

COURSE CHALLENGE AND EQUIVALENCY

Background

The District will comply with Ministerial directives and guidelines regarding graduation requirements, and believes that granting credit for prior learning is an appropriate method of permitting students to develop to their maximum potential as expressed in the Board's mission statement.

Procedures

1. Course Challenge

- 1.1. The purpose of the challenge portion of this Administrative Procedure and the attached Appendix is to acknowledge, within parameters, learning which students have accomplished in other settings which corresponds to grade 11 and 12 courses currently being offered in the District or at North Island Distance Education School. A successful challenge results in a student receiving course credit for the appropriate course content, and a final mark which is recorded on the student's graduation transcript.
- 1.2. The underlying principles of challenge are that students learn in a variety of ways and at different rates, and that their diverse needs and abilities are to be acknowledged by providing opportunities to obtain credit for relevant learning. Students must demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes for the course being challenged, and the process is to maintain the high standards of a quality education.
- 1.3. All students are entitled to challenge courses: however, challenging is a rigorous process and it is anticipated that only small numbers of students will be able to give strong and compelling evidence that it is in their best interests to attempt to challenge a course and that they will succeed. Challenge is not envisioned as a method for students to improve their course marks, nor as a replacement for the valuable experience students gain from learning in a classroom setting.
- 1.4. Challenge Eligibility
 - 1.4.1. The student must be enrolled in the District.
 - 1.4.2. A student previously enrolled in a course will not normally be eligible to challenge that course for credit.
 - 1.4.3. Students in grade levels other than grade 11 or 12 may apply to challenge grade 11 or 12 level course.
 - 1.4.4. A student must give compelling evidence that he or she will succeed in challenging a course.
- 1.5. Challenge Approval
 - 1.5.1. Before approval to challenge a course is granted, students must complete the preliminary checklist and [Course Challenge Application Form \(Form 365-1\)](#) and submit it to North Island Distance Education School.

- 1.5.2. Through the [Course Challenge Application Form \(Form 365-1\)](#), the student will provide a written explanation of how the challenge will meet educational goals as outlined in the student's learning plan.
 - 1.5.3. The approval for the challenge application must be made by the Principal of the student's home school, in consultation with the designated advisor or counsellor, the parents, and the student, as well as with the Principal, of North Island Distance Education School.
- 1.6. Requirements for Challenge
- 1.6.1. A student will be given one opportunity to challenge a specific course.
 - 1.6.2. Courses eligible for challenge must be at the grade 11 or 12 level and must currently be offered by the Open School and/or Distance Education Schools.
 - 1.6.3. A student may challenge only one course at a time, although there is no limit to the number of courses a student may challenge.
 - 1.6.4. A student may not challenge a course for the purpose of improving a previously assigned grade.
 - 1.6.5. The entire course must be challenged. Partial credit will not be granted through the challenge process.
 - 1.6.6. A student must demonstrate, through a variety of ways, that the learning outcomes of the course have been met. Examples of performance and assessment activities are: research reports, essays that express student opinion about the issues they are exploring, a 'product' that in some way reflects or summarizes the area of study, a journal that reflects student learning, a learning log of the time spent on activities, a portfolio of student work, documented research time spent in a library, letters of recommendation or certificates of achievement, an interview, a presentation, or a test or examination.
- 1.7. Challenge and Provincial Examinations
- 1.7.1. In order to challenge a course with a provincial examination, a student must first successfully challenge the school portion of the mark. If successful, the student will then be provided the opportunity to write the provincial examination at the first available Ministry-set examination date. In accordance with Ministry policy, the final letter grade and percentage mark will be based on the blended school and examination mark.
- 1.8. Challenge Dates and Fees
- 1.8.1. A student may apply to challenge a course at any time during the school year; however, the opportunity to undergo the formal challenge review will be available at the end of September and the end of February.
 - 1.8.2. A fee of \$120.00/ course or (\$30.00/credit) will be charged by North Island Education School to administer the challenge. This fee will be communicated to the student and the parent.
- 1.9. Challenge Credits and Reporting
- 1.9.1. The Principal is responsible for the transcript of marks under current Ministry policy and guidelines.

2. Course Equivalency

2.1. The purpose of equivalency is to recognize valid credentials at the grade 11 and 12 levels acquired by students from other educational jurisdictions and from institutions outside the regular school system. All students who can provide a written credential or documentation to support their equivalency requests are entitled to an equivalency review. Equivalency is not intended to recognize undocumented prior learning, and credit will be gained only if the prescribed learning outcomes from provincially and locally developed courses are met.

2.2. Ministry Approved Course Equivalency

2.2.1. The Ministry of Education is currently developing and will continually upgrade equivalency credentials from institutions and jurisdictions outside the British Columbia public school system in the document entitled [Table of Equivalencies](#).

2.2.2. A student may apply for equivalency under the [Table of Equivalencies](#). It is the responsibility of the Principal of the student's home school to determine the specific equivalency and the mark to be granted.

The Principal is responsible for the transcript of marks under current Ministry policy and guidelines.

2.3. District-Approved Course Equivalency

Equivalency credits may be granted for students enrolled in the District in recognition of courses or programs that meet the following requirements:

2.3.1. A student is able to provide documentation that the equivalent course or program has been successfully completed as determined by the Principal.

2.3.2. The equivalent course or program matches 80% of the prescribed learning outcomes of a Ministry or locally developed course taught within the District. Equivalency is available for full course credit only; partial credit will not be granted.

2.3.3. The equivalent course or program has been completed at another institution or educational jurisdiction outside the British Columbia school system.

2.3.4. The equivalent course or program satisfies different learning outcomes than those for which the student has already received credit. Equivalency may not be utilized to obtain dual course credit.

2.3.5. The external institution or jurisdiction must be provincially or nationally recognized.

2.3.6. The instructors at the external institution or jurisdiction are qualified and certified by a recognized origination or association acceptable to the Superintendent.

2.3.7. The assessment and evaluation criteria utilized by the external institution or jurisdiction are comparable to those utilized for the course taught in the District.

3. Equivalency and Challenge Information Package

- 3.1. A [Challenge and Equivalency Information Package](#) is available at the District Office and at schools enrolling grade 11 and 12.

Reference: Sections 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act
Graduation Program Order M302/04

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