



August 2024

Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission

NEWSLETTER

Important Notices

Payment Portal Update:

Access to the online payment portal outside of business hours has been restored. However, the ACH/Check is no longer functioning in the online system until further notice. The credit card payment option is the only function available at this time.

We apologize for any inconvenience, but be sure to plan accordingly as to not accrue late fees.

Reminders for Renewals

Student Records:

Student Records should be housed in a 2-hour fireproof vault or a second copy should be stored offsite and/or in electronic form (preferred format).

Payment of Fees

When submitting fee payments (either electronically or via check), please ensure the institution's name is included on the payment itself. The name should appear how it is written in EDvera. This ensures that payments are credited to the correct institution.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Upcoming Changes in EDvera

Program Application Updates:

GNPEC is creating separate New Program Applications and Program Change Applications for unaccredited and accredited institutions. For unaccredited institutions, new program applications will be limited to a single modality for the delivery of instruction (in-person, online, or hybrid). For each NEW program application submitted, the Program Evaluation Fee will be required per modality. These new applications will be live in September (date TBD). However, this update will only impact authorized institutions if the institution seeks to add NEW programming. Already approved programs will not be required to complete separate modality program change applications. As usual, non-substantive changes will not require a fee payment, but other substantive changes to a program will require the payment of the Program Evaluation Fee.

Teaching Site Reminder

In October of 2023, institutions were notified that any previously approved teaching site being used for the delivery of postsecondary activity in Georgia must acquire authorization. All institutions that were identified as having a teaching site, and that plan to continue operations at that site, must have those sites authorized by December 31, 2024. To meet that deadline, the initial application (and applicable fees) must be submitted by November 1, 2024. If you have any questions, please reach out to your Regulatory Specialist.

Upcoming Events

Sept. 10 at 10:00 AM

Renewal Applicant Training Meeting

Minimum Standard of the Month

The Minimum Standards provide specific criteria for compliance with the standards set forth in Georgia law. These standards are applied equally to all institutions authorized by GNPEC or seeking to get authorized by GNPEC.

Minimum Standard 3 contains information about faculty and staff qualifications. The faculty and staff must be qualified, based on previous education and experience, to fulfill the responsibilities of each of their institutional roles. This standard provides detail about these requirements, and well as information about what must be included in personnel files. For in-state institutions, personnel files are reviewed annually at the Renewal Site Visit. Please reach out to your Regulatory Specialist with any questions about this Minimum Standard.

Standard 3: Faculty and Staff (i.e., Personnel)

Statutory Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 20-3-250.5(b)(2); 20-3-250.6(a)(3)

The faculty and staff must be qualified, based on previous education and experience, to fulfill the responsibilities of each of their institutional roles. Credentials reported must be earned from an institution with accreditation recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, licensure recognized by the State of Georgia, or equivalent based on supporting documentation, as determined acceptable by the GNPEC in its sole discretion. For those educated outside the United States, additional documentation of education must be provided, including evaluation by a certified credential evaluation service at the expense of the institution. If applicable, active state licensure or certification relevant to the specific field of instruction must be maintained.

Faculty (Instructor) Qualifications

1. A certificate-granting institution must employ faculty (instructors) who demonstrate competency in the field for which training is offered, as evidenced by at least one of the following:
 - A bachelor's degree with a major in the field of instruction from an institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education; or
 - At least two years of teaching experience and/or work experience in the field for which training is offered.
 - Faculty must hold valid and current licensure/certification if the field of instruction requires licensure/certification for employment.
2. A degree-granting institution must employ faculty (instructors) who demonstrate competency in the field for which training is offered, as evidenced by the following:
 - A degree in the field of instruction, at least one degree level higher than the program being taught, from an institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education.
 - A reasonable number of faculty must have earned a doctorate or terminal degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education.
 - In some instances, as approved by the Executive Director, experience and professional recognition may be an acceptable substitute for the degree requirement.
 - At least two years of teaching experience and/or work experience in the field for which training is offered.
3. A graduate degree-granting institution must employ faculty (instructors) who demonstrate competency in the field for which training is offered, as evidenced by the following:
 - A doctorate or terminal degree in the field of instruction from an institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.
 - In some instances, as approved by the Executive Director, experience and professional recognition may be an acceptable substitute for the degree requirement.
 - At least two years of teaching experience and/or work experience in the field for which training is offered.
4. The institutional organization chart must reflect adequate personnel necessary to support programming scope.
5. The institution must provide programmed orientation to familiarize new hires with institutional policies and procedures along with job requirements.
 - Faculty and staff must be provided with an employee handbook with confirming attestation of receipt to be documented in employee file.

Staff Qualifications

6. A certificate-granting institution has designated a director who meets at least two of the following requirements:
 - A bachelor's degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education;
 - At least one year of administrative or supervisory experience; and/or
 - At least two years of teaching experience and/or work experience in the specific field for which training is offered.

Continued on next page

7. A degree-granting institution must have a designated director who meets the following requirements:

- A bachelor's degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by United States Department of Education;
 - In some instances, as approved by the Executive Director, experience and professional recognition may be an acceptable substitute for the degree requirement.
- At least two years of administrative or supervisory experience; and
- At least two years of teaching experience and/or work experience in the specific field for which training is offered.

8. Institutions with more than one (1) distinct occupational area that leads to an occupational or academic degree must have a program head (e.g., lead faculty, department chair, dean, etc.) who possesses an educational background equal to or exceeding the maximum credential offered in that program area, the requisite qualifications for technical faculty teaching in a degree program, and an ability to administer the occupational components of the program.

- For an institution offering only one (1) program or group of programs in one distinct occupational area, a single individual may fulfill both the director of education and the program head requirements as long as the individual possesses the requisite qualifications for each position.

9. Institutions must employ administrators and supervisors who meet the following requirements:

- An earned degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education appropriate for the programming of the institution and/or area of responsibility; and/or
- Adequate professional experience and education necessary to satisfy responsibilities of the position.

10. Institutions who employ agents to recruit on behalf of an institution ensure the agents do not engage in advertising, sales, collection, credit, or other practices of any type that are false, deceptive, misleading, or unfair.

Personnel Records

Information on all owners, trustees, board members, faculty, and staff persons must be made available upon GNPEC request.

11. Faculty records must, at a minimum, include the following:

- Proof of employment;
- Record of education and experience (i.e., resume/CV);
- Proof of highest level of education (i.e., transcript/diploma); and
- Proof of completion of orientation and notification of updated institutional policies.