

6. Examinations and Grades

Assignments and examinations are the basic means of evaluating your knowledge and understanding of course content. Your final grade for a course is normally determined by a weighted average of the marks for all assignments and examinations completed in the course. You should review your course syllabus for specifics.

The following section contains information related to taking Athabasca University examinations and grades.

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Examinations and Grades

6.1 Examinations

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The following section contains information related to taking Athabasca University examinations and grades.

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6.1.1 Preparation

Good study habits, time management, reading to understand and remember, frequent reviews, and relating your studies to your everyday life all go a long way toward preparing you for examinations.

Anxiety can prevent you from doing well in examinations. Many of our students have benefited from coping strategies offered by Athabasca University's Counselling Services. Athabasca University also produces a brochure "Mastering Exam Anxiety," and provides online resources.

Before you request your examination, discuss your preparedness with your tutor or learning facilitator. If you are having difficulties preparing for your examination, please review Athabasca University's Counselling Services Mastering Exam Anxiety website or [email an AU counsellor](#).

[Mastering Exam Anxiety](#)

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6.1.2 Requesting an Examination

When you are ready to write your examination, you must complete and submit an Examination Request Form. You do not require permission to write an examination; however, we recommend that you discuss your preparedness with your tutor or learning facilitator. You will first need to contact the examination centre or your invigilator and select a date and time to write, and to discuss possible fees. You must submit your Examination Request Form well in advance of your requested write date.

Exam Request Deadlines

When you are ready to request an examination, complete and submit the online Examination Request Form (available as a PDF below, or through myAU).

Online – Examination Request Form

PDF – Examination Request Form

Before you submit the form, it is important that you continue to review the following sections.

6.1.2.1 Oral Exams

If you are registered in a course that has an oral exam, be advised that the exam may be conducted by email, phone, or other methods, which can be arranged between you and your tutor. The evaluation section of the course syllabus will indicate whether the course has an oral quiz or examination, or not.

6.1.2.2 Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability or you are registered for services through Access to Students with Disabilities (ASD), and you require accommodations for your examinations, please

use the Access to Students with Disabilities Examination Request Form.

ASD Examination Request Form

If you are a student with a disability who requires exceptional examination accommodations, you must request your examination 30 days before your write date to allow additional time to prepare the examination. In rare circumstances these time limits may be extended for specific examinations.

ASD website

6.1.2.3 Where do I write?

Students can write at an examination centre located in the University's Athabasca, Edmonton, or Calgary, Alberta offices. In addition, a Canada-wide Examination Invigilation Network has been established and is comprised of many post-secondary institutions that are AU approved invigilation sites.

Students who do not have access to an examination centre, may propose an invigilator; a person approved by Athabasca University to oversee the writing of examinations. Athabasca University students living outside Canada write their examinations at an approved post-secondary institution or Canadian Embassy.

Examination Centres

Invigilators

6.1.2.4 When do I write?

Students are expected to write their exam within their course contract period. Exam requests that are received within our published exam request deadlines, with a write date that is within a student's contract period, will not be assessed any additional fees.

AU has implemented process to accommodate late exam requests. A late exam request is an exam which is requested outside of the published deadlines.

Students cannot write their exam prior to the course contract start date.

All examination requests, with the exception of supplemental examinations, must be received by AU on or before your course contract end date.

After you submit your Examination Request Form, AU aims to have your exam arrive at the examination centre or your invigilator, approximately one week before your requested write date. AU cannot guarantee that your examination will arrive before your requested write date. Timelines are dependent on your geographic location.

Examination Request Form

6.1.2.5 Exam Request Deadlines

If you are requesting to write an exam at an AU location (i.e. AU Athabasca, AU Edmonton, or AU Calgary), you must request your exam 10 days before your requested write date. (Available dates/times at month end are in high demand so more notice may be necessary to ensure your preferred date/time.)

If you are requesting an exam within Canada or the United States at an established AU Approved Invigilation Centre you must request your exam 20 calendar days prior to your requested write date.

If you are outside of Canada and the United States and requesting an exam to be invigilated at an established AU Approved Invigilation Centre, your request must be received 30 calendar days prior to your requested write date.

If you are requesting to write an exam at an invigilator not established as an AU Approved Invigilator, your request must be received 60 calendar days prior to your requested write date.

EXAM REQUEST AND COMPLETION DEADLINES (WITH AN AU APPROVED INVIGILATOR)

Exam Type	Exam Request Deadline	Exam Completion Deadline
Request of an exam for invigilation inside Canada and the US	20 calendar days prior to the exam write date	Prior to or on the course contract end date
Request of an exam for invigilation outside Canada and the US	30 calendar days prior to the exam write date	Prior to or on the course contract end date

Late request for an exam	Prior to or on the course contract end date	Not later than 30 days after the course contract end date
Supplemental Exam	Within 90 calendar days of the initial write date	Within 30 calendar days of making the supplemental exam request

NEW INVIGILATOR REQUEST DEADLINE (INVIGILATORS NOT ALREADY APPROVED)

60 calendar days prior to the anticipated exam write date.

Examination Centres

Invigilators

6.1.2.6 Late Exam Requests

A request that is received outside of the published deadlines will be processed provided the student makes the request by his or her contract end date (with the exception of supplemental exams) and provided the exam is written not later than 30 days after the course contract end date. This is considered to be a late exam request and a fee is assessed for this service. This is not an extension; tutor support will not continue and all other coursework must be submitted prior to your course contract end date. Please allow time for your request to be processed—on-time delivery of the late exam cannot be guaranteed.

See the Exam Request and Completion Deadlines table above for the general guidelines surrounding the assessment of a late exam fee.

6.1.2.7 Examination Security

For exam security reasons, AU reserves the right to delay the shipment of examinations that have a write date scheduled well into the future. Whenever possible, examinations are shipped to an approved invigilator or an approved invigilation centre so that the exams arrive approximately one week before the requested write date.

6.1.2.8 Holiday Closures and Examinations

Examinations are not shipped during the last week in December when the University is closed.

Examination requests that are received prior to the University closure for courses with a course contract end date of December 31 are allowed additional time to write their examinations without being charged the Late Exam Fee. Exams requested prior to the University closure for courses with a contract end date of December 31 must be completed no later than January 15 of the following year.

The Exam Request Deadlines must still be met (i.e. if you are requesting an exam in Canada or the U.S. you must still request 20 days before the write date) or the Late Exam Fee will be assessed.

This additional time does not apply to other course work such as assignments and quizzes, which must be completed on or before the December 31 course contract end date.

Any examination requests received after the university closure, but prior to the course contract end date of December 31 will be processed as a Late Examination Request.

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6.1.3 Examination Centres

Students can write their examinations at Athabasca University buildings in Athabasca, Edmonton, or Calgary, Alberta. In addition, a Canada-wide Examination Invigilation Network has been established that is composed of many post-secondary institutions that are AU-approved invigilation centres.

If you wish to write your examination at a location other than AU or any of the listings in the Examination Invigilation Network, you must write at an accredited post-secondary institution such as a community college or a technical institute. If a college or technical institute is not accessible, you may write your examination at an educational institution such as a high school or library, provided it is approved by Examination Services Unit, Office of the Registrar.

If none of these options is available, review [Invigilators: Pre-Approved](#).

[Canada-Wide Examination Invigilation Network](#)
[Writing at Athabasca University](#)
[Centres Outside Canada](#)

6.1.3.1 Arrive on Time!

Arrive promptly for your examination. Latecomers can be extremely disruptive to other students writing examinations. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled examination, and you have not notified your exam invigilator in advance, you should try to rebook your examination within 10 business days. Depending on where you write, you may be charged an exam rebooking fee (payable at Athabasca, Edmonton, and Calgary, Alberta).

After the 10 business-day hold period, the unwritten examination is returned to AU. If and when you request the exam again, the multiple examination fee will be charged.

Whenever possible, AU will accommodate moderately late arrivals; however, you will risk being interrupted if others leave the room before you are finished writing your examination. Allowing additional time may not always be possible.

If you think you might be late, please inform the institution where you are writing. Staff will advise you whether or not there is time to write your examination. If you still choose to write with less than the recommended time allowed, this will be noted on your examination in the case of a future appeal.

Multiple examination fee
Unwritten/Multiple Examinations

6.1.3.2 Centres Within Canada

Students who live within a 100 km radius of an AU-approved invigilation centre, write their examinations at that centre. Students who live more than 100 km from an exam invigilation centre, may request to write their exams closer to home provided they arrange for an invigilator who meets specific guidelines and is approved by AU.

Examination Invigilation Network
Invigilators

6.1.3.3 Centres Outside Canada

AU students who live outside of Canada must write their examination at an AU-approved post-secondary institution or Canadian Embassy, or use an invigilator who meets specific guidelines.

Invigilator guidelines

6.1.3.4 Grouped Study Students

Grouped study students write their examination at the same place, date, and time selected by the course professor unless approval for an exception has been obtained in advance by the AU course coordinator.

6.1.3.5 Online Examinations

An increasing number of AU examinations are completed and submitted online. The course syllabus and your course materials will indicate whether the examination(s) for your course are online. When writing an online examination, it is your responsibility to ensure a computer with an Internet connection and an accepted web browser is available for your

use at the Invigilation Centre. Students are not permitted to bring or use personal laptops for online exams. Refer to your student manual for training resources, computer requirements and other information related to writing your online exam. Please direct your questions about online examinations to the [Examination Services Unit](#) or the AU [Information Centre](#).

All other examination regulations apply to online examinations. You must complete and submit the Examination Request Form to Examination Services using the methods described in the [Requesting an Examination](#) section.

6.1.3.6 Examination Attempt and Time Allotments

Once a student has viewed an examination—unless the wrong examination has been sent to the approved invigilator or approved invigilation centre—the examination will be deemed to have been written or attempted to have been written.

Students must complete their examinations within the time specified on the official invigilation and examination instructions.

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6.1.4 Invigilators: Pre-Approved

Students are required to write an exam with an established Athabasca University-approved invigilator or at an AU-approved invigilation centre if they live within 100 km of that invigilator or invigilation centre. Students who live more than 100 km away from an examination centre may write their exams closer to home provided they arrange for an invigilator.

An invigilator is a person authorized by AU to oversee the writing of an examination by an AU student. There may be an AU-approved invigilator in your area already.

Use the link below to determine whether there is an AU-approved invigilator in your area. If not, email [Examination Services Unit](#), Office of the Registrar, review the [Exam Request Deadlines](#), and Invigilation guidelines (See below).

[Examination Invigilation Network](#)

6.1.4.1 Invigilator: Requires AU Approval

AU has the right to refuse a requested invigilator, and request that the student submit an alternative invigilator, or request that the student write the examination at an AU-approved invigilation centre. AU has the right to discontinue the use of an AU-approved invigilator or an AU-approved invigilation centre at any time.

6.1.4.2 Invigilator Guidelines

If an AU-approved invigilator is not available in your area, you may propose an individual (on the [Examination Online Request Form](#)), who meets the guidelines below. Before an invigilator may be approved, the University must be able to verify the accuracy of the information presented by the student and proposed invigilator. Please review [Exam Request Deadlines](#).

A proposed invigilator may be:

a professor or instructor at a recognized public post secondary institution;
a full-time administrative or professional staff member of a recognized public or private post-secondary institution;
a full-time administrative or professional staff member of a public library or a library in a public school;
a full-time administrative or faculty staff member of a public or private elementary or secondary school;
a full-time human resources professional who works in a dedicated HR department;
a ranking officer in the Armed Forces;
an official at an embassy or consulate office.

A proposed invigilator **may not** be a friend, neighbour, co-worker, supervisor, family member, or relative of the student, and may not live at the same address as the student. Exceptions may be considered for students who live in remote communities and who do not have access to one of the individuals from the above categories within a 100 km radius of the student's residence. The Office of the Registrar must be confident that the individual selected will ensure that the examination invigilation guidelines will be followed and that there is no conflict of interest between the approved invigilator and student.

AU students are not permitted to act as invigilators for other AU students without the written permission of the Manager of Examination Services. Students at other schools are also not permitted to act as an invigilator unless the individual is a paid employee of an AU-approved invigilation centre or has been approved by the Manager of Examination Services.

If these options are not available to you, email [Examination Services Unit](#), Office of the Registrar. A staff member will help you determine a suitable location and an acceptable invigilator.

[Examination Request Form](#)

[Examination Invigilation Network](#)

6.1.4.3 Invigilator Fees

Students are responsible for any expenses incurred when writing an examination. Most invigilators request a fee to invigilate examinations. Invigilation centers may also charge a fee if you cancel or reschedule your examination.

AU does not charge a fee to invigilate examinations at any of its three offices located in Athabasca; Edmonton; or Calgary, Alberta.

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6.1.5 Unwritten/Multiple Examinations

Occasionally, circumstances arise that prevent students from writing their examination on the date requested. When the unwritten examination is returned to Athabasca University, and you request to write at a later date, this is called a multiple examination. You may reschedule your examination by following these guidelines.

For each request to write, you must complete and submit an Examination Request Form. If you reschedule your new write date within 10 business days after your original write date, but not past your contract end date, you will avoid the multiple examination fee (examination rebooking fees may be assessed by your invigilator).

If you reschedule later, Athabasca University will charge you a multiple examination fee. This fee is levied each time an exam is returned unwritten and is requested again. If you were scheduled to write your examination at Athabasca University Athabasca, Edmonton, or Calgary office, you will be charged a non-refundable rebooking fee, provided the exam is written within 10 days.

Ensure that your invigilator is able to reschedule to the new write date. Your invigilator may assess a cancellation or rebooking fee; however, she or he is under no obligation to reschedule a new write date. Also ensure that the correct fee accompanies the Examination Request Form.

Multiple examinations do not apply to supplemental examinations, which are written as requested.

6.1.5.1 Returning an Unwritten/Multiple Examination

If you are unable to write your examination, your AU-approved invigilator or the AU-approved invigilation centre must hold the unwritten examination for a period of 10 business days after

the scheduled write date. Although it is expected that an approved invigilator or an approved invigilation centre will endeavor to accommodate rescheduling, neither is under any obligation to reschedule a new write date.

Unwritten examinations must be returned immediately after the expiry of the 10 business-day hold period. If the exam is not being written at one of Athabasca University Athabasca, Edmonton, or Calgary offices, it is expected that the AU-approved invigilator or AU-approved invigilation centre will initiate the return process on the next business day following the expiry of the 10 business-day hold period.

Questions?

email [Examination Services Unit](#), Office of the Registrar
refer to [Requesting an Examination](#)
[Examination Rebooking Fee](#)
(Athabasca, Edmonton, or Calgary)
[Multiple Examination Fee](#)
[Examination Request Form](#)
[Supplemental Examinations](#)

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6.1.6 Supplemental Examinations

If you are not satisfied with your initial examination mark (supplemental examinations do not apply to assignments, quizzes, or challenge courses) you may request and write **one** supplemental examination for each midterm or final exam required in your course. The higher of the two marks will be used in calculating your final course grade.

If the supplemental exam is written after the course contract end date, you are not required to apply for a course extension.

Athabasca University charges a non-refundable fee for a supplemental examination. To avoid delay, ensure that this fee accompanies the Examination Request Form. Unwritten/multiple examinations do not apply to supplemental examinations, which are written as requested.

In order to request a supplemental examination, you must complete and submit the Examination Request Form to the Office of the Registrar so that the form will arrive no later than 90 calendar days after the date of writing the initial examination. The supplemental exam must be requested within the Exam Request and Completion Deadlines.

Supplemental examination fee
Examination Request Form

NOTE: Not all post-secondary institutions will accept a course where a supplemental exam has been written. Students taking an AU course on a Letter of Permission from another post-secondary institution should check first to see if that institution will accept a course for transfer where a supplemental exam has been written.

6.1.6.1 Returning an Unwritten Supplemental Examination

If a student is unable to write the supplemental exam, an AU-approved invigilator or an AU-approved invigilation centre must hold the unwritten examination for a period of 10 business days after the scheduled write date. Although it is expected that an AU-approved invigilator or an AU-approved invigilation centre will endeavor to accommodate scheduling changes, neither person is under any obligation to reschedule a new write date.

Unwritten supplemental examinations must be returned immediately after the expiry of the 10 business day hold period. If the exam is not being written at an Athabasca University centre, it is expected that the AU-approved invigilator or the AU-approved invigilation centre will initiate the return process on the next business day following the expiry of the 10 business day hold period.

An unwritten supplemental examination that has been returned to the University may not be re-requested.

6.1.6.2 Supplemental Examination Security

The regulations surrounding supplementary examination security are the same as regular examination security. See [Examination Security](#) for more information.

Questions?

email [Examination Services, Office of the Registrar](#)
[Requesting an Examination](#)

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6.1.7 Challenge for Credit Examinations

When the challenge for credit process involves an invigilated examination refer to the Undergraduate Exam Request and Completion Policy, except in the case of Supplemental Exams. Supplemental Examinations are not allowed in the challenge for credit process.

Examination Invigilation Network
Challenge for Credit
Supplemental Examinations
Unwritten/Multiple Examinations

6.1.7.1 Challenge for Credit Grades and Appeals

Courses taken via the challenge for credit process are recorded as CH (courses taken via challenge) on your transcript. The evaluation schemes for courses taken via the challenge for credit process can be viewed in the course syllabus.

You have one opportunity to challenge a course. If you do not successfully complete, or you fail the course taken via the challenge for credit process, you are not permitted to challenge the course a second time. You must instead register in the full course and complete it successfully in order to receive credit. If you do not successfully complete the requirements of the course taken via the challenge for credit process you will be assigned a grade of "F" (failure).

All challenge for credit grade appeals are subject to an appeals process described in Athabasca University's Student Code of Conduct and Right to Appeal Regulations.

Undergraduate Courses
Grading Policy

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Examinations and Grades

6.2 Marks and Grades

The marks for your assignments and examinations should be available to you approximately five to seven business days after Athabasca University receives them from the marker. Unofficial final grades should be available 10 business days after Athabasca University receives the marks for your last assignment or examination.

Neither of these timelines includes mailing times.

For each course you complete, the Office of the Registrar will provide a statement of the final grade that you achieved and the credits you earned.

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6.2.1 Grading Policy

Effective January 1, 2003, Athabasca University adopted the province-wide alpha/4.0 grading system to report undergraduate final grades. Courses with start dates of January 1, 2003, and later use an alpha grading scale. For courses with start dates before January 1, 2003, the percentage grading scale is used.

For individual courses, the alpha scale uses letter grades ranging from A+ through F to reflect a student's performance and knowledge of the materials covered. Overall academic performance is reported using the 4.0 grade-point average (GPA) scale. A grade point is a value between 0 and 4.00 that is assigned to a grade (alpha or percentage). The grade-point average is a weighted average of all the courses a student has taken with AU.

The passing grade for AU undergraduate courses taken before December 31, 2002, is 50 per cent unless stipulated otherwise in the course outline/syllabus. For courses started January 1, 2003, and later, the passing grade is the equivalent to a D unless stipulated otherwise in the course outline/syllabus.

Alpha grading scale

6.2.1.1 Grade-Point Average

A grade-point average is calculated for all AU undergraduate transcripts. All courses listed on your transcript have a grade and are included in the cumulative grade-point average calculation.

For each course taken, the transcript will display the course grade (percentage or alpha) as well as its corresponding 4-point grade value. All failing grades, excluding WF (Withdrawal Failure) and U (Failure: in courses using pass/fail grade mode), are calculated into the cumulative average. For courses started

before December 31, 2002, the actual percentage grade earned by a student for a failed course is also shown on the transcript. For courses started before September 1989, the passing grade is 60 per cent unless stipulated otherwise. Grades for courses using the pass/fail grade mode are not included in the GPA calculation.

Alpha grading scale

6.2.1.2 Notification of Marks and Grades

Unofficial final grades can be viewed in Gradebook in the myAU portal. It can take five to seven days from the time your final grade appears in Gradebook until the final grade is entered into the student information system. If the final grade appears in the PDF document when you preview your transcript online, then the final grade is entered in the student information system and you can order a transcript. For each course you complete, the Office of the Registrar will provide a statement of the final grade that you achieved and the credits you earned.

If you are transferring your courses to another institution, please determine the receiving institution's deadlines and ensure you allow adequate time for your grades to be processed and sent.

6.2.1.3 Questions Regarding Marks

Questions about your midterm marks may be directed to your Academic Centre or tutor. You must identify yourself before AU staff will release unofficial marks or grades over the telephone. Marks and grades released over the telephone have no official standing.

The Office of the Registrar provides statements of your composite grade (final grade) achieved in courses and the credits earned for each course completed. Your course composite grade cannot be calculated until all the course requirements (e.g., labs, assignments, essays, tests, quizzes, and examinations) have been completed, submitted, and marked.

Transcript Requests

6.2.1.4 Final Grade Processing

We recommend that you write your examination and complete and submit all your assignments at least six weeks before the date your final grade is required.

If you are transferring your courses to another institution, please ask about the receiving institution's deadlines and ensure that you allow adequate time for your grades to be processed and sent.

6.2.1.5 Incomplete Course Work

Before December 31, 2002, students who were unable to complete a course by the course contract end date and did not request a course extension or a course withdrawal were awarded a grade of 0F (Zero Failure).

After January 1, 2003, students who are unable to complete their course by the course contract end date and do not request a course extension or a course withdrawal are awarded a grade of F (Failure) or U (Failure: for courses using pass/fail grade mode).

For courses that have mandatory components (e.g., quizzes, assignments, or minimum grades on all assignments or quizzes), these components must be completed to pass the course. A mark of zero on such a component may result in a failing grade being assigned to the course. You are strongly advised to carefully read the course evaluation scheme in the course syllabus.

Some courses, especially those with lab components, are offered only at specific times of the year and are exempt from this policy. For more information, contact the Academic Centre that offers the course.

[Course Extensions](#)

[Course Withdrawal](#)

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6.2.2 Appeals

Students may appeal any mark given to essays, examinations, assignments, or exercises that contribute to their final grade. Appeals of both failing and passing marks will be considered.

Students determine the grounds for appeal and must follow the procedures outlined in Athabasca University's Student Code of Conduct and Right to Appeal Regulations.

These regulations may not apply to grouped study courses. Grouped study students must consult an advisor at the collaborating institution offering the AU course.

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6.2.3 Transcript Requests

A transcript is a student's official academic record at the time of the document's production.

If you use the Online Student Transcript Request form, the official transcript will show only the grades that have been entered in your official student record at the time the online request is submitted. Before you submit your request online, preview your transcript to ensure it accurately reflects the academic record you expect to be issued.

Most institutions or agencies require that official transcripts be sent to them directly from AU.

AU does not recognize honours list recipients on the official student record, but will indicate the following:

- current program of study and the associated total transfer credit awarded
- non-credit courses completed at AU
- grade-point average
- course names and numbers, number of credits awarded
- the final grade and corresponding 4-point grade value
- the grade points and credit hours earned for each course
- registration
- the term dates (year/month course(s) started)
- courses challenged for credit (noted with CH) including unsuccessful challenges
- re-registrations (noted with R) and repeated courses
- suspensions and expulsions
- graduation with distinction or great distinction.

6.2.3.1 Methods of Requesting Transcripts

No partial transcripts are issued, and only you can request a transcript. You may request an official transcript using one of the following methods:

online request

Transcript Request Form (PDF) and in your learning resources package

Login to myAU using your student ID number and password. Select the "Request Transcripts" option under Student Record in the left-hand navigation menu.

Transcript requests from a student must be kept at a reasonable number. AU may follow up with students ordering an unusually high number of transcripts.

6.2.3.2 Letter of Certification

A Letter of Certification is an official confirmation of information that is not included on your transcript. For example, a letter may be requested if no course(s) have been completed at AU.

Only the student concerned may request a Letter of Certification from AU. The request must:

1. be made in writing and bear the student's signature and birth date or student ID number
2. confirm the information to be included in the letter
3. bear the full name and contact information of the letter's recipient
4. be faxed to 780.675.6174, Attn.: Academic Records or mailed.

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