

Advanced Degree Documents Instructions

1. **Diploma** - For each degree that we are claiming as an advanced degree, we should submit a scanned copy of your diploma. It should show
 - 1) your name;
 - 2) the name of your university;
 - 3) the degree that was awarded to you, and
 - 4) the date that it was awarded.

It should be clear that the diploma has been provided by your university. A PDF file of your diploma should be sufficient.

- a. **Common issue: University did not provide an English diploma.** If your university issued your diploma in a language other than English and did not provide you with an English version, you should contact a translation service to get your diploma translated. Alternatively, if you or a colleague is fluent in the language that your diploma was issued in, you may translate it. In that case, the person translating it should fill out and sign a translation affidavit.
 - b. **Common issue: University provides only Latin diplomas.** If your university issues diplomas only in Latin, your university may offer a translation template for diplomas online. If your university does not provide such a translation, then you may need to contact a translation service in order to obtain a translation of your diploma.
2. **Transcripts** - We should also submit a scanned copy (PDF format) of the official transcripts for the advanced degree that we are claiming to meet the advanced degree requirement. Your transcript should clearly come from your university, should be official, and should be printed on or after the conferral date on your diploma. In addition, the following information should appear on your transcripts:
 - The name of the degree you received
 - Your field of study (major) for the degree
 - The date you received the degree (if not visible, the date you completed the requirements for receiving this degree should likely be sufficient)
 - Your dates of attendance (the months/years in which you began and concluded your studies should be sufficient)

- a. **Common issue: Transcripts state that they are “unofficial.”** We should not submit transcripts that state that they are unofficial, since USCIS is clear about the requirement that an official academic record be provided for each advanced degree. You should contact your university and make sure to request a scanned copy (PDF format) of your official transcripts. Some transcripts also mention black and white copies are considered unofficial, so providing color copies of transcripts is preferred.
 - b. **Common issue: Transcripts were printed before the conferral date shown on your diploma.** We recommend against submitting transcripts that were printed before you received your degree. In most cases, these transcripts will not show the conferral date. If you received your transcripts during your studies, instead of afterward, they will likely not be considered sufficient since they are not complete. You should request that your university provide you with updated transcripts.
 - c. **Common issue: University does not provide transcripts for the degree you received.** If your university does not issue transcripts for your degree, there are two alternatives that can be submitted in place of official transcripts:
 - i. **A diploma supplement.** A diploma supplement should be issued by your university and should be official. It should describe the program you attended and should list the degree you received, your field of study, the date you received your degree, and your dates of enrollment in the program.
 - ii. **A letter from the registrar.** Similar to a diploma supplement or transcripts, a letter from your university’s registrar can be submitted in place of official transcripts. We strongly recommend that it be scanned with official letterhead and that it be signed by your university’s registrar. It should show the name of your degree, your field of study, the date you received the degree, and your dates of enrollment in the program.
3. **Degree Evaluation (Degrees from outside the U.S. only)** - In order to claim a foreign degree as an advanced degree, you will need to submit a degree evaluation showing that it is equivalent to a degree earned from an accredited US institution. If you hold an advanced degree from a US institution, and are able to provide a diploma and official academic record for this degree, then you should not need to obtain a degree evaluation. If you need a degree evaluation, we recommend that you use one of the providers on NACES.org to get your degree evaluated. A general evaluation of your degree’s equivalency should be sufficient, and it should not be necessary to obtain a

course-by-course evaluation. So long as your degree evaluation states that your degree is equivalent (some providers use the term “comparable”) to an advanced degree earned from an accredited US institution, it should be usable.

- a. **Common issue: Degree evaluation does not state that your degree is equivalent to a US advanced degree.** Sometimes, a degree evaluator may not be able to conclude that your advanced degree is equivalent to one earned in the United States. For instance, your evaluation may say that your degree is equivalent to a bachelor’s degree or “X years of study” in a graduate program. If this is the case, your degree evaluation will not be usable and you will need to obtain an evaluation from a different provider.
- b. **Common issue: Date of graduation or other information is not consistent with the diploma and transcript.** You should try to get the evaluation service to correct the date of graduation or other information on the degree evaluation to match the other documents we are submitting.

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