

Policy LICN-006: Experience/Degree Credit for Salary Purposes

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**NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Manual**

Item	Description
Policy Title	Experience/Degree Credit for Salary Purposes
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Statutory Reference	G.S. 115C-12; 115C-268.1; 115C-268.5; 115C-270.5; 115C-270.20; 115C-302.1; 115C-302.10; <u>143-64.80</u>
NC Administrative Code	16 NCAC 06C .0364 EXPERIENCE CREDIT FOR SALARY PURPOSES; 16 NCAC 06C .0364; 06C .0365; 06C .0366; 06C .0367; 06C .0369; 06C .0370

I. Experience Credit as a Professional Educator

Salary for a NC public school employee shall be determined by the amount of creditable experience an individual has. Credit awarded for professional school experience shall be calculated according to the following rules:

1. Full-time work in a school unit of not less than six calendar months within one fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) shall earn one year of experience credit (excluding experience in a one-teacher private school, for example: homeschool). A calendar month is defined as the number of days employed divided by the number of days in the pay period multiplied by the employee's percentage of employment.
2. Part-time work shall require a minimum of 15 hours per week to establish experience credit in a school unit. One year of experience can be earned, if the experience totals six calendar months of full-time experience during a single fiscal year.

3. Partial years of full-time or part-time experience can be combined for experience credit. For example, two years of part-time work can be combined for one year of experience, if it is equivalent to six months of full-time experience. Full-time experience of less than six calendar months in a fiscal year can be combined with another partial year of part-time or full-time experience to equal one year of experience credit.
4. Experience credit for a single year served in two or more school administrative units shall be allowed unless the State Board of Education has been advised that the person's contract was willfully breached during the school year.
5. Credit for college teaching shall be calculated based on the number of clock hours spent in the classroom teaching per week. Six class hours per week shall be considered half-time teaching and twelve class hours per week shall be considered full-time teaching.
6. Service as a tutor, clerical paraprofessional, or substitute teacher shall not be recognized for professional educator experience credit. It may be recognized for non-teaching work experience credit if it meets the criteria identified below in Section II of this policy.
7. Experience credit as a professional educator shall not be awarded for a period of time designated as a leave of absence except as required by Workmen's Compensation and the Uniform Services Employment Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA).
8. One full year of experience credit shall be awarded for every two years of full-time instructional duties performed in an instructional setting while on active military duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, regardless of academic degree held while serving in instructional roles. This applies to military veterans initially employed by an NC LEA or Charter School on or after July 1, 2014. "Non-teaching Experience Credit for Military Experience in Instructional Roles" shall be defined as professional work experience in a dedicated instructional setting while on active military duty that is clearly an instructional role and is verifiable on government issued service documents. Military service for which this credit is awarded must be characterized as honorable. This provision does not apply to JROTC instructors covered under Section III of this policy.
9. One full year of experience shall be awarded to MSA interns who meet the following criteria:
 - a. Enrolled in an approved EPP as a full-time MSA student; and,
 - b. Receives a stipend from either a state-funded or non-state funded source, and,
 - c. Completes a 10-month internship in a public-school unit; or
 - d. Any combination of internship experience and employment experience in an academic year that satisfies the 6-month employment requirement for experience credit.

II. Experience Credit for Non-Teaching Work Experience

For salary purposes, non-teaching work experience can be credited toward an individual's total licensure experience rating on the recommendation of the designated personnel administrator of the NC LEA or Charter School which has employed the individual in a professional position.

"Relevant non-teaching work experience" shall be defined as professional work experience in public or private sectors that is directly related to an individual's area of licensure and work assignment. Credit for non-teaching work experience is not transferable to other licensure areas for which the experience is not relevant. In addition, to be eligible for credit, such experience must meet the following criteria:

1. was at least half-time (20 hours or more per week);
2. was completed after age 18;
3. did not include on-the-job training;
4. was paid and documented.

One year of experience credit can be awarded for every two years of full-time relevant non-teaching work experience completed before the individual earned a bachelor's degree. One year of experience credit can be awarded for every year of full-time relevant non-teaching work experience completed after the individual earned a bachelor's degree. For Class V Career-Technical Trade and Industry Education licenses one year of experience credit can be awarded for every year of full-time relevant non-teaching work experience after the individual has completed the required training and work experience to qualify for the provisional license.

Partial years of full-time or part-time experience can be combined for experience credit. Periodic audits of non-teaching work experience will be conducted by NCDPI and, pursuant to G.S. 143-64.80, LEAs and Charter Schools will be required to repay amounts if duplicate years of experience, experience credit exceeding the policy limits, or credit for non-relevant experience have been awarded.

Public school units shall recommend a professional educator for non-teaching work experience credit in accordance with this Section. The DPI Licensure Section shall accept the recommendation if it finds that the work experience is directly related to the educator's area of licensure or work assignment, based on documentation submitted by the PSU. In making finding, the Licensure Section shall consider the following factors:

1. Alignment between the primary job responsibilities of the prior work experience and the content standards for the subject area that educator has been hired to teach, as defined by the Standard Course of Study.
2. Transferable skills between the prior work experience and the skills required for being an effective educator, as defined by the Evaluation Standards and Criteria for Teachers in SBE Policy EVAL-006, or other evaluation standards appropriate for the position for which the educator has been hired.
3. Any specialized knowledge obtained by the educator through the prior work experience, beyond that taught in a traditional educator preparation program, that could enhance the learning experience for students under the educator's supervision.

III. Experience Credit for JROTC

1. Military experience may be awarded up to a maximum of 10 years for JROTC instructors, based on a minimum of 20 years of service and retirement from the military service.
2. For JROTC instructors who qualify based on fewer than 20 years of service non-teaching experience may be awarded based on the criteria outlined in Sections II and IV of this policy.

IV. Non-teaching Experience Credit for Military Experience in Leadership Roles

Consistent with Section II of this policy, at the recommendation of an employing NC LEA, the Department shall award non-teaching experience credit for military experience for leadership roles performed while on active military duty. This applies to military veterans initially employed by an NC LEA starting July 1, 2014.

With respect to non-teaching military work experience that is not directly related to the area of licensure or work assignment, one full year of experience credit shall be awarded for every two years of full-time leadership duties while on active military duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, regardless of academic degree held while in instructional or leadership roles.

“Non-teaching Experience Credit for Military Experience in Leadership Roles” shall be defined as professional work experience in one or more of the official United States military branches while on active military duty that is clearly a leadership role and is verifiable on government issued service documents. Military service for which this credit is awarded must be characterized as honorable. Experience credit for “Leadership Roles” is limited to verifiable experience in a military leadership position with primary responsibility over a team of other military service members following successful completion of a sanctioned military leadership course.

Members eligible for this non-teaching work experience credit are: commissioned officers, warrant officers, and non-commissioned officers. Junior enlisted members that have not completed formal military leadership training are excluded from eligibility for this credit.

Non-Teaching work experience that is directly related to an individual’s area of licensure and work assignment shall be credited as set forth in Section II of this policy.

Military experience credit may only be awarded once for each role period (i.e. no overlapping credit award). This provision does not apply to JROTC Instructors covered under Section III.1 of this policy.

V. **Graduate Degrees Salary Pay Approval**

~~NCDPI may~~The Department of Public Instruction shall authorize salary on the master’s degree, doctoral degree, or other appropriate degree level ~~(or other appropriate)~~ of the State salary schedule for professional educators who hold a master’s degrees- degree, doctoral degree, or other advanced degrees that ~~do~~ does not lead to a professional educator license if the following criteria are met:

1. The master’s or higher degree is from ~~a regionally accredited IHE~~an accredited institution of higher education or one that was accredited at the time the degree was conferred.
2. The master’s or higher degree is in an education or subject area directly related to an existing area of licensure and current teaching assignment or instructional support responsibilities.
3. The educator’s assignment for the majority (50% or more) of the school day is in the area for which the master’s or higher degree ~~applies.~~applies; and
4. The educator completed at least one course toward that degree prior to August 1, 2013.

Professional educators who were authorized for graduate pay or who received a graduate degree salary supplement prior to the 2014-2015 school year are not required to satisfy the above criteria.

Graduate pay authorized under this Section is limited to professional educators serving in administrative, student services, and teaching positions.

Public School Units may recommend a professional educator for graduate degree salary authorization in accordance with this Section. The DPI Licensure Section shall accept the recommendation if it finds that the graduate degree is directly related to the educator’s area of licensure or work assignment, based on documentation submitted by the PSU. In making this finding, the Licensure Section shall consider the following factors:

1. Alignment between the curriculum of the graduate degree and the content standards for the subject area that educator has been hired to teach, as defined by the Standard Course of Study. To qualify for graduate pay, the educator must have completed a graduate degree in the same subject area that the educator has been hired to teach or at least 18 credit hours of coursework in courses aligned with the content standards for that subject area.
2. Transferable skills between those developed in the graduate degree program and the skills required for being an effective educator, as defined by the Evaluation Standards and Criteria for Teachers in SBE Policy EVAL-006, or other evaluation standards appropriate for the position for which the educator has been hired.
3. Any specialized knowledge obtained by the educator through the graduate degree program, beyond that taught in a traditional educator preparation program, that could enhance the learning experience for students under the educator's supervision.
4. ~~For teachers and student services personnel who complete a degree at the master's, six-year, or doctoral degree level, they must have the following:
 - a. ~~completed at least one course toward that degree prior to August 1, 2013; and,~~
 - b. ~~qualified for the salary supplement pursuant to State Board of Education policy LICN-006**, as it was in effect on June 30, 2013.~~~~

~~**Sections 6.40 and 6.50 from policy LICN-006 that was in effect on June 30, 2013, states the following about graduate pay as referenced above in 4b:~~

~~Licensed public school personnel shall be paid on the salary schedule applicable to their assignment at the highest license level held. This policy shall apply to all areas, including administration, student services, and teaching.~~

~~The Licensure Section shall authorize salary on the master's level (or other appropriate) salary schedule for professional educators who hold master's degrees or advanced degrees that do not lead to a professional educator license if the following criteria are met:~~

1. ~~The master's or higher degree is from a regionally accredited IHE.~~
2. ~~The master's or higher degree is in an education or subject area directly related to an existing area of licensure and current teaching assignment or instructional support responsibilities.~~
3. ~~The educator's assignment for the majority (50% or more) of the school day is in the area for which the master's or higher degree applies.~~

~~The regional accrediting agencies are: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and Western Association of Schools and Colleges.~~

VI. Recommendations and Appeals Panel

~~The Department shall establish an Appeals Panel to consider appeals of requests for non-teaching work experience or graduate salary that have not been approved. The panel shall be coordinated by the Licensure Section. Membership of the panel will include LEA Personnel Administrators, higher education faculty, and representatives of professional teacher associations.~~

1. If the Licensure Section rejects a recommendation from an LEA or charter school to award

non-teaching work experience credit under Section II or authorize graduate degree salary under Section V, the LEA or charter school may appeal the decision to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

2. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall appoint Appeals Panel consisting of no fewer than three staff members from within the Department of Public Instruction to review each appeal.
3. The panel shall consider the factors in Section II or V, and a majority of the panel shall affirm or reverse the decision of the Licensure Section. The decision of the Appeals Panel shall constitute a final agency decision for purposes of G.S. 150B-23.