



08.150 VERIFICATION OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

Authority: Chancellor

History: Effective April 1, 1987; reformatted January 29, 2007; supersedes former Policy No. HR 1.50; revised January 2009; revised March 2011; revised August 2017; revised August 2018

Sources of Authority: N.C.G.S. § 126-30; UNC Policy 300.2.3[R]

Related Links: [Office of State Human Resources Manual](#); [UNCW Policy 08.510 SHRA Disciplinary Action, Suspension, and Dismissal](#); [UNCW Policy 08.521 EHRA Review and Appeal Procedures \(including SAAO I and SAAO II\)](#)

Responsible Office: Human Resources; Academic Affairs

I. Purpose

The university recognizes the need to employ well-qualified employees of the highest integrity. Further, the university understands the need to comply with North Carolina statutes regarding credentials. Therefore, hiring decisions must be based on qualifications known to be accurate and complete. This policy establishes procedures to be followed in verifying the employment credentials of applicants and current UNCW employees.

II. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- A. Applicants for university positions regardless of whether the positions applied for require specific education, registration, or licensing.
- B. Employees subject to the State Human Resources Act (SHRA) and employees exempt from the State Human Resources Act (EHRA), including senior academic or administrative officers (SAAO) and faculty, regardless of date hired.

III. Policy

A. General

- 1. Employment in state government is viewed as a position of trust and carries with it a responsibility to the citizenry who bear the cost. State employees must be of high integrity and represent themselves truthfully in their application materials. Pre-

employment screening and verification of applicant credentials are important components of the employment process and are vital to the university's integrity.

2. Hiring decisions are based in part on the academic and professional credentials provided in the application materials. These credentials include relevant work history; professional registrations, licenses, or certifications; and educational requirements used to meet job qualifications or to set the salary of an applicant.
3. All degrees used to meet job requirements must be from appropriately accredited institutions.

B. Applicant Certification of Credentials

1. Applicants must certify the accuracy and completeness of application materials by signing the application for employment. Further, applicants authorize the verification of credentials and acknowledge their understanding that false information may be grounds for rejection of their application or disciplinary action up to dismissal if employed. Applicants who refuse to sign the appropriate document will not be eligible for employment.
2. Applicants are required to provide an authorized third party translation and verification of foreign degree(s) at their own expense. Human Resources maintains a list of authorized translation service providers.

IV. Procedures

A. Verification of Work History and Professional Credentials

Verification of relevant work history and professional registrations, licenses and certifications are to be completed by the hiring department prior to the effective date of employment as part of the reference check process. Verification of professional registrations, licenses and certifications must come from the issuing source.

B. Verification of Educational Credentials

Educational credentials used to meet job requirements or set salary shall be verified no later than ninety days after the employee's effective date of employment by the responsible party listed below.

1. For SHRA and EHRA non-teaching employees Human Resources will verify the highest degree. New employees complete a "Verification of Educational Credentials" form to assist in contacting institutions and verifying the information they have provided.
2. For faculty—and other employees assigned as instructor of record for any "for credit" course, the hiring department will verify

all undergraduate and graduate degrees via “official” transcripts (see note). In addition to “official” transcripts, the department chair and dean of the academic unit complete a “Certification of Credentials and Qualifications” form for faculty and other employees teaching a “for credit” course and forward it to the office of the Provost to document that the faculty member being appointed meets accreditation standards.

Note: In compliance with accreditation standards, “official” transcripts are those which have been sent directly to the university’s hiring official (or designee) from the degree granting institution. Transcripts which have been marked “issued to student” shall not be considered. Any foreign degrees or other credentials must comply with section III.B.2 of this policy.

V. Falsification or the Provision of Misleading Information Related to Credentials

A. Before Hire

1. Applicants who falsify or provide misleading information related to application materials will be considered ineligible for employment in the position for which the materials were submitted.
2. Previous ineligibility will not bar an individual from applying for other positions which may subsequently become available, provided a new application with accurate data is submitted.

B. After Hire

1. Falsification or the provision of misleading information related to credentials discovered after the employee has been hired will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. State law mandates dismissal where the employee provided false or misleading information in order to meet position qualifications. Any disciplinary action must comply with the Code of the University of North Carolina and pertinent UNC and UNCW policies for SHRA, EHRA non-faculty or faculty employees.
2. Management, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, shall assess the severity of the falsification to determine the level of discipline in situations other than where the employee has provided false or misleading information to meet position qualifications. Factors considered in determining the level of discipline include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Relevance of the employee's position to the university's mission;
 - b. Effect of the false or misleading information on the hiring decision or the advantage gained by the employee over other applicants;

- c. Effect of the false or misleading information on the starting salary.
- d. Advantage gained by the employee in subsequent promotion and salary increases.
- e. Effect of the false or misleading information on the management or operations of the hiring department.