

Equivalency Credit Opportunities

This language applies only to districts that serve students in grades 9 -12. Prior to course scheduling or course registration for the next school term, the district will provide information to students and their parents or legal guardians about meeting credit-based graduation requirements through equivalency courses.

I. Experiential Education Opportunities

The district may grant credit, including high school graduation credit, for school planned or approved learning experiences which may be conducted away from the facilities owned, operated, or supervised by the district or conducted primarily by individuals not employed by the district. To grant credit for such experiences, a proposal for approval of credit must be submitted to the district's designated team.

The proposal shall include the following elements:

- (a) Name of program or planned learning experience;
- (b) Length of time for which approval is desired;
- (c) Objectives of the program or planned learning experience;
- (d) Which one or more of the state learning goals and related essential academic learning requirements are part of the program or planned learning experience;
- (e) Description of how credits shall be determined (completion of a district-defined course or satisfactory demonstration of proficiency/mastery in the related state learning standards in accord with WAC 180-51-050(1)) and WAC 180-51-051;
- (f) Content outline of the program and/or major learning activities and instructional materials to be used;
- (g) Description of how student performance will be assessed;
- (h) Qualifications of instructional personnel;
- (i) Plans for evaluation of program; and
- (j) How and by whom the student will be supervised.

Approved experiences may include, but are not limited to, the following: School planned or approved learning experiences such as travel study, work study, private lessons, paid work, volunteer work, and education programs sponsored by governmental agencies.

II. Career and Technical Education Courses Provided by the District

On or after September 1, 2021, any statewide equivalency course offered by the district or accessed at a skill center will be offered for academic credit. Any approved state and local equivalency course offered by a host district in a skill center in which the district participates under an interdistrict cooperative agreement will be honored as an equivalency course by the district. Students served at any core, branch, or satellite skill center campus must have access to academic credit for any approved local or state equivalency courses offered at those sites and in accordance with transcript requirements in RCW 28A.230.097.

The district may also adopt local course equivalencies for career and technical education courses that are not on the list of courses approved by the superintendent of public instruction under RCW 28A.700.070.

Each high school will adopt core academic course equivalencies for high school career and technical courses, provided that the career and technical course has been reviewed and approved for equivalency credit by a district team appointed by the superintendent or a designee.

The district team will include a school administrator, the career and technical administrator, an instructor from the core academic subject area, an instructor from the appropriate career and technical course, a school counselor, and a representative from the curriculum department.

Career and technical courses approved for equivalency will be:

1. Aligned with the state's essential academic learning requirements and grade level expectations; and
2. Aligned with current industry standards, as evidenced in the curriculum frameworks. The local career and technical advisory committee will certify that courses meet industry standards.
3. Recorded on the student's transcripts as the academic course the equivalence credit fulfills.

III. Mastery/Competency-based credits

Students may obtain credit-typical credit ranges from (.5) to (1) credit mastery-based credit for the subject passing a district-created assessment that is aligned to state learning standards or course equivalency requirements adopted by the office of the superintendent of public instruction (OSPI). Students do not need to have attempted and failed a course before being eligible for these options. Students may gain the knowledge and skills to earn mastery/competency-based credits through learning experiences such as independent study or experiential education, including paid work.

Options available may include:

- Locally created written or oral test;
- Written report by the student;
- Student-designed portfolio of work;
- Student presentation or oral defense of their learning in the course;
- Hands-on demonstration of knowledge and skills;
- A combination of assessment approaches, as defined by the district; or
- other locally developed methods.

Successful completion of next higher-level course: Credit may be awarded for a course when the student successfully completes the next higher-level course in a sequence that includes a natural progression of the state learning standards from the previous course. State or locally determined learning standards will be used as the guide when making decisions regarding what courses should qualify.

Mastery-based credit is available if the student achieves a C or higher grade in the next-higher level course.

The mastery/competency examination must be offered in a proctored setting with appropriate technology. The district will approve the site(s) where the examination is offered, which could include individual schools, district buildings, community colleges, universities, education service districts, or other community settings. The district will award credit based on the highest examination score.

The student will be responsible for the cost of taking a mastery/competency examination. The district will offer financial assistance to students who demonstrate need, such as qualifying for free

or reduced lunch. *The district could pay for the cost of taking the examination for all students if it chooses.*

The district will receive official test results for each student who takes a mastery/competency examination. The district will provide a letter to the student with a copy of the test results and an indication of how many credits the student will be awarded. Credits awarded will be recorded on the student's transcript with a grade of "Pass."

To ensure cultural responsiveness and equity in awarding mastery-based credit, the district will collect and annually review disaggregated data to see which subgroups of students are receiving mastery-based credit. If disproportionality is found, the district will take appropriate actions to ensure equitable access to these crediting opportunities.

Elective Credit for Paid Work Experience

Students ages 16 and older may earn up to two elective high school credit through paid work experience according to the requirements contained in chapter 28A.600 RCW, which include preapproval of a proposal and assessment of the student's grade-level proficiency on the state financial education learning standards. Credits earned through this policy do not restrict students from earning additional credits through cooperative worksite learning (WAC 392-410-315) through mastery/competency policy.

Students who are legally eligible for paid employment may earn elective credit for paid work experience. Students who meet the requirements below as determined by the appropriate school official will be awarded one-half elective credit for each 180 hours of paid, verified work experience. Students may earn up to a maximum of two elective high school credits through this process.

In order to be eligible to receive elective credit, the student's High School and Beyond Plan must be updated to reflect the paid work experience. In addition, the student's paid work experience must be approved in advance and in writing by the school counselor, principal, or principal designee. Approval is contingent upon the student's submission of the following information:

- Identification of the work-based sponsor (employer) who will serve as the point of contact for the employer and participate in supervising the student during the student's employment;
- A student narrative describing how the paid work experience will enable the student to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the goals of basic education, including those essential to understanding the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities as provided in RCW 28A.150.210(4); and
- A plan for demonstrating or otherwise assessing the student's:
 - Grade-level proficiencies on the state financial education learning standards for employment and income or financial decisions as provided in the state financial education learning standards adopted in RCW 28A.300.469; and
 - Growth in proficiency in meeting the state financial education learning standards that occurred between pre-work and post-work experiences.

The hours worked may occur during a student's school day, outside of the regular school calendar, or in accordance with WAC 180-51-050 and 180-51-051. The district will verify the number of paid hours worked by the student at least once per term.

Courses taken before attending high school

The district will award high school credit for computer science courses taken before attending high school if either of following occurs:

1. The course was taken with high school students, if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing the same course requirements and examinations as the high school students enrolled in the class; or
2. The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high school credit because the course is similar or equivalent to a course offered at a high school in the district determined by the board.

Students who have taken and successfully completed high school courses under the circumstances above shall not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform any other additional assignment to receive credit.

IV. Computer Science Courses

AP courses

The board will approve Advanced Placement (AP) computer science courses as equivalent to high school mathematics or science, and may be used by a student to meet math or science graduation requirements. The superintendent or designee will adopt procedures to denote on the student's transcript that AP computer science qualifies as a math-based quantitative course for students who complete it in their senior year.

Mastery/Competency-based credits

The district may award academic credit for computer science to students based on student completion of a mastery/competency examination that is aligned with the state learning standards for computer science or mathematics and course equivalency requirements adopted by the office of the superintendent of public instruction (OSPI).

To receive mastery/competency-based credits for computer science, a student must take a mastery/competency examination that OSPI has found aligns with the state learning standards for computer science or mathematics and that aligns with course equivalency requirements adopted by OSPI. The number of credits awarded will be based on the student's performance on the mastery/competency examination.

Cross References: 2170 - Career and Technical Education
 2410 - High School Graduation Requirements
 2401 - Financial Education Mastery-Based Learning and Credit

Legal References: RCW 28A.230.300 Computer Science
 RCW 28A.230.010 Course content requirements—Access to
 career and technical course equivalencies—Duties of school
 boards of directors—Waivers
 RCW 28A.230.097 Career and technical high school course
 equivalencies.
 RCW 28A.230.120 High School Diplomas – Issuance- Option to
 receive final transcripts –Notice
 WAC 180-51 High school graduation requirements
 WAC 392-410 Courses of study and equivalencies

Management Resources: 2023 – December Policy Issue
 2019 - July Policy Issue
 2018 - May Policy Issue
 2013 - September Issue
 Policy News, August 2006 Legislature Codifies Course Equivalency
 for Career and Technical Courses

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