**Instruction Domain Worksheet**

**Specialist Teacher Programs**

This worksheet includes instructions for sponsoring organizations to provide evidence for each criterion in the Instruction domain. A separate worksheet should be completed for each Specialist Teacher program being put forward for approval through Informal or Formal Review.

If proposing an Initial Teacher, Professional Teacher, Administrator, Professional Support Personnel, or Endorsement program, please see specific worksheets for each type of license [here](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/review/toolkit/informal/).

Within this document, you will find:

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# Domain Overview

**Instruction Domain Vision***:* The sponsoring organization provides effective instruction to all candidates and ensures that all completers have the requisite content knowledge and evidence-based pedagogical skills, including curriculum literacy and anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, for the licensure role.

**Instruction Domain Overview**: An effective educator is one who uses evidence-based practices, including anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, to nurture and cultivate academic achievement, cultural and linguistic competence, sociopolitical awareness, and emotional intelligence. In order to prepare effective educators, programs of study must provide all candidates with access to effective instruction in relevant content knowledge, evidence-based pedagogical skills, and curriculum literacy competencies. All programs should also embed field-based experiences into coursework to provide candidates with opportunities to observe and apply practices in the PK-12 setting. Throughout, sponsoring organizations should ensure that candidates develop the ability to continuously reflect on their own identities, biases, and practices in the licensure role. Sponsoring organizations must intentionally design and routinely update programs of study and associated coursework.

Within the Instruction domain, each program or grouping of similar programs is evaluated independently, rather than at the organization level. The criteria in the Instruction domain are differentiated to reflect these expectations and responsibilities as they relate to Teacher, Specialist Teacher, Professional Support Personnel, and Administrator roles.

For additional details, see the Instruction Domain section of the [2023 Guidelines for Educator Preparation Program Approval](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/program-approval/).

# Program Information

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| **Sponsoring Organization Name** |
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| **Proposed Program** |
| Licensure Field, Grade Span, Type, and Level (e.g., Elementary, 1-6, Initial, Baccalaureate)  If proposing to offer the same license at both the baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate levels, a separate Instruction Domain Worksheet must be completed for each. |
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| **Program Delivery** |
| Please indicate the delivery model for this program.  Appendix I of the [2023 Guidelines for Educator Preparation Program Approval](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/program-approval/) provides information relevant to the varying models. |
| On main campus  Off campus/satellite location  Hybrid (online and face-to-face)  Online |
| If hybrid or online, which aspects of the program requirements will be asynchronous? Approximately what proportion of the entire program of study does this reflect? |
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| If hybrid or online, how will your organization ensure that asynchronous learning experiences are consistent with other delivery models in rigor and alignment to DESE expectations? |
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| **Program Variations** |
| DESE approves programs based on the endorsement they lead to (e.g., Elementary 1-6, Initial, Post-Baccalaureate). Sponsoring organizations may offer multiple pathways that lead to the same endorsement (e.g., an MAT, MEd, and licensure-only track that all lead to the Elementary 1-6, Initial, Post-Baccalaureate endorsement). These are known as “program variations,” all of which must be recorded and approved by DESE.  Please list all proposed program variations below. If your sponsoring organization will offer multiple pathways to the same endorsement, list all variations below and complete the open responses that follow. If your sponsoring organization will offer a single pathway, you may skip this section. |
| [Variation Title]- [brief description of what makes the pathway distinct] |
| [Variation Title]- [brief description of what makes the pathway distinct] |
| [Variation Title]- [brief description of what makes the pathway distinct] |
| **Are enrollment requirements the same across variations?**  If not, please describe the differences and submit separate enrollment requirements for each variation with **differences highlighted or annotated.** |
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| **Is the program of study the same across variations?**  If not, please describe the differences and submit a separate program of study for each variation with **differences highlighted or annotated.** |
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| **Are the Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) requirements screened consistently across variations or covered in the same courses across variations?**  If not, please describe the differences and submit a separate SMK Matrix for each variation with **differences highlighted or annotated**. |
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# Required Documents

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| **Instructions** |
| Please submit this completed worksheet along with the following required documents in the Instruction Domain folder within DESE’s SharePoint*.* Ensure that course numbers and titles are consistent across all documents to support the clarity and accuracy of DESE’s review.  Many of these documents likely exist within your organization, though they may have different names. Except where noted below, there is no required format for these materials. We encourage you to reach out to DESE before significantly adapting any existing materials.  **Guidance for** **program variations**: If any of the documents differ between variations, a separate document must be submitted for each pathway.   * **Organize by document type:** Save documents of the same type in a single folder (e.g., programs of study for all variations in one folder, SMK matrices for all variations in another folder). Do not group documents by program variation. * **Use clear file names:** Include the variation title in the document name. * **Indicate differences:** Highlight or annotate how documents for variations differ. |
| * **Enrollment requirements**: A description of the specific requirements for candidates to enroll in the preparation program, including whether and how the program screens prior content knowledge at the functional level and any changes to the program of study that may result from this screening (e.g., waivers, additional coursework). * **Program of study:** For the purposes of this review, “program of study” refers to the coursework, seminars, workshops, field experiences, and any other program components that are required for the completion of an approved Massachusetts educator preparation program. Within each sponsoring organization this may also be known by another name (e.g., advising sheet, degree checklist).   + Required courses must be differentiated from electives. If candidates may select courses to cover a requirement it should be clear.   + If there is a required course sequence, this should be clear. * **Course descriptions:** A high-level overview (typically one paragraph) of key content covered in each course listed within the program of study, including the course number and title. * **Course syllabi:** For each course referenced in the program of study a complete syllabus should be provided.   + Each syllabus should clearly outline 1) course objectives, 2) a schedule of topics, 3) key assignments/assessments, and 4) core texts or resources. It is helpful, but not required, to list which SMK is addressed.   + Each syllabus should be provided in a separate document; the title of which should align exactly with the course numbers/titles in the program of study.   + If multiple instructors teach the same course, only one syllabus should be submitted for review. While individual instructors may tailor the approved syllabus, core content approved by DESE must remain consistent. * **SMK Matrix:** Using DESE’s SMK Matrix template(s), list the course(s) where content fluency is developed. Please reference the [2024 Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/) and the overview section in the template(s) for further information. |

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# Worksheet Prompts

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| **Instructions** |
| The suggested response length for each prompt below is 500 words.  When referring to specific courses in your responses below, please make sure that course numbers and titles match those used in the program of study, course descriptions, syllabi, and matrices. |

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| **INS 1: The sponsoring organization regularly examines and updates the program(s) of study to ensure content and practices throughout the program(s) that:**   * **Represent diverse identities, experiences, and perspectives; and** * **Align with current evidence-based practices, including anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.** |
| Explain how your sponsoring organization will regularly examine and update the program of study to ensure content and practices throughout this specific program that **represent diverse identities, experiences, and perspectives**.  When responding, please include information about the individuals responsible for these reviews as well as the frequency, format, criteria, and tools that will be used to conduct these evaluations. |
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| Explain how your sponsoring organization will regularly examine and update the program of study to ensure content and practices throughout this specific program that **align with current evidence-based practices, including anti-racist and** [**culturally and linguistically sustaining practices**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/culturally-sustaining/default.html)**.**  When responding, please include information about the individuals responsible for these reviews as well as the frequency, format, criteria, and tools that will be used to conduct these evaluations. |
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| Describe how your sponsoring organization’s course structures and pedagogy will **model anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices for candidates**. |
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| **INS 2: The program(s) of study ensures all candidates develop the fluent content knowledge required for the licensure role (as articulated in the** [**2024 Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/)**).** |
| If SMK is not covered at the functional level directly within the program of study, explain how your sponsoring organization will screen candidates for the required SMK.   * What will the program’s entrance requirements be? * What process will be used to assess incoming candidates’ content knowledge? * How will the program support candidates with differing content knowledge levels or identified content gaps?   Please reference the SMK Matrix(es) for the proposed license to determine the content knowledge and practices that must be covered. |
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| Describe how specific courses and field-based experiences outlined in the program of study are designed to ensure that all candidates develop the fluent content knowledge and practices required for the licensure role.  Please reference the SMK Matrix(es) for the proposed license to determine the specific content knowledge and practices that must be covered and assessed. |
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| Provide an overview of the evidence your organization will collect to identify **trends** **in candidates’ strengths and areas for growth** in their content fluency.   * How frequently will this occur? * How will these trends be used to inform updates to the program? |
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| Fill in the table below to describe how your organization will assess **individual candidates’** content fluency. |

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| Which assessment will be used? (e.g., first gateway task in course \_\_) | What is the timing and purpose of this assessment? | What steps will be taken if a candidate does not demonstrate the required content fluency? |
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| **INS 3: The program(s) of study ensures that all candidates develop the evidence-based pedagogical skills needed to be effective educators (as articulated in the Professional Standards for Teachers[[1]](#footnote-2)** |
| *Not applicable for Specialist Teacher programs.* |

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| **INS 4: The program(s) of study ensures that all candidates develop the curriculum literacy skills needed to be effective educators through opportunities to critically analyze the quality of, understand the instructional approaches in, and skillfully use curricular materials (as articulated in Appendix G of the** [**2023 Guidelines for Educator Preparation Program Approval)**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/program-approval/)**.** |
| **Curriculum Literacy:** A growing body of research indicates that curricular materials make a difference in student outcomes and can have a significant impact on ensuring educational equity. All educator candidates should have coursework and field-based experiences that prepare them to be curriculum literate in their licensure role. Regardless of the quality of curricular materials used in the school or district where completers are ultimately employed, educators must be able to:   * understand the integration and connections that are at the core of high-quality materials; * discern whether materials are high or low-quality in order to adjust or adapt them; and * skillfully use materials through evidence-based practices that are inclusive and culturally and linguistically sustaining to ensure the enacted curriculum supports and engages all students.   For additional information about curriculum literacy and high-quality curricular materials, see Appendix G of the [2023 Guidelines for Educator Preparation Program Approval](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/program-approval/) and DESE’s [Curriculum Matters](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/) and [CURATE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/curate/default.html) webpages. |
| Describe how specific courses and field-based experiences outlined in the program of study are designed to ensure that all candidates have **opportunities to critically analyze the quality of curricular materials.** What criteria will candidates use for this analysis? |
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| Describe how specific courses and field-based experiences outlined in the program of study are designed to ensure that all candidates have **opportunities to understand the instructional approaches in curricular materials.** What instructional approaches will be covered? |
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| Describe how specific courses and field-based experiences outlined in the program of study are designed to ensure that all candidates have **opportunities to skillfully use curricular materials**. How will the program model and scaffold skillful use? |
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| Describe how the specific courses and field-based experiences outlined in the program of study are designed to support candidates to **enhance materials that are not culturally and linguistically sustaining.** |
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| Fill in the table below to describe how your organization will **assess individual candidates’** **curriculum literacy skills.** |

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| Competency | How is this integrated into the program of study (identify specific courses)? | Which PK-12 curricular materials will be utilized? Why were these specific materials selected? | How and when in their program will candidates be assessed on this competency? | What steps will be taken if a candidate does not demonstrate the expected level of understanding? |
| Understand that the integration and connections among content expectations, aligned curricular materials, and student engagement are at the core of high-quality equitable instruction. |  |  |  |  |
| Discern high-quality curricular materials from low-quality curricular materials to advocate for high-quality curricular materials. |  |  |  |  |
| Skillfully use materials through evidence-based practices that are inclusive and culturally and linguistically sustaining, to ensure the enacted curriculum supports and engages students to reach their full potential. |  |  |  |  |

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| **INS 5: The program(s) of study is intentionally designed such that sequencing and connections between courses build candidates’ readiness for full responsibility in the licensure role.** |
| Describe how the specific courses and field-based experiences outlined in the program of study are designed such that sequencing and connections between courses will build candidates’ readiness for full responsibility in the licensure role.   * How will topics, texts, and assessments across courses connect and/or build on each other to support candidates to demonstrate fluent content knowledge and evidence-based pedagogical skills by the end of the program? |
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| Describe the evidence your organization will collect to identify strengths and areas for growth in sequencing and connections between courses.   * How frequently will this occur? * How will these trends be used to inform updates to the program? |
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| **INS 6: The program(s) of study embeds field-based experiences such that candidates have opportunities to observe, apply, and reflect on evidence-based practices, including anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogy.** |
| Describe how field-based experiences (including both pre-practicum and practicum experiences) and aligned coursework will provide candidates with opportunities to observe, apply, and reflect on evidence-based practices, including anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogy. |
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| Describe how sponsoring organization faculty/staff will communicate and collaborate with Program Supervisors and Supervising Practitioners to support intentional connections between coursework and field-based experiences. |
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**Supplemental Documents (Optional)**  
Provide up to three additional documents that provide further evidence for any criteria within the Instruction domain. Please indicate how each document aligns to specific criteria and provides evidence beyond required materials, including any pages or portions that are particularly relevant.

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| Title of Document | Aligned Criterion | Brief Explanation of Alignment and Evidence |
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1. In June 2024, DESE will release an updated [Model Rubric for the Evaluation of Classroom Teachers](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/rubrics/updates/) that integrates and strengthens culturally and linguistically sustaining practices throughout the Standards of Effective Practice. The Professional Standards for Teachers and CAP will be updated to align with the rubric during the 2023-2024 academic year. Programs will be expected to implement the updated expectations in the 2025-2026 academic year. Draft materials and updates are available on [DESE’s website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/).   [↑](#footnote-ref-2)