

FAQs: Advising for MAT Elementary (Initial Licensure)

<i>Question</i>	<i>Answer</i>
Where can I get current program documents including information about student teaching, etc.?	Information about your program, course schedule, student teaching, etc., may be found in the online Advising Guide on the following website www.liberty.edu/advisingguide .
How do I find out who my advisor is?	All School of Education candidates share a group of LUO advisors who work together to give you consistent answers about your program. You can contact your LUO advisor by phone or email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-800-424-9595 • LUOAdvising@liberty.edu
Is previous teaching experience or education coursework required for the elementary program?	The MAT Elementary is an INITIAL licensure program. No previous teaching experience or education coursework is required.
What content competencies are required for the elementary program?	Elementary education candidates must document a <i>minimum</i> of 30 semester hours of liberal arts content courses distributed in the four core areas (English, Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science). All competencies must be completed <i>prior</i> to student teaching. See Content Competencies link under MAT Elementary in the Advising Guide.
Is an on-campus residence required for the MAT Elementary?	While optional intensives are available, candidates are able to complete all required graduate courses in the online format (practicums will be required in certain courses, and the MAT culminates in a 300-hour student teaching semester).
Can student teaching be waived?	Student teaching cannot be waived, but there are two options to complete the degree at Liberty: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Register for EDUC 590/592 and fulfill student teaching requirements for licensure. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If you are currently employed as a full-time contractual general elementary education teacher in a public school or in an accredited private school, your current position may serve as your student teaching. You will enroll in EDUC 591/593 (Student Teaching in Your Own Classroom) and complete all of the student teaching course assignments under the supervision of an on-site mentor. b. If your employment is not in an accredited school, you should make arrangements to complete the student teaching in an accredited school, perhaps through a leave of absence or in a year-round school during the summer. 2. If a leave of absence or placement in a year-round school during the summer cannot be arranged, you may register for EDUC 696 and complete the degree without licensure (“opt out”). We can verify that you completed the coursework but did not complete the student teaching under Liberty University supervision. It is possible to earn licensure at a later date by completing the student teaching requirement (within a 5 year limit). 3. <i>Note:</i> All MAT Elementary degree requirements must be completed. Otherwise the candidate must change to the M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction (non-licensure).

Must I quit my job to do student teaching?	The student teacher candidate is required to work a full time schedule at the school site. The student teacher candidate is also required to attend ‘after hours’ activities such as after school professional development workshops, faculty meetings, evening PTA meetings, etc. Lastly, the student teacher candidate is, of course, required to create lesson plans, gather and prepare materials for instruction, and grade student assignments in a timely manner. Therefore, it is recommended that student teacher candidates keep outside commitments to a minimum and that they limit work to 15 hours per week or less on weekends.
How long must student teaching be?	Minimum of the following documented field experience hours required for elementary student teachers: 300 hours of with 150 hours of direct teaching “ Early field experiences ” are experiential learning opportunities throughout the program to give candidates short practical experiences as elementary teachers. These can be accumulated as the candidate completes course benchmark assignments in collaboration with schools before the formal student teaching semester. Whatever the balance is must be completed during the formal student teaching. The student teaching is more structured than the early field experiences, requiring specified projects and a competency-based portfolio. A MINIMUM of 300 cumulative field experience hours are required. The formal student teaching is concentrated into one semester (16 weeks).
Who will supervise my student teaching?	Student Teaching Supervisors must be licensed and experienced teachers (minimum 3 years) with a graduate degree. You will have two supervisors in your student teaching: a. Your On-site Supervisor (OSS) will assist you in your school setting. b. Your Student Teaching Course Professor (LU Supervisor) will grade student teaching assignments that you submit through Blackboard and LiveText.
I already have a master’s degree and don’t want another one. Can I just take the courses I lack for licensure as an elementary teacher?	FOR LIBERTY GRADUATES: If you have already earned an MAT degree from Liberty, you may take just the courses needed for licensure, and Liberty will process the licensure documents for you. However, we strongly encourage you to earn the additional degree as the coursework will be the equivalent or nearly the equivalent of an additional degree. FOR ALL OTHERS: The following two options are available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPTION 1 [recommended]: Enroll in the Ed.S. in Curriculum & Instruction and complete the additional licensure requirements listed at the bottom of the Degree Completion Plan. This provides a twofold benefit to you: (1) you will most likely be paid a higher salary because of the Ed.S. degree, and (2) you will have obtained the license for elementary teachers. • OPTION 2 [NOT recommended]: The candidate takes only the courses needed for licensure and submits the transcript to the department of education. [Candidates who need more than 6 credits for licensure must apply to a degree program even if they plan to stop after completing the courses required for licensure.]
After completing this program, are there any other requirements necessary before I can work in a school system?	Upon completion of the degree requirements, including student teaching and licensure tests, you will submit licensure paperwork and fees as explained during the student teaching course. All licensure paperwork is submitted to: Liberty University, School of Education, Licensure Office, 1971 University Blvd., Lynchburg, VA 24515 E-mail: teacher@liberty.edu
My state requires a “certificate.” How does this compare to the VA “license” as an elementary teacher?	Liberty’s MAT Elementary program is approved for a VA license, which is reciprocated in other states. Virginia uses the term “license,” but it is the same credential as a “certificate.”

<p>Will my license be valid in other states?</p>	<p>You have two choices to apply for licensure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You may submit the licensure application for your state (usually available on your state’s Department of Education website). Our Licensure Office will prepare the verification that you have completed a state-approved program. In most states, there are no other requirements for licensure. In some states you will need to take a state-specific test. There may also be a state-specific course to be completed during your first year of employment. 2. You may submit the application for Virginia licensure and then apply for licensure in your state. This is the recommended route if you are not sure where you will be teaching.
<p>What are the exact licensure requirements for my program?</p>	<p>Go to the following website and look under the Middle Grades program requirements beginning on page 19: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Compliance/TeacherED/nulicvr.pdf. The main aspects of these requirements are provided below.</p> <p>(FOR NON-VIRGINIANS: Our licensure programs are approved by the state of Virginia and are reciprocated by other states. Some of our non-Virginia candidates choose to apply directly for their own state’s license. After your student teaching is complete, you may submit your own state’s application for licensure to LU’s licensure office.</p>
<p>How can I add a middle school endorsement to my elementary education license?</p>	<p>There are two ways to add a middle school endorsement to your elementary education license:</p> <p>-STATE APPROVED PROGRAM OPTION (preferred)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete at least one placement (practicum) in a middle school setting – grades 6 through 8 2. Middle School Content Competencies complete (at least 21 credits in each subject area in which you are planning to seek a middle school endorsement) 3. take EDUC 673 or 676 4. pass middle school Praxis II for the content area in which you are seeking endorsement <p>-FOR VA LICENSE ONLY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. pass middle school Praxis II for the content area in which you are seeking endorsement