

Subject-Matter Competence for the Education Specialist Credential

A candidate for an Education Specialist Credential must demonstrate subject-matter competence, in a minimum of one subject, through one option identified below for the preliminary or intern credential. Subject-matter competence must be met prior to student teaching, or for intern candidates, before being given daily whole class instructional responsibilities or becoming the teacher of record. The Education Specialist Credential authorizes the teaching of all subjects within the specialty area(s) listed on the credential.

The determination of an individual’s status as a Highly Qualified Teacher for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is the responsibility of the employer and independent of the subject-matter competence requirement for the individual’s teaching credential.

Option to Meet Subject-Matter Competence	Type of Education Specialist Credential	
	Level I (1997)	Preliminary (2009)
Pass appropriate Multiple Subject subject-matter examination(s)*	May be used	
Complete Commission-approved elementary subject-matter program	May be used	Not an option
Pass appropriate Single Subject subject-matter examination(s)*	May be used in any subject area	May be used but is limited to Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) core academic subject areas <i>(see below)</i> ¹
Complete Commission-approved Single Subject subject-matter program		
Hold a valid general education elementary or secondary General or Standard Teaching Credential or Standard Restricted Credentials	May be used – no restriction on which subject area is listed on the document or how subject matter was met <i>(General Credentials have no majors or minors)</i>	
Hold a valid elementary or secondary Ryan or SB 2042 Multiple or Single Subject Teaching Credential	May be used – no restriction on which subject area is listed on the document or how subject-matter was met for the document <i>(review documents for individuals prepared out-of-state or out-of county if subject-matter competence has been met)</i>	
Applying for an Early Childhood Special Education Credential	Subject-matter competence is not required	

*Scores must be used for certification within five years of the passing date for each examination.

¹ NCLB Core Academic Subject Areas include English, economics, reading/language arts, mathematics, history, science, arts, geography, civics/government and foreign language which may be demonstrated in California by the passing the following Commission examinations or completing a Commission-approved subject matter program:

- art
- English
- music
- mathematics, including foundational-level mathematics
- foreign language
- science, including foundational-level general science or specialized science
- social science

In addition, the elementary level is an NCLB Core Academic Subject Area which may be demonstrated in California by passing the appropriate Commission examinations for the Multiple Subject Credential.

