Overview

- College requirements for academic documents
- Assisting applicants
- Strategies to identify questionable documents
- Trends in documents
- Communication Tips
- Question Period
Official Documents

What makes a document official?
• Sent directly to you by the issuing institution
  • Institution stamp/seal
  • Original signature

Anomalies:
• Many international applicants report that their universities will not send official transcripts
• Original documents submitted to you by the student are not considered official unless coming from a jurisdiction that only issues one official copy to the student and is supported by a verification letter received directly from the issuing institution

Strategies to assist applicants in obtaining documents
• Ontario College of Teachers website (www.oct.ca)
• Interventions (correspond with institutions via email, letters and faxes)
• Embassies & Consulates
• Outreach
• Meetings
Incoming documents

- Document arrives from Mail Room with envelope attached
- Checked by Primary Document Assessment Team
- Acceptable Document?
  - Yes
  - No
- Questionable Document Team makes recommendation to Officer
  - Officer Accepts?
    - Yes
    - No
- Further Information requested from institution
- Information received acceptable?
  - Yes
  - No
- Investigation begins
  - Yes
  - No

Identifying questionable documents

- Names and Proof of Identity
- Mode of delivery
  - Third party sender or no sender information
  - Documents from different institutions received with tracking numbers in sequence
  - Postmarked in a different country
- Appearance of document
  - Inconsistencies on document (different from what we normally receive)
  - Alterations to the document
- Fonts, logos, colours, handwritten, pre-printed, institution stamp, letterhead
Clarifying questionable documents

• Contact institutions
  • Use of standard form to facilitate responses for questioning the mode of delivery
• Notify applicants
• Request further information in writing when questioning appearance and content
• Once response received, it may be necessary to seek clarification

Statistics

Ontario College of Teachers
Fraudulent Documents

- Number of fraudulent documents has been increasing.
- We have received responses identifying possible fraud from a broad range of countries around the world.
What do you do when you discover forgery?

• Do not process the file
• Make notes
• Avoid accusatory language in your letters of inquiry or letters to the applicant.
• Clearly indicate the reasons for the finding that the document is fraudulent
• Have a process in place for closing the application if a satisfactory explanation is not received.

Print Resources

• IAU – *International Handbook of Universities, World List of Universities*
• ACU: Association of Commonwealth Universities – *Commonwealth Yearbooks*
• NOOSR (based in Australia)
• AIU: Association of Indian Universities – *Universities Handbook India*
Electronic Resources

- UNESCO – World Higher Education Database
  - Education Systems: www.unesco.org/education/education-systems
  - List of Universities: www.unesco.org/education/education-systems/university-list
- AAU: Association of African Universities
  - www.aau.org
- AUCC: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
  - www.aucc.ca/about
- CICIC: Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials – Directory of Universities, Colleges and Schools in Canada
  - www.cicic.ca/post-secondary-schools-list
- Oregon Student Assistance Commission, Office of Degree Authorization – Unaccredited Colleges list
  - www.osac.state.or.us/oda/unaccredited.html
- India – University Grants Commission – Fake Universities list
  - www.ugc.ac.in/institutes/fake-universities.html

Contact Information

Iona Mitchell
Manager, Membership Records
Ontario College of Teachers
121 Bloor Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 3M5
Tel: (416) 961-8800 Ext 403
Email: imitchell@oct.ca