

Guam Community College

Standard Operating Procedures

Determining Acceptance on Educational Diplomas, Degrees or Certificates

Guam Community College Human Resources Office is responsible for determining the eligibility of employment for all applicants for positions of the agency. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to developing and implementing job related minimum qualification standards and determining acceptable qualifying experience and education criteria in accordance with labor laws, established professional standards and best practices.

The purpose of establishing this Standard Operating Procedure is to standardize processing and acceptance of high school diplomas or equivalent and post secondary education degrees due to the growing availabilities of fraudulent certifications from non-recognized entities, also know as “diploma mills.”

A copy of the applicants’ high school diploma, general education development (GED) certificate or college transcripts are required to be included in all application packets submitted to the Guam Community College Human Resources Office. As applications are received the Human Resources Staff are required to determine if the credentials claimed are acceptable to Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Accreditation Standards. Granting institutions should be recognized as accredited by a national accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as reliable authorities with reference to the quality of education or training offered. To be “recognized” means that the accrediting bodies have been reviewed by CHEA or the United States Department of Education (USDE) and meet the quality standards of the respective organizations.

As approved by the President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Human Resources Administrator have agreed to use several databases as referenced below as lists of degree-granting and non-degree-granting institutions that are accredited by United States accrediting organizations that have been recognized either by CHEA and/or USDE to verify the validity of educational diplomas, degrees and/or certificates.

The Human Resources Staff must research all schools listed on the employment applications received to determine the validity of degrees or credits earned.

The Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs

(<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>) of the Office of Postsecondary Education is used to research accredited institutions and accrediting agencies recognized by the USDE.

The **Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)** (<http://www.chea.org/search/search.asp>) is a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation and is used to research accredited institutions recognized by USDE.

The Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) (<http://www.detc.org/accred.html>) is used to research accredited institutions that offer online distance educational courses or degrees that are recognized by USDE.

The American Council on Education (ACE)

(<http://www.acenet.edu/resources/memberdirectory/index.cfm>) is used to research valid state GED testing and administrator sites.

Von Alt, K. (2009) *Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education 2008-2009*, American Council of Education, Washington, D.C. is the official guide to recognized accredited institutions published by ACE.

Degrees or transcripts received from schools or colleges outside of the U.S. that are not recognized or listed in the references above should be evaluated by a member agency of the **National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES)** (<http://www.naces.org/members.htm>). NACES is an association of private foreign educational credential evaluation services recognized by CHEA.

In some instances applicants may include professional certifications or licenses as part of the application packet. The guide referenced below is used to research competency-based or curriculum-based professional certifications and licenses:

Harris, P. (2008), *The Guide to National Professional Certification Programs*, 3rd ed, HRD Press, Amherst.

Proof of research must be attached to the application packets. If there is any doubt on the researched database, the Human Resources Staff must consult with the Guam Community College and/or University of Guam Registrar.