



ADMISSIONS Policy

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Interested applicants can call or visit ACI to set up an appointment with an Admissions Representative. Applicants are required to visit to see the facilities firsthand, and meet the staff.

During the admissions appointment, the programs offered, the admissions requirements, program costs and the catalog will be reviewed with the applicant. Applicants will also need to take the Distance Learning Assessment.

Only after the applicant has satisfied all of the admissions requirements will the applicant be provided an enrollment agreement. The enrollment agreement is the contract between the applicant and ACI. The enrollment agreement lists the program description, the program hours, class schedule, academic delivery and cost for program completion.

The applicant becomes a student only after the enrollment agreement has been accepted by ACI.

Changes to admissions policies, procedures or tuition do not impact currently enrolled students. ACI honors the terms outlined in the Catalog under which the student enrolled.

PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT

- Before enrolling a prospective student for admission, Austin Career Institute provides the prospective student a copy of Austin Career Institute Catalog, Student Handbook, all required consumer pre-enrollment information, knowledge that accurately reports the certification or licensing requirements of the jurisdiction for which it is preparing graduates, and provides access to materials that accurately reflect the most recent accreditation annual report statistics.
- The prospective student's educational background is considered prior to enrolling a student.
- ACI only admits students who have received a high school diploma or GED. Students who apply without documentation of the GED or high school diploma due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. refugee status) are permitted to take an entrance exam supplied by ACI only if they are applying for non-FSA grant funding.
- Austin Career Institute does not admit ability-to-benefit students who are applying for Title IV Financial Student Aid (FSA) through the Department of Education.



- All students admitted are beyond the compulsory age of attendance for the state of Texas.
- All students must be enrolled as a regular student in an eligible program.

VACCINATION POLICY

- Austin Career Institute does not require vaccination records for admittance
- Because we respect the rights and decisions of all parties concerning childhood vaccines, we do not require these records for admittance.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

- Austin Career Institute does not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, color, religion, disability, national origin or ethnic origin in admitting students nor does it recruit students already attending or admitted to another school offering similar programs of study. All members of the armed services will not be denied admissions based on reasons related to their service.

READMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS

- An institution may not deny readmission to a person who is a member of, applies to be a member of, performs, has performed, applies to perform, or has an obligation to perform, service in the uniformed services on the basis of that membership, application for membership, performance of service, application for service, or obligation to perform service.
- Austin Career Institute will promptly readmit any service member with the same academic status as the student had when the student last attended Austin Career Institute or was last admitted to Austin Career Institute, but did not begin attendance because of that service membership, application for membership, performance of military service, application for service, or obligation to perform military service.
- “Promptly readmit” means that the institution must readmit the student into the next class or classes in the student's program beginning after the student provides notice of his or her intent to reenroll, unless the student requests a later date of readmission or unusual circumstances require Austin Career Institute to admit the student at a later date.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

- Austin Career Institute does not offer telecommunications or correspondence courses / programs of study.



DISTANCE AND HYBRID EDUCATION

- Austin Career Institute offers hybrid courses. Hybrid courses are a combination of in-class education and online distance education.

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

- Austin Career Institute does not offer any study abroad programs.

HOW TO APPLY

- Complete the enrollment application
- Contact Austin Career Institute admissions office to schedule an interview. During the meeting, information concerning program and class schedules, curriculum books and supplies, dress code, and available grants and FSA / payment plans will be shared.
- Choose a program
- Fill out relevant applications for funding source and provide required documentation
- Enroll in program of choice

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO STARTING CLASSES

Admissions Requirements

1. Applicants must be 18 years old or older
2. Applicants must complete an Application for Admissions
3. Applicants must have a Diploma or GED, or take and pass an entrance exam*
4. Applicants must speak English or Spanish or take and pass an entrance exam (ESL programs are available to students so that they are able to improve their English and be able to pass the Entrance Exam and enter the English language trade classes)
5. Applicants desiring to enroll in blended courses will be required to complete a Distance Learning Assessment to confirm they are well-suited for online coursework
6. Applicants must meet with an Admissions Representative to determine the type of class schedule that will best meet the applicant's objectives, and sign an enrollment agreement
7. FSA applicants must have valid proof of successful completion of high school as evidenced by any of the items on the following non-exhaustive list:
 - a. Copy of the student's valid high school diploma or G.E.D. certificate (or equivalent)



- i. In mitigating circumstances, as an alternate to show proof of completion of high school, an official high school transcript (bearing signature of a high school official) listing the student's graduation date
 - ii. Austin Career Institute accepts online diplomas when the **diploma** comes from an **online school** that has accreditation from the proper regional board.
 - iii. Have evidence of completion of home schooling that state law treats as a home or private school; or a copy of state-issued credential for secondary school completion if homeschooled (if applicable)
 1. Austin Career Institute considers home-schooled students to be beyond the compulsory age if the state in which the student was home schooled does not consider the student truant once he or she has completed the home-schooled program.
 - iv. An academic transcript of a student who has successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit towards an Associates or Bachelor's degree
 - v. Any foreign diploma must be verified for high school completion by an approved outside agency that is qualified to translate into English in order to confirm the academic equivalence to a U.S. High School Diploma
 - vi. A former member of the military who is unable to obtain documentation of his or her high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent), an institution may accept as alternative documentation a DD Form 214—Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty— if the DD Form 214 indicates the individual is a high school graduate or equivalent.
8. Students applying for NONE-FSA grant funding at Austin Career Institute must meet the grant requirements and be approved for the grant they are applying for.
9. Students who are interested in using Title IV funding must also meet requirements it takes to become eligible for Title IV FSA funding in addition to ACI's requirements.
- Please see “ <https://ifap.ed.gov/bbook/attachments/2013bluebookvol2ch1.pdf> “ for further detail.

*All applicants must produce a high school diploma. In mitigating circumstances (i.e. refugee status applicants who have successfully graduated from high school but don't have paperwork), if the applicant is not planning to use FSA funding, ACI has developed an entrance exam in lieu of a high school diploma which has proven successful in determining an applicant's ability to successfully understand and complete the requirements of the programs offered. A minimum passing score of 70% is required. Applicants who fail the exam will be allowed to retake the exam in 24 hours. A third attempt at the exam will be provided one week following the second exam attempt. A fourth attempt at the exam will not be provided for 1 month following the third attempt.



Recognized equivalents of a high school diploma

For students who are interested in using Title IV funding the Department of Education recognizes several equivalents to a high school diploma:

- A GED certificate;
- A certificate or other official completion documentation demonstrating that the student has passed a state-authorized examination (such as the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), or, in California, the California High School Proficiency Exam) that the state recognizes as the equivalent of a high school diploma (certificates of attendance and/or completion are not included in this qualifying category);
- An associate's degree;
- Successful completion of at least 60 semester or trimester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours that does not result in the awarding of an associate's degree, but that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree at any institution; or
- Enrollment in a bachelor's degree program where at least 60 semester or trimester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours have been successfully completed, including credit hours transferred into the bachelor's degree program.
- Foreign diplomas www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/hsdiploma.html (see the Foreign high-school diplomas section) 1–9 Chapter 1—School-Determined Requirements FSA HB Jul 2019 Glossary CFR DCL
- For a student who enrolls without completing high school, a transcript indicating the student has excelled in high school.
 - The student must no longer be enrolled in high school, must satisfy 's written policy for admitting such students, and must be starting a program that leads at least to an associate's degree or its equivalent.
 - Note that merely possessing a certificate of attendance and/or high school completion is not sufficient for a student to be Title IV aid eligible.
 - Such a certificate may be issued without a student having completed all of the academic graduation requirements, including passing any required examinations.
 - A state must consider a certificate or high-school-completion-equivalency test as equivalent to a high school diploma in that state in order for it to be considered equivalent to a high school diploma for Title IV aid eligibility purposes.

HOME SCHOOLING



To receive FSA Funds, a student must be qualified to study at the post-secondary level. Though homeschooled students are not considered to have a high school diploma or equivalent, they are eligible to receive FSA funds if their secondary school education was in a homeschool that state law treats as a home or private school. Some states issue a secondary school completion credential to homeschoolers.

- If this is the case in the state where the student was homeschooled, he/she must obtain this credential to be eligible for FSA funds if the state requires it.
- The student can include in his/her homeschooling self-certification that he/she received this state credential.

An eligible institution is defined in part as one that admits as regular students only those who have a high school diploma or equivalent, are beyond the compulsory age of attendance for the school's state, or are dually enrolled at the college and a secondary school.

For students who finish homeschooling at a younger age, the Department considers them to be beyond the age of compulsory attendance if:

- your school's state would not require them to obtain a secondary completion credential as provided under state law; or
- the student has completed a secondary school education in a homeschool setting that qualifies as an exemption from compulsory attendance under state law.

ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT COMPLETED, SIGNED AND DATED

- The enrollment agreement must be fully executed prior to the enrollee starting classes
- Austin Career Institute maintains the original copy of this fully executed enrollment agreement
- A copy of the signed agreement is provided to the enrollee and/or parent, legal guardian (when applicable)
- Registration Fee paid in full

TRANSFERS

All accepted transfer clock hours will be credited at the beginning of the program. A possibility exists that no transfer credit will be granted.

- Students transferring from another franchise location of Austin Career Institute will be placed into an existing class based on level of completion recorded on their transcript. Courses with an 85% or higher grade will be eligible for transfer hour's credit with a maximum of 100% of the student's completed clock hours allowable for transfer in general education chapters. Tuition balances do not transfer from one school to another.



- A student wishing to transfer may be accepted to an educational course / program after carefully evaluating the student's academic records. Each transfer is evaluated on an individual basis.
- For Title IV, HEA purposes, all hours attempted must be counted toward the 150% requirements for Title IV, HEA eligibility.

RE-ENTRY

- All students who are approved for re-entry enter at the same Satisfactory Academic Progress level as when they withdrew.
- Students who drop and re-enter within 180 days will enter at the same tuition rate as when they withdrew until the student reaches the next checkpoint as listed on the SAP Policy.
 - For the remaining period of enrollment beyond the closest checkpoint at time of re-entry, tuition will be at the current level as per stated in the applicable Catalog at the time the student re-enters.
- Students who re-enter after 180 days will pay the current tuition rate for the amount of contracted clock hours at the time of re-entry.
- Tuition costs under the enrollment agreement are reflective of the program clock hours that must still be taken, after giving clock hours for work performed in the student's earlier enrollment.

INTERNAL PROCEDURES FOR VERIFYING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

- All students must have a verifiable high school diploma or G.E.D. certificate.
 - If the applicant's high school diploma is not available, as an alternative to verify high school graduation, Austin Career Institute will accept:
 - An official transcript, listing the applicant's graduation date and in addition, must have a high school official's signature / title provided on the transcript.
 - A state certificate received by an applicant after the applicant has passed a State-authorized examination that the State recognizes as the equivalent of a high school diploma.
 - An academic transcript of the student who has successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit towards a bachelor's degree.
 - The Department of Education requires students who receive Title IV funding to have a valid high school diploma. For non-Title IV applicants, in mitigating circumstances (i.e. refugee status applicants who have successfully graduated from high school but don't have paperwork), ACI has developed an entrance exam in lieu of a high school diploma which has proven successful in determining an applicant's ability to successfully understand and complete the requirements of the programs offered. A



minimum passing score of 70% is required. Applicants who fail the exam will be allowed to retake the exam in 24 hours. A third attempt at the exam will be provided one week following the second exam attempt. A fourth attempt at the exam will not be provided for 1 month following the third attempt.

- Austin Career Institute accepts online diplomas when the **diploma** comes from an **online school** that has accreditation from the proper regional board.
- There is not an appeal process for any diplomas/GEDs that are not verifiable.
- Home School Diplomas are recognized by the Department of Education, therefore are accepted at Austin Career Institute (pending the state approves) if they are signed by the parent or guardian and list the secondary school courses completed by the applicant, and document the successful completion of a secondary school education or a secondary school completion credential for home school if the State requires, and is provided under the State law.
- Self-certification for verifiability is not sufficient.
- Prospective applicant's educational background is also considered prior to enrolling them as a student.
- Title IV Funded Academies: The Department of Education requires students who receive Title IV funding to have a valid high school diploma.
 - If a student is admitted and is found to have an invalid high school diploma or GED, the student must be dismissed from Austin Career Institute immediately and all Title IV aid disbursed for the student must be returned to the Department of Education.
 - A student may be readmitted only after providing a valid GED certificate.
- Non-Title IV Academies: If a student is found to have a false high school diploma, the student will be immediately dismissed from the program of study for failure to provide a valid high school diploma.
 - A student may be readmitted only after providing a valid GED certificate.
- Austin Career Institute follows the procedures for verifying high school diplomas when the admissions representative is not familiar with the high school in question.

Due Diligence

- Due diligence will be administered when enrolling a student.
- If Austin Career Institute Admissions Director suspects an invalid diploma, the Director will:
 - Call references the applicant provided on their Enrollment Application and ask for verification of the high school the applicant graduated from, including city and state in which the high school resides.



- Contact the appropriate State Education Agency (SEA) to determine if the high school is state recognized.
- Review the “State Regulation of Private and Home Schools” which provides a brief description for each state’s legal requirements that apply to K–12 private schools in the United States.
 - <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii/nonpublic/regulation-map.html>
- Not assume if the high school referenced has a website that it is a legitimate high school.
- Ask the applicant questions about the name(s) of their high school guidance counselor, principals and superintendents and ask for the phone number to the high school.
- Make a call to the school personnel, ideally in the applicant’s presence, to aid in determining if the high school in question is legitimate.
- Use “professional skepticism” if getting several applicants from out of state with the “same” high school listed on the diploma.
- Follow instincts and if suspecting fraud, ask additional questions AND ask the applicant to schedule a contract signing appointment at a later date in order to give the Admissions Director time to uncover the facts needed to verify a diploma.
- Consistently be alert for any information concerning a list of diploma mills.

Enrollment Status

- Students must be enrolled at least halftime to qualify for available Direct Subsidized / Unsubsidized and Direct Plus Loan programs.
- Part-time enrollment of at least halftime does not reduce the student’s Pell award.
 - However, if the program is less than an academic year in hours or weeks of instructional time, qualifying students enrolled in that program will receive a prorated award based on the length of the program.
- The length of the program as defined in clock-hour and weeks of instructional time determines the amount of aid a qualifying student may be awarded.
- Students must complete the required hours and weeks at each checkpoint per payment period in accordance with the SAP Policy in order to qualify for and receive the Pell and/or Direct Loan disbursement awarded.

INCARCERATED STUDENTS

- Incarcerated students are not eligible for enrollment as all classes and hands-on training is conducted at the physical location.
- A student is not considered incarcerated if the student is in a half-way house, has home detention, or is serving a sentence on weekends only.



CITIZENSHIP AND RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS ACCORDING TO §668.33

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, to be eligible to receive Title IV, HEA program assistance, a student must—

- (1) Be a citizen or national of the United States; or
- (2) Provide evidence from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service that he or she -
 - (i) Is a permanent resident of the United States; or
 - (ii) Is in the United States for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a citizen or permanent resident;

(b)(1) A citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau is eligible to receive funds under the FWS, FSEOG, and Federal Pell Grant programs if the student attends an eligible institution in a State, or a public or nonprofit private eligible institution of higher education in those jurisdictions.

(2) A student who satisfies the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section is eligible to receive funds under the FWS, FSEOG, and Federal Pell Grant programs if the student attends a public or nonprofit private eligible institution of higher education in the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau.

(c)(1) If a student asserts that he or she is a citizen of the United States on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the Secretary attempts to confirm that assertion under a data match with the Social Security Administration. If the Social Security Administration confirms the student's citizenship, the Secretary reports that confirmation to the institution and the student.

(2) If the Social Security Administration does not confirm the student's citizenship assertion under the data match with the Secretary, the student can establish U.S. citizenship by submitting documentary evidence of that status to the institution. Before denying Title IV, HEA assistance to a student for failing to establish citizenship, Austin Career Institute must give a student at least 30 days' notice to produce evidence of U.S. citizenship.

If the student falls in one of the categories below, they are generally considered an “eligible noncitizen.”

Generally, a student is an eligible noncitizen if they are:

- (1) A permanent U.S. resident with a Permanent Resident Card (I-551);
- (2) A conditional permanent resident with a Conditional Green Card (I-551C);
- (3) The holder of an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security showing any one of the following designations: “Refugee,” “Asylum Granted,” “Parolee” (I-94 confirms that you were paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired), T-Visa holder (T-1, T-2, T-3, etc.) or “Cuban-Haitian Entrant;” or
- (4) The holder of a valid certification or eligibility letter from the Department of Health and Human Services showing a designation of “Victim of human trafficking.”



If the student is in the U.S. and has been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), an F1 or F2 student visa, a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or a G series visa (pertaining to international organizations), the student must select “No, I am not a citizen or eligible noncitizen.” The student will not be eligible for federal student aid. If the student has a Social Security Number but is not a citizen or an eligible noncitizen, including if the student has been granted DACA, the student should still complete the FAFSA because she / he may be eligible for state or college aid.
