

# Music Teachers' Association of California

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[www.mtac.org](http://www.mtac.org)

## HOW TO JOIN MTAC WITHOUT A DEGREE IN MUSIC

It is a long-standing requirement for Active Membership in MTAC that applicants must have a bachelor's degree in music or the equivalent from an accredited college/university. If you wish to become a member of MTAC and do not have a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in music, you have two options:

1. Active on Points Membership or Provisional Membership using the Membership Application on Points Form
2. The California Plan (CalPlan) Program

### Option 1: Provisional Membership or Membership on Points

**General Information:** There are two types of membership in this category:

1. **ACTIVE ON POINTS MEMBERSHIP:** Achieving Active on Points Membership with the **Membership Application on Points Form** means that the applicant has successfully documented a music background which fully meets the MTAC requirements for a music degree equivalency. Active on Points members will enjoy all rights and privileges of Active membership in MTAC, including eligibility for participation in State Programs such as Certificate of Merit, and may also choose to join a local MTAC Branch to benefit from the activities and programs offered by the Branch.
2. **PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP:** Provisional Membership is a temporary category, and is granted to an applicant who has fulfilled a significant portion of the requirements for Active Membership and who offers satisfactory evidence of the intention and ability to qualify for Active Membership within a three-year period. Provisional Members will be granted the full rights and privileges of Provisional Membership as they continue working toward Active Membership (including eligibility for participation in State Programs such as Certificate of Merit), and may also choose to join a local MTAC Branch to benefit from the activities and programs offered by the Branch.

**How to apply:** Please use the **Membership Application on Points Form**, which allows applicants to show and document their background, coursework, and experience in music. Using this form, applicants receive credit in points as applied to several categories which include: major instrument instruction; music theory; music history; music pedagogy; and recital and ensemble performance. Applicants who have taken accredited college/university music classes or who may already have a music minor will find the **Membership Application on Points Form** a useful first step toward achieving Active Membership. The **Membership Application on Points Form** is available online at [mtac.org](http://mtac.org), or by request from the MTAC State Office.

**Required documentation:** *Official academic transcripts or acceptable written verification must be provided for all points claimed on the Membership Application on Points Form.* Please refer to the instructions on the form for specific information about types of acceptable written verification. All transcripts must be sent directly to the MTAC State Office address by the academic institution(s). Transcripts sent by the applicant will not be accepted, even if they are in sealed envelopes. A Foreign Credential Evaluation Report (FCER) will be required for all coursework completed in colleges or universities outside of the United States (see next page for more information). MTAC reserves the right to require additional documentation as needed for verification purposes.

## Option 2: The California Plan (CalPlan)

**General Information:** CalPlan is a self-study program which offers study guides and examinations to demonstrate musical knowledge and accomplishment. CalPlan Members have a period of three years to complete the program. It incorporates skill building in music theory, music history, and music pedagogy, as well as opportunities to strengthen professional skills. MTAC formally recognizes achievement of these goals by awarding the California Plan Certificate during the annual State Convention. Completion of the CalPlan program qualifies a teacher for Active Membership in MTAC. CalPlan is an ideal program for applicants who do not have the required educational background to qualify for Active or Provisional membership. It is also an excellent option for those who may have significant training and/or coursework in music but are unable to provide satisfactory paperwork for verification.

**Eligibility:** Enrollment in CalPlan is open to high school graduates who have demonstrated proficiency in playing their instrument at *MTAC Certificate of Merit Level 8 or higher*. They should actively be teaching or seeking to teach within one year of beginning the Plan. Because CalPlan is self-study program which includes academic as well as practical requirements, applicants should possess sufficient self-discipline and motivation to maintain focus and momentum. Each CalPlan member is sponsored by an MTAC Branch; however, responsibility for achieving CalPlan goals lies with the member and the State CalPlan Chair. Additional information about CalPlan is available from the MTAC State Office or the State CalPlan Chair.

**How to apply:** Please visit the MTAC website at [mtac.org](http://mtac.org) for current details on how to contact the CalPlan Chair of MTAC.

# For All Applicants with Non-U.S. Degrees: Foreign Credential Evaluation & Credential Evaluation Services

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is a Foreign Credential Evaluation Report (FCER)?**

A: A foreign credential evaluation report provides a description of an individual's international education and an assessment for its U.S. equivalence.

**Q: Can I send my diploma or university transcripts to MTAC instead?**

A: No. MTAC will *not* accept transcripts, diplomas, or other academic credentials documenting foreign degrees as a substitute for the FCER. Other academic documents should not be submitted to MTAC unless specifically requested.

**Q: What does MTAC look for from a Foreign Credential Evaluation Report?**

A: MTAC determines if the applicant has *at least the educational equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree in music* and is qualified to teach the Primary and/or Secondary Instruments that the applicant has listed.

**Q: What type of FCER should I use? The credential evaluation service offers a basic (document-by-document) or detailed (course-by-course) report.**

A: MTAC requires a *detailed (also called "course-by-course")* report. This report lists individual courses taken with semester units and individual grade equivalents. If the agency offers reports that list the level of the courses taken (e.g., lower versus upper division, professional, vocational), this is preferable. The detailed report is needed to verify the applicant's instrument and subject specialties.

**Q: Which Credential Evaluation Services are approved by MTAC?**

A: MTAC recommends the following foreign credential evaluation services:

<p><b>World Education Services (WES)</b> www.wes.org (212) 966-6311</p>	<p><b>International Education Research Foundation (IERF)</b> www.ierf.org (310) 258-9451</p>
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**Q: Are there other Credential Evaluation Services that I may use?**

A: MTAC will accept a Foreign Credential Evaluation Report from any member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). For a full list of members, visit [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org). *Please note: No other credential evaluation services will be accepted.*

**Please do not hesitate to contact the MTAC State Office with any questions  
regarding your application for membership in MTAC.**

**[www.mtac.org](http://www.mtac.org)**