This advisory clarifies the bachelor’s degree requirement for Initial baccalaureate teacher preparation programs.

### **Definition of *Bachelor’s Degree* Programs**

Based on the definition of Bachelor’s Degree in [603 CMR 7.02](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=02), DESE’s requirements for the degree conferred upon completion of an Initial Baccalaureate program are as follows:

* The degree conferred upon completion of requirements must be a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree;
* The major must be in one or more academic subjects in the arts or sciences or a major appropriate to the instructional field for the license sought; this could include a major in education.
* **The specific major of the degree is not defined by DESE.**

### **Specifications for Organizations that Currently Hold Initial BaccalaureateProgram Approvals**

### Organizations that currently hold state approval to deliver Initial Baccalaureateprograms may change the major earned through completion of that program. If the change in major does not impact the program of study approved by DESE, the Organization must notify DESE of the change via its State Annual Report update. However, if the change in major results in a new or revised program of study, the Organization must submit the updated program of study with annotations noting the differences. DESE will review the updated program of study to ensure it continues to meet requirements. No Needs Assessment would be required for these changes as they would be made to an existing program.

As organizations think about changes to their baccalaureate program majors, please consider the following:

* The subject matter knowledge (SMKs) requirements are being revised for several license areas based on updated MA Curriculum Frameworks. The updated SMKs will be released in March/April 2018 and will be expected to be implemented by September/October 2019. Please see the following link to the updated Regulations: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=03>.
* Additionally, if your education program has been approved by the Board of Higher Education, only programs with substantial changes will need to go through a new program approval process. The Department of Higher Education defines a substantial change as a redesign of at least 30 credits or more to an approved program at institutions that were chartered after 1943. For more information on new programs please visit <http://www.mass.edu/foradmin/academic/publicnewdegrees.asp>. If you would like to change the name of your program, please visit <http://www.mass.edu/foradmin/academic/publicchangeprograms.asp>.