

Office of Teacher Certification

# Teacher Certification System Certified Teachers FAQs

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## Introduction

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In 2022, the new Teacher Certification System (TCS) was launched internally and was released to certified teachers in 2023. This modern, browser-based application replaced an outdated technology solution and is now the official source of information on teacher certification in Nova Scotia.

This document provides some frequently asked questions (FAQs) and answers that may be helpful for Certified Teachers.

## General

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### How do I view the status of my application/request?

Once your application/request has been successfully submitted, you can track its progress in the Teacher Certification System. Go to your profile and click on the Applications/Request tab near the bottom of the screen.

### How do I verify a document has been received?

Under the Applications/Requests tab on your profile, you will see all submitted applications. Click Expand for Details to the right of the application. If there is a check mark in the box next to the required document, it has been received by our office.

### How do I update my personal information?

At any time, you can update your current address, email, phone number and gender from your profile in the Teacher Certification System. Click the edit icon next to any of these fields and enter the correct information. Remember to save your changes. A change in name will require you to complete and submit the Change of Name form.

### How do I change my name?

A Change in Name application can be submitted from Application/ Requests tab of your teacher profile. Proof of legal name change documentation is required to be uploaded upon submission of your application.

### Why does my application/request still say "Incomplete Documentation"?

The application may say "Incomplete Documentation" for one of two reasons:

1. There is documentation pending, that has not yet been received by our office. In this case, the Office of Teacher Certification will notify you by email.
2. The pending documentation has been received by our office from the applicant but has not yet been uploaded into the system.

Once all documentation has been received and added to your profile, the assessment of your application will begin, and the status will change to "In Progress" until a final decision has been made on your application by the Registrar/ Assistant Registrar.

### How do I submit transcripts?

Official Transcripts and Program Completion Letters (if required) must be mailed to the Office of Teacher Certification at the address below and are not to be uploaded with your application. Paper transcripts are only accepted if they are in a university-sealed envelope. Note that a Program Completion Letter is required if you have not yet graduated, and your transcript shows all courses were completed but does not state the degree has been awarded. Mailing address:

Registrar, Office of Teacher Certification  
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
P.O Box 578 Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2S9

Alternatively, you may have your official transcripts sent electronically to the Office of Teacher Certification. Please note that these transcripts must come directly from the university and will not be considered official if received from the applicant.

### How do I find my Professional #?

You can view your professional number from your profile within the Teacher Certification System. It can be found above your name.

Your professional number is the 6-digit number on your teacher's certificate mailed to you.

### How long does it take to process my request?

Applications/Requests take up to 30 days to process from the time that all required documentation has been received. A delay in submitting one or more required documents can result in prolonged processing periods.

### Why don't I have an initial teaching location in my profile?

Only individuals who applied for certification with recognized teaching service from another jurisdiction have an initial teaching location identified in their profile.

### I received my Nova Scotia Teacher's Certificate and do not believe that I have received the correct classification. What should I do?

You should discuss the assessment of your qualifications and the classification of teacher certification granted to you with the Assistant Registrar of Teacher Certification

If the matter is not resolved at that level, you should discuss the matter with the Registrar of Teacher Certification and request a reassessment.

If you are not satisfied with the class of certificate granted and believe the Teacher Certification Regulations have been misapplied to your application, you may request a review by the Certification Appeals Committee. You will be responsible for demonstrating how the Regulations have been applied in error. In this regard, you should contact the following individual:

Chair  
Certification Appeals Committee,  
Education and Early Childhood Development  
PO Box 578  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2S9

Additional information about appeals is located in the Teacher Certification Regulations and on the Office of Teacher Certification website.

### Where can I see the current salary scale for teachers?

Please visit the Teaching Service/Salary page on the Office of Teacher Certification website where you will find a link to the current pay grid. As an alternative, you may refer to the Teachers' Provincial Agreement (page 150-151). [https://nstu.blob.core.windows.net/nstuwebsite/images/Agreements/2012-15\\_TPA\\_Eng.pdf](https://nstu.blob.core.windows.net/nstuwebsite/images/Agreements/2012-15_TPA_Eng.pdf)

### Can I pay for a service with a credit card?

Upon submission of your application/request, you will be given an option to pay online by credit card or Interac.

## Changes in Classification

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### What are the deadlines for Change in Classification submission?

There are two deadlines: September 30<sup>th</sup> and last day of February. The effective date of your change in classification is determined by the date of receipt of your application, the supporting transcripts, and the \$35 fee. If both application, supporting transcripts and fee are received between the period of March 1<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup>, the effective date is August 1<sup>st</sup>; if the application, supporting transcripts and fee are received between October 1<sup>st</sup> and the last day of February, the effective date is January 1<sup>st</sup>. These dates are explicit in legislation and our office does not have the authority to provide any exceptions. It is the responsibility of the applicant to meet legislated deadlines.

### What constitutes a research course for certification upgrade to ATC3?

As per Teacher Certification Regulations, teachers are required to complete 6 credit hours of research methods or research literacy coursework to obtain an ATC3 upgrade. These are approved research courses that both the Office of Teacher Certification and the universities have determined are eligible courses for upgrades.

Many Master of Education programs have research courses included. Please confirm eligibility of these courses with our office before commencement of the program.

If a teacher is completing a certificate or diploma program to obtain their ATC3, applicants must complete the research requirement outside the pre-approved program or in a previous masters degree. This is because certificate and diploma programs do not contain approved research methods/literacy coursework,

Research courses completed outside of a formal program (degree, diploma, or certificate) must be pre-approved by the Office of Teacher Certification unless. Course approval may be obtained by emailing the course number, name, credit hour value, course description and institution to [certification@novascotia.ca](mailto:certification@novascotia.ca). Approved research methods and research literacy courses offered by Nova Scotia universities are located here: [Approved Research Courses OCT 2022.pdf \(ednet.ns.ca\)](#).

### I have a conditional teacher's certificate. Does removal of my conditional status equate to a change in classification?

During the period of validity of your Conditional Teacher's Certificate, you are required to complete the courses indicated on the Evaluation Sheet provided. These courses may be completed at any recognized university and must be approved by the Office of Teacher Certification prior to commencement of the courses. Once all requirements are completed the Removal of Conditional Status form should be completed. A full list of the courses completed will be required and/or a Statement of Professional Standing.

Change in Classification is a separate process. In Nova Scotia there are four regulated methods by which a certified teacher can "upgrade" their certificate classification: Degree program, Certificate program, Integrated program, and Diploma program. Information about these upgrading options is available on the Office of Teacher Certification website.

Upon completion of your approved program of study, you are required to submit an Application for a Change in Classification form to the Registrar, Teacher Certification. You must include with your application official transcripts of your completed program, transcripts of all transfer courses and a money order for \$35.00 payable to the Minister of Finance, Nova Scotia or a copy of your receipt for the electronic payment of the fee.

### What is required if I am using transfer courses?

Along with the official transcripts from the university where you completed your program, you are also required to submit official transcripts for all transfer courses from the university where the courses were originally completed before being transferred.

### How do I submit transcripts?

Official Transcripts and Program Completion Letters (if required) must be mailed to the Office of Teacher Certification at the address below and are not to be uploaded with your application. Paper transcripts are only accepted if they are in a university-sealed envelope. Note that a Program Completion Letter is required if you have not yet graduated, and your transcript shows all courses were completed but does not state the degree has been awarded. Mailing address:

Registrar, Office of Teacher Certification  
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
P.O Box 578 Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Alternatively, you may have your official transcripts sent electronically to the Office of Teacher Certification. Please note that these transcripts must come directly from the university and will not be considered official if received from the applicant.

## Endorsations

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I was expecting an endorsement but I don't see it on my profile. Is there an explanation for this?

If you did not receive an endorsement, it could be due to one of these reasons:

- You completed your Bachelor of Education program and were certified to teach in a different jurisdiction before August 1, 2000. As a result of this, you are certified under the old regulations when teachers were not endorsed by grade level or subject area.
- You started the undergraduate component of a pre-service teacher education program between September 1, 1993 and August 1, 2000 and were certified to teach within 7 years of the first class taken. This would mean you would be certified under the old regulations.
- You meet the minimum standards of certification in Nova Scotia as either a permanently or conditionally certified teacher at the secondary level but have not yet met the endorsement requirements:
  - Major endorsements require 30 credit hours of undergraduate coursework in a teachable subject discipline plus 6 credit hours of secondary teaching methods in that subject.
  - Minor endorsements require 18 credit hours of undergraduate coursework in a teachable subject discipline plus 3 credit hours of secondary teaching methods in that subject.
- If none of these situations apply to you, please reach out to our office at (902)424-6620 or [certification@novascotia.ca](mailto:certification@novascotia.ca).

Why do I have a major endorsement on my certificate when it was a minor on my degree or vice versa?

The requirements a university holds for a major and minor as a component of a degree are distinct from the regulatory requirements for a teacher's certificate major and minor endorsement. Requirements for major endorsement are:

- A minimum of 30 credit hours of university study in one teachable subject discipline, as per the Nova Scotia Public School Program and the Teacher Certification Regulations and;
- 6 credit hours of secondary teaching methods in the related subject field.

Requirements for minor endorsement are:

- A minimum of 18 credit hours of university study in one teachable subject discipline, as per the Nova Scotia Public School Program and the Teacher Certification Regulations and;
- 3 credit hours of secondary teaching methods in the related subject field.

Therefore, teachers receive endorsements based on the criteria outlined above rather than what the university notes on the transcript.



## Program Approvals

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### Why isn't my program pre-approved? What programs are approved for an upgrade?

In Nova Scotia there are four regulated methods by which a certified teacher can "upgrade" their certificate classification:

- Degree program
- Certificate program
- Integrated program
- Diploma program

Each of these programs is defined in the regulations. All certificate programs are expected to meet regional centre for education/CSAP needs and as such, are developed in cooperation with at least one Nova Scotia regional centre for education/CSAP. For this reason, there are currently no certificate programs approved for delivery by a university outside of Nova Scotia. Only certificate and diploma programs developed by Nova Scotia universities are approved by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for increases in classification in our province. This takes place after the program is developed by the local university to meet a local need in education, and then is reviewed and recommended by the Minister's Advisory Council on Teacher Certification. If approved by the Minister, the certificate or diploma program is also required to be approved by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission. All approved certificate and diploma programs are located on the Office of Teacher Certification website.

Regardless of the upgrading option you choose, all programs other than a Master of Education degree offered in Canada must be approved, in advance, by the Registrar, Teacher Certification.

### How do I obtain approval for specific courses?

Course approval may be obtained by emailing [certification@novascotia.ca](mailto:certification@novascotia.ca) with the course number, name, credit hour value, course description and institution.

### What is required if I have transfer courses on my transcript?

Along with the official transcripts from the university where you completed your program, you are also required to submit official transcripts for all transfer courses from the university where the courses were originally completed at before being transferred.

## Service

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### How do I submit teaching service for assessment?

Service letters must be sent directly to the Office of Teacher Certification from the jurisdiction(s) where you taught. Letters can be sent by mail or by email. For more information on what is required within the letters, please follow this link: <https://certification.ednet.ns.ca/how-get-teaching-service-assessed-recognition>. Note that only service meeting the requirements of section 27 the Governor in Council Education Act Regulations can be recognized in Nova Scotia.

### Why is my profile showing 0 days/years of service for the last school year?

Nova Scotia public school service for the last school year is not officially recognized until the fall timeframe, when the Office of Teacher Certification has completed the year-end reconciliation of days taught and claimed. Until the service is officially recognized, any service records for that year will show 0 days recognized. **This is not an error.**

### Have you notified my Employer regarding my service?

Employers are notified on a monthly basis of all changes in service that have been recognized.