



## Virginia Board for Asbestos, Lead, and Home Inspectors

### **Guidance Document: Clarification of Acceptable Degree Programs for Asbestos and Lead Licensing**

Adopted by the Board on May 17, 2016

#### **I. Background**

##### Asbestos

Regulation 18 VAC 15-20-32 lists the qualifications for each individual asbestos license discipline. These qualifications are modeled after the EPA Asbestos Model Accreditation Plan for States (MAP), which suggests that states consider similar qualifications. The Board used the MAP as a starting point and added more specific qualifications in developing its Asbestos Licensing Regulations.

To satisfy the education requirement for Inspector, Management Planner, and Project Designer, an applicant can have either a bachelor's degree or an associate degree in engineering, architecture, industrial hygiene, physical science or a **related field**. "Related field" affords the applicant the opportunity to use a degree that does not fall into one of those specific fields of study.

##### Lead

Regulation 18 VAC 15-30-52 lists the qualifications for each individual lead-based paint activity discipline. Section 54.1-501.6 of the Code of Virginia restricts any Lead-Based Paint regulations of the Board from being more stringent than EPA's Lead-Based Paint Activities Regulations. Because of this restriction, the Board's entry requirements are identical to EPA's Lead-Based Paint Activities Regulation, 40 CFR 745.226.

To satisfy the education requirement for Project Designer, the applicant can have a bachelor's degree in engineering, architecture, or a ***related profession***; however, the field of study for the degree designation was left blank for Risk Assessor.

## **II. Issue**

Frequently, Board staff has difficulty determining which fields of study should be recognized as a related field or a related profession. Many of today's degrees have rather creative titles. Even after reviewing transcripts, it is difficult to determine whether certain degrees are *related* and should be acceptable in meeting the minimum requirements for licensure. Additionally, since Lead Risk Assessor does not specify a field of study, staff has no regulatory guidance on what fields of study may be acceptable.

Board staff requests guidance in deciding which fields of study should be accepted as either a related field to asbestos or a related profession to lead-based paint activities.

## **III. Policy**

To ensure consistency in the application of the regulations and to serve as guidance to staff and applicants, the Board adopts the following policy:

Where a determination cannot be made whether a degree should be accepted as either a related field or profession, a degree with a minimum of 40 semester credit hours in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) related courses is acceptable towards meeting the application requirements for licensure pursuant to 18 VAC 15-30-52 and 18 VAC 15-20-32. Applicants for licensure pursuant to this provision shall supply official transcripts for each degree program that is being submitted for consideration.

Board staff may request additional information as needed in order to ensure compliance with this policy. Should Board staff be unable to satisfactorily determine whether the credit hours comply with this policy, the application will not be approved. The applicant may request an informal fact-finding conference pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (Chapter 40 of Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia) in order for the Board to consider the submitted documentation in the event that the supporting documentation is not sufficient or a determination cannot be reasonably made by staff based on the information submitted.