

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
November 1, 3, 2022
Virtual Meeting**

**DAS Subcommittee:
Amend Process and Requirements for Certificate Renewal
(Prepared by Sara Davis, Rana Hutchinson Salzman, Lara
Friedman-Shedlov, Georgina Tom, and Lauren Burroughs)**

BACKGROUND

This proposal seeks to amend the certificate renewal process for the Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) Certificate.

The SAA Digital Archives Specialist certificate program was introduced in 2012.

“SAA is committed to providing education and training to ensure that archivists adopt appropriate practices for appraising, capturing, preserving, and providing access to electronic records. That’s why we’ve developed the Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) Curriculum and Certificate Program, designed to provide you with the information and tools you need to manage the demands of born-digital records.”
(<https://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/das>)

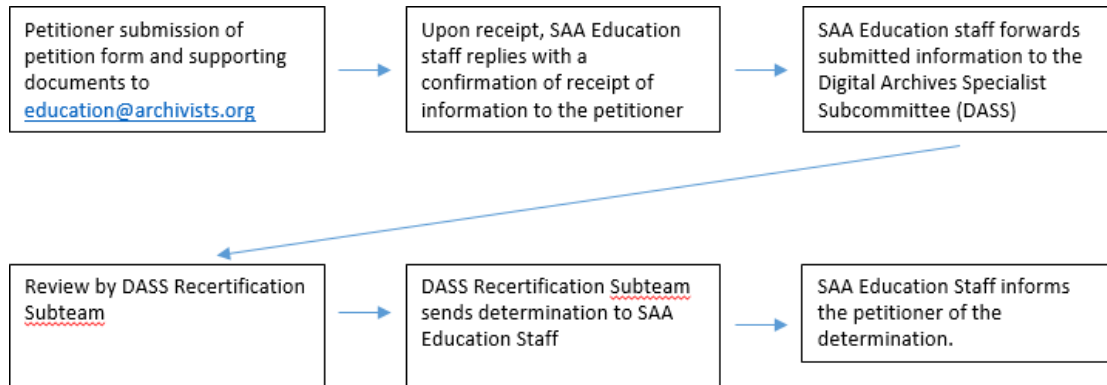
Certificate is to be renewed every five years which is necessary to remain abreast of technological developments and other considerations; however, certificate holders face a limited DAS course catalog. This creates pressure on the DAS Subcommittee to add new courses. DAS Subcommittee members seeking certificate renewal have the additional challenge of even more restricted course options, because they have already attended multiple courses as part of their liaison duties.

DISCUSSION

The proposed amendment seeks to encourage varied professional development experiences related to digital archives while still promoting the DAS program. It provides flexibility for certificate holders in regard to desired experiences or seeking to stretch limited professional development funding, and provides wider availability of resources for those who are challenged by travel, physical, or other restrictions. This level of flexibility may serve to encourage those who are undecided about pursuing the DAS Certificate or renewal. It also lessens the embedded demand for the DAS Subcommittee to create new course listings. In addition, study of programs listed on the Certificate Renewal Petition Form could help inform DAS course development.

The requirement of completing the pertaining course exam in addition to the course itself is not new but included in writing in the Recommendation to provide clarity.

Review of the Certificate Renewal Petition Form and proof of attendance should be the charge of a DAS Subcommittee Certificate Renewal Subteam because DAS Subcommittee members are the subject specialists, as opposed to SAA Staff. Members of the Certificate Renewal Subteam would forward the decision to the SAA Education Staff. Initial contact for petitioners will remain education@archivists.org to avoid confusion. Therefore, recommended workflow is as follows:



The Certificate Renewal Form requirements of a brief summary and justification seek to provide accountability in line with the course exam. Such a form could be made available via a fillable form or Google Form.

The certificate renewal process was apparently originally intended to be simple. The proposed amended process seeks to maintain that simplicity.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

THAT the SAA Council adopt the following revisions to add a Certificate Renewal by Petition option to the Digital Archives Specialist certificate renewal process.

Maintaining Your DAS Certificate

The DAS Certificate is valid for five years. DAS certificate holders who wish to renew their certificates may select one of two options:

Option A - By DAS Coursework:

- Complete four (4) courses and pertaining course exam from the DAS course list

Option B - By Petition:

- Complete two (2) courses and pertaining course exam from the DAS course list
AND
- Attend programs* of digital archives content for:

- two (2) live/synchronous -- seminars, workshops, webinars
OR
- one (1) live/synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid multi-day -- institute, conference
OR
- one-term minimum professional service on the DAS Subcommittee
OR
- one-term minimum professional service on the Electronic Records Section Steering Committee or Blog team

*Programs offered by other archival organizations or allied professions that clearly fall within the archival discipline. “Allied professions” include, but are not limited to, libraries, museums, records management, and oral history.

The following applies to both options:

- Renewal courses may be a combination of courses from all tiers; however, only one foundational course may be taken as part of the renewal process
- No more than one course may be completed for credit in the first year after the certificate has been awarded
- All courses must be new (no retakes) to the attendee
- Travel time to/from professional development course/program is not eligible for credit toward recertification.

Process:

Certificate holders wishing to renew through Option B - By Petition are required to submit:

- DAS Tracking Sheet, available at <https://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/course-workshop-resources>
- proof of attendance, in the form of a receipt of payment or event program for non-paid events
AND,
- the Certificate Renewal Petition Form [See Appendix B], which includes a justification and brief summary

See the SAA-DAS Certificate Renewal By Petition Guidelines [See Appendix A] for more information.

Contact SAA Education staff for transcript verification and other questions at education@archivists.org.

Support Statement: The Digital Archives Specialist program will now provide the flexibility of two options for the process of certificate renewal, which is required every five (5) years: Option A - By DAS Coursework or the new, Option B - By Petition, which is a combination of DAS coursework and professional development programs offered by other archival organizations or allied professions that clearly fall within the archival discipline.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: As it pertains to SAA Strategic Plan 2023-2025
<https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan/2023-2025>

The proposed addition for the Digital Archives Specialist program of certificate renewal Option B - By Petition contributes to achieving the following strategic goals:

- 1.3 - Provide leadership in ensuring the completeness, diversity, and accessibility of the historical record.
- 1.4 - Strengthen the ability of those who manage and use archival materials to articulate the value of archives.
- 2.2 - Provide content via education and publications, that reflects the latest thinking and best practices in the field.
- 2.3 - Deliver information and education via methods that are accessible, affordable, and keep pace with technological change.
- 2.4 - Foster communities for professional interaction.
- 3.1 - Identify the need for new standards, guidelines, and best practices and lead or participate in their development.
- 3.3 - Participate actively in relevant partnerships and collaborations to enhance professional knowledge.
- 4.3 - Foster an inclusive association and profession through educational and leadership opportunities.

Fiscal Impact: This change to the DAS Certificate Renewal requirements should have a net positive effect on the SAA Education budget overall. Although this alteration to the program may impact enrollment numbers in existing courses, the program will benefit overall due to the flexibility of allowing diversity of expert knowledge and retaining those who have received the certificate. The impact on enrollment is expected to be minimal due to the fact that there are a limited number of SAA courses that certificate holders can take once they've completed the initial certificate requirements. In addition, SAA Education will need to budget less for instructor travel reimbursements, meals, and hotel costs associated with in-person teaching.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How will it be decided which courses qualify?
- What is the financial impact on SAA?
- What are the overall benefits to updating the certificate renewal requirements?

Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) Certificate Renewal by Petition Guidelines Society of American Archivists (SAA)

DRAFT

The DAS Certificate is valid for five years. DAS certificate holders who wish to renew their certificates may select one of two options: Option A - By DAS Coursework; or Option B - By Petition. Renewal By Petition is a system that uses a combination of DAS coursework, continuing education offered outside of SAA, and professional service.

Option A - By DAS Coursework:

- Complete four (4) courses and pertaining course exam from the DAS course list

Option B - By Petition:

- Complete two (2) courses and pertaining course exam from the DAS course list
AND
- Attend programs* of **digital archives content** for:
 - two (2) live/synchronous -- seminars, workshops, webinars
OR
 - one (1) live/synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid multi-day -- institute, conference
OR
 - one-term minimum professional service on the DAS Subcommittee
OR
 - one-term minimum professional service on the Electronic Records Section Steering Committee or Blog team

*Programs offered by other archival organizations or allied professions that clearly fall within the archival discipline. “Allied professions” include, but are not limited to, libraries, museums, records management, and oral history.

The following applies to both options:

- Renewal courses may be a combination of courses from all tiers; however, only one foundational course may be taken as part of the renewal process
- No more than one course may be completed for credit in the first year after the certificate has been awarded
- All courses must be new (no retakes) to the attendee
- Travel time to/from professional development course/program is not eligible for credit toward certificate renewal.

Certificate holders wishing to renew through Option B - By Petition are required to submit:

- DAS Tracking Sheet, available at <https://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/course-workshop-resources>

- proof of attendance, in the form of a receipt of payment or event program for non-paid events
AND,
- the Certificate Renewal Petition Form, which includes a justification and brief summary

The governing principle used to determine a program’s qualification status for renewal credit is whether it reflects or falls into the Tiers of Study as determined by the DAS Curriculum Structure:

- [Foundational Courses](#) focus on the essential skills that archivists need to manage digital archives. They focus primarily, but not exclusively, on the needs of practitioners—archivists who are or will be working directly with electronic records. These courses present information that an archivist might implement in the next year.
- [Tactical and Strategic Courses](#) focus on the skills that archivists need to make significant changes in their organizations so that they can develop digital archives and work seriously on managing electronic records. They focus primarily, but not exclusively, on the needs of managers—those archivists who manage other professionals and who oversee programmatic operations. These courses present information that an archivist might implement in the next five years.
- [Tools and Services Courses](#) focus on specific tools and services that archivists need to use for their work with digital archives. They are practical courses focused on specific software products and other tools and they focus primarily, but not exclusively, on the needs of practitioner archivists. These courses present information that an archivist could implement immediately.
- [Transformational Courses](#) focus on the skills that archivists need to change their working lives dramatically and transform their institutions into full-fledged digital archives. They focus primarily, but not exclusively, on the needs of administrators—those archivists with oversight over the entire archival enterprise of an institution. These courses present information that an archivist might implement over the course of the next ten years.

All programs can only be counted in one Tier of Study at a time.

A brief justification and summary is required, as indicated on the Renewal form.

Specific qualifying detail-

- Attend programs* of **digital archives content** for:

two (2) live/synchronous -- seminars, workshops, webinars		one (1) live/synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid multi-day -- institute, conference
Attendance at archival seminars, workshops, and webinars during the original offering of the program (i.e. not a recording). Must have a professional digital records/archival emphasis.		Attendance at professional archival meetings including monthly, semi-monthly, quarterly, or annual meetings of local, regional, or national archival or allied groups that have a professional digital records/archival emphasis.

Program of less than 1 day (1 -3 hours)	OR	Program of 1 day or more (6 hours or more)
Does not include travel		Does not include travel, but does include repository tours

*Programs offered by other archival organizations or allied professions that clearly fall within the archival discipline. “Allied professions” include, but are not limited to, libraries, museums, records management, and oral history.

Definitions

Allied professions: include, but are not limited to, libraries, museums, records management, and oral history.

Asynchronous: pre-recorded, virtual, on-demand course

Hybrid Course: courses that include a combination of synchronous and asynchronous portions

Synchronous: live virtual course or in-person course

Archival seminars, workshops, webinars, institutes, conferences : short courses, usually sponsored by organizations of professional archivists, colleges or universities, or archival institutions, relating to any of the areas or disciplines of archival practice defined by the Tiers of Study, taken either synchronous or asynchronous, in-person or virtually.

Contact SAA Education staff for transcript verification and other questions at education@archivists.org.

SAA-DAS Revision History

Date	Name(s)	Description
March 2022	Sara Davis, Lara Friedman-Shedlov, Rana Hutchinson Salzmann, Georgina Tom	Created/compiled from other existing sources. Thanks to the Academy of Certified Archivists.
August 2023	Lauren Burroughs	Appendix C, Appendix D added based on November 2022 feedback from Council.

**Digital Archives Specialist (DAS)
Certificate Renewal Petition Form - Option B**
Society of American Archivists

Petitioner Name:

Date of Original Certificate

Date of Previous Renewal (if any):

Name of Proposed Program for Credit:

Sponsoring Institution(s):

Date(s) of Program:

Proposed Category of Fulfillment

(Foundational, Tactical & Strategic, Tools & Services, Transformational):

Brief Justification (approx. one paragraph):

Brief Summary of Program (approx. one paragraph):

Submit form to Digital Archives Specialist Subcommittee at education@archivists.org.

[*Ideally, this form would be in Google Doc interface allowing users to submit multiple courses.]

Committee Rubric for Evaluation

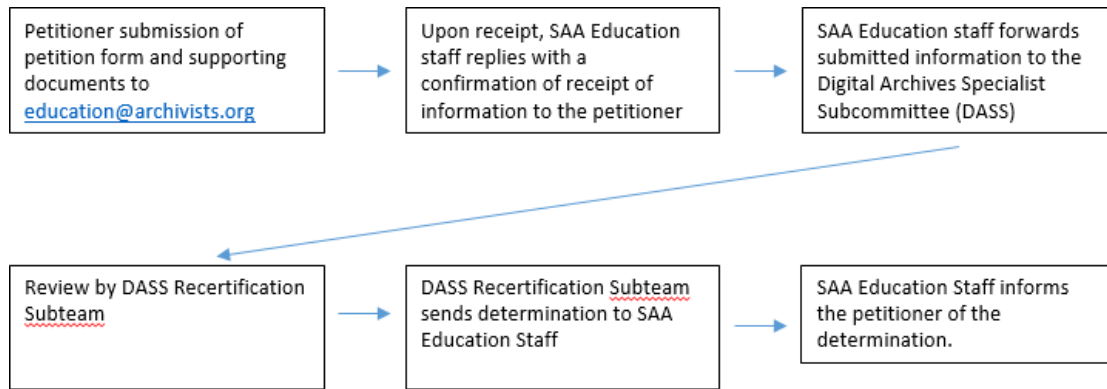
QUALIFICATION	YES	NO
Is the course offered by an allied* profession/professional group? (Library, archive, museum, gallery, historical society, etc.)		
Does the course fulfill one of the following categories? (Foundational , Tactical and Strategic , Tools and Services , Transformational) Based on the information provided by the petitioner's submitted form		
Does the course fill a gap in or expand upon SAA's offerings? Based on the information provided by the petitioner's submitted form compared against SAA's course list and DAS core competencies		
Is the course's objective solely related to digital archives matters? Based on the information provided by the petitioner's submitted form		
Does the course meet the time requirements? Live/synchronous webinars: 1-3 hours each (travel not included) Multi-day live/synchronous/virtual event (conference, institute, etc): 6 or more hours (travel not included, but repository tours are included)		
Is the petitioner seeking authorization from the DAS Subcommittee before registering for the course?		

*The DAS Subcommittee has received informal feedback from numerous SAA members about the lack of in-depth, tool-specific courses, particularly in the computer language space. While Python, R, SQL, and others are increasingly necessary tools for archivists to use in their daily work, few courses are being offered by GLAM institutions. In instances where this discrepancy appears, the subcommittee proposes to first consult the [Academy of Certified Archivist's pre-approved recertification list](#). This qualification should be considered holistically with the rest. For example, a course that is vendor sponsored may not necessarily be disqualified because the vendor is not a library or archive if it fulfills the rest of the requirements.

Subcommittee members who will evaluate these petitions will be: **SAA Director of Training and Organizational Development** (subcommittee *ex officio*), **DAS Chair**, **DAS Vice Chair**, members of the **Course Development Working Group**.

Approved courses will be kept on an internal list for ease of evaluation. This list may be used to determine future SAA offerings based on patterns in petitioned courses.

Timeline



This timeline also appears on page 2.

Review turnaround time: up to 4 weeks

Review by persons identified in Appendix C will take place between receipt of petition notice from SAA Education and the next DAS meeting. Once the petitioner takes the course in question, they must submit proof (certificate of completion or similar). Once this documentation is received, their transcript will be updated accordingly.