

Endorsements and Highly Qualified Status

Q. What does “Highly Qualified” mean?

A: Highly Qualified (HQ) is a term used to define whether teachers have met specific teacher professional development standards. It is a term that is most closely associated with the provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). There are a variety of ways that current teachers who are not HQ can become so. Most teachers graduating from Utah institutions are HQ in their subject areas upon licensure.

Q. What is an endorsement?

A: An endorsement is attached to an educator license by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE). It authorizes an educator to teach specific courses. In Utah, mathematics endorsements are required for all secondary mathematics courses.

Q. What endorsements are available in mathematics?

A: Mathematics teachers must be endorsed at the proper level for the courses they teach.

Level 2 endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach 7th and 8th grade mathematics.

Level 2 enhanced endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach 7th and 8th grade mathematics and Secondary I.

Level 3 endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach 7th Grade Mathematics, 8th Grade Mathematics, Secondary I, Secondary I Honors, Secondary II, Secondary II Honors, Secondary III, Mathematics of Personal Finance, College Prep Math, Modern Mathematics, and Mathematical Decision Making for Life

Level 4 endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach all secondary mathematics classes.

Q. What makes a mathematics teacher Highly Qualified under ESEA?

A: In order to become HQ under ESEA a mathematics teacher must:

Have a major or minor in mathematics education **or**

Have a Level 3 or 4 mathematics endorsement **or**

Have a Level 2 mathematics endorsement and pass the PRAXIS mathematics assessment 5169 or 5161 **or**

Earn National Board Certification

Please note that **all new endorsements** in the ESEA areas require passage of the PRAXIS assessment; therefore anyone granted a mathematics endorsement after 2007 will automatically be HQ.

Q. What is the connection between Highly Qualified under ESEA and endorsements?

A: It is possible to be endorsed by USOE without being Highly Qualified however, it is impossible to be Highly Qualified without being USOE endorsed at the mathematics level at which a teacher is teaching. The terms refer to two different qualifications. In order to be qualified to teach a class, a teacher needs to have the required endorsements. However to become Highly Qualified in mathematics, a teacher must meet federal guidelines for HQ.

Q. What is the PRAXIS test?

A: The PRAXIS is a nationally-normed assessment of content and pedagogy. The USOE has approved some tests in some areas as indicators of Highly Qualified status. Those seeking a Level 2 Mathematics Endorsement must take and pass the Praxis 5161 or 5169. Those seeking a Level 3 or 4 Mathematics Endorsement must take and pass the Praxis 5161. More information on the Praxis can be found on the ETS website at www.ets.org

Q. Does passing the PRAXIS mean I have earned the endorsement?

A: No, coursework is also required. To view a required list of coursework, view the Endorsement Schedule.

Q. What is an ARL?

A: An ARL is an Alternate Route to Licensure. It is a program designed for college graduates without a teaching license that have majored in areas that are closely related to secondary subjects. The ARL program allows a degreed individual to teach while earning their teaching license. In mathematics ARLs are available for those with degrees in mathematics, statistics, engineering, some sciences, and other mathematics intensive majors. Upon completion of the ARL program the teacher will have the license, be properly endorsed, and be highly qualified.

Q. Do I need all the courses on the checklist in order to receive a Utah mathematics endorsement?

A: Yes, you need to have completed the exact courses listed on the checklist in order to receive a Utah mathematics endorsement. The only courses which can be waived are courses which are pre-requisite to other courses on the list. For example if you have passed Calculus, you do not need to have College Algebra on a transcript since it is a pre-requisite for the course.

Q. Will my business statistics course meet the statistics requirement for the endorsement?

A: No. Mathematics classes must be general in nature so as to prepare teachers to deliver a broad picture of mathematics to their students. Mathematics courses specific to other majors such as business statistics or engineering calculus do not meet the requirements.

Q. Where can I find more information?

A: Check out the information available from Educator Licensing: <http://schools.utah.gov/cert/> on the USOE website, where you will find specific course requirements and a description of the process for application.

Professional Development

Q. Where can I find information on professional development in mathematics?

A: Current information on Professional Development can be found on the Secondary Mathematics Website. State-approved or state-sponsored opportunities for professional learning are usually also found in OnTrack. Information about district level in-service is also housed on most district websites.

Q. Can state-sponsored professional development be used for endorsement courses?

A: Only college and university coursework that results in a grade of C or better may be used for endorsement purposes. The courses for mathematics endorsements are very specific. Training in specific pedagogical practices will improve a teacher's practice and should improve student achievement, but does not necessarily lead towards endorsement credit.

Q. Is USOE or college credit available for professional development?

A: Some, but not all, professional development courses carry USOE or college credit. Read the information on individual courses.

Q. Where can I take courses that can be used for endorsements?

A: Endorsement coursework can be completed at any accredited college or university. Each university designs their own schedule and should be contacted for more information regarding current offerings.

In addition, the Utah Mathematics Endorsement Project (UMEP) offers coursework over the Ednet system at times convenient to practicing teachers. These courses are supported with state funds and require only a small registration fee from districts.

Q. How much does professional development courses cost?

A: Many state-sponsored professional development opportunities are free or require only a small registration fee which is usually paid by districts. State sponsored courses that offer college credit usually require a recording fee that is paid by the teacher. USOE credit is awarded without additional fees.

Q. Where can I find funding for support of coursework that is not state-sponsored?

A: Title IIA funds are available in many districts to support professional development and the pursuit of endorsements, especially for teachers who must become Highly Qualified. Districts and Charter Schools plan for the use of these funds in the fall as part of their Consolidating Planning Process. Contact your local administration for more information on the availability of these funds.