Association of International Credential Evaluators

Los Angeles Symposium
April 4, 2019

AICE 2019 Los Angeles Symposium

"The future is digital…are you? Effectively using technology while maintaining credential evaluation standards"

CONTENTS

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing technological age, international credential evaluators face new challenges that require an understanding of innovations and standardizations in digital credentials.

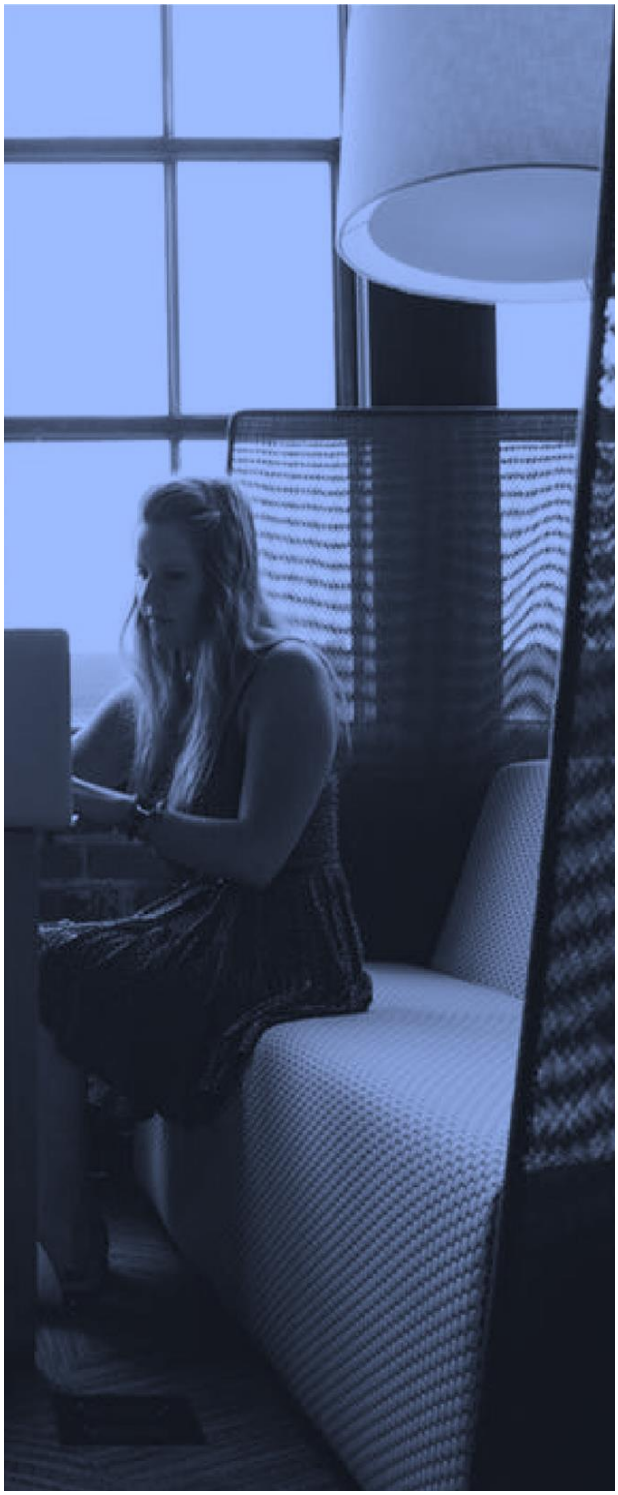
The Symposium addressed the many stakeholders involved in the digital document process: the universities, government, and third-party platforms. Panelists looked into the existing eco-system, security and reliability of the current digital systems and discussed the available tools for digital credential verification.

Panelists and attendees exchanged ideas and shared verification tools to promote best practices while seeking digital solutions that promote data security, protection and standardization of digital processes.

This report provides an overview of the topics discussed at the Symposium and key takeaways. Results of the joint AICE-AACRAO 2018 Survey related to digital transcripts and presentation slides are also included.

Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert
President, AICE

"99% of respondents to the survey considered official documents to be a hard copy in a sealed envelope." **Melanie Gottlieb, Deputy Director, AACRAO**



AICE-AACRAO Survey

In December 2018, AICE-AACRAO released a questionnaire to survey the AACRAO membership on their acceptance of digitally transmitted transcripts. Groups targeted included:

- Records & Academic Services
- Enrollment Management
- Domestic & International Admissions & Recruitment
- Transfer Admissions & Recruitment
- International Credential Evaluators

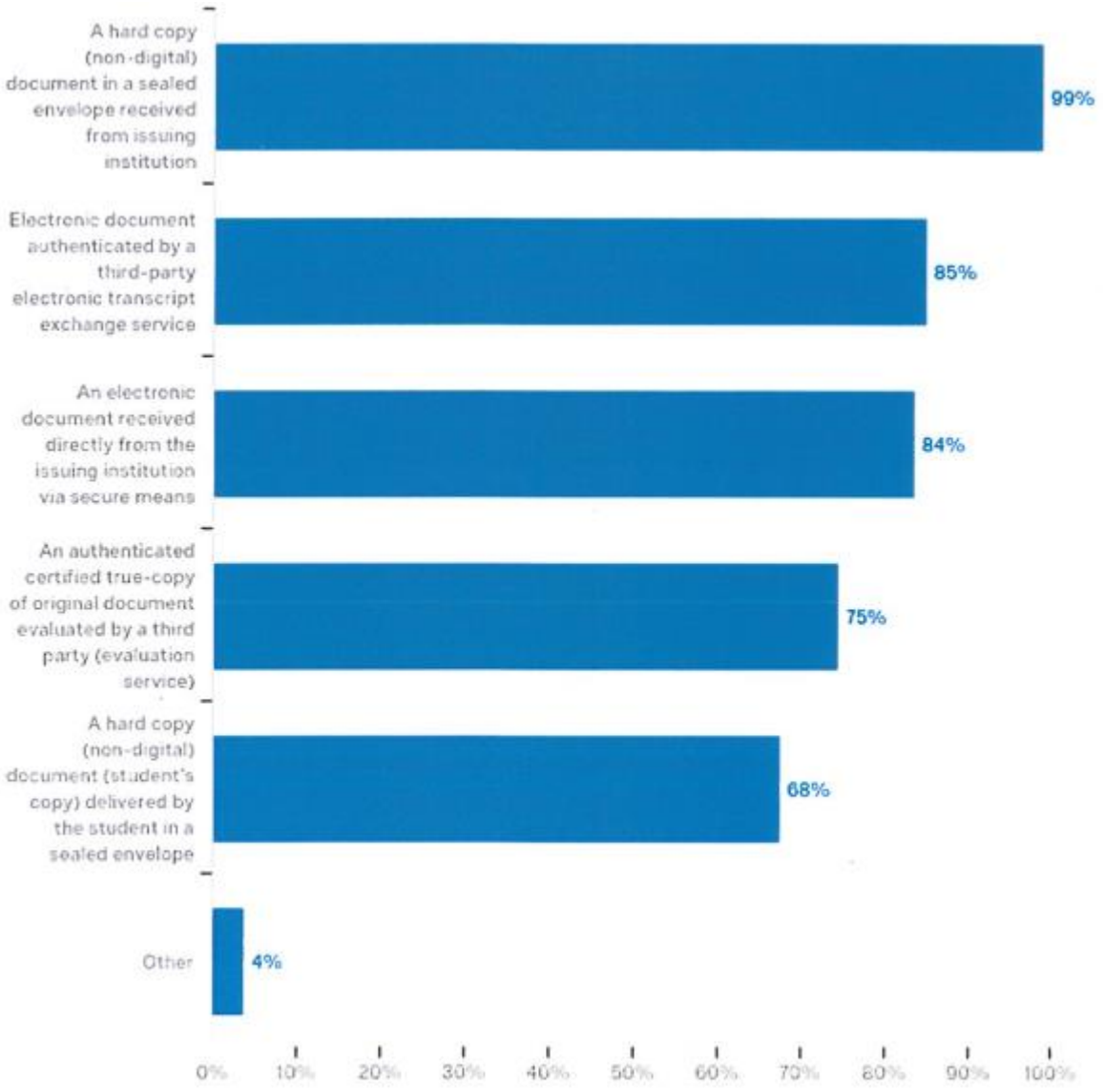
About AACRAO

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers is:

- 100+ years old
- 11,000 members
- 2,600+ institutions
- 40+ countries

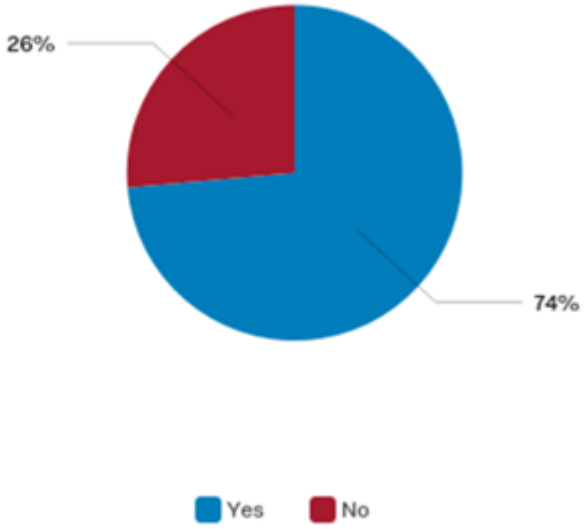
2018 AICE-AACRAO Survey: Melanie Gottlieb (AACRAO)

Definition of an official transcript:

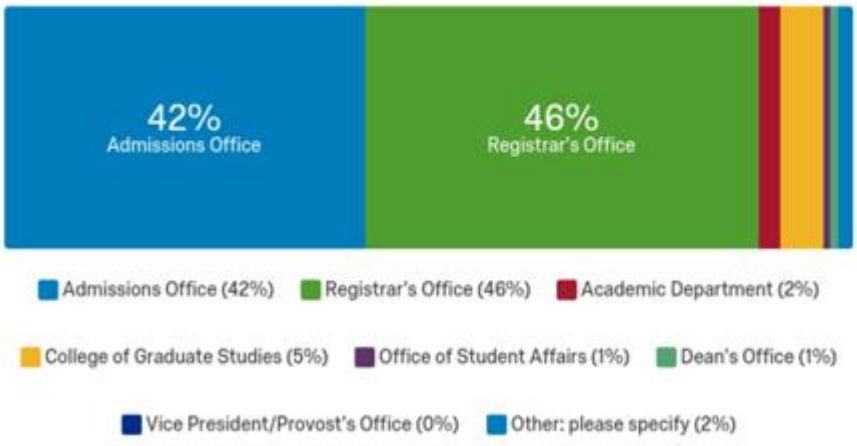


99% preferred hard copy (non-digital) document in a sealed envelope received from issuing institution.

Does your institution accept scanned unofficial transcripts uploaded with application for a tentative admission decision?



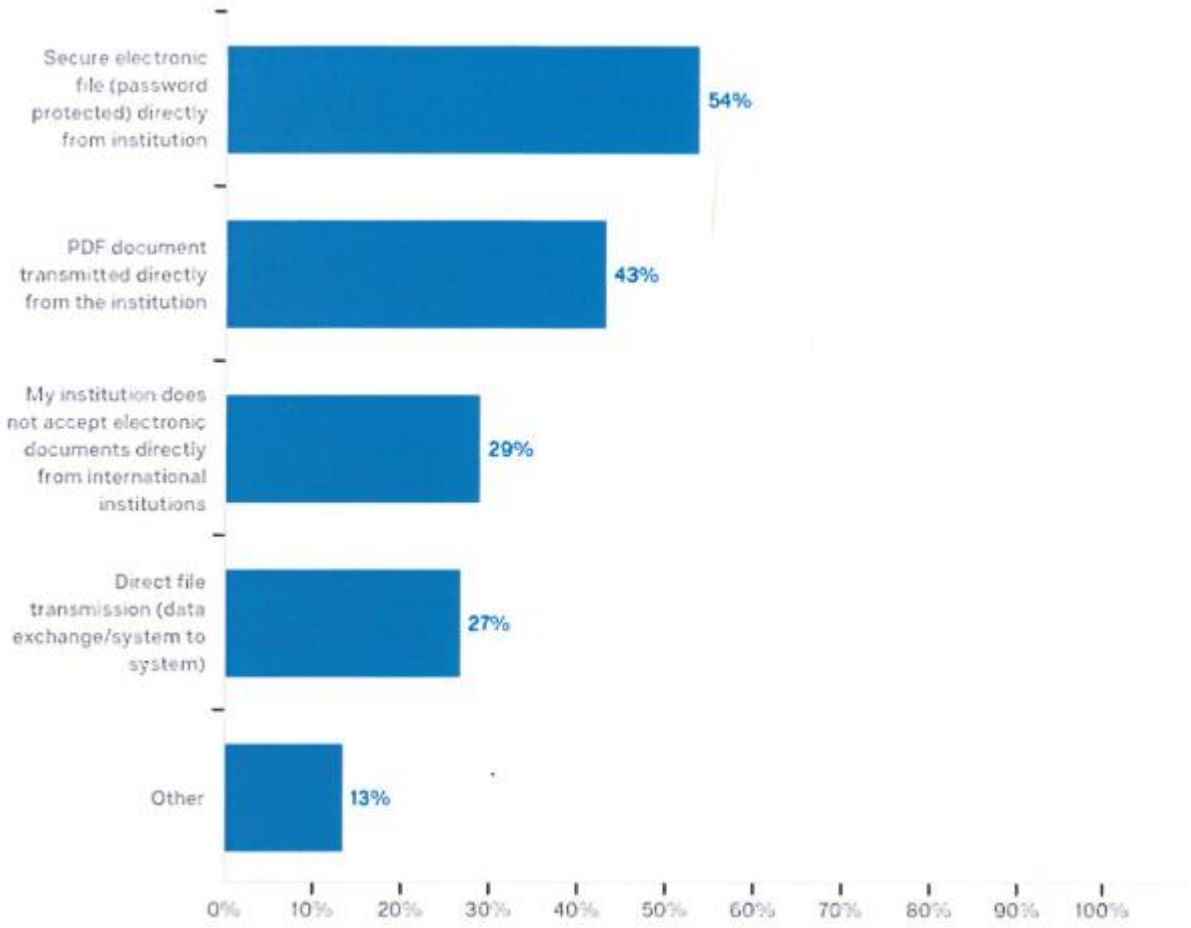
Who ensures the requirements for official documents are met after admission?



Other Responses

- *Financial Aid Office*
- *Office of Education Abroad*
- *International Students Office*
- *Admission Counselor*
- *Advisor*

How does your institution accept electronic documents from international institutions?

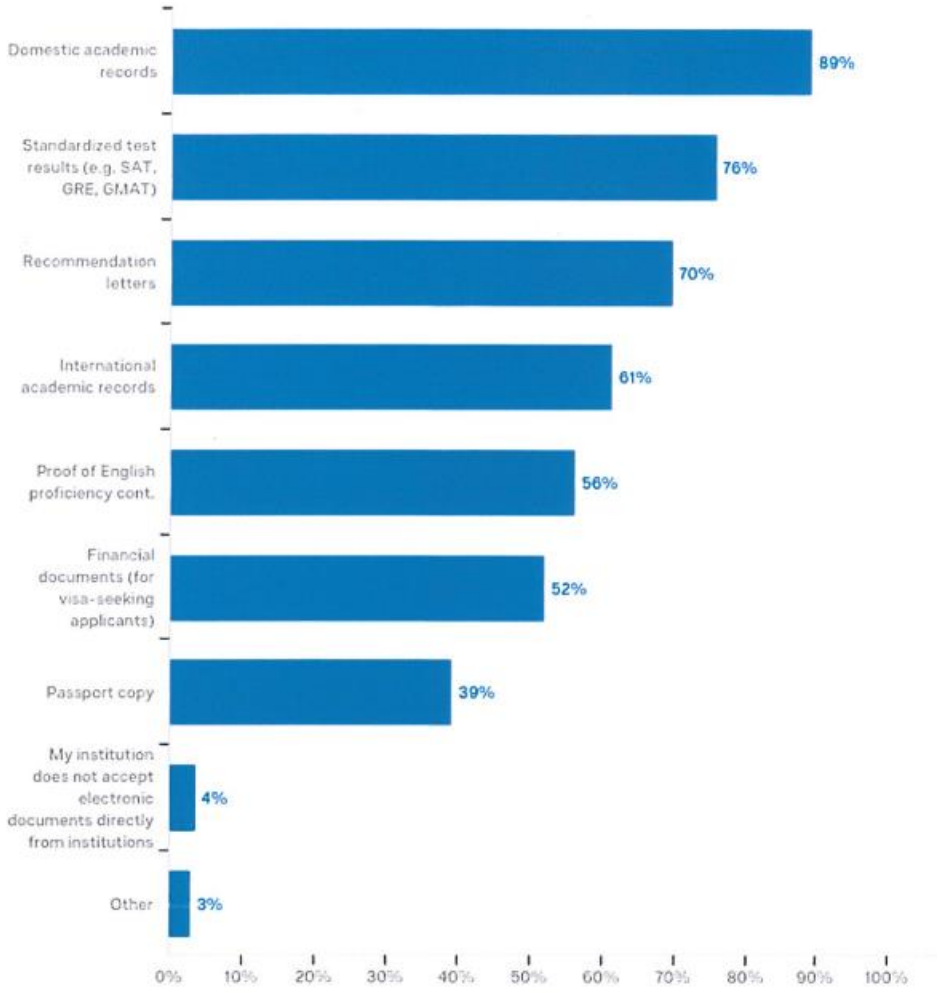


54% accepted secure electronic file (password protected) directly from institution.

Top other reasons:

- Through an evaluation service
- From the translation service
- PDF from an approved partner or third party
- Not sure/not common enough to have a policy

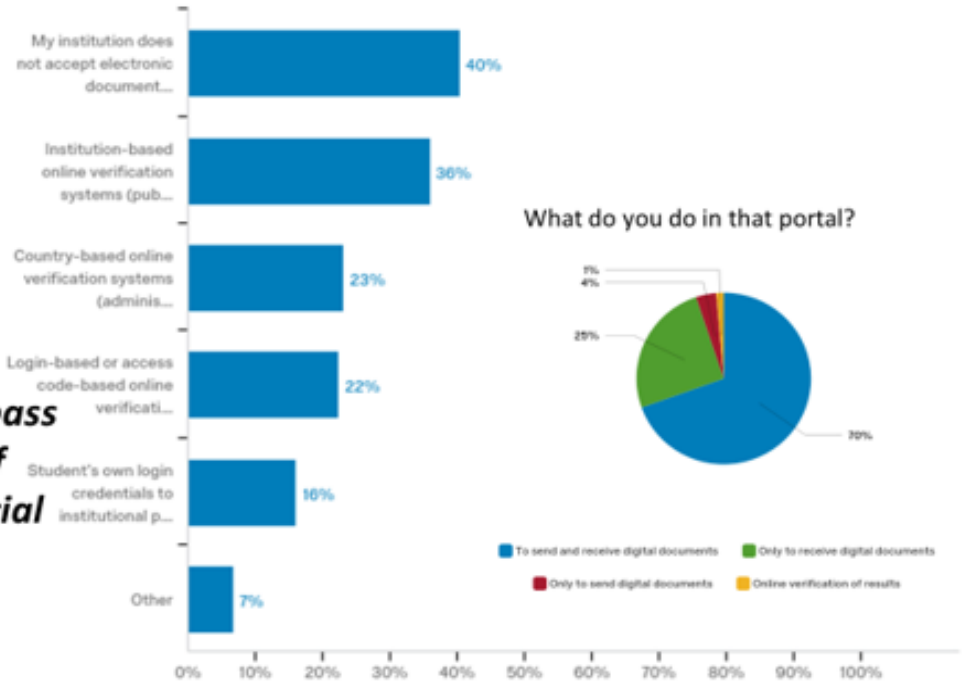
Which documents does your institution accept electronically?



Popular "other" responses:

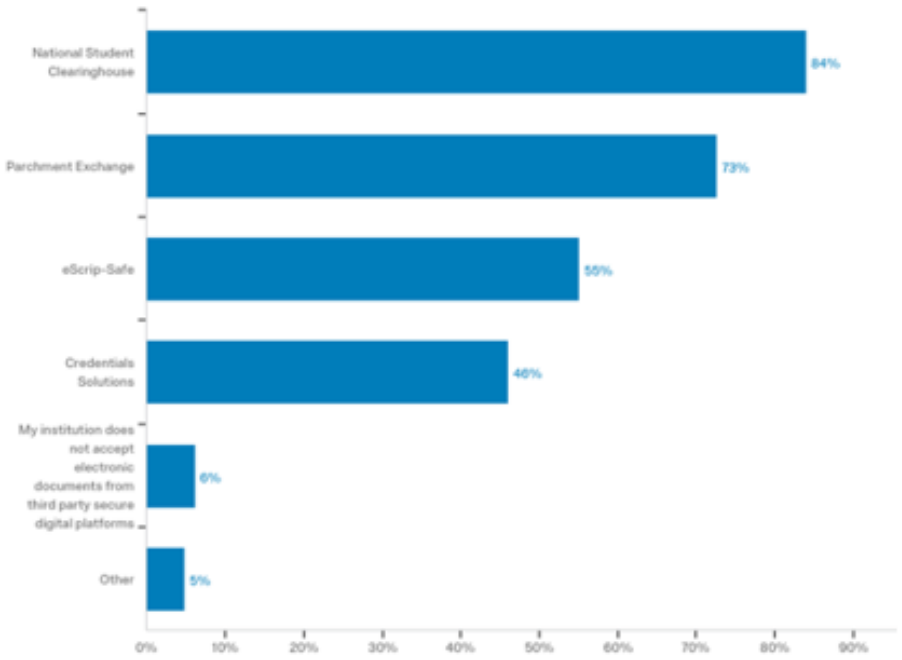
- Resume, application, enrollment agreements, financial aid documents
- Residency documentation. Student must have Driver's License to authenticate him/herself
- Immunizations
- Evaluations prepared by members of NACES for international transcripts
- COMLEX and USMLE results from the original source
- Accept all electronically but must submit original before admission

What type(s) of online verification portals does your institution use to supplement or bypass the requirement of submission of official documents ?



40% did not accept electronic documents
36% used institution-based online verification systems
23% used country-based online verification systems
22% used login-based or access code-based online verification
16% used student's own login credentials to institutional portals
7% stated other, but did not specify

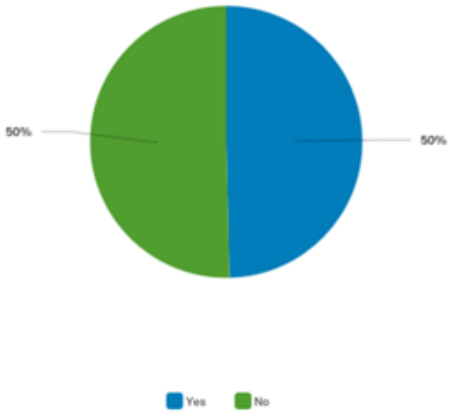
Does your institution use any of the following third party secure digital platforms ?



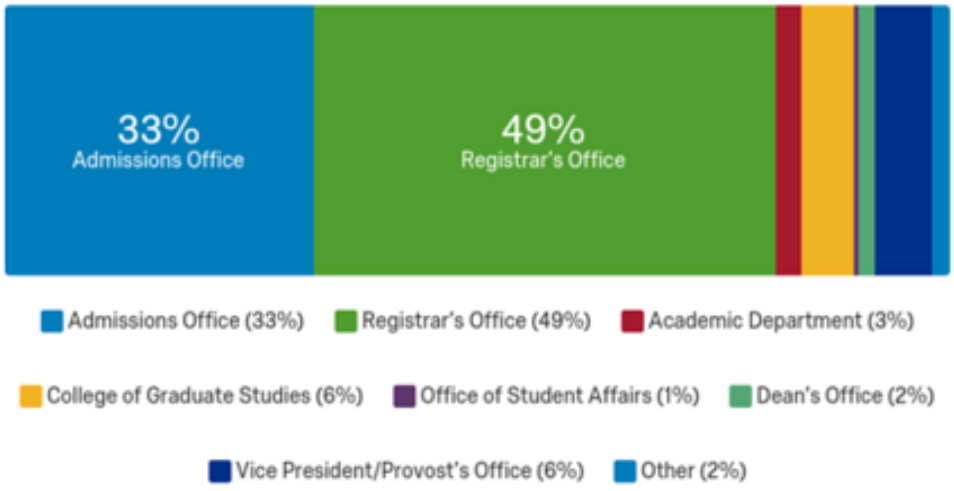
Popular "other" Responses:

- WES
- InCred
- SPEEDE
- NeedMyTranscript
- Joint Service Transcripts
- FASTER (FL Service)
- Scribble
- eTranscripts California
- IERF
- JST
- Diploma Sender

Does your institution also require official documents from the issuing institution?



What office is responsible for the policy on accepting digital academic records?



Popular other responses:

- *Admission and Registrar's office are together*
- *Office of International Education*
- *Human Resources*
- *Ministry of Education*
- *International office in conjunction with the General Counsel's Office*
- *Compliance Office*
- *International Students Office*

Key Takeaways from the AICE-AACRAO Survey:

- 50% of respondents said they required official transcripts for admission while 50% said they did not
- 74% of institutions accept scanned unofficial transcripts for admission
- 46% of respondents indicated the Registrar's office ensures that requirements for official transcripts are met after admissions
- 29% of respondents said they do not accept electronic transcripts from institutions outside the United States

Module 1: Introduction to Existing Digital Academic Records, Practices & Systems ("Legacy Systems")

Moderator: Alexander Agafonov, Ph.D. (Globe Language Services)

Panelists: Annetta Stroud (AACRAO) and Robert Watkins (University of Texas, Austin)

To understand what the future holds one needs to understand the past. This module reviewed "legacy" systems of electronic transmission of typed and hand-written academic documents as well as the introduction of the first truly digital education records, which are created, stored and transmitted electronically. Handling of international academic records was initially patterned after policies and procedures that were used for domestic documents.

Module 1 panelists aimed to answer the following questions:

Which of the "traditional types" (e.g., facsimile, e-mail, shared drives, encrypted file-sharing services, etc.) of electronic transmission of paper-based academic credentials. are used currently by your office/ institution? Are domestic and foreign credentials handled differently? If so, why?

What are the Pros and Cons of various electronic transmission methods?

What are the file types accepted by e-mail from students and/ or from institutions (e.g., PDF, Secure/ Password Protected PDF, JPG, PNG, TIFF, MS Word, etc.)?

Does your institution/ organization accept "born-digital" academic documents from US institutions or organizations? From foreign institutions?

Does your institution/ organization send out "born-digital" academic records? Who has control over these records? Who approves them? Quality assurance mechanisms?

What are the reasons for wanting to use digital tools to create/ store/ transmit/ verify education documents from foreign countries?

How to factor in vast differences in digitization of academic records among various countries and regions of the world? Can the "digital divide" be bridged?

What are the advantages of switching to digital academic records (e.g., Cheaper to produce and maintain? More secure? Easier to transmit/ share? Etc.)?

What rights does the credential holder (student/ graduate) have to his/her documents when they are in digital format?

Would "official" paper-based credentials co-exist with digital records in your institution/ organization? Why or why not?

Would students have any means of accessing their "born-digital" academic records? Would records need to be converted from all-digital to a template-based format for students to use?

What kind of security concerns need to be addressed to accept "born-digital" academic records from foreign countries? (server and e-mail hacking; spoofing; academic data integrity; corruption and fraud)."

The report on this panel is presented as a transcript of the discussion that occurred between the moderator, panelists and attendees:

Alexander – UT Austin has a history of digitizing documents, having started SPEEDE, but it has not completely embraced the digital wave of accepting academic transcripts electronically.

Robert – Today we have on-line verification sources, you can get things verified by email, or through a verification database, all information that was published in books are not available on the web, UT Austin accepts uploaded scanned documents for application purposes, once admitted original documents are required. Domestic applicants' digital documents are accepted but not for international applicants. Domestic admissions will accept high school documents from big school systems in TX (Dallas Sch System, Houston Sch System, and even Dallas and Houston community college systems). With international, the problem we have is fraud as there are no signatures, no letterhead, no telling signs as there are on original hard copy documents. I'd rather see the official or original documents scanned rather than a digital document. Still not totally ready to trust digital docs from other countries. An exception is CHESSIC and CDGDC (China) but they come through National Student Clearing House. We want the transcript and digital verification.

Annetta – SPEEDE was the first student data document mobility platform established in 1994 by UT Austin. The reason we use the third-party mechanisms is trust and transparency. But at the international level things are opaque. If you can verify the document on line, then the document you have can be accepted.

Robert – The GDN concept is the utopian idea that the server in UNISA (S. Africa) will send the transcripts/document to the server at the UT Austin. Doing away with paper. There is something compelling about it but also frightening. There is now the emergence of Blockchain. There are also Badges which carries your entire academic documents, financial, resumes, reference letters, etc.

Alexander – Trust issues is one concern, but understanding the technology is important. Cost is another factor. When we talk about digital credentials and digital transmission. How are credentials formed on a digital platform, how do you know it is legit?

Robert – TOEFL is an example along with GRE that come to us electronically. We don't want it in paper form and by mail. Transcripts are a different story.

Annetta – US & Canada have developed a secure enough digital shared platform. However, the same cannot be said for international systems.

Robert – The trust factor is important. What are some hindrances to adopt digital documents/shifting to a digital system? Cost, disruption, and training staff to transition to a new system.

Alexander – Is a third-party verification of documents acceptable if it is approved by the university?

Annetta – Within the past 20 years, many institutions have set up online verification systems. We can go online and verify the documents. Electronic verification systems are a very good tool. Every examining board has an online verification tool. India has it for its secondary exams. Korea has it too. If I can verify the Standard XII, I don't need a paper copy. Being aware of what the tools are for online verification, is key.

Robert– Dealing with a high volume of credentials, having to go and verify the docs on line is an extra step that we don't want.

Yuriko Bassett (audience member, representing Azusa Pacific University) – How do we know which countries are moving to the direction of digitizing their documents?

Annetta – Australia and NZ have done this very well through MyeQuals.

Alex Popovski (audience member, representing Ucredo) – As the former Assistant Dean at Binghamton University, we would accept electronic transcripts. Binghamton was 50 minutes away from Cornell. Cornell's documents were sent electronically but the information was encrypted.

Annetta – This shows we're not even there domestically. Our interoperability systems aren't communicating with each other.

Julia Funaki (audience member, representing AACRAO) – When you have all the different parties adhering to best practices then we can build trust.

Meg Wengner (audience member, representing ECE) – Some institutions in S. Korea will no longer issue paper transcripts. TAICEP is working on a best practices document. Ask the community, get back to the institution, then share that info with colleagues.

Annetta – National Information Center-Korea Information Center is a useful resource on Korean education system. KIRC is appointed by the Korean government and provides helpful information.

Alexander – Pros concerning digital transcripts are clear, digitalization is happening and it drives the decision making. The cons are the everchanging costs, upgrading the system, efficiency (a lot of the digital systems are not efficient yet).

Module 2: Digital Platforms set up by Universities and Third-Party Providers

Moderator: Alex Popovski (Ucredo)
Panelists: Polixenia Tohaneanu (University of Idaho); Michael Sessa (PESC); Michael Hovland (University of Iowa)

This module explored digital platforms set up by universities (e.g. MyeQuals, HEAR), platforms set up by private non-profit providers (e.g. National Student Clearinghouse, Parchment, eScrip Safe), and for-profit providers (e.g. ETX-NG). Universities set up electronic document transfer platforms to establish a more efficient means of inter-institutional document transfer to maintain credential integrity and increase efficiency in the admissions process. When adopted by universities, bilaterally, by groups of institutions, or regionally and nationally, these systems allow a university to digitally transfer credentials directly to a receiving institution at the students' request. These systems have largely replaced paper-based credentials, making the need to issue official printed documents an archaic process.

Institutional Perspective: Polixenia Tohaneanu (University of Idaho)

Motivation for Implementing Electronic Academic Credentials

- Improve students' experience with the application process
  - Portability of academic credentials
  - Self-advocacy
  - Empowerment
- Make internal processes more efficient, reduce costs, and shorten the admission timeline
- Ensure transparency and authenticity of credentials
- Align our institution with global initiatives of reducing the use of environmental resources

General Criteria for Accepting Electronic Credentials as Official

- Mission statement attesting to a student-centered approach
- Endorsements, partnership, affiliates and signatories (Groningen Declaration, UNESCO Vancouver Declaration, etc.)

- Commitment to comply with FERPA, GDPR, and other international privacy frameworks
- Commitment to verify the accreditation of partner institutions and universities
- Transparency and auditability: clean description of how the process for ordering and obtaining credentials works
- Cost for students and partner universities
- Technology infrastructure for secure data solution
- Ease of use and customer service for end user: students and receiving institutions

Criteria Specific to Collaborative Universities Initiatives

- Recognized or endorsed by representative bodies in the country's Higher Ed
- When working with a 3rd party secure network provider, the verification process extends to this platform

Collaborative Universities Initiatives

Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) – electronic credentials

- Supported by GuildHE, JISC, Universities UK, Higher Education Academy
- 90 UK universities expected to subscribe
- Distributing partners: Gradintel, Digitary, Advanced Secured Technologies

My eQuals is owned by the participating universities and managed by Higher Education Services

- Currently 47 universities from NZ and Australia have subscribed
- Students use the system to generate a secure link of their credentials which can be inserted or embedded in an email
- The recipient institution/employer use the recommended security features to verify its authenticity

Security Measures to Ensure Authenticity

- Verify the source/origin of the digital document
- Check the security features suggested by the electronic transcript provider
- Be consistent, rigorous, always be on alert for possible data breaches
- Subscribe to the participating institutions' new letter to follow up on their latest changes
- Engage your own institution's IT Office support (antimalware resources, training)

Internal Procedural Changes Needed to Accommodate International Electronic Academic Credentials

- Replicate some procedures already in place for domestic transcripts
- Adapt to the reality that more and more schools no longer issue and mail paper transcripts
- Need to credit a general procedure that applied to various types of digital credentials

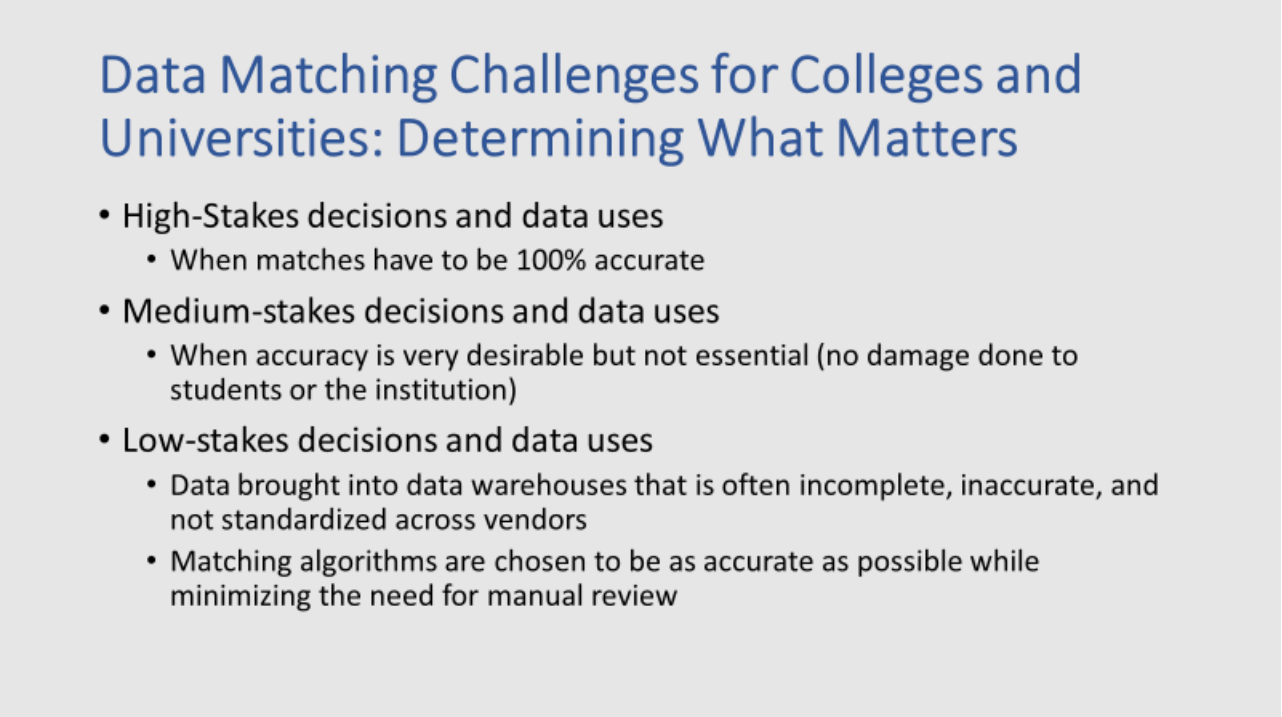
- Electronic transcripts with expiration date

Vision for the Future

- Expansion of digital credentials to a global rate – create a global depository
- Digital Badges with enhanced security features
- Making machine-readable data that will be recognized by admission tracking systems: GPA calculation, Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC), etc.

Institutional Perspective: Michael Hovland (University of Iowa)

Michael Hovland discussed the challenged of importing third-party data into a university student information system. He focused on strategies for improving efficiency and reducing errors by grouping data into poor of importance.



The Realities of Matching 3rd Party Data

- At the University of Iowa we have dozens of vendor and purpose-specific matching algorithms whose uses depend on the importance of the decision and the quality/extent of the data to be matched
- High-stakes decisions and uses require the most robust, complete, and accurate data, including SSN, date of birth, etc. and often require manual review
- Low-stakes decisions have fewer data elements and much less data available for matching and rarely rely on manual review

Data Matching Issues

- At the University of Iowa, our matching systems were built around high-stakes uses, such as "has the student ever attended school here" or "has the prospective employee ever been employed here"
  - Requires extensive match data
  - Requires hitting against a global pool of all present and past students and all present and past employees
  - Usually requires manual review
- Using a high-stakes process for low-stakes data without sufficient matching data results in high numbers of duplicate records
  - Duplicate rates as high as 3%

What Is "Good Enough"

- My work lies mostly in a low-stakes world of prospective student prospects and inquiries
- In a given population, I would rather have 100 mismatches than 1000 duplicates
  - Duplicates add expense to student outreach and have negative effects on predictive models
- To work effectively with data for low-stakes and medium stakes decisions, institutions have to:
  - Use appropriate matching algorithms given the quality of data
  - Change the size of the pool to which the external data is being matched
  - Determine an acceptable mismatch rate in a system with little or no manual review.

Questions to Ask When Designing Systems for Matching External Data

- Specifically determine which matching processes are high-stakes, medium-stakes, and low-stakes
- Identify the potential risks of mismatches and duplicates
- Determine the amount of time and money that can be devoted to manual review for match processes
- Determine what is "good enough" and make decisions accordingly

After You Match Students You Have to Match Attributes from 3rd Party Sources

- Many institutions purchase student search records from multiple data providers such as ACT, College Board, NRCCUA, Cappex, Chegg, and CBSS and receive student records from many other organizations as well, such as NACAC, College Week Live, and Raise.Me
- The number of search vendors increases every year
- The output files from these data providers are not even standardized for simple fields such as postal code, date of birth, and high school grad year, let alone fields such as intended major, race/ethnicity, and religious affiliation

Approaches to Solving the Problem

- As a result, campuses (and CRM software vendors) must build extensive lookup tables and crosswalk tables to put non-standard data into a standardized form
- Rather than having hundreds of campuses do the heavy lifting of standardizing the data, it makes more sense for a small number of data providers to do the heavy lifting on behalf of all the clients that support their services
- Our position is that data providers can decide what data fields they wish to collect and report to clients. However, any data they decide to report should be standardized with similar data from other data providers

Current State of Efforts

- Data Standardization Working Group organized in 2016 and has met at NACAC 2016 and NACAC 2017
- The group comprises representatives from all the major vendors as well as several representatives from colleges and universities
- In the past year the Working Group was "adopted" and supported by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council)

Student Attributes to Standardize

- Date of Birth
- Sex
- Race/Ethnicity (Federal values)
- Race/Ethnicity (Raw values)
- HS Graduation Year
- High School Code
- Home School Code
- Phone
- GPA
- Class Rank
- Religious Affiliation
- Citizenship status
- Parent/ guardian education
- Family Income

Geographic Fields to Standardize

- State Code Alpha
- State Code Numeric
- Country
- County Code
- Province Name
- Zip Code
- Zip+4
- Non-US Postal Code
- Postal Delivery Point
- Postal Correction Character

Enrollment Preferences Fields to Standardize

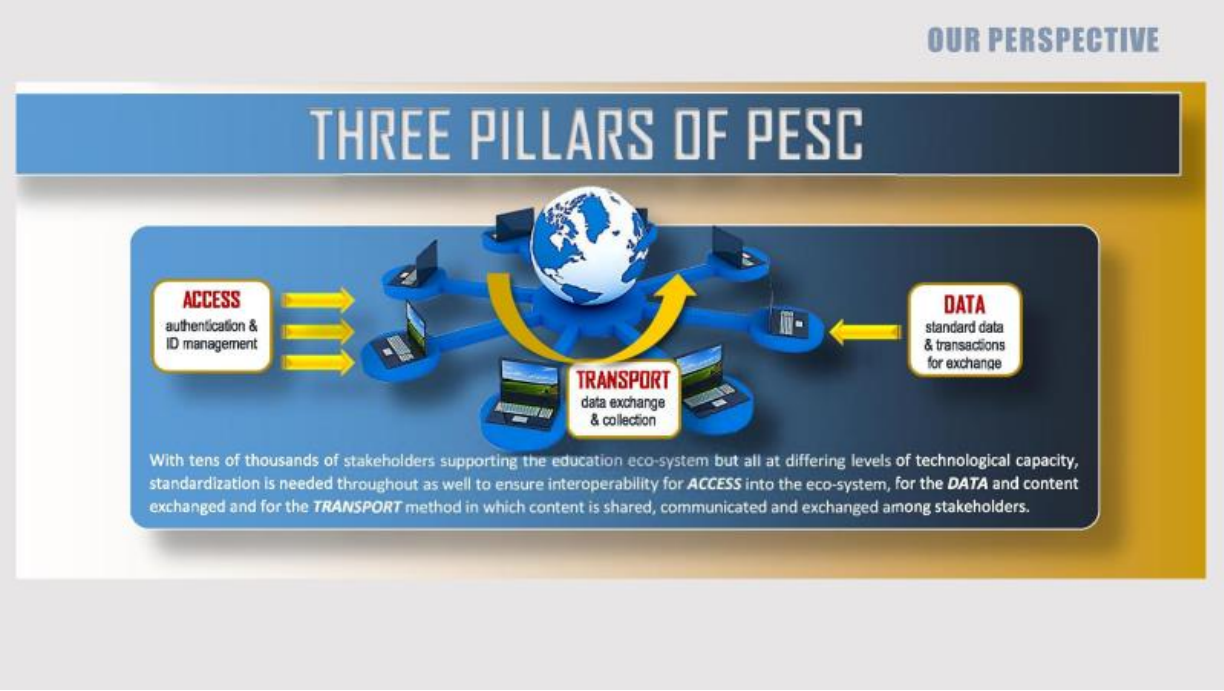
- Intended Majors
- Preferred College size
- Highest level of education to complete
- Preferred College type
- Preferred College Affiliation
- Preferred distance/location
- Preferred College setting

Example of the Problem of Standardizing Intended Major Using "Engineering, General"

Codes	Labels
•14	•ENGINEERING
•14.01	•Engineering, General
•14.0101	•Pre-Engineering
•14.0102	•Engineering
•450	•Preengineering
•490	•Engineering (Pre-Engineering), Gen
•540	•Engineering (General)
•1175	•Math & Engineering
•1375	
•43	

Third-Party Standards Perspective – Michael Sessa (PESC)

Michael Sessa presented on the role of PESC as a gateway for setting up overarching data standards.



Blueprint for the efficient, secure & successful transition from high school into the higher education & workforce environment.

OUR VOICE

Advocacy

1) Data Standards
Adopt, align & implement community-sourced data standards

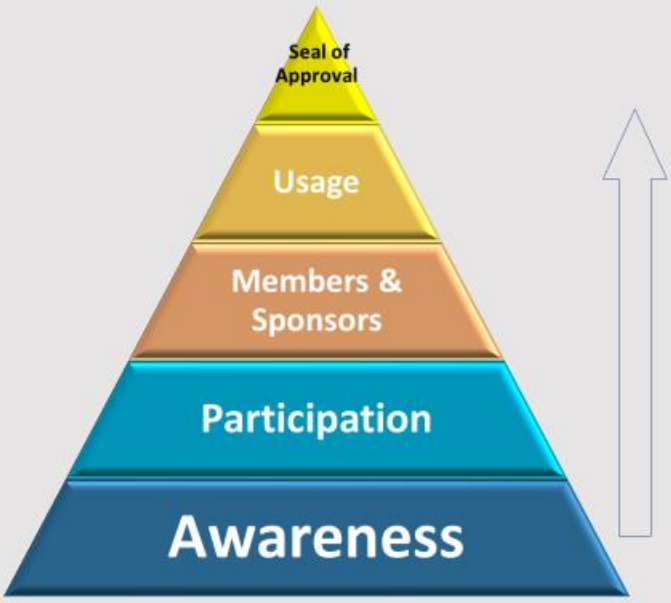
2) Data Governance
Support an open collaborative, transparent group of stakeholders

3) Data Advocacy
Advocate in policy-maker & IT sectors for high prioritization of data standards

4) Data Usage
Commit to using high quality linked open data across all applications, systems and networks

5) Data Perspective
Ensure a 'P20W' (lifelong) & international perspective in all aspects of development

OUR FOOTPRINT



Brand Maturation Cycle

Seal of Approval
PESC's Premiere Brand

Usage & Implementation
PESC Approved Standards, Technology & Services

Members & Sponsors
Organizations Funding PESC

Participation in PESC
Data Summits, Groups

Awareness of Standardization
Outreach, Events, Conferences, Partnerships

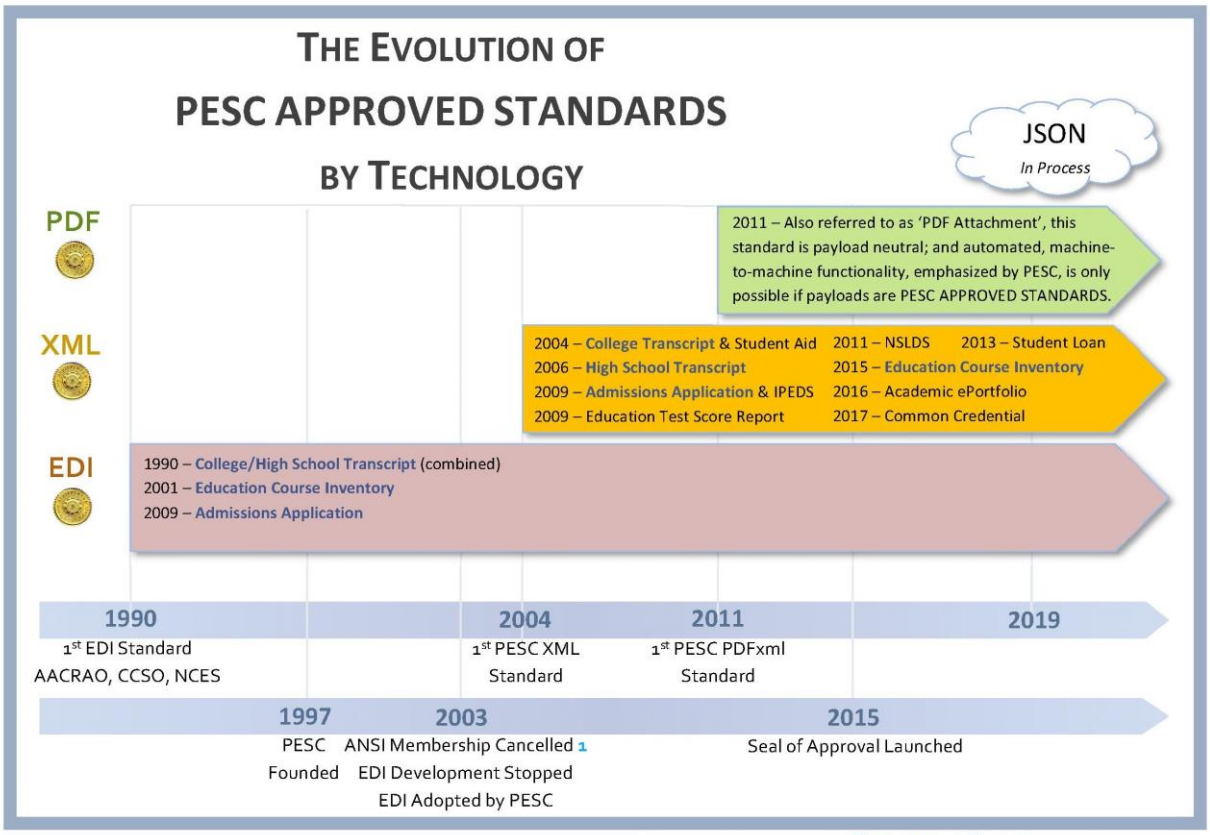


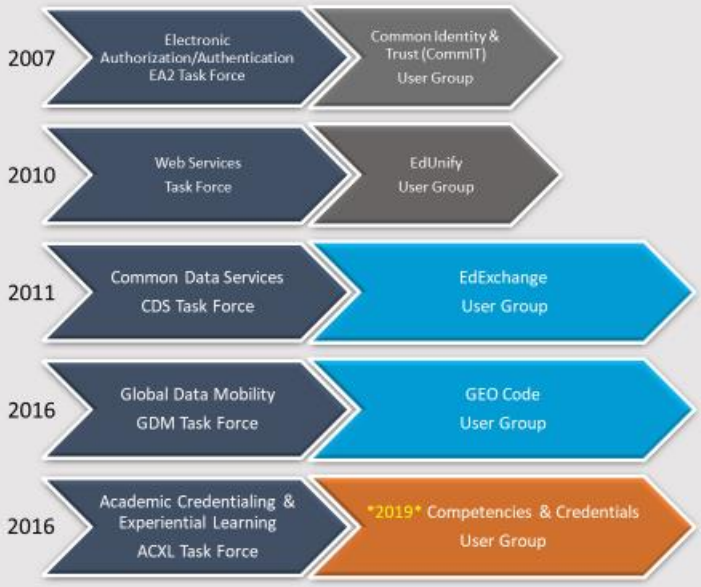
Table 1. ***The Evolution of PESC APPROVED STANDARDS by Technology***

As the community adopts a new technology, PESC develops and produces a corresponding PESC APPROVED STANDARD in that technology. Data contained in a PESC APPROVED STANDARD in one technology is equal to in value and integrity to the same PESC APPROVED STANDARD in a different technology. For example, one organization using the PESC APPROVED College Transcript in EDI can trust another organization using the PESC APPROVED College Transcript in XML as development and production (through mapping) use the same definitions, taxonomies and code sets.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers	*JSON*	JavaScript Object Notation | JSON - LD (Linked Data)
ANSI	American National Standards Institute, US Chamber of Commerce	*NCES*	National Center for Education Statistics, US Dept. of Education
CCSSO	Council of Chief State School Officers	*NSLDS*	National Student Loan Data System
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange	*PDFxml*	Portable Data Format XML data embedded
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System	*XML*	eXtensible Markup Language

OUR PUBLIC PURPOSE



Development Maturation Cycle

Task Forces Morph to User/Work Groups

CommIT (inactive)

Partnered with Internet2

EdUnify (inactive)

PESC

EdExchange (active)

PESC, Driven by California

GEO Code (active)

PESC, Resurrect PESC Single Institution ID

Competencies & Credentials

NEW – Launch at Spring 2019 Data Summit

Module 3: Digital Platforms set up by Governments

Moderator: Alan A. Saidi (ACEI)
Panelists: Alexander Burlakov (Ukraine); Chiara Finocchietti (CIMEA); William Paver, Ph.D. (FCSA); Emily Tse (IERF)

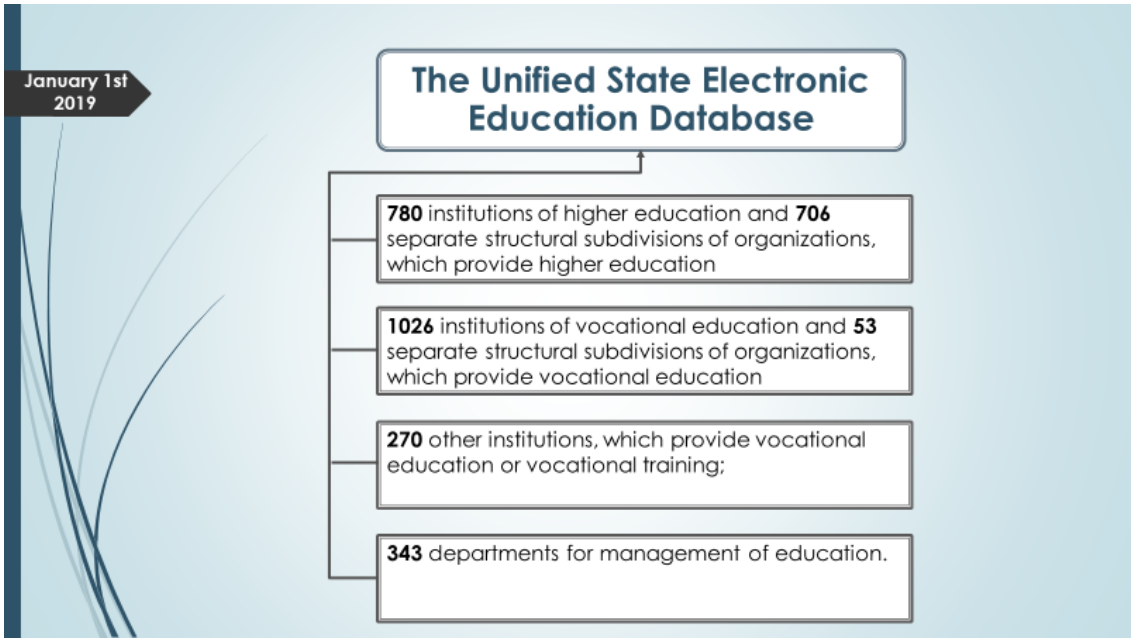
Many government organizations initiated the digitization of academic documents. Some do this through bodies that oversee the education sector, such as Moldova, while others do this to regulate professional qualifications gained through academic means. In this module, the panelists will demonstrate a selection of government-sponsored or hosted platforms and demonstrate how the range of information available this way affects how useful it is for credential evaluation. Like regional academic recognition, electronic data platforms originating from governmental organizations can be considered to be trustworthy, but panelists discussed the challenges of using these platforms based on the range of data available, in consideration if it is an adequate replacement for paper documents.

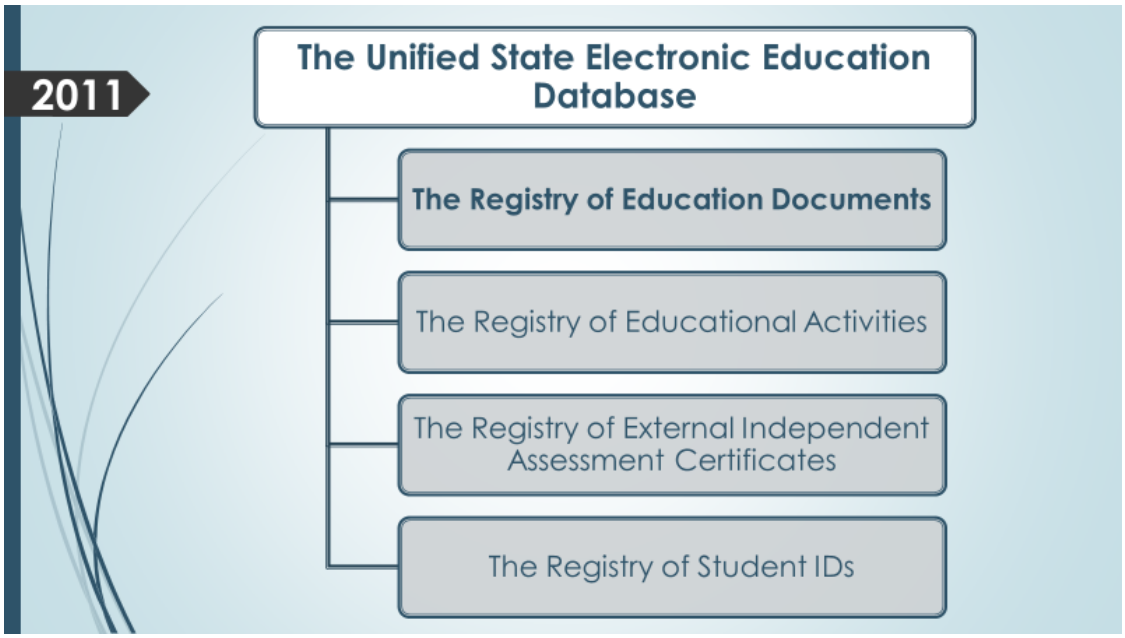
The Government Perspective: Alexander Burlakov (Government of Ukraine)

Alexander Burlakov works as a technical advisor to the government of Ukraine. He mentioned that in 2011, the Ministry of Education and Science officially began the creation of the Unified Electronic Database. The owner of this system is the Ministry of Education & Science that was launched on January 1, 2019. Access is free and available through the Ministry.

The Database collects, stores and protects data provided by educational institutions in Ukraine and contains the academic documents of students who are completing their education and/or have graduated. The Database stores information that includes the qualification earned and its level.

Currently, participants in the Unified State Electronic Education Database include:





One of the most important functions of the Database is its credential verification feature. At this time, verifications of "plastic" diplomas ranging from high school (Atestat) to graduate (Magistr) issued from 2000 to 2014 is available. This service is free of charge and is provided within 5 business days. Verification requests must be in writing and set by regular mail (post) to Ukraine.

The following steps are needed to be taken either by the applicant or third party when requesting a credential verification:

- Complete the application form available through this link https://www.inforesurs.gov.ua/zrazku.html.
- Provide photocopies of the internal Ukrainian passport of a graduate and his/her educational documents
- Submit the above by regular mail (post) to Ukraine.

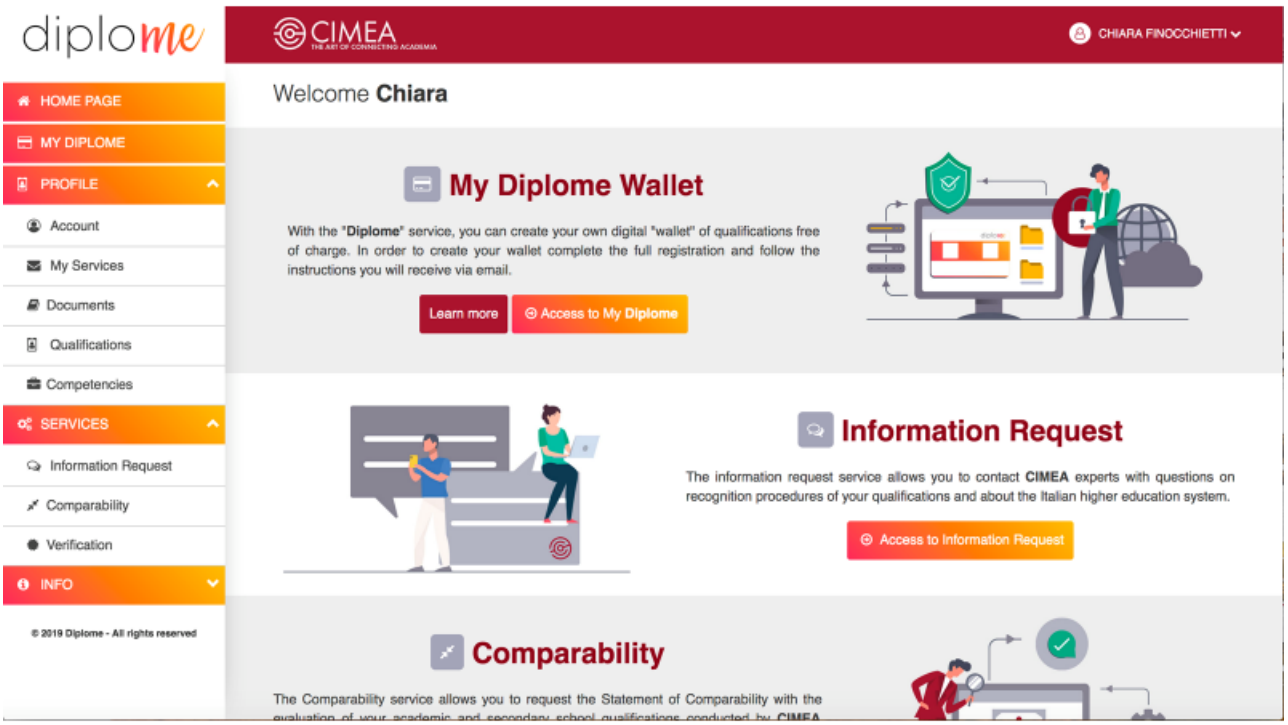
Additional information on the Unified State Electronic Database:

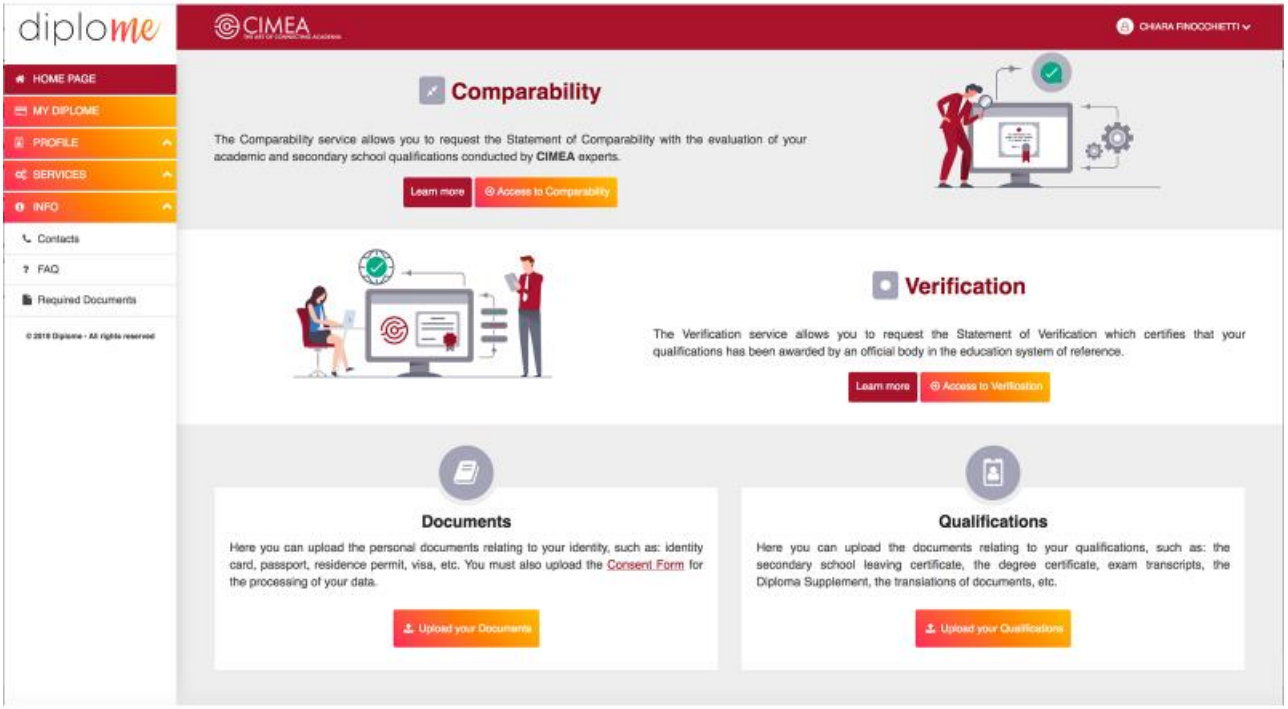
- The Database is currently in Ukrainian but within one year it will be in English.
- Academic documents issued in 2000 and on have been digitized.
- Plans are underway to digitize more documents and connect with more institutions.
- At this time the Database is for verification purposes only.

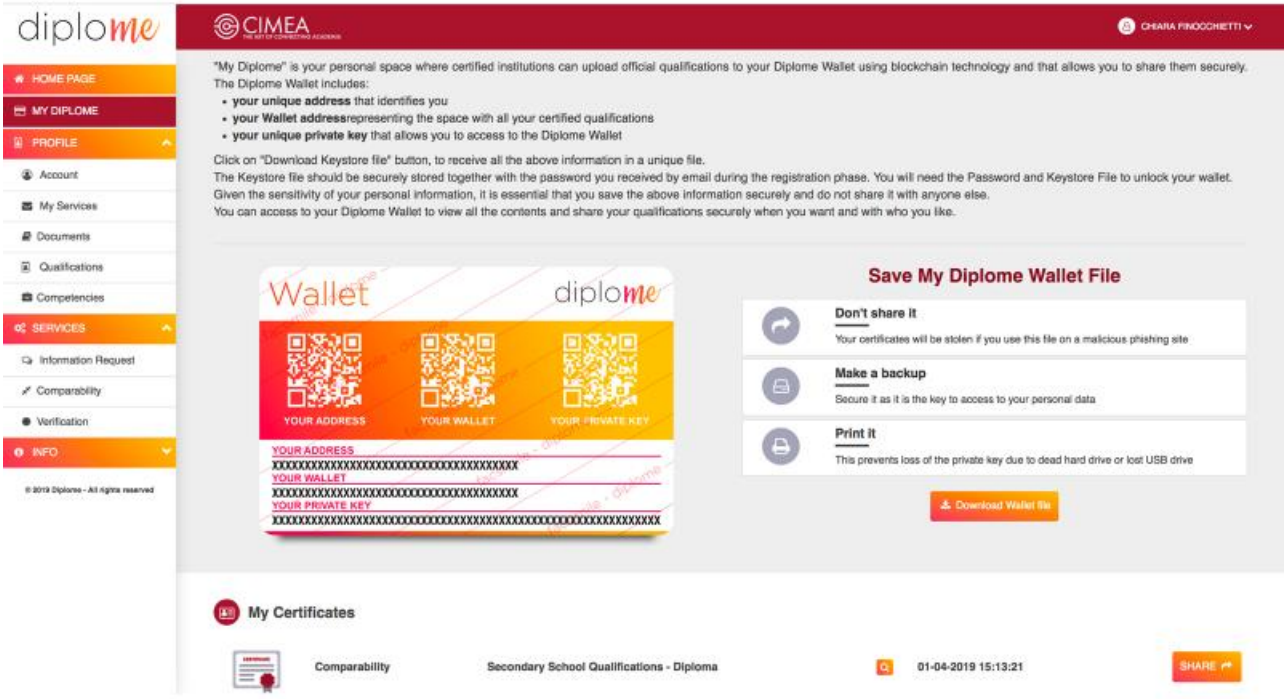
The Government Perspective: Chiara Finocchietti (CIMEA, Italy)

Since 1984, The CIMEA - **Information Center on Mobility and Academic Equivalences** has been responsible for disseminating information and carrying out consultancy activity on the procedures for the recognition of academic qualifications and on topics related to Italian and international higher education and training. CIMEA is the official Italian center for the NARIC network – National Academic Recognition Information Centers – of the European Union and the ENIC network – European National Information Centers – of the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The push to become digital and explore the use of technology for the mobility of students and professionals has been strongly supported by the Italian government. The Council of the European Union adopted the automatic recognition of qualifications. Automatic for access but not for admission. The Council of the European Union recommends that member countries are to explore new technology and blockchain to foster mobility of graduates and to use technology to fight document fraud.

CIMEA's platform is an open platform. It creates an ecosystem that is shareable. It is open sourced and uses the JSON format. Italy, through CIMEA is the first country to adopt the blockchain technology and is working with a group of higher education institutions to upload their documents into this system. The benefits of adopting blockchain technology for academic documents is that you can access it with a cryptographic key which is secure. The information is recorded in multi dots. One document can be hacked but not multi documents. This is the benefit of blockchain technology. It is also in compliance with the GDPR system. The owner of the qualification is the owner of the data. This platform has also been developed to meet the needs of refugees, those with or without or missing documents. CIMEA has adopted the methodology by developing the Academic Pass for refugees with limited to no documents. It's a reliable secure source. Protection of data is important and for refugees it is essential.


diplome
CIMEA
CHIARA FINOCCHIETTI
HOME PAGE
MY DIPLOME
PROFILE
Account
My Services
Documents
Qualifications
Competencies
SERVICES
Information Request
Comparability
Verification
INFO
© 2019 Diplome - All rights reserved
Welcome Chiara
My Diplome Wallet
With the "Diplome" service, you can create your own digital "wallet" of qualifications free of charge. In order to create your wallet complete the full registration and follow the instructions you will receive via email.
Learn more
Access to My Diplome
Information Request
The information request service allows you to contact CIMEA experts with questions on recognition procedures of your qualifications and about the Italian higher education system.
Access to Information Request
Comparability
The Comparability service allows you to request the Statement of Comparability with the


diplome
CIMEA
CHIARA FINOCCHIETTI
HOME PAGE
MY DIPLOME
PROFILE
SERVICES
INFO
Contacts
FAQ
Required Documents
Comparability
The Comparability service allows you to request the Statement of Comparability with the evaluation of your academic and secondary school qualifications conducted by CIMEA experts.
Learn more
Access to Comparability
Verification
The Verification service allows you to request the Statement of Verification which certifies that your qualifications has been awarded by an official body in the education system of reference.
Learn more
Access to Verification
Documents
Here you can upload the personal documents relating to your identity, such as: identity card, passport, residence permit, visa, etc. You must also upload the Consent Form for the processing of your data.
Upload your Documents
Qualifications
Here you can upload the documents relating to your qualifications, such as: the secondary school leaving certificate, the degree certificate, exam transcripts, the Diploma Supplement, the translations of documents, etc.
Upload your Qualifications



A lot of governments are building blockchain applications. But they are looking for applications and have approached CIMEA.

The Credential Evaluator Perspective: William Paver, Ph.D. (FCSA)

In the absence of Mr. Herman de Leeuw, Executive Director of the Groningen Declaration Network (GDN), Dr. Paver stepped in to offer a brief overview of the history and mission of the GDN.

The need to improve the portability of student data on a global scale was first introduced by Herman de Leeuw formerly with Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO), the executive agency of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, and current Executive Director of the Groningen Declaration Network. At its inaugural meeting, held on April 16, 2012 in Groningen, the Netherlands, attendees signed the Groningen Declaration pledging to uphold the goals of improving student data mobility which has since grown to include stakeholders from around the world. For more on the origin of the GDN and its relevance for international enrollment management, please refer to the article written by Herman de Leeuw and Emily Tse which appeared in the NAFSA IEM Spotlight Newsletter Vol II, issue 3, December 2014 via this link: https://www.nafsa.org/Content.aspx?id=49509

The Credential Evaluator Perspective: Emily Tse (IERF)

Examples of Government-Sponsored Platforms

Direct Government & Ministerial Providers:

- Online listing of recent graduates
- Sites developed for online verification of education (certain details confirmed or image of entire document reproduced)
- Sites developed for verification of the apostille (e.g., Ukraine)
- Sites developed for verification of professional licensure

Government-Appointed Providers:

- Providers that can issue records as well as verify them (e.g., NAD in India)
- Providers that focus on verification services

Benefits

Removal of Barriers

- Easy and efficient
- Quick
- Automatic layer of authentication

Challenges

- Possible cost to evaluation services
- Expiration
- Not user-friendly or not a stable site
- Trusted source vs unknown source
- Decentralized system (e.g., CHESICC vs CDGDC)

Roundtable Key Takeaways:

Cost

At what point does the institution or organization pass the cost of the academic credential verification to the student applicant?

- If a verification requires setting up an account, the institution/organization can set up the account and pay the fees for the service.

- If a verification system does not require the setting up of an account and does not have policies that restrict the cost of verification to be borne by the student, the cost can be passed onto the applicant who is responsible to have their documents verified.

Definition of Official Academic Credentials

What is your institution's/organization's definition of official academic documents?

Although the definition of official transcripts as we know it is changing in the new digital environment, the principles of authenticity, legitimacy and safeguarding will probably remain as the most important criteria for official credentials.

The discussion on what constitutes an official transcript focused around the authenticity aspect of credentials, as well as the manner in which they are provided. The conclusion regarding the dichotomy of authentic/official led to the following conclusion: **authentic transcripts do not need to be official, but all official transcripts must be authentic.**

The tentative definition of official academic credentials agreed upon was as follows:
authentic transcripts/credentials issued or attested by a regionally-accredited institution with granting authority, enclosed in a sealed envelope, with the institution's official stamp and/or appropriate signature on the back flap.

Conclusion:

The future is digital, but the future is here, now! All of us in admissions and credential evaluations need to learn about what's offered digitally in terms of documents and come to appreciate how time-saving it is to use secure, vetted digital resources instead of the old-fashioned, snail-mail based and sometimes tampered with paper documents.

Module 2 touched on the different ways institutions of higher education are attempting to navigate the space of electronic credentials. On one side, universities are working on creating valid and secure platforms able to provide authentic electronic transcripts (such as My eQuals or HEAR), on the other side universities are researching efficient solutions to accept electronic transcripts as official (like University of Iowa or University of Idaho). To help mediate this relationship, institutions for standardization of digital credentials such as PESC are assisting with the implementation of these initiatives.

AICE Endorsed Members and Affiliates agreed to share information on security and ease of use of digital verification resources.

"*There's a learning curve involved in using digital documents, and we should all attend as many webinars, sessions, etc. on digital documentation as we can. Once you get the basic concepts, it isn't at all as scary as it seems at the beginning when you don't know anything*." Beth Cotter, Foreign Credential Evaluations, Inc.

Verification of documents digitally is a huge time-saver!

Speakers:

Alexander Agafonov, Ph.D.	Globe Language Services, Inc.
Alexander Burlakov	Government of Ukraine
Chiara Finocchietti	CIMEA, Italy
Melanie Gottlieb	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
Michael Hovland	University of Iowa
Aleks Morawski	Scholaro, Inc.
Alex Popovski	Ucredo
Alan A. Saidi	Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc. (ACEI)
Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert	Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc. (ACEI)
Michael Sessa	Post-Secondary Electronic Standards Council (FCSA)
Annetta Stroud	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
Polixenia Tohaneanu	University of Idaho
Emily Tse	International Education Research Foundation (IERF)
Robert Watkins	University of Texas, Austin

About AICE:

Founded in 1998, AICE is a not-for-profit professional membership association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for those involved in international credential evaluation and comparative education research. The mission of AICE is to provide guidelines and standards to be used by its Endorsed Member credential evaluation services regarding the best practices in international credential evaluation. Through its annual symposia, AICE provides a forum inviting experts in U.S. and international education from institutions of higher education, professional associations and government to discuss and collaborate with the development of standards for its endorsed member organizations. The member organizations are endorsed by AICE for having demonstrated excellence in credential evaluation and adherence to professional standards through a rigorous membership application process.