

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING
THE APPROVAL OF
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES
FOR HOME INSTRUCTION**

*Adopted by the Board of Education
July, 1985*

Division of Instruction
Office of Middle and High School Instructional Services
Virginia Department of Education
Post Office Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE APPROVAL OF
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES FOR HOME INSTRUCTION**

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- 8VAC20-60-10. Definitions.**
- 8VAC20-60-20. Schools seeking approval.**
- 8VAC20-60-30. Approval renewal.**
- 8VAC20-60-40. Review.**
- 8VAC20-60-50. Approval criteria.**
- 8VAC20-60-60. Disclaimer.**
- 8VAC20-60-70. Listing of approved schools.**
- 8VAC20-60-80. Restrictions.**
- 8VAC20-60-90. Revocation or suspension of approval.**
- 8VAC20-60-100. Transmitting documents and other materials.**

8VAC20-60-10. Definitions.

The following words or terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Board" means the Virginia Board of Education.

"Correspondence school" means a school, organization, or other entity, no matter how titled, that teaches nonresident students by mailing them lessons and exercises which, upon completion, are returned to the school for grading. The lessons or exercises may also be transmitted and graded through electronic means.

"Course" means presentation of an orderly sequence of material dealing with an individual subject area such as mathematics, biology, etc.

"Department" means the Department of Education.

"Home instruction" means the teaching of a child or children in the home as an alternative to compulsory attendance as defined in §22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia.

"School" means a correspondence school.

8VAC20-60-20. Schools seeking approval.

Schools seeking approval of the academic courses offered shall submit the following:

1. A catalog or other documents containing the following information:
 - a. A statement of ownership or control of the institution;
 - b. Descriptions of courses offered by the institution;
 - c. A description of the evaluative method used; and
 - d. A schedule of tuition and fees.
2. Verification of approval or exemption from regulation from the appropriate government agency in its state of domicile.
3. Such additional information as the board or department may deem necessary.

8VAC20-60-30. Approval Renewal.

Approval of the academic courses shall be renewed annually on or before August 1, provided the school verifies that it continues to meet the requirements of 8VAC20-60-50. Forms for this purpose shall be provided by the department.

8VAC20-60-40. Review.

Each school meeting the criteria listed in 8VAC20-60-50 is required to submit the material in 8VAC20-60-20 for review every five years concurrent with the renewal affidavit.

8VAC20-60-50. Approval Criteria.

Academic courses offered by schools submitting the information required by 8VAC20-60-20 of this chapter shall be approved if the following criteria have been met:

1. The school is, in fact, a correspondence school as defined in this chapter;
2. The courses offered are not in conflict with state or federal laws or regulations;
3. The school evaluates the students' work on a periodic basis and maintains a permanent record of that work.

8VAC20-60-60. Disclaimer.

Board of Education's approval of correspondence courses is not an endorsement of the program as a substitute for public school programs nor is it an endorsement of the educational or operational philosophy of the school. Additionally, the approval of courses is not intended as an endorsement of the quality of the courses nor is it a conclusion that they are appropriate to meet the educational needs of the student or the assessment required by §22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia.

It is manifest that parents who choose to educate their children at home through a correspondence course are directly responsible for the educational progress of their children and the adequacy of instruction. The General Assembly has provided a mechanism to ensure that a child is receiving adequate instruction at home by requiring annual competency testing or evaluation. This testing program or evaluation is a measure of educational adequacy and the determining factor in the decision regarding the continuation of home study.

The approval of the board does not guarantee that a school has a refund policy for uncompleted courses. The Board of Education assumes no liability for damages or financial loss to parents using any course to meet Option iii of §22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia relating to home instruction.

8VAC20-60-70. Listing of approved schools

The department shall maintain a list of schools whose courses are approved under the provisions of this chapter for dissemination to the public upon request.

8VAC20-60-80. Restrictions

No school whose courses are approved for home instruction shall advertise in any way that the courses have the endorsement, recommendation, accreditation, recognition, or any other similar term, of the board, the department, or the Commonwealth of Virginia.

8VAC20-60-90. Revocation or suspension of approval

Approval of courses offered by a school may be revoked or suspended for cause by action of the board; such action shall be reported and preserved in writing and shall not take place prior to a hearing as provided for in §XVII of Regulations Governing Operation of Proprietary Schools and Issuing of Agent Permits.

8VAC20-60-100. Transmitting documents and other materials

The mailing of applications, forms, letters, or other papers shall not constitute receipt of the same by the department unless sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested. Such materials should be sent to the Associate Specialist, Proprietary School Service, Department of Education, P.O. Box 6-Q, Richmond, VA 23216.

Authority: Code of Virginia § 22.1-16.

Administrative Note: Please submit all information to:

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