

NEW EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR RID CERTIFICATION

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. WHAT ARE THE NEW EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS?

Q: Why must I have a minimum of an associate's degree to take the NIC, SC:L, or OTC Interview/Performance Exams after June 30, 2009?

A: The RID Membership took a huge stride in elevating the profession of sign language interpreting when they passed motion C 2003.05 at the 2003 RID National Conference in Chicago. This motion mandated that after June 30, 2008, all hearing interpreters must hold a minimum of an associate's degree, in any field, to take the NIC, SC:L, and OTC Interview/Performance Exams. (A degree is not required for the NIC, SC:L, and OTC Written/Knowledge Exams.)

It was recognized that some system of "equivalent alternative criteria allowable in lieu of the educational requirements" was needed for interpreters who had many years of experience and expertise, yet who did not have a degree in higher education. Upon nearing the requirements deadline, it was realized that more time was needed in developing the requirements for the Alternative Pathway, so the deadline was reset to June 30, 2009.

Q: What is the Alternative Pathway to Eligibility?

A: The Alternative Pathway is a system that measures a combination of qualifications that can be collectively considered an acceptable substitute for the new educational requirements. The Alternative Pathway uses a point system that awards credit for college classes, years of full-time interpreting work, interpreter-related training, professional interpreting certifications, and specific volunteer services to RID (including articles published in *VEWS* or the *Journal of Interpretation*). Please visit the RID Web site for more information about the Alternative Pathway.

2. DO THE REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO ME?

Q: If I am currently certified by NAD, RID, or Boys Town (EIPA certification), do I need to provide proof that I meet the educational requirements before I can take a performance exam?

A: Yes.

Q: Do I need to send my transcript to the RID National Office in order to take the NIC Written/Knowledge Exam?

A: No. There are no changes to the requirements for taking any of the written/knowledge exams. However, we highly recommend that all written/knowledge exam candidates think ahead and ensure that they will be able to meet the educational requirements for the corresponding performance exam.

Q: I am a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) and have been interpreting for 18 years. Why do I have to meet the educational requirements?

A: The educational requirements apply to all NIC, SC:L, or OTC Interview/Performance Exam applicants, regardless of the applicant's background, skill level, or certification.

Q: I currently hold an RID certification, but I don't have a college degree. Does that mean I will lose my certification after June 30, 2009?

A: No, as long as you participate in the Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) and fulfill all other requirements, you will continue to hold your certification.

Q: I am already RID certified. I heard there would be grandfathering for the degree requirements, so am I exempt from the requirements?

A: No, there will be no grandfathering for the educational requirements. If you want to take the NIC, SC:L, or OTC Interview/Performance Exam after June 30, 2009, you will need to have at least an associate's degree or successfully meet the requirements of the Alternative Pathway to Eligibility.

Q: I have NIC Advanced certification and would like to re-test to try for NIC Master certification. Since I already hold an NIC certification, will I still need an associate's degree to take the NIC Interview/Performance Exam again?

A: Yes, regardless of certifications already held, all applicants for the NIC, SC:L, and OTC Interview/Performance Exams must have at least an associate's degree

or meet the requirements of the Alternative Pathway to Eligibility in order to satisfy the educational requirements.

Q: I am ready to take the CDI Performance Exam. Do I need to have an associate's degree?

A: No, the new educational requirements that went into effect on June 30, 2009 only apply to the NIC, SC:L, and OTC interview/performance exams. You will need to have an associate's degree to take the CDI Performance Exam beginning June 30, 2012.

3. WHAT SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS?

Q: I do have a 2-year degree (associate's degree), but it has nothing to do with sign language or interpreting. Would this satisfy the educational requirements?

A: Yes, if you have a college degree that is an associate's degree or higher, no matter what your major was, it will satisfy the educational requirements. The degree need not be in interpreting.

Q: I completed a certificate program from a business college. Would this satisfy the educational requirements?

A: Not by itself. Only an actual associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree automatically fulfills the educational requirements. You will need to see if you can gain eligibility through the Alternative Pathway.

Q: I have a 4-year degree (bachelor's degree). Does this satisfy the educational requirements?

A: Yes.

Q: I already passed the NIC Written/Knowledge Exam, but I am not yet eligible to take the interview/performance exam. How long do I have to acquire at least an associate's degree or meet the requirements of the Alternative Pathway to Eligibility?

A: You have 5 years from passing the written/knowledge exam to take the coordinating interview/performance exam. This also applies to the SC:L and OTC exams.

Q: I took my NIC Written/Knowledge Exam last year. I will be graduating from a two (2) year interpreter training program in 6 months. I would like to take the NIC Interview/Performance Exam right now, while everything is fresh in my mind. Can I go ahead and take the exam and then send in a copy of my transcript after graduation?

A: No, you must have officially completed your associate's degree for it to be counted toward the educational requirements. You will need to see if you can gain eligibility through the Alternative Pathway if you want to apply for the performance exam before you graduate.

4. HOW DO I SUBMIT MY TRANSCRIPT?

Q: Can I send my diploma instead of a transcript?

A: No, you need to send a transcript.

Q: Can RID send my transcript back to me after reviewing it?

A: No, RID will not return transcripts.

Q: Someone told me I need to send a sealed transcript from the college I graduated from. Is this true?

A: No, you may send an unofficial or official copy of your transcript.

Q: Where do I send my transcript?

A: Please send your transcript to:

RID
Attn: Cert. & Ed. Dept.
333 Commerce Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Q: May I send my transcript by fax or as an E-mail attachment to expedite processing?

A: No, a copy of your transcript needs to be sent to the RID National Office by postal mail.

5. HOW DOES TRANSCRIPT PROCESSING WORK?

Q: Is there a fee for processing eligibility documentation?

A: There is no fee at this time.

Q: How early will I need to submit my documentation?

A: Verifying your transcript and updating your status will take longer than the previous process. You should submit everything at least four to six weeks prior to your exam date.

Q: How long will it take for RID to process my transcript and how will I know it's been processed?

A: After RID has received your transcript, it will take approximately 2-4 weeks for processing. Once your transcript has been verified, you will receive an e-mail from the Certification & Education Department. Please make sure that the e-mail address in your account is current.

Q: What is the actual process?

A: Candidates have several options. They are as follows: 1) submit exam application, related fee, and college transcript by mail at the same time or 2) register for the exam and pay online and then submit the college transcript via mail. In the latter case, the application and fee will be processed, but the exam registration will be "pending" until the candidate fully meets the prerequisites. Once RID receives the college transcript and is able to verify that the educational requirements are met, an Authorization To Test (ATT) letter will be generated and available to the candidate in the RID account. The candidate is then able to schedule a performance exam.

Q: What is the Authorization To Test (ATT) Letter?

A: The Authorization To Test (ATT) Letter is the official notice given to candidates by RID to take an exam. Please be sure to take your ATT Letter and identification to the exam site. If you do not have your ATT Letter in hand, you will not be permitted to test.

Q: If RID has verified that I meet the current educational requirements and I need to retake an examination, will I need to submit the transcript again?

A: RID will keep the information you submitted for verification on file. If the documentation you submitted shows that you meet the current educational requirements, you do not need to resubmit that documentation.

Q: Once I've paid for the exam, can I go ahead and schedule an appointment for the exam?

A: No, you may not schedule your exam date until you receive E-mail notification from RID that you meet the current educational requirements. The E-mail notification will direct you to your RID account, where you will be able to access and print out your Authorization To Test (ATT) Letter under "Track Tests" in the Testing and CEU Information section. Please make sure that the e-mail address in your account is current so there is no delay in receiving notification.