

Documentation for International Student Admission Applications

INT-08



About This Policy

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Responsible University Office:

Office of the International Services

Responsible University Administrator:

Vice President for International Affairs

Policy Contact:

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sallaei@iupui.edu[Scope](#)[Policy Statement](#)[Reason For Policy](#)[Procedure](#)[Definitions](#)[Additional Contacts](#)[History](#)[Back to top ↗](#)

Scope

International admission offices of Indiana University.

[Back to top ↗](#)

Policy Statement

Official Document Verification Requirements

Applicants are required to submit official transcripts from all previous secondary and/or postsecondary educational institutions attended, as relevant to the level of application. Final, official transcripts must either be sent directly by the institution to the respective international admissions office in a sealed envelope or submitted by the applicant in a sealed envelope with the institutional seal or signature on the unopened envelope flap. An official transcript, exam result, or degree certificate is a verification of the academic record issued from the original issuing source (i.e., college, university, examining board or secondary school), in the original language(s) in which the school executes official documents as a standard practice. Official documents must arrive in the original unopened envelope as issued by the originating institution.

If the degree is not posted on the transcript, a separate official degree certificate or diploma must be presented to verify the type of degree awarded and the date of award. Verification of graduation is required.

Official transcripts or degree certificates issued in languages other than English must be accompanied by an official translation to English unless the issuing institution routinely also issues the documents in English (Taiwan, Germany, Iran, etc.). The international admissions director has the discretion to waive the official translation requirement when an IU faculty or staff member is available to verify the original language document.

IU international admissions offices will conduct ongoing research on countries and institutions for which documents are routinely issued in English.

Official certificates of secondary exam results issued by the examining body (O-Levels, A-Levels, WAEC, or others) must be sent directly by the examining board when online verification is not available via scratch card or other verification method.

IU international admissions offices will conduct ongoing research on online exam verification options available to verify both secondary and postsecondary qualifications (exam results, degrees awarded, etc.).

Not all countries follow standard procedures for issuing or verifying academic credentials, and practices across education systems constantly evolve.

IU international admissions offices will conduct ongoing research on countries for which special handling of documents is required.

When possible, these research initiatives may be outsourced to an external credential evaluation service.

Disposition of documents submitted in support of an application

All supporting materials submitted in support of an international application for admission to a campus within the Indiana University (IU) system become the property of IU and are not returnable. Original documents are not to be returned or released as copies to the student or any external third party. This policy pertains to all documents submitted with an application, including but not limited to academic records, test score reports, and financial documents.

Standard Exceptions

Academic documents sent directly by foreign governments or embassies with student placement divisions (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, etc.) are acceptable as official documents, as are transcripts verified/stamped by educational placement agencies operating US or binational government-funded programs overseas that verify credentials as a standard part of their selection process (e.g. Fulbright, IREX, AMIDEAST, LASPAU). Transcripts may arrive from these sources either via e-mail (in an admission dossier referral) or in sealed envelopes. This recognition does not extend to EducationUSA advisors, who do not have the authority to validate a transcript.

In those cases where a separate, official diploma must be submitted to verify graduation, the official diploma will be returned to the student.

Other Exceptions

Given the wide variation across world education systems, exception requests will arise on a regular basis. UA-OIS and IN-OIA international admissions directors are charged with resolving exception requests expeditiously in accordance with the intent of this policy and may authorize members of their Assistant/Associate Director leadership teams to handle exception requests.

[Back to top ^](#)

Reason For Policy

Official international documents present in a broad range of document types, with many variations from country to country; and often, from institution to institution within countries. Therefore, international admission officers require extensive resources, clear guidelines to facilitate efficient and professional document verification and handling, and broad authority as professionals to make discretionary exception decisions.

Additionally, it is a standard practice within the admissions profession to retain original documents as the property of the institution to which the prospective student has applied.

Procedure

Students are encouraged to upload copies of required admission documents to the Sunapsis IOM environment for admission evaluation and processing purposes. IU international admission offices can use unofficial transcripts from international institutions to evaluate applications for admission, but students are required to submit official documents before the end of the first term of enrollment. Failure to provide official documents results in holds on students' registrations. Official transfer credit evaluations cannot be posted in SIS unless an official, final transcript has been received.

Within the university, documents will be made available electronically to authorized staff via the Sunapsis International Office Module.

After authentication and scanning, paper documents received in support of **undergraduate applications** will be retained on file in the UA-OIS Office of International Services (UA-OIS) for the Bloomington campus, and the IUPUI Office of International Affairs (IN-OIA) for the Indianapolis campus for a period of one year to aid in resolving any questions about authenticity. After one year, documents will be destroyed.

For the Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses, documents received in support of **graduate applications** will be authenticated, and scanned into Sunapsis. Disposition of graduate documents will be handled at the campus level, in collaborations with UA-OIS or IN-OIA. It is the responsibility of the graduate academic department to abide by policies imposed by the respective School or Graduate School with regard to document retention and purging.

For the regional campuses, procedures designed to maintain equivalent standards for document verification and management will be outlined in the UA-OIS Service Level Agreement covering international admission services.

Definitions

Official Transcript and Degree Certificate: An official transcript, exam result, or degree certificate is a verification of a student's academic record issued from the original issuing source (e.g., college, university, examining board, or secondary school), in the original language(s) in which the school executes official documents as a standard practice. Official documents arrive in the original, unopened envelope issued by the originating institution. When submitted directly by the student, the academic document must be presented in a sealed envelope with an institutional stamp or signature on the unopened envelope flap.

An official transcript or degree certificate is not a:

- document that has been authorized by an official notary or government office that is not specifically authorized to issue or verify academic records;
- photocopy of a document;
- document that arrives without an envelope or in an open envelope; nor a
- translation of a document.

Official Translation

An official translation is an exact, precise English translation of an academic document that has been prepared by the issuing institution or a professional translator, including instructors of foreign languages at accredited institutions. An official translation is not a document translated by the student, family member, or friend.

Official Exam Results Certificate

An official secondary exam certificate is a verification of exam results issued by the examining body (O-Levels, A-Levels, WAEC, or others). Official exam results arrive in an original unopened envelope as issued by the examining body.

An official exam certificate is not a:

- transcript issued by the school or college;

- other document produced or authorized by a school or college; nor a
- photocopy of a certificate.

[Back to top ^](#)

Additional Contacts

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[Back to top ^](#)

History

Endorsed by IU International Admissions Policy and Practice Council, 1/9/2015

Approved by Associate Vice President for International Services, 1/11/2015