

## **Frequently Asked Questions About Letters of Equivalency**

These questions and answers are based on current regulations as of September 1999, and are subject to change by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education and/or the General Assembly.

### **What is a Letter of Equivalency?**

The Bachelor's or Master's Letter of Equivalency is used only for a salary increase. It will not satisfy certification regulations that require an earned degree.

### **Master's Equivalency (MEQ)**

#### **1. Who qualifies for a Master's Equivalency (MEQ)?**

The MEQ may be issued to those persons who have completed at least thirty-six (36) hours of graduate-level credit in accordance with Chapter 49.191(1) State Board of Education regulations.

#### **2. What are the requirements for an MEQ?**

Candidates for an MEQ must hold a valid Level I or Level II Pennsylvania certificate and have earned at least 36 semester hour credits with a grade of "C," "Pass," or better. A minimum of 18 academic **graduate** credits must be earned in the content area of the applicant's certification area(s) at an accredited college/university.

The remaining 18 credits may be earned through Pennsylvania in-service programs approved by the Secretary of Education after October 1, 1972 or be a combination of graduate college/university and Pennsylvania in-service credits.

#### **3. Are Pennsylvania in-service credits acceptable?**

A maximum of 18 of the credit requirement may be satisfied through in-service programs approved by the Secretary of Education. Official in-service letters with raised seal must be submitted with the application.

#### **4. Are community college credits and continuing education units (CEUs) accepted toward the Letter of Equivalency for Master's Degree?**

No. Community college credits and continuing education units (CEUs) are not accepted toward the Letter of Equivalency for Master's Degree.

#### **5. Are quarter hour credits equivalent to semester hour credits?**

No. A quarter hour credit is only equal to two-thirds of a semester hour credit.

#### **6. May I use the credits which were accepted for issuance of the Level II toward the MEQ?**

Yes, if they meet the criteria. Documents submitted with a TIMS application need not be re-submitted.

#### **7. How do I determine if my credits are graduate level?**

Credits must be clearly listed as graduate level on the transcript. This information is usually on the back of the transcript or may be verified with the college/university registrar.

**8. How can I be certain that my school district's MEQ deadline will be met?**

The Bureau cannot be responsible for meeting school district deadlines. We recommend submitting your application well in advance of your deadline.

**Bachelor's Equivalency (BEQ)**

**1. Who qualifies for a Baccalaureate Equivalency (BEQ)?**

The Letter of Equivalency for Baccalaureate Degree is issued to holders of Vocational Instructional I, Vocational Instructional II or their equivalents.

**2. What are the requirements for a BEQ?**

The accumulation of 90 college semester hour credits with a grade of "C," "Pass," or better.

- The first 60 hours must be from an accredited two-year or four-year college.
- The final 30 hours must include a minimum of 18 credit hours earned at a State-approved baccalaureate degree granting institution.
- The remaining 12 of the final 30 credits may be satisfied, in full or in part, through in-service programs approved by the Secretary of Education.

**3. Are community college credits and continuing education units (CEUs) accepted toward the Letter of Equivalency for Baccalaureate Degree?**

Community college credits are accepted except for 18 credit hours of the final 30 which must be earned at a State-approved baccalaureate degree granting institution. Continuing education units (CEUs) are not accepted toward the Letter of Equivalency for Baccalaureate Degree.

**4. Are CLEP credits accepted toward the Letter of Equivalency for Baccalaureate Degree?**

Yes.

**5. Are quarter hour credits equivalent to semester hour credits?**

No. A quarter hour credit is only equal to two-thirds of a semester hour credit.

**6. May I use the credits which were accepted for issuance of the Level II toward the BEQ?**

Yes, if they meet the criteria. Documents submitted with a TIMS application need not be re-submitted.

**7. How can I be certain that my school district's BEQ deadline will be met?**

The Bureau cannot be responsible for meeting school district deadlines. We recommend submitting your application well in advance of your deadline.