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Recognition of Foreign Qualifications

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In the United States, the competent authorities for recognizing previous education and qualifications include entities such as the following:

- Education Institutions (for those seeking to study)
- Employers (for those seeking employment)
- State-Level Licensing Authorities (for those seeking professional licensure)
- Federal Immigration Authorities (for those seeking to obtain/change visa status)

In some instances, the entities mentioned above will evaluate foreign credentials themselves. However, in most instances, they will request that you obtain a **credential evaluation** to determine how one's non-U.S. credentials compare with U.S. credentials. Such evaluations are carried out by private, non-governmental entities for a fee.

*Note: The U.S. Department of Education does **not** evaluate foreign qualifications or degrees. Please **do not** submit evaluation requests or related documentation to the Department.*

To Study

When seeking admission to an educational institution, the competent authority for recognizing previous education and qualifications is the school or higher education institution in which you seek to enroll. Contact the admissions office for instructions. Many institutions and schools evaluate credentials themselves, while some will refer

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you to a credential evaluation service. (See the U.S. Department of State's [EducationUSA](#) page for additional information.)

To Work

When seeking employment, the competent authority for recognizing previous education and qualifications is the employer. For instructions regarding the evaluation of foreign credentials, contact the human resources office of the prospective employer. Some employers will recommend or require that you use a specific credential evaluation service. (See [Working in the United States](#) for additional information).

To Practice a Licensed Profession

Regulated professions in the United States are generally licensed at the state level, and the competent authority for recognizing previous education and qualifications is the appropriate state licensing board in the jurisdiction where you intend to work. In some states, licensing boards have specific procedures for evaluating and recognizing foreign qualifications.

Depending on the state licensing board and the profession, the evaluation of foreign credentials will be done by the board, by a general credential evaluation service or by a specialized credential evaluation service that focuses on a specific profession. The authoritative source of information regarding the evaluation of foreign credentials is the relevant state licensing board.

For additional information about licensed professions, including links to state licensing boards and professional associations, see [Professional Licensure](#).

Important Notes Regarding Credential Evaluation Services

- **There is no federal regulation of credential evaluation services.** The U.S. Department of Education does not endorse or recommend any individual credential evaluation service or any individual association of credential evaluation services.
- **Use a credential evaluation service recommended by the employer, education institution or state licensing authority to which you are applying.**

If no specific credential evaluation service is recommended, you can search online to identify a credential evaluation service on your own.

- **Credential evaluations are not free.** The cost will vary according to the complexity of the case and the amount of documentation you can provide.
- **Credential evaluations are done on an individual, case-by-case basis and take into consideration various factors.** Different credential evaluation services might evaluate credentials differently, according to their criteria.
- **Credential evaluation services generally require English translations of any non-English documents.** For details regarding requirements, consult the entity that will evaluate your credentials.
- **Credential evaluation services generally have in place a process to appeal their recommendations.** If needed, make use of the appeals process provided by the credential evaluation service. (The U.S. federal government has no role in credential evaluation appeals.)