General Required Documents Guide

Updated for the Fall 2026 Intake

Following the initial online application and a successful interview, applicants will move on to the document submission part of the application process. **Applicants must submit all required documents applicable to their circumstances if they pass the interview.** Preparing them in advance will help with the steps following a successful interview, which is why we recommend getting started on them early in the application cycle.

Required documents may vary or differ depending on the applicant's country of origin/residence. These differences are noted below where necessary.

This is a simplified guide to help applicants get started with document collection. Additional documents not listed in this guide may be requested of you depending on the circumstances regarding your application specifically.

For any questions, please email us at epik@korea.kr.

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Passport Information Page

Each applicant will need to submit a color copy of the information page in their passport. Applicants should ensure they have a passport **that will be valid for at least a year and a half from the expected date of arrival in Korea.**

Professional Photo

Applicants must submit a professional-quality photograph. This should be a passport-like photo of the applicant, taken from the shoulders up and facing forward (smiling is allowed). **The background should be a solid color, and the applicant's head, neck and entire face must be visible.** Glasses are allowed if they are for sight correction, but not other accessories such as hats, scarves, etc. **The ideal photo size is 3.5x4.5 cm, but generally any passport-sized photo will suffice. Please do not send oversized photos, as these cannot be used and will slow down your application processing.** This should be attached to your application with a paper clip. **Please make sure to submit the photo on photo-quality paper.**

Apostilled Criminal Record Check

The Criminal Record Check (also known as a "Police Certificate") must be issued by a national police authority from the applicant's country of primary citizenship. CRCs issued by police authorities below the national level will not be accepted. **The CRC must be dated within 6 months of the contract starting date.**

Intake	CRC must be dated starting from:
Spring (February)	August 1st
Fall (August)	February 1st

For late intake applications, the dates will differ; we recommend obtaining the CRC at least one month after the main intake requirement if you wish to be also considered for late-intake positions.

A physical federal-level apostille must be affixed to the physical CRC by the proper government office. Please see *Appendix 2* for more details.

Applicants should use the links in the following table to begin the process of obtaining a national level criminal record check in their country of primary citizenship. **Please keep in mind that processing times can be heavily delayed based on the number of requests received by the government offices. We strongly recommend applicants to begin this process as early as possible to ensure it will be ready by the document submission deadline.**

Australia	Australian Federal Police	
Canada	Royal Canadian Mounted Police	
Ireland	An Garda Síochána	
New Zealand	Ministry of Justice	
South Africa	South African Police Service	
United Kingdom	England & Wales (Basic)	Disclosure and Barring Service
	Scotland (Level 1)	Disclosure Scotland
	Northern Ireland (Basic)	AccessNI
	ACRO	
United States	Federal Bureau of Investigations	

Note: If you are currently residing in a foreign country and have resided there for 2 or more years, you may need to submit an apostilled CRC from that country as well. Details will be discussed during or after the interview, but it would be good to begin this process early as well.

If you have completed your Bachelor's degree outside of your home country, you must supply an apostilled CRC from that country.

For US applicants, the FBI background check must be apostilled by the US Department of State Office of Authentications in Washington, D.C. **A state-level apostille will not be accepted.**

For UK & Australian applicants, if you have ever received a legal name change in your home country, you must be sure to list these former names on your CRC application where asked and they should be clearly listed on the check itself once received. If the office is unable to do this, please contact your assigned coordinator or agency after a successful interview.

For Canadian applicants, the original RCMP fingerprint background check must be apostilled on the federal level by Global Affairs Canada. **Provincial-level apostilles on notarized copies of the background check will not be accepted.**

Apostilled Bachelor's Diploma

Applicants must submit an apostilled copy of their Bachelor's diploma. Postgraduate diplomas and other higher qualifications cannot be submitted as a substitute, only as supplementary documents to potentially increase your starting salary level. **Only diplomas from accredited English-language universities within the designated countries are accepted.**

- **In the case where an applicant was issued a Master's diploma** through completing a combined/extended degree program or due to regional academic traditions, supplementary paperwork must be provided that explains why only a Master's diploma was issued, and that it qualifies or includes the qualification of a Bachelor's degree on an international level.

We strongly recommend having a notarized copy of the Bachelor's diploma apostilled as we cannot guarantee that you will be able to have it returned to you, especially after accepting a final placement result.

The process of obtaining an apostille for a notarized diploma copy differs depending on where the diploma was issued. **Please refer to the relevant authority regarding how to apostille the diploma copy, especially if you completed your Bachelor's degree outside of the country listed on your application for *Primary Citizenship*.**

For US/Canadian applicants, a notarized copy of the diploma should first be created by a local notary public (or by the university if they offer it). This notarized copy can then be sent to the local state/provincial authority for the apostille. Please review *Appendix 2* for more information.

For South African applicants, the original SAQA Verification Letter must be apostilled together with a notarized/verified copy of a standard non-honours Bachelor's diploma. Higher qualifications (Honours, Masters, etc.) can also be apostilled with these documents, as long as they are all verified and included within the SAQA Verification letter.

For applicants who have yet to receive their diploma, a letter of intent to graduate or similar provided by the university registrar's office may be used as a temporary placeholder in order to receive placement following a successful interview. However, the apostilled diploma copy must be submitted directly to the EPIK office by a date set by EPIK each term. If an applicant will not receive their diploma in time to meet this deadline, then that applicant is not eligible for the current term. Applicants that submit a placeholder to secure a position but then fail to submit the apostilled diploma copy by the deadline will have their position/application revoked for the term.

If an applicant also holds any Master's degree which will be used for salary considerations, then an apostilled copy of the Master's degree must also be submitted to qualify for the higher pay level or qualification.

Sealed Transcripts

Applicants must submit sealed transcripts/academic records alongside each apostilled diploma they submit as part of their application package. The envelopes they are mailed in should contain a marking on/over the seal to prove that it has never been opened. **The contents of the transcripts/records must clearly state when the qualification was completed or conferred.**

For applicants who have attended multiple schools before completing their degree, sealed transcripts for those previous schools will be required if they attended the degree-issuing university for less than 2 years. Transcripts from study abroad programs are not required.

For applicants who have yet to receive their diploma, a set of sealed, in-progress transcripts should be submitted as a placeholder. However, the sealed, finalized transcripts must be submitted to the EPIK office no later than the date set for the specific term. Applicants that submit placeholder transcripts but then later fail to submit the finalized transcripts by the deadline will have their position/application revoked for that term.

If physical transcripts are not available due to university policies, please consult with your assigned coordinator or agency after a successful interview notice for assistance.

Two Original Letters of Recommendation

There are very specific requirements in regards to the content and format of the letters. Please pay careful attention to the letter of recommendation requirements outlined below. Each letter of recommendation must meet the following requirements:

- **Letters must clearly state the name of the referee, their title/position, and their contact information.** Ideally, both a phone number and an email address should be included.

- **Letters must be from a supervisor, manager, professor, academic advisor, co-teacher, or other professional source.** The referee cannot be a friend, family member, or co-worker. Letters from post-high school/secondary school sources are preferred.

    - Current teachers in Korea **must provide at least one letter** from their current school.

- **Letters from volunteer groups/organizations, social clubs, etc. will only be accepted in relation to a teaching or education-based context.** Letters from freelance contracts, independent nannying/babysitting/au pair experiences, tutoring, etc. will not be accepted. Letters from religious organizations will only be accepted in reference to teaching/education-related experience or professional employment.

- **Letters must be on official letterhead OR the referee's official business card must be included.** If neither is possible, the applicant will need to obtain a letter from a different source. If a business card is attached, a scan of the business card should be included in the PDF file of the letter.

    - **As public schools in Korea do not normally have letterheads or business cards,** letters of recommendation from Korean co-teachers must clearly state the school's name, address, and contact number. Korean school letters must be signed by the referee or include their personal seal. If possible, including the school's logo and/or official seal would be ideal, but it is not mandatory if the school refuses to provide it.

- **Letters must be ink-signed. Digital signatures are only accepted for the initial online application.** Following a successful interview, the original physical letters with real, pen-to-paper ink signatures must be submitted as part of your application package. ***Traced signatures and duplicate/doubled signatures are not acceptable (i.e., ink signature next to printed copy of recommendation letter scan).***

- **Letters must include a typed date** which must be within 2 years from the opening date of the application period. **For the Fall 2026 term, letters must be dated on or after February 1st, 2024.** Regardless of regional formatting, the date must be a full date (e.g., February 1st, 2024; 01/02/24; 2024.02.01., etc.).

- **Letters must include the applicant's full legal first and last name as it appears on their passport.** If the referee knows the applicant by a nickname, they can use that nickname after including one instance of the applicant's full first and last name in the beginning of the letter.

- **Letters must be written in either Korean or English.** Letters written in Korean must have at least one instance of the applicant's full legal name written in English alphabet. Letters in other languages will not be accepted.

- **Letters should be 1-2 pages in length.** They should also contain more than just a description of the applicant's role or responsibilities. Letters that do not contain any character reference or do not attest to the applicant's (potential) ability as a teacher will not be accepted.

- **Letters should be addressed to "Whom it May Concern" or to the "EPIK Team."** Letters addressed to specific recruiters, Offices of Education, institutions, etc. will not be accepted.

- **Letters must clearly state the nature and length of the relationship between the referee and the applicant.**

- **Letters from online TEFL/TESOL/etc. course providers are not accepted.** Letters from course providers are only acceptable if the applicant has attended the course and interacted with the referee in-person.

Please review *Appendix 1* for the letter of recommendation template.

Proof of Level 2 Status

Applicants may apply while technically considered Level 3 but will need to qualify as a Level 2 or higher status in order to secure a final placement. As such, applicants must submit proof of meeting Level 2 (or higher) status no later than the specific document deadline for the intake. **Failing to do so will result in the revocation of any placement offer.** Attaining a Level 2 or higher status may be done through various means.

One of the following is required to qualify as Level 2 or higher:

- **Bachelor's/Master's degree in Education or education/teaching-related major**

  - Applicants who possess a Bachelor's degree in Education or who majored in a field of Education automatically qualify for level 2 status. Applicants who have a Master's in Education meet not only our minimum requirement, but also qualify for level 2+ status. As such, applicants who have these qualifications do not have to obtain a TEFL/TESOL/CELTA certification.

- **TEFL/TESOL/CELTA Certification, Postgraduate Certificate in Education, or a valid Teaching License/Credential**

  - TEFL/TESOL/CELTA certificates must clearly state the number of real-time hours completed for the course. If they do not, the applicant must provide proof of the number of hours (e.g., transcripts, a letter from the course director). Only certificates of **100+ hours** will qualify applicants for Level 2 or higher (depending on other qualifications).

- If an applicant possesses a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or a valid teaching license/credential, they must submit a photocopy of it and bring the original with them to Korea. Teaching licenses/credentials must be issued by an official education authority and valid at the time of their contract start date to be qualified as Level 2 or higher.

- **For Indian applicants,** a valid teaching certificate in English education is a mandatory requirement which cannot be fulfilled by a TEFL/TESOL/CELTA.

Additional Mandatory Documents Specific to Certain Applicants

Depending on their background, applicants may also need to submit the following:

1. **For UK/Australian Citizens: Apostilled Birth Certificate**

   - Applicants from the UK and Australia must submit an apostilled copy of their birth certificate along with their other documents. For applicants whose current name does not match that on their birth certificate, multiple or a more detailed criminal record check may be necessary. Please inform your coordinator or agency if this is the case.

   - For UK/Australian citizens born abroad and not possessing a UK/Australian birth certificate, an apostilled registration of birth abroad document must be submitted instead.

   - For those who have become naturalized citizens of the UK/Australia and thus do not possess a birth certificate from these countries, an apostilled copy of naturalization papers must be submitted instead.

2. **For South Africa/Quebec/etc. Applicants: Proof of English-medium Education**

   - Applicants who received their education within one of the designated English-speaking countries but in regions where English is not the only language of instruction in schools (South Africa, Quebec, Puerto Rico, etc.) must submit proof of English-medium education from each school attended during this period. **Letters must be submitted from every school attended from grade/year 7 up until high school/secondary graduation and must include the full name of the applicant, their period of enrollment/attendance, and that the language of instruction was English for all lessons/classes (excluding foreign/additional language courses). The letter must include a date of issue (must be typed or stamped).** These letters should be issued by the school's administration offices.

3. **For Korean Citizens: Proof of Residency/Citizenship & English-medium Education**

   - Korean citizens who hold permanent residency/dual citizenship in one of the designated countries are eligible to apply, but they must provide proof of permanent residency/dual citizenship. A photocopy of a passport or residency card will suffice.

- If requested, these applicants will need to submit proof that they have received their education in English from schools in one of the designated countries or at accredited international schools beginning from at least grade/year 7 until high school/secondary graduation.

4. **For International School Attendee Applicants: Proof of English-medium Education**

   - If any part of an applicant's education from grade/year 7 through high school/secondary graduation was completed outside the designated English-speaking countries, they must submit proof that the school(s) they attended were accredited English-medium international schools in order to meet eligibility requirements. Documents must clearly state both the accreditation status of the school and that English was the language of instruction. Proof is required for every school attended outside of the designated English-speaking countries.

5. **For Indian Applicants: Valid English Education Teaching Certificate**

   - Indian citizens are required to hold a valid teaching certificate in English education to qualify for the E-2 visa. As mentioned previously, TEFL/TESOL/CELTA certification does not fulfill this requirement.

Document Collection for Applicants Currently in Korea

Applicants currently teaching in Korea can receive certified copies (원본대조필) of some of their previously-submitted documents (e.g., apostilled CRC, apostilled diploma, etc.) from either their current Office of Education or their local immigration office. These copies can be used in place of new documents to save time for applicants currently in Korea but will only be valid if previously submitted for an E-2 visa and if they meet the current EPIK document guidelines. **All other required documents not mentioned below must be submitted as new original documents. We cannot accept any original copy of previously-submitted documents.**

- Public school teachers **must** receive a certified copy of their apostilled diploma, apostilled CRC, apostilled birth certificate (if applicable), and transcripts **from the Office of Education that holds the original documents.**

- Teachers at private institutions may receive a certified copy of their apostilled CRC and apostilled diploma from their local immigration office; **these copies must be submitted with an itemized receipt from the immigration office that specifically includes what copies were requested from them.** These applicants will still need to submit an apostilled birth certificate (if applicable) and a sealed set of final transcripts as the immigration offices typically do not require or hold these documents, along with any other required documents requested of them if they were not able to obtain a copy of it from the immigration office.

Certified copies will be acceptable if they meet all of the following conditions:

- **Issued within the current application period –** Previously-issued certified copies will not be accepted.
- **Issued by the institution that holds the original documents –** If you have been teaching in Korea and have transferred locations multiple times, you must obtain certified copies of your documents from the institution that is holding on to the original documents. **We cannot accept certified copies of previous certified copies.**
- **Includes clear information regarding the issuance of the certified copies –** Certified copies issued by Offices of Educations or schools must include the following information on every page:
    - Date of issue
    - Name of issuing institution
    - Name of issuing party
    - Pen-ink signature and/or official ink seal of issuing party and/or institution

    ※ If the copies are double-sided, the above information must be marked on both sides in order for both sides to be accepted for processing.

Applicants that wish to submit certified copies must supplement them with a **Certificate of Entry & Departure (출입국에 관한 사실증명)**, which can be obtained at a local government office (e.g., local citizen center, district office) or at the local immigration office. This document will need to be submitted with the initial documents package sent to EPIK after a successful interview, and then potentially again depending on the application timeline. Details on the second submission will be provided by your assigned coordinator.

Current teachers in Korea must also submit a photocopy of their Residence Card (both sides) and a copy of their initial Visa Grant Notice or visa sticker in their passports (if still available).

Appendix 1: Letter of Recommendation Template

This is only a guideline. Reference Letters do not need to fit this exact format.

Letterhead

(한국 학교 및 학원: 기관 직인 또는 로고)

Company/School Address

Phone Number

Email Address

Typed Date

Recipient information (i.e. “Dear EPIK Team” or “To Whom it May Concern”)

Please write specific information attesting to the applicant’s ability to teach in Korea.
The letter must:

- *Be in Korean or English (한국어로 작성 가능 단, 지원자 성명은 영문으로 입력)*
- *Be 1-2 pages*
- *Be typed and printed on professional letterhead (handwritten letters are not acceptable)*
- *Include the applicant’s full first and last name*
- *Clearly state the relationship between the referee and the applicant, including the length and nature of the relationship*
- *Provide a character reference, and not only describe the applicant’s role/duties*
- *Include any other required and relevant information listed in the Two Original Letters of Recommendation section*

Name

Position

Signature (Must be ink-signed, 작성자 잉크 서명)

Appendix 2: Apostille Information

An apostille is a type of legal certification. When attached to a document, that document is certified as legally valid within any country following the Apostille Convention, which includes South Korea.

All CRCs and diploma copies must be apostilled for the application process. Apostilles must be issued in English or include an official English translation.

All documents should be apostilled separately and not in a bundle.

Australia	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade				
Canada	Global Affairs Canada **RCMP checks must be apostilled by GAC**				
Ireland	Department of Foreign Affairs				
New Zealand	Department of Internal Affairs				
South Africa	Department of International Relations & Cooperation				
United Kingdom	Legalisation Office				
United States	**State Apostilles* *(For diploma copies ONLY)***				
	Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California
	Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware	Florida	Georgia
	Hawaii	Idaho	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa
	Kansas	Kentucky	Louisiana	Maine	Maryland
	Massachusetts	Michigan	Minnesota	Mississippi	Missouri
	Montana	Nebraska	Nevada	New Hampshire	New Jersey
	New Mexico	New York	North Carolina	North Dakota	Ohio
	Oklahoma	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	South Carolina
	South Dakota	Tennessee	Texas	Utah	Vermont
	Virginia	Washington	West Virginia	Wisconsin	Wyoming
	US Department of State *(for FBI background checks ONLY)*				

*We try to verify links as much as possible, but some websites block access from outside of the USA; as such, we cannot guarantee that all links for state apostilles are correct after the date of issue of this guide.