

PANHANDLE ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION FOR EDUCATORS

Intern Handbook



wtamu.edu/PACE

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Congratulations on securing an internship through the Panhandle Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE) program. ***Please ask immediately*** if you have questions regarding internship or other program requirements. We are available to answer your questions and help you have a successful internship.

You may contact our office by mail, phone, fax, or email.

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Please note:

Please keep the University, the PACE program, and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) informed of your current email and postal mail addresses and telephone number(s). Email is our primary form of communication, so **please provide our office with the email address(es) that you check daily**. Once each semester you may receive file updates, reminders, and other critical information by postal mail. Please attend to communication and correspondence from PACE as soon as it is received.

All correspondence from WT's Admissions, Registrar, and Business Offices will be sent only through your WT student email account, so please check that account frequently.

INITIAL HIRE PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS

Intern/Probationary Certification Process

1. **Prior to internship training**, apply for an intern or probationary certificate with the Texas Education Agency and submit the two documents below to your district:
 - ❑ **Internship Fee Agreement** authorizes payroll deduction of the internship fee; any other payment arrangements must be made with the director of the PACE program.
 - ❑ **Statement of Eligibility for Internship** verifies that you are teaching at the grade level and in the content area required for your certification.**We will not recommend the certificate until these forms are on file.**
2. **The PACE** staff will recommend you for your intern or probationary certificate when all paperwork and eligibility requirements have been completed, or notify you if any requirements are lacking.
3. **The Texas Education Agency** staff will initiate a criminal background review (from the fingerprinting process) and issue you an intern or probationary certificate (if the criminal background review is satisfactory). TEA will not initiate the fingerprinting process until the fees have been paid; a delay in submission of the fees will postpone issuance of your certificate.

Other Required Documents

Complete these documents *during internship training*:

- ❑ Complete the **Change of Student Information** with your current information.
- ❑ **Texas Educators' Code of Ethics Statement of Affirmation** confirms receipt of and compliance with the code of ethics for educators.
- ❑ **FERPA Consent to Release Educational Records and Information** permits our program to disclose educational records and information to specific individuals or entities.
- ❑ **Statement of Understanding and Agreement** acknowledges your understanding and agreement with program requirements.

Complete/submit to the PACE program as soon as possible, but *no later than September 1*:

- ❑ **Intern Teacher Information Form** provides contact and district/campus information and is also used to confirm that your teaching assignment matches your target certificate. This form is available in the Intern/Mentor folder under "Links" on the PACE home page, wtamu.edu/pace. **Please submit this form by September 1 and submit an updated form if your assignment or information changes during the internship year.**

Please note:

Failure to submit documents will delay your intern/probationary certificate recommendation. An extended delay will initiate notification to your superintendent and may result in action from your school district.

DOCUMENTS COLLECTED DURING THE INTERNSHIP YEAR

Internship procedures provide supervision and support and contribute to your success as a first-year teacher; they also meet statutory requirements as outlined in U.S. Code related to education and the Texas Administrative Code, which governs educator preparation programs. A support team including your campus mentor, campus administrator, and university supervisor will provide ongoing supervision and support and report on your progress as a first-year teacher. You will participate in professional development training and document these activities as listed below.

1. *Intern Observations*

As a part of required professional development and training, you will observe your mentor or another teacher **during classroom teaching** for one full period (45-minute minimum) twice each semester and submit an observation report to the PACE program. *Each observation must be of classroom instruction separate and apart from planning, collaboration, etc.*

Following each observation, complete the **Intern Observation Form** and submit it to PACE; four observation reports must be on file by the end of your internship year (two per semester). One 45-minute observation should be completed within each reporting period; that is, the observations must be completed over the course of the year, so that you observe the classroom instruction and interaction as the year progresses.

This form will be completed and submitted online; it is available under “PACE Interns” link on the PACE website, wtamu.edu/pace. **Submit one report on or before each date: October 1, December 1, February 1, and April 1.**

2. *Professional Development Tracking Form*

You will maintain the **Professional Development Tracking Form** documenting formal professional development training (excluding program course work) throughout your first year of teaching. These may include pre-service and in-service training, First-Year Teacher Academy, workshops, and seminars—any formal professional development activities.

Please document the date, training title/topic, provider, and clock hours earned; obtain required signatures before submission to PACE; you do not need to submit certificates, but retain those for verification purposes. If your district has an online system to track your professional development training, please attach a copy to this form and obtain the required signatures before submitting documentation to our office.

Download and print this form from the “PACE Interns” link on the PACE program website, wtamu.edu/pace. Please maintain this document throughout the year and **submit it to PACE by May 1.**

ADDITIONAL SUPERVISION AND DOCUMENTATION

Your campus mentor, campus administrator, and university supervisor will provide supervision and support throughout the year and provide input on your progress as a first-year teacher. Descriptions of these activities are included so you are aware of the support and supervision provided as well as how your progress is evaluated and reported to our program throughout the internship year.

1. *University Supervisor Observations*

Your university supervisor plays a central role in your support and supervision as a liaison between you, the district, and PACE staff. The supervisor will visit your classroom three - five times during the year. He/she will observe your teaching for at least 45 minutes, provide written feedback on your performance including strategies to address concerns, and conduct an interactive conference with you both before and after the observation to discuss the lesson. The supervisor will also provide a copy of the observation report to your principal and will touch base with your mentor and principal to discuss your progress. *Please inform PACE if your supervisor has not contacted you by phone or email before the end of your first three weeks of teaching or if he/she has not visited you by the end of the first six weeks.* An example of the **Supervisor Observation** report is available under “PACE Interns” link on the PACE website, wtamu.edu/pace.

2. *End-of-Year Administrator Evaluation*

PACE will ask your campus administrator to complete an evaluation near the end of your second semester of internship which provides our office with information regarding your performance as compared to other beginning teachers on your campus. This is used for ongoing program evaluation and improvement and is taken into consideration when making certificate recommendation decisions. If the district does not support recommendation for the standard certificate, you will need to appeal to continue with the program. *We will send this form directly to your principal to be returned to the PACE office by May 1.*

CERTIFICATION TEST INFORMATION

PPR Test Approval

Approval for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR), TExES #160, will be granted upon completion of these requirements:

- Passing the content exam and
- Completing PACE Module 1 with a grade of A or B and
- Completion of the PPR review on the TExES Certification Exam Review for Teachers website, pact.tarleton.edu/TCERT.
- Upon completion of the PPR review, download the certificate and email it to PACE advisor requesting PPR test approval.

Practice Exams

You may choose to take a practice exam before you take the official exam. Practice exams are offered several times each semester through WT's Office of Educational Services, 806.651.2341, or https://apps.wtamu.edu/forms/texes_practice.php.

Test Registration

Test frameworks, preparation manuals, and registration information are available through the Pearson website, <http://www.tx.nesinc.com/Home.aspx>. Full-length interactive practice exams, include the PPR, are also available through Pearson.

Test Preparation Resources

Additional test preparation resources are available at [TExES Test Resources](#).

Supplemental Exams

Certain district and/or PACE requirements may apply to supplemental exams such as ESL. Consult the PACE adviser with questions about supplemental exams.

Please note:

It is important to prepare for each exam because state law limits testing to five attempts. **If you are unsuccessful after five tests attempts, you cannot retest and will not be certified in that area.** It is also important that you complete testing requirements as early as possible because your testing status will weigh heavily in your district's decisions regarding contract renewal.

STANDARD CERTIFICATE APPLICATION PROCESS

You will apply for the **Standard Texas Educator Certificate** when you are eligible for certificate recommendation. Eligibility includes successful completion of all the “Three T’s”: Training (course work), Testing (certification exams), and Teaching (internship).

You may apply for the standard certificate during the final week of internship when **all** program and certification requirements have been met:

- ✓ Completion of certification course work with a 3.0 GPA and no grade below a “C”;
- ✓ Passing scores on required certification exams;
- ✓ Full payment of the internship fee; and
- ✓ Successful completion of both internship semesters and submission of required documentation:
 - ❑ Four ***Intern Observations***,
 - ❑ ***Professional Development Tracking Form***, and
 - ❑ ***End-of-Year Administrator Evaluation***.

If all requirements are complete, apply for the standard certificate with the Texas Education Agency, tea.texas.gov, *during your final week of internship*:

- ✓ Log in to your TEAL/ECOS account and verify/update your Educator Profile;
- ✓ Select “Standard Certificate Texas Program” from the “Applications” menu;
- ✓ Follow the instructions to apply and identify the recommending entity, **West Texas A&M University (Alternative)**;
- ✓ Complete the *Candidate Exit Survey*;
- ✓ Submit the appropriate fee to TEA; and
- ✓ Forward the confirmation email to PACE advisor

Once the PACE staff verifies that you have met all requirements, you will be recommended for certification. If your file is incomplete, we will notify you of requirements that have not been completed and/or documents that have not been submitted.

Please note:

If you have not completed all requirements by the time your probationary/intern certificate expires, you may be granted a one-year extension with *evidence of progress toward certification*. Please call the PACE program for information regarding the extension process **at least one month prior to the expiration date** of your certificate. **A fee will be charged to cover required ongoing supervision expenses during the extension year.**

I understand I must have all my tests passed (content, PPR, and supplemental exams) to be eligible for an extension for a Texas probationary certificate and receive required supervision.

INTERN CHECKLIST

Due	Item or Task
Before Intern Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the online <i>Application for Intern or Probationary Certification</i> ; submit the <i>Fee Agreement</i> and <i>Statement of Eligibility for Internship</i> to your school district
During Intern Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <i>Code of Ethics Affirmation, FERPA Consent, and Statement of Understanding and Agreement</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete PACE orientation training (first days of school video, etc.)
August 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Register for Fall course work (contact PACE Adviser for petition into classes). Please refer to your certification plan.
September 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm probationary/intern certificate application and fingerprinting status
October 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit first <i>Intern Observation</i> report documenting one full class period (45-minute minimum) of observation
December 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit second <i>Intern Observation of the Mentor</i> report documenting one full class period (45-minute minimum) of observation
December 15	<input type="checkbox"/> If you have made an A or B in EDPD 6331, complete the PPR test preparation module on T-CERT website; submit certificate to PACE requesting PPR test approval <input type="checkbox"/> Register for Spring course work (contact PACE Adviser for petition into classes). Please refer to your certification plan.
February 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit third <i>Intern Observation</i> report documenting one full class period (45-minute minimum) of observation
April 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit final <i>Intern Observation</i> report documenting one full class period (45-minute minimum) of observation
May 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit <i>Professional Development Tracking Form</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm registration into summer course work, if applicable (contact PACE Adviser for petition into classes). Please refer to your certification plan.
June 1	<input type="checkbox"/> If you have made an A or B in EDPD 6331, complete the PPR test preparation module on T-CERT website; submit certificate to PACE requesting PPR test approval <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for the <i>Standard Educator Certificate</i> if all requirements are complete
August 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact PACE regarding a <i>Probationary Certificate</i> extension if all requirements have not been met (<i>a fee will be charged to cover the expense of required supervision</i>). <i>All exams (content, PPR, and supplemental) must be passed for an extension.</i>