



State of California
Commission on Teacher Credentialing
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SUBJECT MATTER AUTHORIZATIONS

Effective January 1, 2005, additions to Title 5 Sections 80089.3 and 80089.4 allowed the Commission to issue Introductory and Specific Subject Matter Authorizations in core academic subject areas as an additional option to meet the “highly qualified” requirement under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Although NCLB is no longer in effect, educators may still receive Subject Matter Authorizations to expand their authorized content areas of instruction.

Introductory Subject Matter Authorizations

An Introductory Subject Matter Authorization authorizes the holder to teach the subject matter content typically included in curriculum guidelines and textbooks approved for study in grades 9 and below. This allows an employer to assign a teacher with an Introductory Subject Matter Authorization to teach a class in which the curriculum is for grades 9 and below but the students in the class may be in grades K-12.

Introductory Subject Matter Authorizations are available in the following subjects:

Art - must include coursework in the content areas of art history including aesthetics and appreciation, two-dimensional art including drawing, painting, and printmaking, three-dimensional art including sculpture and ceramics, and photography/computer generated imagery

Dance – must include coursework in the content areas of jazz dance, contemporary dance, and dance theory

English – must include coursework in the content areas of grammar or language structure, advanced composition, speech, drama or theatre, and literature

A Language Other Than English (specify) – must include coursework in the content areas of grammar, composition, culture, conversation, and literature

Mathematics – must include coursework in the content areas of algebra, advanced algebra, geometry, probability or statistics, and development of the real number system or introduction to mathematics

Music – must include coursework in the content areas of vocal music including the analysis of repertoire and literature appreciation for developing musicians, instrumental music including the analysis of repertoire and literature appreciation for developing musicians, aural musicianship, keyboard, music history including music appreciation, world music, conducting and music theory

Science – must include coursework in the content areas of biological sciences, chemistry, geosciences, and physics

Social Science – must include coursework in the content areas of United States history, California history, world history, world civilization or world cultures, physical geography, and United States government

Theater – must include coursework in the content areas of acting, directing and stagecraft

Introductory Subject Matter Authorizations may be added to the following credentials:

- Single Subject Teaching Credential
- Multiple Subject Teaching Credential
- Standard Elementary Teaching Credential
- Standard Secondary Teaching Credential
- Special Secondary Teaching Credential (in academic subjects only)

To qualify, individuals must satisfy the following requirements:

1. possess a valid prerequisite teaching credential
2. complete one of the following:
 - a. 32 semester units (48 quarter units) of non-remedial coursework in the subject, including a minimum of three semester or four quarter units of coursework in each content area. The balance of the units may be in any course within the subject category. (Exception: the subject of Science requires at least six semester or eight quarter units in each of the four science content areas [biological sciences, chemistry, geosciences, and physics]), or
 - b. a degree major from a regionally-accredited college or university in a subject directly related to the subject to be listed on the credential

Specific Subject Matter Authorizations

A Specific Subject Matter Authorization authorizes the holder to teach the specific subject in grades preschool, K-12, and classes organized primarily for adults.

Specific Subject Matter Authorizations are available in the following subjects:

Art History/Appreciation	English Composition	Photography
Biological Sciences	Geography	Physics
Chemistry	Geosciences	Plant Science
Civics/Government	History	Three-Dimensional Art
Dance	Instrumental Music	Two-Dimensional Art
Drama/Theatre	Literature	Vocal Music
Economics (social science)		

Specific Subject Matter Authorizations may be added to the following credentials:

- Single Subject Teaching Credential
- Multiple Subject Teaching Credential
- Standard Elementary Teaching Credential
- Standard Secondary Teaching Credential
- Special Secondary Teaching Credential (in academic subjects only)

To qualify, individuals must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. possess a valid prerequisite teaching credential
2. complete one of the following:
 - a. 32 semester units (48 quarter units) of non-remedial coursework (Exception: the subject of History requires a minimum of 16 semester units in both world history and U.S. history.)

- b. a degree major from a regionally-accredited college or university in a subject directly related to the subject to be listed on the credential

Coursework Requirements

Acceptable coursework must be:

- a. completed with a grade of “C” or better (“credit”, “passing”, or “satisfactory” grades are acceptable)
- b. applicable toward a bachelor’s degree or a higher degree (elective or non-elective, non-remedial)
- c. taken at a regionally-accredited institution
- d. granted regular quarter or semester hour credit
- e. from the subject department of the subject matter authorization being sought

The following coursework may be used as long as it meets the criteria listed above:

- a. community college, correspondence, online, or extension coursework
- b. advanced placement units (requires an official transcript of the course and written verification from the college or university admission or registrar’s office that the units were used towards a bachelor’s degree and are in the subject category of the requested subject matter authorization)

Unacceptable coursework includes:

- a. coursework that is not applicable toward a bachelor’s degree or higher degree (remedial)
- b. professional development or continuing education units
- c. in-service training or workshops
- d. education and education methodology coursework unless a letter is provided by the chair of the subject area department stating that the course is equivalent to one offered by that department
- e. coursework from a department other than the subject matter authorization being sought unless a letter is provided from the chair of the subject area department stating that the course is equivalent to one offered by that department

How to Apply

Applications for adding subject matter authorization content areas to a credential may be submitted to the Commission by mail including the following items:

1. A completed application ([form 41-4](#))
2. Official transcripts verifying qualifying degree held or coursework completed. You may be required to submit photocopies of the catalog course descriptions or a course syllabus if the content of any course you wish to use to qualify for a subject matter authorization is not clear from the course title.
3. [Application processing fee](#)

For more detailed information, including instructions for converting supplementary authorizations to subject matter authorizations, please refer to the [Subject Matter Authorization Guideline Book](#), available on the Commission’s website. You may also contact the Commission by email at credentials@ctc.ca.gov

References: California Education Code, Section 44225, and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sections 80089.3 and 80089.4