed.
- Mail both a “Name Acknowledgement Form” and a “Background Check Profile Form,” along with the required fee, to the address below. Wait to receive an approval letter from SCHEV. You must use the SCHEV-approved name in completing the remainder of the certification application.

GATHER REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND PREPARE A FULL CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PACKET FOLLOWING ALL INSTRUCTIONS BELOW

- Certification application forms for new institutions of higher education are available under the “New School Certification Forms for Degree-Granting Institutions” heading on the PPE Forms & Regulations page at <https://ppe.schev.edu/ppe-forms-and-regulations>.
- Certain items are required to supplement various forms. Your responses to certain questions may indicate that supporting documentation is required. You should start working on your application early enough to ensure you can secure all required documents and submit your application by the deadline indicated by SCHEV staff.
- Mail all required forms and documents in a 3-ring binder with a table of contents and clearly marked tab dividers in the order prescribed in the instructions below. Do not use sheet protectors or submit handwritten documents.

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
Attn: PPE Unit
101 N. 14th Street, 10th floor
James Monroe Building
Richmond, VA 23219-3659

Tab	Required Documents	Instructions for Completing Institutional Certification Application for Institutions of Higher Education
1.	Certification Application Fee	You must provide a company or cashier's check in the correct, nonrefundable amount of \$10,000 made payable to: Treasurer of Virginia.
2.	Projected Accounting Budget	- Existing schools must submit a complied, audited, or reviewed financial statement. - New schools must complete a three-year Projected Accounting Budget form.
3.	Certification Application Form	Complete the Certification Application Form for Institutions of Higher Education in its entirety, in accordance with 8VAC 40-31 et seq.
4.	Accreditation Document	Accreditation is a process of external quality review used by higher education to evaluate colleges, universities and educational programs for quality assurance. Institutions of higher education in Virginia must be accredited an accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of Education (USED). In-State institutions Degree-granting institutions must achieve candidacy status or its equivalent within 3 years of certification AND be fully accredited within 6 years to remain eligible for certification. - In-state institutions must submit an accreditation plan with the application for certification - Only Council may grant any subsequent changes to an institution's accreditation plan. Out-of-State institutions Out-of-state institutions requesting initial certification must be accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by USED. Out-of-State institutions must: - Submit a copy of the documentation providing the name and address of the current accrediting agency (or agencies); original accreditation date; date of next review; and proof of current status. - Provide the name(s) of any former agencies the institution was accredited by and an explanation for why it is no longer accredited by that agency.
5.	Good Standing Status	- Out-of-State institutions must provide documentation of any determination of limitation, suspension, revocation, termination, or sanctions placed by US Department of Education, accrediting agency, or a state regulatory body against the institution within the last five years. - New in-state institutions may simply provide a statement behind this tab that reads, "Proof of Good Standing is Not Applicable."
6.	Site Listing Form	- Out-of-state institutions must provide a complete list of all sites AND programs of study offered at each site. - New in-state institutions may simply provide a statement behind this tab that reads "not applicable."

7.	Acknowledgement of Prior Postsecondary Involvement Form	- The Acknowledgement of Prior Postsecondary Involvement form allows the President or CEO to attest to any previous involvement in the operation of a postsecondary institution as required under 8VAC 40-31-180(A)(8). - Disclosure of any previous involvement by any administrator, owner, controlling shareholder, or member of the institution's governing board in the operation of a postsecondary institution is also required. - Misrepresentation of facts may cause the application to be denied in its entirety. - The form must be signed and notarized, and all required supporting documents must be included.
8.	Program Inventory Form	Include the following: - A complete list of programs that will be offered at the institution - The appropriate Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code for each program - Credential awarded (e.g. certificate or degree) - Number of credit hours required to complete program - Any necessary supporting documents.
9.	Application for New Program Approval Form	- Complete one form per program. - Include curriculum and any supporting documents with this form. No fee is required when included as part of a new certification application package.
10.	Institutional Checklist and Catalog	- Include a completed Institutional Catalog Checklist at the beginning of this tab. - Include a copy of your institution's Catalog written as though the institution were already certified by SCHEV to operate in Virginia.
	Student Handbook	Provide a copy of student handbook if applicable. Note: Virginia regulations do not require institutions to provide a student handbook in addition to a catalog. However, some institutions produce a separate handbook to provide students enrolled in certain programs with specific requirements.
11.	Policy Documents	<u>Curriculum</u> - A document that clearly defines a process by which the curriculum is established, reviewed, and evaluated. The curriculum policy should include: An explanation of the written process for evaluating each program and an explanation of the procedures to assess how well educational goals are being achieved; - Documented use of the results of these evaluations to improve the programs offered by the institution. <u>Internship, Externship, Production of Work (if applicable)</u> A document that accurately describes a compliant policy applicable to programs that require an internship, externship, or production work. The policy must adhere to 8VAC-40-31-160(M).
12.	Senior Administrator Qualification Form	Provide a Senior Administrator Qualification form for each senior administrator who has already agreed to work at the institution. All new hires MUST be approved by SCHEV. - A copy of this form must be completed and maintained in the personnel file and available upon request in the event of an audit. - Include required supporting documentation that demonstrates that the senior administrator is qualified for his/her particular responsibilities through: - Educational background, relevant work experience, or records of accomplishments in previous educational work settings; and - Being of good reputation and character. Note: Senior administrators are positions that have administrative or managerial authority, such as Chief Executive Officer, President, Chancellor, Dean, Provost, or Owner.

13.	Board Member Qualification Form	Provide a Board Qualification form for each board member that has already agreed to serve. Boards must collectively demonstrate financial, academic, managerial, and any necessary specialized knowledge, but individual members need not have all of these characteristics.
14.	Administrative Personnel Qualification Form	Provide an Administrative Personnel Qualification Form for each administrator who has already agreed to work at the institution. All new hires MUST be approved by SCHEV before the full certificate to operate is issued. - A copy of this form must be completed and maintained in the personnel file and available upon request in the event of an audit. - Include required supporting documentation that demonstrates that the senior administrator is qualified for his/her particular responsibilities through: - Educational background, relevant work experience, or records of accomplishments in previous educational work settings; and - Being of good reputation and character. Note: Administrative personnel generally oversee operational/administrative areas, such as Campus Director, Financial Aid administrator, Admissions Director, Registrar, Director of Student Services, etc.
15.	Faculty Qualification Form	Submit a Faculty Qualification Form for each faculty member hired to work for the institution. If the institution has not yet hired all of the instructors, provide forms for those already hired and submit a statement indicating all additional instructor positions that will be filled prior to full certification. All new hires MUST be approved by SCHEV before the full certificate to operate is issued. - A copy of this form must be completed and maintained in the personnel file and available upon request in the event of an audit. - Include required supporting documentation with each form showing faculty are qualified to teach in accordance with 8VAC40-31-140. Note: Qualifying faculty under “exceptions to the rule,” is allowed only under the following circumstance: - In emerging fields where academically qualified faculty are uncommon or non-existent. It is NOT applicable when an academically qualified faculty member would be easy to recruit. - Exceptions to the rule must be documented and approved by SCHEV prior to hiring. - Exceptions should only be used sparingly and may not “swallow” the rule.
16.	Advertisements and Other Promotional Materials	Provide a sample advertisement or other promotional material as though the institution is already certified by SCHEV to operate in Virginia. The sample should include: - A statement that the Council has certified the institution to operate in Virginia; - The institution's complete name as approved by SCHEV; - The address of at least one site located in Virginia. Note: Refer to sample advertisement for guidance.
17.	Enrollment Agreement	Institutions of higher education are required to enter an enrollment agreement with each student in accordance with 8VAC 40-31-160(D)(2). Include a copy of the proposed enrollment agreement. Note: Refer to the enrollment agreement requirements for guidance.

18.	Truth-In-Lending Agreement	When tuition and fees are paid by the student in installments, a clear disclosure of truth-in-lending statement must be provided to and signed by the student. Include a copy of your institution's truth-in-lending agreement. Note: Refer to sample agreement for guidance.
19.	Student Records Documents	In accordance with 8VAC40-31-160(D)(3), a transcript of each student's academic coursework at the institution must be retained permanently. - Submit a sample student transcript to include the following: - SCHEV-approved program name and credit hours - Dates of enrollment - Each course taken and grade earned - Student's last status at the institution (graduated, withdrawn, etc.) In accordance with 8VAC40-31-160(D)(4), a record of all financial transactions between each individual student and the institution must be maintained for a minimum of three years after the student's last date of attendance. - Submit a sample financial ledger to include the following: - Payments from the student - Payments from other sources on the student's behalf - Refunds
20.	Authorization Certificates	Provide copies of the following: - State Corporation Commission Certificate, if incorporated - Certificate of Assumed or Fictitious Name - Current Business License (from the Virginia locality within which the institution will operate) - Proof of State Authorization from home state (if applicable): - Evidence the institution is operating in good standing in its home state - Evidence the institution closed in good standing if it ever operated in another state.
21.	Library Resources	Submit a plan describing library resources in accordance with 8VAC40-31-160(J). The institution shall maintain and ensure that students have access to a library with a collection, staff, services, equipment and facilities that are adequate and appropriate for the purpose and enrollment of the school. Plan must include but not limited to: - Description of physical and virtual library - Plan to ensure library resources are current; well distributed among fields of study; cataloged; logically organized and readily located. - Personnel, qualifications and job description for persons responsible for library and resources - Plan for agreements with other libraries. - Institutions offering graduate work must describe library resources that include major journals in each discipline offered.
22.	Distance Education Activities	Institutions seeking approval to offer distance education from a location in Virginia must submit: - Description of online platform - Policy guidelines regarding attendance, assignment submission, passing grades, plagiarism policy, etc. - Rules by which the school will ensure regular student-faculty interaction. - Description of training and support services specific to distance education. - Means by which school ensures students have sufficient background, knowledge, and technical skills to successfully undertake an online program. Complete the SCHEV Distance Education Attestation statement form.

23.	Certificate of Occupancy	The school must provide a copy of its Certificate of Occupancy. A certificate of occupancy is an essential document for every property you rent or own. It: • Describes the classification of the property and if it is being used in a way it was intended. • Serves as proof that a property has complied with and conformed to all federal, state, and local standards and codes and is now fit for occupancy.
	APPLICATION SUBMISSION	Submit all required forms and documents in a 3-ring notebook binder with a table of contents and clearly marked tab dividers in the order prescribed in these instructions. • <u>Do not use</u> sheet protectors. • Submit original documents with original signatures. • Photocopies and handwritten documents <u>will not be</u> accepted. • Mail your completed application package to: State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Attn: PPE Unit 101 North 14th Street, 10th Floor James Monroe Building Richmond, VA 23219-3659
	FINAL STEPS TO FULL CERTIFICATION	Once your certification application package is deemed complete and in compliance with SCHEV's minimum standards, SCHEV staff will contact you to schedule a site visit. During the visit, a member of the staff will tour your facility. They will expect to see all the equipment, classroom features, and amenities described in your certification application. All supplies and facilities, including signage, should be ready for student occupancy.
	Surety Instrument Calculation Worksheet and Surety Forms	All schools must obtain and maintain a surety instrument for the first five years of certification in accordance with 8VAC40-31-160(H) and all subsections. The surety instrument may be a Letter of Credit obtained from a banking institution or a Surety Bond from an insurance company. The surety instrument must be: • Adequate to provide refunds to students • In the amount of unearned non-Title IV portion of tuition and fees • Sufficient for any given term Complete the Surety Instrument Calculation Worksheet. • The minimum acceptable surety amount is \$20,000. Note: Resources for surety bonds include: • National Association of Surety Bond Producers (NASBP) – www.nasbp.org • The Surety & Fidelity Association of America (SAA) – www.surety.org • American Insurance Association – www.aiadc.org.