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ACCS Teacher Certification Plan

As an ACCS accredited school, Coram Deo Academy certifies its teachers in accordance with the [requirements](#) laid down by the Association of Classical Christian Schools. Much of the following training plan for Coram Deo Academy is directly dependent on the 2017 revision of [ACCS Teacher Certification](#).

Overview

Purpose

ACCS Teacher Certification provides schools and administrators with a common understanding of what a classical Christian teacher should be, and a structure by which a path to excellence can be awarded. Teacher certification should verify the presence of demonstrable philosophical understanding and competent teaching skills in the one certified. ACCS Teacher Certification has no relationship or connection to state teacher licensing or public school certification.

Philosophy

Modern (public) teacher certification prescribes a series of courses and some service in the classroom. This system arises from the idea that most people can be trained to do the job. Classical Christian philosophy asserts that teaching is a gift (Ephesians 4:8–11, Romans 12:3-8), and a practiced art. For those who have the gift (and it is given, as all spiritual gifts, in varying degrees), it must also be developed. The ancients did this through an apprenticeship.

Rather than passing a prescribed course of classes, apprenticeship involves a combination of training, observed instruction, imitation of a master, and evaluation by a master. Historically, this process takes artisans from novice to apprentice, to journeyman, to master.

In this light, the ACCS teacher certification system is built around the local accredited school. We believe that those who serve alongside a teacher know them best. And, we believe that mastery is assessed in community, with the local organization's people as the keepers of the flame, so to speak. Nationally, we provide these guidelines to ensure that each local school is able to understand and provide a consistent standard to teachers.



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Rather than the apprenticeship terms above, we use three more common terms: provisional, professional, and master level certification.

Guidelines

Certification is awarded to a teacher who can demonstrate that he or she has met the following primary requirements. The categories listed below are important and none may be excluded. However, ACCS desires to establish a somewhat flexible process for demonstrating competence. The measures of competence listed below are presumed to be those most common to classical, Christian schools. They are not meant to be the only means to demonstrate competence. School administrators may substitute alternative forms of assessment of teacher competencies as they deem them necessary and appropriate.

Once the administrator of an ACCS-accredited school has established the school-specific guidelines in accordance with the below framework, it must be submitted to the ACCS Director of Accreditation for mutual concurrence before it will become the accepted norm for that school.

When a teacher completes the requirements for a given level of competency, the administrator will need to enter the ACCS Member's Resource Center (MRC) and fill out the teacher certification form indicating the teacher's name, the level attained, and the date it was attained. (See <https://mrc.classicalchristian.org/certified-teacher-list/>.) ACCS will record this information in our database and mail back a certificate for the administrator to sign and present to the teacher, commemorating the achievement.

Verification

The local school administrator of an ACCS-accredited school is authorized to determine whether competency has been demonstrated for purposes of ACCS Teacher Certification. The school administrator is only authorized to grant teacher certification to teachers who work for the same school as the administrator. However, teachers themselves will receive a certificate acknowledging their certification. Teachers can expect to transfer this certificate and status as an ACCS certified teacher to any other ACCS member school.



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Coram Deo Academy Certification Pathway¹

I. Provisional Certification (Apprentice Level Teacher)

Candidates for a provisional teaching certificate must demonstrate that they have met the following qualifications. These must be done by the start of the second year of the teacher's full-time tenure at the school. Part-time teachers are generally given double the time (two years rather than one year) for the completion of these requirements.

Year One:

- _____ 1. Demonstrate knowledge of subject matter and children through [faculty application](#) and [interview process](#). Read [CDA Parent & Student Handbook](#) & [CDA DNA: Faculty and Staff Field Guide](#).
Due date: August 1st
Fulfills D) Knowledge of Subject Matter and E) Knowledge of Children
- _____ 2. Read *A Classical Guide to Narration* by Jason Barney.
Due date: September 1st
Fulfills C) Philosophy of pedagogical or classical aspects of classical Christian education (along w/ 5.)
- _____ 3. Complete [ACCS Foundation of Classical Christian Excellence](#) course.
Due date: End of Q1
Fulfills A) Fundamental Training in classical Christian education and B) Philosophy of the Christian aspects of classical Christian education
- _____ 4. Read ["The Lost Tools of Learning"](#) by Dorothy Sayers and ["Three Instruments of Education"](#) by Charlotte Mason and submit an [essay response](#).
Due date: End of Q2
Fulfills C) Philosophy of pedagogical or classical aspects of classical Christian education (along w/ 2.)
- _____ 5. Read ["The Paradigm of the Liberal Arts Tradition"](#) and ["Piety: Proper Loves, Proper Fears"](#) from *The Liberal Arts Tradition* by Clark and Jain and submit an [essay response](#).
Due date: End of Q3
Fulfills B) Philosophy of the Christian aspects of classical Christian education

¹ This certification pathway is specific to Coram Deo Academy because while it includes all the requirements of [ACCS Teacher Certification](#), it details the process further with an apprenticeship process unique to our school's distinctives and culture.



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_____ 6. Conduct two observations of experienced ACCS teachers in your division (PreK-2nd, 3rd-6th, 7th-9th, 10th-12th) or a comparable subject area (e.g. art/music/PE) using [ADL rubric](#). Submit the observation feedback to the teacher and administrator.

Due date: End of Q4

Supports A-F requirements

_____ 7. Read *The Seven Laws of Teaching* by J. M. Gregory and submit an [essay response](#).

Due date: June 15th

Fulfills F) Knowledge of the teaching process

Upon completion of the above 7 requirements, the teacher will submit these pages with all materials to the Principal and will be awarded Provisional certification.

I, _____, have completed the above requirements for provisional certification, to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

Administrator Approval:

Date:



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II. Professional certification (Journeyman Level Teacher):

Teachers who have been teaching full-time at the issuing school for more than 3 years must achieve this level of certification or be placed on probation until it is completed.

Year Two:

_____ 1. Complete one of the following level 1 or 2 ClassicalU courses:

- Introduction to Classical Education by Chris Perrin
- Essentials of Effective Teaching by Robyn Burlew
- Teaching the Great Books by Joshua Gibbs
- Principles of Classical Pedagogy by Chris Perrin
- Assessing Students Classically by Andrew Kern, Chris Perrin, et al.
- The Liberal Arts Tradition by Kevin Clark and Ravi Jain

Due date: End of Q2

Fulfills D) Evidence of continual learning

_____ 2. Attend an Open House to understand the admissions process. (Arrange in advance for a substitute to cover your class.)

Due date: End of Q3

_____ 3. Observe for at least 30 min. four other teachers, two of which must be outside your division or subject area, and submit informal observation notes to the Principal.

Due date: End of Q4

_____ 4. Read one of the following general books on classical Christian education and write an [essay response](#):

- *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* by Douglas Wilson
- *The Case for Classical Christian Education* by Douglas Wilson
- *Wisdom and Eloquence* by Robert Littlejohn and Charles T. Evans
- *Classical Education* by Gene Veith and Andrew Kern
- *The Liberal Arts Tradition* by Kevin Clark and Ravi Jain

Due date: June 15th

Fulfills D) Evidence of continual learning



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Year Three:

_____ 1. Complete one of the following level 2 ClassicalU courses:

- Narration: A Classical Guide to Mason & Narration by Jason Barney
- Charlotte Mason: A Liberal Education for All by Jason Barney
- Upper School Teaching and Leadership by Chris Schlect
- Awakenning the Moral Imagination through Literature by Vigen Guroian
- Grammar School Teaching and Leadership by Lori Jill Keeler
- Principles of Classical Pedagogy II by Andrew Kern
- Socratic Teaching by Andrew Kern
- The Teacher's Playbook by Jerilyn Olson

Due date: End of Q2

Fulfills D) Evidence of continual learning

_____ 2. Lead a Curriculum Night training session for parents in a particular subject or aspect of classical Christian education OR lead a faculty meeting through a teaching demonstration or discussion of a text on classical Christian education.

Due date: End of Q3

Fulfills D) Evidence of continual learning

_____ 3. Have two other teachers observe you for 30 min. and provide you with written feedback, including ideas for improvement; share feedback with the Principal.

Due date: End of Q4

Fulfills D) Evidence of continual learning

_____ 4. Read a book relating to teaching a particular subject area or problem in classical Christian education and submit an [essay response](#). Seek approval of any books not on the following list:

- *Common Arts Education* by Chris Hall
- *A New Natural Philosophy* by Ravi Jain, et al.
- *From Wonder to Mastery* by John Mays
- *Mathematics: Is God Silent?* by James Nickel
- *The Myth Made Fact* by Louis Markos
- *Teaching from Rest* by Sarah Mackenzie
- *Socratic Conversation* by Jeffrey Lehman
- *Something They Will Not Forget* by Joshua Gibbs
- *The Lost Seeds of Learning* by Phillip Donnelly
- *The Joy of Learning* by Jason Barney



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- *A Short History of Narration* by Jason Barney
- *The Abolition of Man* by C.S. Lewis
- Education-related books by Mortimer Adler
- *Building the Christian Academy* by Arthur Holmes
- *Poetic Knowledge* by James Taylor
- *Norms and Nobility* by David Hicks
- Any of the Cultural Liturgies series by James K. A. Smith
- *The Great Tradition* by Richard Gamble, ed.

Due date: June 15th

Fulfills D) Evidence of continual learning

Upon completion of the requirements for years two and three, and dependent on C) *Demonstration of successful teaching* as evidenced through positive reviews, as well as A) *Completion of all the requirements for Provisional certification* and B) *Completion of the ACCS Foundation of Classical Christian Excellence course*, the faculty member may apply for Professional certification (Journeyman Level teacher).

I, _____, have completed the above requirements for ACCS Professional certification, to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

Administrator Approval:

Date:



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III. Professional Growth Plan and Master's certification

After a Coram Deo Academy teacher has attained professional certification or Journeyman Level Teacher status, the teacher enters the Professional Growth Plan cycle and has the opportunity to pursue Master's level certification, if desired.

Professional Growth Plan cycle

Year A: [Scholarship - Discipleship - Partnership Growth Plan](#)

In coordination with their supervisor, teachers devise a detailed Growth Plan with goals in scholarship, discipleship and partnership, including specific measurables for each quarter. During check-in meetings teachers report on their progress with their goals, and it is expected that teachers will complete them over the course of the year.

Year B: Independent Study

In coordination with their supervisor, teachers propose an independent study of an area of teaching and learning connected to their work and potentially beneficial to the entire academy. Independent studies should most often involve reading books, the completion of courses, and documentable research. The proposal should include any requests for funding for ongoing education, travel expenses, etc. Teachers are expected to present the fruit of their independent study to their colleagues in an appropriate forum to be determined in coordination with their supervisor.

Year C: Observation and Feedback

The teacher conducts 10 observations of colleagues using various observation rubrics and is observed at least 10 times in return by a combination of faculty and administrators.

Teachers may enter the professional growth plan cycle in A, B, or C, as determined in coordination with their supervisor. Thereafter, the cycle goes in order and repeats, as long as a teacher remains at Coram Deo Academy.



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Master's certification

Pursuing master's certification (Master Level Teacher) at Coram Deo Academy is not necessary to thrive as a contributing faculty member. Instead, the master's certification represents an above-and-beyond investment to advance the academy as a whole through teacher leadership. This certification depends on and assumes the completion of all requirements for Professional Certification (fulfilling III.A).

Master's certification can be awarded at any point after the completion of a teacher's fifth year at Coram Deo Academy, as long as the following requirements have been met:

- _____ 1. The completion of a significant course of training and study in grammar, logic or rhetoric, well documented, with an essay response demonstrating personal knowledge of logic and rhetoric specifically

Fulfills B) Evidence of training in the Trivium

- _____ 2. Completing the following Classical U courses:

- The Informal Fallacies by Joelle Hodge and Christopher Perrin
- Listening, Speaking, Reading Writing by Andrew Pudewa
- Essentials of Formal Logic by Joelle Hodge
- The Seven Liberal Arts by Andrew Kern

Fulfills D) The teacher will demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of logic

- _____ 3. Leadership in classical Christian education as demonstrated by one of the following:
- a) developing uniquely classical curriculum within the academy
 - b) training other teachers classical methods within the academy
 - c) conducting training in classical Christian education on a national level.

Fulfills C) The involvement of the teacher in the development of uniquely classical curriculum within the school, training other teachers within the school, or conducting training in classical Christian education on a national level



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_____ 4. Successfully shouldering a set of significant administrative responsibilities in addition to fulfilling normal faculty responsibilities for at least one year.

The continuance of #4 remains a condition of master level status for the purposes of compensation at Coram Deo Academy. However, a teacher's Master level certification will remain valid and transferrable, even if a teacher decides to relinquish those administrative responsibilities at any point thereafter.