



The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE), recognized by the US Department of Education in 1995 as the national accreditor for Montessori Teacher Education Programs (http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg7.html#ed) is dedicated to improving academic degree and certificate programs for Montessori professional educators – those who teach and lead in schools, Infant and Toddler through Secondary II -- and to assure the public of their quality.

MACTE accredits certification course levels based on (1) the evidence they have that they prepare competent, caring, and qualified professional Montessori educators and (2) their capacity to monitor and improve the program's quality. MACTE believes this is the soundest way to assure the public about the quality of these programs. The Montessori teacher education program, not the college, school, department, or other administrative unit of the institution or school, receives MACTE accreditation.

MACTE's unique approach to accreditation helps programs improve and be accountable for their quality. MACTE's accreditation process starts with the evidence, quantitative and/or qualitative, the faculty truly relies on to convince themselves that the graduates are competent Montessori professionals. The program writes a scholarly paper, called a *Self-Study*, which makes the case that the claims the program makes about its graduates are warranted. MACTE's on-site visit, called the OSVT, verifies that the evidence cited in the *Self-Study* is accurate and trustworthy and that the program/institution is committed to the certification course level program. MACTE's Board determines if the evidence is convincing and of sufficient magnitude to support the program's claims that its graduates are competent, caring, and qualified Montessori teachers.

MACTE's constituency represents a broad range of programs/institutions offering certification courses at different levels. They are not limited to operating within the United States. Programs offering certification courses with a blend of residential and distance education, which satisfy MACTE's requirements, may also be considered for accreditation by MACTE.

As its Quality Principles suggest, MACTE is an advocate for program improvement based on evidence and confirmed scholarship. To that end, MACTE shares information about factors it has discovered in its accrediting work that influence the evidence programs rely on to support their claims. MACTE also conducts meetings and workshops on its innovative approach to accreditation for constituents, affiliations, state groups, and consortia.

MACTE is a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA), Council on Higher Education Association (CHEA), National Association of State Directors of

Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), and is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) as an accreditor.

MACTE has its principal office at Charlottesville, Virginia, and with board members serving worldwide. Additional information about MACTE's accreditation activities and events are available on MACTE's website (www.MACTE.org)

The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) is a nonprofit organization of providers of programs for the training of Teachers of the Montessori system of education. Some of these providers are in institutions of higher education, but most are independent Montessori schools or groups and individuals devoted to providing the next generation of Montessori Teachers. MACTE is devoted to the accreditation and the improvement of these programs for professional Montessori educators. MACTE's primary work is to assure the public about the quality of the professional teacher education programs it accredits. It provides this assurance through a system of accreditation that verifies and evaluates the evidence program providers rely on for their claim that they prepare competent, caring, and qualified professional Montessori educators.

Like all accreditors, MACTE requires program providers to meet some traditional standards of eligibility and capacity. MACTE, however, requires much more, and much less, than most accreditors. It requires *more* in the sense that the program seeking accreditation must satisfy three quality principles that require:

1. **Evidence** that the graduates are competent in the Montessori system of education
2. **Evidence** that the program has a way to monitor and enhance the quality of the Montessori teacher education program
3. **Evidence** that the program has the capacity to offer a quality program

MACTE requires *less* in the sense that the faculty members need only submit a *Self Study* in which they present the evidence and argument upon which they rely to support their claim that the three basic principles of evidence are satisfied.

The MACTE Board verifies the evidence presented in the *Self-Study* and evaluates whether the evidence supports the claim that the program prepares competent, caring, and qualified Montessori educators. Based upon its evaluation of the evidence for the three Quality Principles, the MACTE Board accredits professional teacher education programs in Montessori education.

MACTE also conducts meetings for its constituents in which innovations in program design and evidence of program effectiveness are studied. In addition, MACTE is an advocate for improvements in Montessori education.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for candidate status in MACTE, an attestation included with the application from the program administrator to the following three items is required:

1. The program's commitment and intent to comply with MACTE's Quality Principles and Criteria and requirements (fees, annual reports, etc.)
2. An understanding of, and agreement to, the fact that MACTE, at its discretion, may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the program's status with MACTE.
3. The program's agreement to disclose to MACTE, at any time, all such information as MACTE may require to conduct its accrediting functions.

Guiding Principles of MACTE Accreditation

MACTE's accreditation system helps providers improve their programs while also enabling them to be accountable for their program's quality. To achieve this goal, the accreditation process itself follows four basic *process* principles. The system is, first of all, grounded in a belief that improvement is a continuous process in which each step helps define the next one and moves it forward. Second, the process is inquiry driven, building up from the questions the program faculty has asked in setting its own mission. Third, the process draws evidence from the on-site visit that examines whether candidate learning meets high expectations and whether the program follows processes that produce quality. Finally, the process is intended to be frugal, not burdening the program and institution with unnecessary activities, or costs in paperwork, personnel, time, and money.

Process Principle One: Continuous Improvement to Advance Quality. The three MACTE quality principles – evidence of candidate learning, provider learning and capacity for quality -- constitute a dynamic cycle in which the provider formulates goals for candidate achievement, allocates needed resources, assesses candidate performance, and uses the evidence from the assessment to improve program quality.

The MACTE quality principles and criteria must be complemented with an accreditation process that incorporates practices of continuous improvement. Hence, MACTE's approach to accreditation relies on the following ideas from the continuous improvement literature:

- Create constancy of purpose for improvement
- Balance constancy of purpose and continual improvement, short-term and long-term results, and knowledge of action
- Link program improvement to candidate learning
- Improve every system in the program to enhance the quality of MACTE learning, inquiry, service activities, and outcomes
- Eliminate misleading and superficial numerical quotas, check lists and indicators.

MACTE's approach is not based on a single model or template. Rather, it reflects an understanding that continuous improvement is an energetic process that offers many different paths to excellence in professional Montessori teacher education in much the same way as the Montessori respects the child and enables the child's unique development.

Process Principle Two: Inquiry Driven. MACTE believes that accreditation of professional Montessori education programs should be grounded in inquiry. The questions driving the inquiry should be interesting and important to the professional program faculty. The questions should

take into account teaching, candidate learning, important indicators of quality, and not simply be designed to comply with the external demands of accrediting bodies and state agencies. The questions also should reflect the unique mission of the program and be responsive to MACTE's three principles of quality.

Process Principle Three: On-Site Visits to Ensure Quality. An on-site visit for accreditation provides an external verification of the program's internal quality assurance mechanisms and the evidence they produce. Such on-site visits are essentially investigative reviews of the ways professional education programs are producing candidate learning, assessing the outcomes of instruction, making improvements in the program, and gaining support for the program. Academic on-site visits do not evaluate quality itself, but focus on the verification of the processes that are intended to produce quality. MACTE has modified the standard on-site visit approach to emphasize both the quality processes *and* the evidence of the student learning and accomplishment.

The approach requires the program faculty to live up to their publicly proclaimed high expectations for their program and its improvement. This is accomplished when the program demonstrates accountability to the public for those high expectations through the display of solid evidence of candidate accomplishment.

Process Principle Four: Frugality. The accreditation process should be efficient and use the minimum resources necessary to reach timely decisions. The process should be a part of the normal quality assurance system the program employs. The *Self Study*, in other words, should contain only information and analysis that makes the case that the program prepares competent, caring, and qualified Montessori professionals. The *Self Study* should be important to the program and contain information the program feels it should have, or should have had, to properly and responsibly administer and improve the program. It should be *brief* and it should be about *inquiry*. The MACTE process is weakened to the extent that a program faculty takes steps *solely* for the purpose of satisfying a MACTE requirement. The production of the *Self Study*, in other words, should be a seamless part of the normal collective activity of the program faculty members to improve their program.

MACTE established a set of three principles for a program, which if followed, would signify that the program was a quality teacher education program. The first principle was that the program's graduates should have the knowledge regarding the level they will be teaching, the pedagogical literature related to it, and be able to teach in a caring and effective manner. The second principle was that the program faculty would undertake systematic inquiry that would yield results that would support the first principle in ways that could be interpreted validly and reliably and would continuously improve the program by enhancing the first principle. The third principle was that the program faculty should have the capacity to offer and give a program that fulfilled the first two principles in a fair, decent, orderly and responsible manner.

The MACTE standards, in contrast to its principles, tell us whether or not these principles were followed. The standards state or name the operation or procedure used to measure or to produce what is being defined in the principle. In MACTE, some standards name the actions that would produce the principle, while other standards name actions that would establish the principle's

presence (or absence) by measurement. For example, MACTE has the principle that the students should understand the Montessori philosophy of education and the operations that produces this understanding are a standard set of courses and experiences. The measurement standard was that the point at which the preponderance of the evidence across multiple measures of the students' understanding signified that the material covered in the curriculum was understood.

The standards for the common sense principle that new teachers should know the Montessori curriculum and principles were both measurement and production standards. They were the assessments or measurements (qualitative and/or quantitative) that showed the candidates' sufficient professional understanding coupled with how the faculty produced this understanding through the candidates' completion of a course of study in Montessori education that was planned and fairly administered to yield that understanding. Meeting the measurement standard was taken as more persuasive evidence that the principle was followed than the production standard, but both were required.

To be more precise, the standard in MACTE is a point on a dimension or scale, which had a pole at one end where the evidence was inconsistent with the principle and at the other where the evidence was consistent with the principle. The points in between the poles were degrees or balances of consistent and inconsistent evidence with the standard being the point at which the preponderance of the available evidence the faculty relied was consistent with the principle. The heuristic for *preponderance* was that at least 75% of the evidence had to be consistent with the principle *and* that there was no other evidence that disproved the principle. In this sense there were two MACTE scales – a consistency scale and a conclusiveness scale (proven/not proven) with the consistency scale used by the On-site Verification Team and the conclusiveness scale used by the Board should it reject the OSVT's conclusion. For the Board to alter the OSVT's findings, it had to find something in the record that either disproved the evidence in question or proved its opposite. So, if the OSVT found that the preponderance of the evidence (grades, surveys, ratings, etc.) was consistent with a the principle that the students understood the Montessori teacher education curriculum, the Board, if it were to come to a different conclusion about the principle, would have to find that there was evidence in the record that either disproved the fact that the students understood their subject or proved that they didn't know their subject.

The precise measurement standard for MACTE's view of reliability and validity is that percent of agreement between evaluators would be no lower than 75%. The standard for other measures, like grades and ratings were that the program means were no less than 75% of the maximum score.

MACTE's principles are thought to be necessary conditions for a quality program and while they are set out as the very definition of a quality program, there is only one principle that is both necessary and sufficient for quality and that is the principle that has a standard that the preponderance of the program's graduates can teach effectively and caringly. The evidence for this principle is evolving in the field. At one time, it was only the content named in the clinical course syllabus and recently it has become the ratings by the teachers or mentors and program supervisors give of the adequacy of the student's teaching proficiency. Obviously, the most compelling evidence would be that the students of the student teacher actually learned what was taught in the Montessori lessons and units. Of course, this standard is difficult to implement and

currently is beyond the reach of many programs. The other MACTE principles are thought to be connected to this principle, but absent empirical evidence, this connection is a matter only of informed speculation.

Section C: Quality Principles and Criteria for the Accreditation Programs that Offer a Certification Course Level/Levels

C.1. Definitions of Quality Principles

Quality Principles

The term “Quality Principles” refers to the three principles by which certification programs of Montessori teacher education are evaluated for purposes of accreditation. The Quality Principles state the evidence each applicant must have to achieve “accredited” status. Quality Principles permit many kinds of evidence and are widely applicable to a variety of Montessori programs, and yet avoid provisions that may be seen as arbitrary. They encourage qualitative and quantitative evidence and do not prescribe or proscribe any kind of evidence that can be reliably and validly interpreted. They are designed to promote quality and stability, while accommodating reasonable variations and special characteristics. Quality Principles are intended to acknowledge and respect the evidence the program truly relies on to convince itself that it is of high quality.

Additional Requirements

There are some additional requirements for the program’s capacity about which there is consensus in the Montessori community and substantial compliance with these requirements is required for accreditation. The evidence for residential and distance education certification courses and components must satisfy the same Quality Principles, criteria, policies, and procedures. Guidelines for review of distance education certification courses are available on the MACTE website. No program may offer a completely distance education program, because there must be a minimum of 120 hours of residency in every program. If the Program offers both an EL-I and EL-II there is an additional requirement of 60 hours of residency on top of the 120 hours. Applicants for accreditation should use the revised 2013 Guide to Accreditation and Quality Principles and Criteria found on the website. *Each program is also required to be affiliated with one of the organizations below:*

American Montessori Society (AMS) www.amshq.org

Montessori Educational Programs International (MEPI) www.mepiforum.org

The Pan American Montessori Society (PAMS) www.montessori-pams.org

Association Montessori International (AMI) www.amiusa.org

International Association of Progressive Montessori (IAPM) www.montessori-iapm.org

International Montessori Council (IMC) www.montessori.org

Independent (IND) kayihang@springvalley.org

Quality Principles

“It’s not what the data tells us, it’s what we do with it that counts.”

Quality Principle I

Evidence of Candidate Learning: Understanding and Teaching Montessori Principles.

The core outcome of the programs that MACTE accredits is evidence that the program's graduates are competent, caring and qualified educators. MACTE accreditation is based on the validity of the interpretation of the evidence that the program faculty relies on to support its claims about its graduates' understanding of their subject matter, knowledge, and the level they will teach. The essential idea of this principle is the program's ability to produce graduates who demonstrate knowledge for effective work in Montessori Education.

Quality Principle II

Faculty Learning and Inquiry

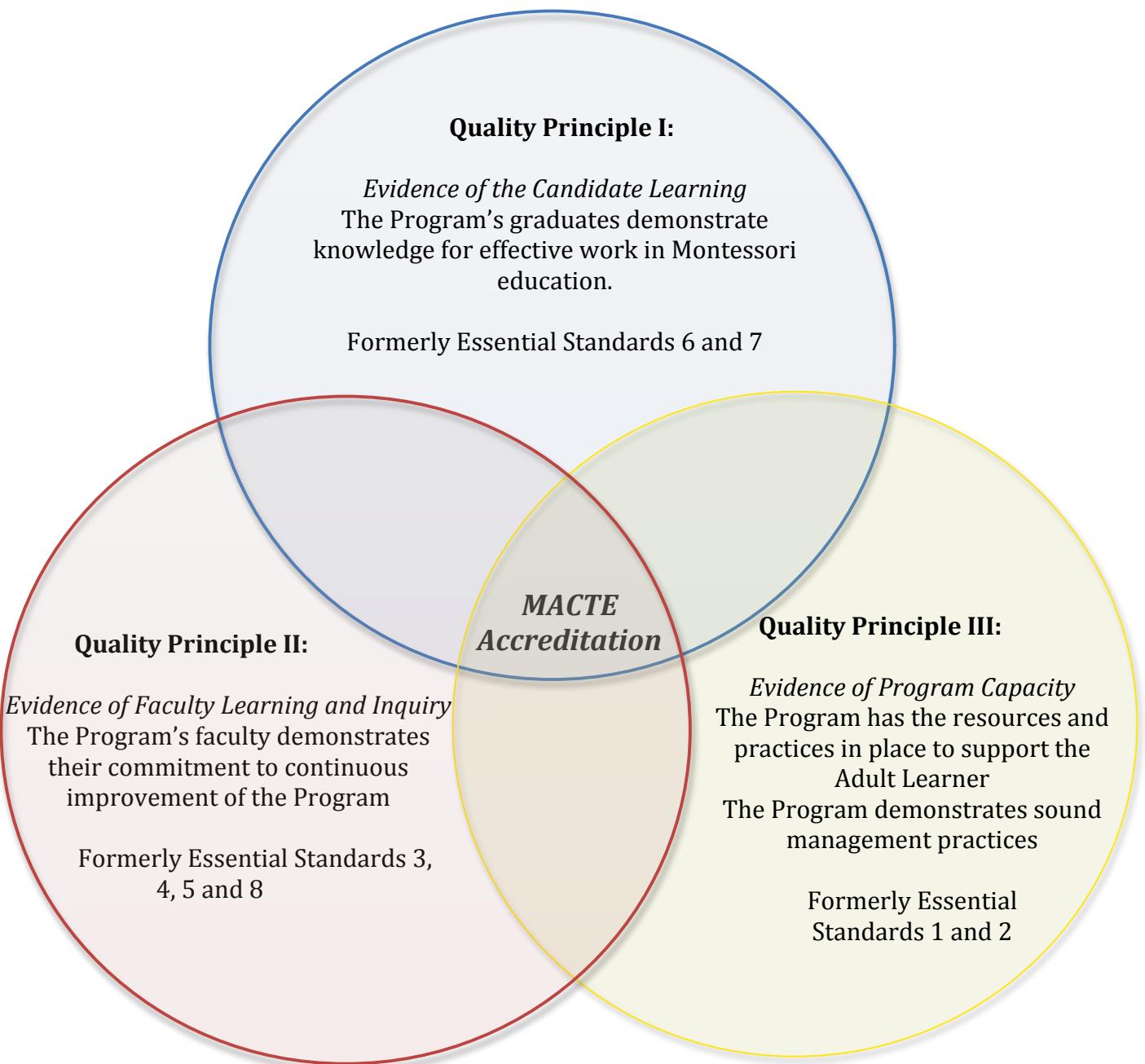
The core activity of the programs MACTE accredits is the faculty's learning and inquiry. MACTE accreditation is based in part on the faculty's system of quality control. This system is the means by which the faculty finds the evidence for Quality Principle I, regularly inquires into ways to improve the program's quality, makes decisions based on the evidence, and monitors and enhances the program's capacity for quality.

Quality Principle III

Program Capacity

MACTE defines a quality program as one that has credible and consistent evidence that the program has the capacity to operate. The essential idea of this principle is a program's ability to demonstrate sound management practices within the program, which will support ongoing candidate learning.

Detailed information regarding the accreditation process can be found in the MACTE Guide to Accreditation.



SECTION D: QUALITY PRINCIPLE I COMPETENCIES FOR MONTESSORI TEACHER CANDIDATES

Categories of competency	As relates to each level, the candidate for certification understands:	Examples of Possible Evidence
I. Knowledge		Evaluations of written and oral assignments Examination results Mentor evaluations of teaching
	1a. Montessori Philosophy	
	1b. Human growth and Development	
	1c. Subject matter for each Course Level* not to exclude: cosmic education, peace education, practical life, the arts, fine and gross motor skills	
	1d. community resources for learning	
II. Pedagogy		Evaluations of written and oral assignments Examination results Mentor evaluations of teaching Evaluations of demonstrations
	2a. Correct use of Montessori materials	
	2b. Scope and sequence of curriculum (spiral curriculum)	
	2c. The prepared environment	
	2d. Parent/Teacher/ family /community partnership	
	2e. The purpose and methods of observation	
	2f. Planning for instruction	
	2g. Assessment & documentation	
	2h. Reflective practice	
	2i. Support and intervention for learning differences	
	2j. Culturally responsive methods	
III. Teaching with Grace and Courtesy (caring manner)	As relates to each level the candidate for certification demonstrates and implements with children/adolescents:	Employer, field consultant, supervising teacher observation and evaluation Children's learning and
	3a. classroom leadership	

	3b. authentic assessment	progress
	3c. the Montessori philosophy and methods (materials)	Post-graduate professional performance
	3d. parent/teacher/ family partnership	
	3e. professional responsibilities	Surveys of employers and alumni
	3f. innovation and flexibility	

*** Targeted Subject Matter by Level**

- Infant Toddler: Sensory and motor experiences, language experiences; positive social experiences; self care
- Early Childhood: practical life, sensorial, math, language, science, physical geography, cultural studies
- Elementary: The Great Lessons language, mathematics, physical and natural sciences, geometry, history, geography
- Secondary: Mathematics, language, economic experiences, outdoor education, service learning, career education, college admissions/career readings