

Library Teacher Licensure in Massachusetts

Updated 1/15/2023

Educator licenses (including library teacher) are granted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Requirements and conditions for licensure are set by DESE and may be revised from time to time. It should be used as a guide, not as a replacement for DESE information.

Introduction

Candidates for library teacher licensure apply directly to DESE. The application includes proof of coverage of nine essential competencies. Candidates also provide evidence of passing the MTEL test of [Communication and Literacy Skills](#). There are four levels of licensure found [here](#).

The most direct path to licensure is completion of one of two graduate programs in Massachusetts. These programs grant both a graduate degree and an endorsement for Massachusetts licensure. Licensure, however, is complicated by the various backgrounds candidates bring to their applications, including: differing undergraduate and graduate degrees; other licenses held; and, outofstate or international education/experience. Included here are links and information to help you navigate your way to licensure. An application submitted to the DESE will provide you with an official analysis of additional requirements applicable to your particular background. <https://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/apply-check-status-license.html>

- There is no subject matter test. MA instead requires what they call a “competency review” to ensure that all subject matter coverages have been met.
- Any individual can apply for the license at any time. The DESE will respond with specific information about missing areas of coverage which can guide the candidate in deciding whether s/he needs to enroll in a complete advanced degree program or can take separate courses at accredited schools.
- Library Teachers are exempt from the SEI endorsement required in other license areas

[Salem State University](#), and [Simmons University](#) offer accredited programs leading to a master’s degree as well as endorsement for initial license. (Outofstate institutions may offer viable online programs as well.) The Massachusetts programs offer the option of taking courses without matriculation, allowing candidates who do not need the entire program to acquire necessary course work. Each program offers possible course waivers, credit for previous courses, and the ability to tailor the program to individual background and needs. Salem State University offers a [Licensure-only program](#) for experienced educators who hold an initial or professional license in another area.

Useful DESE links

[Office of Educator Licensure](#)

[Teacher Licensing](#)

[How to Obtain an Academic PreK – 12 License](#)

[Educator License and Renewal \(ELAR\) portal](#) Apply for licensure via ELAR. First Time users will create a profile before applying.

License Requirements Tool Navigate the series of pulldown menus as follows: **Field:** 'Academic: Teacher' **Select Field:** 'Library' **Grade:** 'All Levels' **Type:** choose 'Temporary', 'Preliminary', 'Initial', or 'Professional'

The nine 'competencies'

These competencies are common to all types of license. However, specific programs, previous licensures, and experience make this tool unique for each applicant. See below for definitions of "coverage" and options for achieving it.

- Characteristics, uses, and design of information systems, for standard reference sources and appropriate technologies.
- Selection, acquisition, organization, and maintenance of information resources.
- Appropriate equipment for using information resources.
- Development, organization, management, and evaluation of school library media programs and resource centers.
- Literature for children and young adults.
- Selection, adaptation, and production of instructional materials.
- Federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to media, including those governing access to and reproduction of materials.
- Ethical issues affecting library media services.
- Community and governmental resources.

What does "coverage" mean?

From the DESE website:

"Please note that at least 10 hours of professional development activity specific to and completely covering each competency review "coverage of" requirement are necessary to satisfy the requirement. These hours may be gained through completion of any one or combination of the following options: coursework, seminars, workshops, mentored employment, peer coaching, or other professional learning experiences. Additional information regarding a competency review can be found at

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/forms-guidelines.html#educator>

Practicum Standards and Requirements

In the 20162017 school year requirements for all licensure programs will change. The first and most immediate update will be to practicum standards and requirements.

Traditionally, library licensure programs were certified by either the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or the American Library Association (ALA). Recently, a new agreement between organizations changes the accreditation structure. For more information, read this from DESE:

- [Guidelines for Program Approval](#)
- [Guidelines for the Candidate Assessment of Performance \(CAP\)](#)