

Glossary of Academic Degrees

Associate Level – Usually equivalent to a two-year college course of study.

A.A.	Associate of Arts
A.S.	Associate of Science
A.R.E.	Associate of Religious Education
A. Th.	Associate of Theology

Bachelor's (Baccalaureate) Level – usually equivalent of four years of college.

B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
B.S.	Bachelor of Science
B.Th.	Bachelor of Theology
B.R.E.	Bachelor of Religious Education
B.S.M.	Bachelor of Sacred Music
B.M.Ed.	Bachelor of Music Education
B.S.N.	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
B.M.	Bachelor of Music
B.D.	Bachelor of Divinity (three years of seminary beyond another bachelor's degree)

Master's Level – usually represents one or two years of specialized study beyond the bachelor's degree.

M.A.	Master of Arts
M.A.	Master of Science
M.S. Ed.	Master of Science in Education
M.B.A.	Master of Business Administration
M.M. Ed.	Master of Music Education
M.S.W.	Master of Social Work
M. Div.	Master of Divinity (formerly this was Bachelor of Divinity, usually requires three years beyond the bachelor's degree)
M.S.T.	Master of Sacred Theology (equal to M.Div.)
M.R.E.	Master of Religious Education
M.C.E.	Master of Christian Education
M.S.M.	Master of Sacred Music
M.Th.	Master of Theology

Doctoral Level – usually takes two to five years beyond the master's degree

Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
D.Ed.	Doctor of Education
Th.D.	Doctor of Theology
D.S.T.	Doctor of Sacred Theology (or S.T.D.)
D.Min.	Doctor of Ministry
D.S.M.	Doctor of Sacred Music
D.R.E.	Doctor of Religious Education
D.D.	Doctor of Divinity
D.Hum.	Doctor of Humanities

The D.D. and D.Hum (along with several others) are normally honorary. They may represent significant accomplishments on the part of the individual in his church or his extraordinary involvement in the life of the school. Like other degrees, its validity may depend upon the reputation of the school granting the degree.

Note:

1. Any of the above degrees can be obtained through mail-order, non-accredited schools. For monetary fees in varying amounts, any degree can be bought, without any classwork whatsoever. Therefore, one should be suspect of a degree obtained from schools not known to be accredited by the regional accrediting agencies.
2. Diplomas are not degrees. Diplomas are offered by a variety of institutions for the completion of some non-standardized class or correspondence work. The holder of a diploma may or may not have completed high school.

How to check on the validity of a candidate's education.

To verify the educational attainments of a prospect, take the following steps:

- Phone the registrar of the college, university, or seminary indicated by the prospect. Ask for information regarding the prospect's attainments at that institution.
- If you are not familiar with that institution, ask how the institution is accredited.
- Phone the registrar of an institution that you know is a legitimate accredited school and ask them if they would accept credits from a school accredited by the above agency. You may ask them about that agency and its validity. Fully accredited schools will not normally give full credit for coursework taken at a school without good accreditation.
- Begin with the highest degree attained. If it is valid, those before it are, also.