

• **Question:** How do I **apply** for INITIAL teacher certification?

**Answer:** Access <http://www.ed.sc.edu/SA/InitCert.pdf> for complete instructions.

• **Question:** What are the **deadlines** for applying for INITIAL teacher certification?

**Answer:** If you are student teaching (Clinical Experience/Student teaching /Internship II/Internship B/Practicum) in the Fall, the application deadline is December 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. If you are student teaching in Spring, the deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous year. If you are student teaching in the Summer, the application deadline is December 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. *Please note that failure to submit your application by these established deadlines, will result in your inability to student teach*

• **Question:** What **Fees** are required for Certification?

**Answer:** You will submit a nonrefundable fee to the SC Department of Education (SCDE) along with your electronic certification application; a fee to L-1 Identity Solutions Enrollment Services Division (L-1) for electronic fingerprinting; and a nonrefundable fee will be charged to your University Tuition Bill the semester you register for student teaching/internship/clinical experience.

• **Question:** What **exams** do I have to pass in order to receive certification?

**Answer:** You must pass the required portions of the Praxis II specialty area examination AND the appropriate Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) examination in order to receive SC certification. Please visit [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org) for specific information including test codes, test locations, fees, dates and registration materials.

• **Question:** Where should I go to complete my **fingerprinting**?

**Answer:** The SCDE has contracted with L-1 to provide fingerprinting services for our students. Register online with L-1 at <http://www.l1enrollment.com/> or call 866-254-2366 to schedule an appointment for electronic fingerprinting. L-1 has an office in Columbia at Pavillion Office LLC (L-1), 5000 Thurmond Mall Suite 357, Columbia 29201. You may also wish to check with your advisor to see if an on-site (at USC) fingerprinting has been scheduled. **A previous criminal record may affect your ability to student teach. If you have specific questions regarding criminal records, please call the SCDE at 803-734-8466.** Please note that if you graduate more than 18 months after the fingerprinting and background check process you may have to be fingerprinted again and assessed an additional fee by the SCDE.

• **Question:** How long does it take to process the background check?

**Answer:** While the background check takes only a few days, it takes approximately 12 weeks for the SCDE to forward to USC the list of students who are cleared for student teaching/internship/clinical experience/practicum.

• **Question:** How long will it take the SCDE to process my certification once I complete my degree program?

**Answer:** Early in the semester you plan to graduate, submit your Application for Graduation (<http://registrar.sc.edu/html/forms/forms.stm>) to the College of Education Office of Student Affairs. At the same time, submit the online request for transcripts and fee to the USC Registrar's office. When your degree has posted, the Registrar's office will forward to the SCDE a copy of your transcripts with degree posted. This process can take up to four weeks. Once you have successfully completed the student teaching/internship/practicum/clinical experience, your degree has posted, you've submitted passing scores on ALL required examination(s) of the Praxis II to both USC and the SCDE, and you have been ADEPT recommended (if applicable), the College of Education will forward the Recommendation form to the SCDE. Please allow at least four weeks from the time this information leaves USC for the SCDE to issue a Letter of Eligibility. Then allow an additional eight to 10 weeks to receive your certificate. You can check the status of your certification application by logging onto the SCDE website at: <https://www.scteachers.org/apps/mycert/logon.cfm> or call the SCDE at 803-734-8466.

• **Question:** How will my USC transcript be sent to the SCDE?

**Answer:** You will submit the online Request for Transcript (<http://registrar.sc.edu/html/transcripts/default.stm>) and fee to the USC Registrar at the same time you apply for graduation. Be sure to indicate "SC State Department of Education, Columbia, S.C." as Recipient, "Mail After Degree is Posted" for the Print prompt, then the year and term you will graduate. If you received a graduate or undergraduate degree from an institution other than USC-Columbia, you must contact the Office of the Registrar at that institution and have your transcript sent directly to the SCDE at 3700 Forest Drive, Suite 500, Columbia, SC 29204. The SCDE will not accept unofficial transcripts.

• **Question:** Will I be notified if there is something wrong with my application or if there is a problem with my background check?

**Answer:** If you are missing anything from your certification application and/or background check, either the SCDE or USC will contact you via your USC email address.

• **Question:** Who do I contact if I have questions regarding the certification process?

**Answer:** Please call the SCDE at 803-734-8466 with questions about the electronic application and the College of Education Certification Office at 803-777-3031 for other certification questions.