

Procedures and Guidelines

New Hampshire's

Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) 2001

General Information about HQT

According to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, all educators teaching “core academic subjects”* must be “highly qualified”.

***Core academic subjects are English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, history, geography, and arts (music, visual arts, dance and theater)**

What is the definition of a highly qualified teacher?

The requirement that teachers be highly qualified applies to all public elementary or secondary school teachers employed by a local educational agency (school district) who teach a core academic subject.

“Highly qualified” means that the teacher:

1. Holds a minimum of a **bachelor's degree**; and
2. **Has obtained full state certification or holds an Intern license in NH** as a teacher covering the grade range of the assignment, holds a license to teach in the State, and does not have certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis; (Statement of Eligibility or Emergency Permissions to employ are not HQT)

Educators holding **Alternative IV licenses** are considered highly qualified only after demonstrating content knowledge. (See below) **Alternative V licenses** denote HQT because of the content major required for eligibility to pursue the Alternative V route; and

3. Has **demonstrated subject-matter content knowledge** in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches.

The HQT content requirement applies to elementary K-6 teachers, teachers in grades 7-8 by subject area regardless of setting or school approval status, and all teachers in grades 9-12 who provide direct instruction in the NCLB core content areas.

What is **direct instruction**?

Direct instruction occurs when an educator provides the primary content instruction without another educator or co-teacher who is HQT. For example, if a special education teacher or an ELL teacher were to be the only person teaching a lesson on fractions in sixth grade, that educator would need to be HQT in elementary education or middle level math. If a special educator or ELL teacher provided

supplemental instruction, HQT status is not required for that additional instruction beyond the original lesson. In some cases it helps to ask the following question to help determine the requirement for HQT: Is the educator granting credit for a core content area subject?

Demonstrating Content Knowledge

A) Passing a **subject test** in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches; or

B) Successfully completing an **undergraduate or graduate degree** in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, or **coursework (transcript review)** equivalent to an undergraduate academic major (30 course credits) in the core academic subject;

Exception: In social studies content areas, five [5] courses in each social studies area (geography, civics/government, history, economics); or

C) Demonstrated competence in each core academic subject in which the teacher teaches by completing a High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (**HOUSSE**) **before June 2008** which demonstrated that all content competencies were met for the grade range and teaching assignment.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the requirement for Highly Qualified Teachers?

There are three primary components needed to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements:

1. Minimum of a Bachelor's degree
2. NH certification that covers the grade range
3. Demonstration of content knowledge in each core content area that the teacher teaches

*2. What are the core content subjects?

NCLB defines the core content subjects as English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, history, geography, and arts (music, visual arts, dance and theater).

3. What if I teach elementary or middle school grades 7 and 8?

All elementary and middle school teachers in grades 7 and 8 must meet the HQT requirements for each core content subject that they teach. The K-8 endorsement provides the certification requirement for HQT but does not provide the demonstration of core content knowledge. The HQT content requirement for grades 7 and 8 applies whether the school has an elementary or middle school approval status.

4. Who must meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements?

If an educator provides direct instruction (by being the teacher of record, granting credit, or providing the only content instruction) in a core content area defined by NCLB, the educator needs to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements for each of the core content subjects that are taught.

5. If I meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements, how do I demonstrate this?

To demonstrate that you meet the HQT requirements, you may need to provide your school or district administration with the appropriate documentation or evidence that demonstrates that you have met the qualifications for each core academic subject that you teach. Evidence may vary and will depend upon which method you choose to demonstrate that you meet the "highly qualified" teacher requirements. In many cases the documentation is already contained in the NH Department of Education's Educator Information System (EIS).

6. What do I have to do *after* I meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements?

Continue to engage in professional development in the core academic subject areas that you teach and incorporate the content goals into your Individual Professional Development Plan.

7. If I meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements, do I get any kind of document from the State?

Not if the educator works for a NH school district. The district will report HQT status to the NHDOE in the Educator Information System (EIS). This information will be kept in a database at the Department. Meanwhile, you should keep the evidence that you gathered to demonstrate that you meet the HQT requirements in case the documentation is requested for a future teaching assignment, position, school, or district. For example, if you move to a new state or change teaching assignments you may need to demonstrate that you meet the “Highly Qualified” Teacher requirements for your new position. While working in NH, the records will remain in the EIS.

8. For how long does my highly qualified status last?

Your highly qualified teacher status applies to the classes that you teach. Therefore, your highly qualified status lasts as long as you maintain your certification and the same teaching assignment. You should continue to engage in professional development in the core academic subject(s) that you teach.

9. If I teach one or more of the subjects that social studies covers, such as history, geography, economics, civics & government, how do I meet the Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements?

Teachers in grades K-6 may meet HQT for social studies by being HQ in Elementary Education through the Praxis II or a comparable multi-subject elementary content test taken in another state for certification. Teachers in grade 7-12 who teach social studies need a social science degree that includes coursework in history, geography, economics, and civics & government. An educator without a social science major teaching one or more of the subjects covered in social studies needs to meet the HQT requirements to teach each class (5 courses). The secondary or middle school level Praxis II tests are additional options.

For example, a teacher teaching both a “civics & government” class and a history class, needs to meet the HQT requirements for civics/government and history.

New Hampshire considers Comprehensive Business Education to meet the HQT requirement for teaching Economics via transcript review.

10. If I teach Middle Level Science (General Science) how do I use the 30 credit option for transcript review? What courses must be taken?

If a teacher is teaching science at the middle level and is using the 30 credit option (transcript review) to meet the HQT requirements, the teacher should have some coursework in each of the four general areas. (life science, physics, chemistry and earth/space science)

11. If I teach reading, do I need to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements?

If your teaching assignment is reading, you will need to meet HQT for reading.

Certifications: The Reading and Writing Specialist and Reading and Writing Teacher endorsements meet the HQT requirement for reading in grades K-12. English certification meets the content requirement for reading in grades 5-8 or 5-12. Elementary Education (K-8) meets the HQT requirements for reading in grades K-8.

12. If I teach a Career and Technical Education (CTE) course, do I need to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements?

If a student receives credit towards one of the core academic subjects defined by NCLB, the teacher needs to be HQT in that subject. For example, if a teacher teaches a communications course where students earn an English

credit for the communications course, the teacher must have at least a bachelor's degree, hold certification in the CTE area being taught and meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements for English.

13. What if I teach English language learners?

If teachers of English language learners provide **direct instruction** in core academic subjects and/or grant credit for those subjects, they must meet the requirements of the law for highly qualified teachers, in addition to the ESEA Title III requirements for teachers of English language learners (an English proficiency test on oral, listening and reading comprehension, and on writing skills). A teacher who does not teach a core academic subject must still meet the Title III requirements in order to instruct English language learners.

14. What if I teach Special Education?

The highly qualified teacher requirements apply only to teachers providing **direct instruction** and/or granting credit in core academic subjects. Special educators who do not directly instruct students in core academic subjects or who provide only consultation to teachers who meet the highly qualified teacher requirements in adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions or selecting appropriate accommodations, do not need to demonstrate subject-matter competency in those subjects.

15. Must special education teachers who teach core academic subjects be highly qualified?

Yes. NCLB requires all teachers of core academic subjects, including special education teachers, to be highly qualified. IDEA requires that all special education teachers who teach core academic subjects be highly qualified. In order to be highly qualified special education teachers must hold a special education certificate or be licensed as special education teachers in addition to holding a bachelor's degree and demonstrating subject-matter competency.

16. If a special education teacher teaches core academic subjects exclusively to students who are being assessed against alternate academic achievement standards, at what subject-matter level must the special education teacher be highly qualified?

The 2004 IDEA amendments provide that if a special education teacher teaches core academic subjects *exclusively* to students who are being assessed against alternate achievement standards, the teacher must meet the highly qualified requirements for elementary school teachers and, for instruction above the elementary level have subject-matter knowledge appropriate to the level of instruction being provided. Please see Section 602(10)(C) of the IDEA for the complete text and the IDEA regulations.

17. Must special education teachers who teach multiple core academic subjects exclusively to students with disabilities be highly qualified in all subjects they teach?

Yes. Special education teachers in this category must be highly qualified.

18. What activities may special education teachers carry out if they are not highly qualified in the core academic content area being taught?

There are many activities that special education teachers may carry out that would not, by themselves, require those teachers to be highly qualified in a particular subject-matter. Special educators who do not directly instruct students in any core academic subjects or who provide only consultation to highly qualified teachers of core academic subjects in adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions, or selecting appropriate accommodations do not need to demonstrate subject-matter competency in those subjects. These special educators could also assist students with study skills or organizational skills and reinforce instruction that the child has already received from a highly qualified teacher in that core academic subject.

19. Must subject specialists who teach in elementary schools be highly qualified in all subjects or just the subject they teach?

Many elementary schools employ subject-area specialists—such as reading, music, art or foreign language teachers—who only teach those specific subjects. A single-subject teacher in an elementary school may

demonstrate the subject-matter competency needed to be highly qualified in the same manner as secondary teachers with single subject certification.

20. What if I am a long-term substitute teacher?

Long-term substitute teachers teaching a core academic subject(s) for more than 20 consecutive days need to meet the requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers.

21. If I am planning to take a core content knowledge test, such as Praxis II, when will I be considered HQT?

After the test is taken and passed. The ETS website www.ets.org contains information on the Praxis tests used in NH.

Certification and HQT

Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements does not equate to certification in a particular subject area. Teachers will only be considered HQT within the grade range of their certification. For example, a K-8 certified teacher who has met the HQT requirement in Social Studies is considered HQT grades 5-8, not grades 5-12. Teachers must be certified in their major assignment.

Save or Maintain a Copy of Documentation/Evidence

Save a copy of all documentation. This documentation may need to be provided during a Title II-A monitoring visit or to demonstrate competency for a new teaching assignment. If it is determined that a teacher does not meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements, the teacher may need to create an HQT Plan.