

# Dual Credit Policies—Question and Answer

[Part 1: Questions and answers published in the DM Bulletin on March 24, 2023](#)

[Part 2: Additional questions answered after being submitted to \[dualcredit@gov.bc.ca\]\(mailto:dualcredit@gov.bc.ca\)](#)

## Part 1: Questions and answers published in the DM Bulletin on March 24, 2023

### 1. What policies govern dual credit?

- The Earning Credit through Equivalency, Challenge, External Credentials, Post Secondary Credit and Independent Directed Studies policy (post-secondary credit policy) enables schools to award Grade 12 elective credit for post-secondary courses, regardless of funding eligibility.
- The Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes policy (funding policy) sets out the conditions under which school districts can claim dual credit courses for regular per-course funding from the Ministry.
- Other relevant policies include Graduation Requirements and K-12 Funding - General.

### 2. What is happening with dual credit?

- The Ministry is currently exploring policy options to increase dual credit access, equity, and quality.
- Ministry staff have had conversations with more than 35 partner organizations—over 150 K–12 educators, post-secondary representatives, Indigenous rightsholders, trades training experts, industry associations leaders, and students—since August 2022 regarding proposed changes to the funding and post-secondary credit policies.
- At a minimum, a policy revision bringing greater clarity is anticipated for July 1, 2024 for implementation in the 2024/25 school year.
- This improved policy foundation will support investments in expanded dual programming within several priority government initiatives, including the Early Childhood Education Dual Credit Project, Future Ready, and the Health Human Resources Strategy.

### 3. Can school districts offer dual credit beyond trades training?

- Yes, B.C.'s policies have always allowed for a variety of career aspirations and post-secondary credentials.
  - o The Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes Policy is concerned with funding course enrolments for students for preparing for specific occupations but doesn't prescribe what occupations students can pursue.
  - o In 2008, language emphasizing that dual credit is for the full range of courses (i.e., not only trades training) was added to the policy.

- The same policy requirements apply to both trades training and other dual credit.
- Related policy statement: “[...] help prepare students for specific occupations.” “...the Ministry of Education and Child Care encourages school districts to improve transition success for students by collaborating with post-secondary institutions and industry associations to offer transition programs that lead to trades certification or post-secondary credentials.”

#### **4. Is dual credit funding limited to courses that prepare students for entry directly into the workforce?**

- No, the very name of the funding policy—i.e., post-secondary transition programs—acknowledges that most students will continue their post-secondary studies after their dual credit experience.
- At the same time, the post-secondary credit policy is concerned with preparing students for specific occupations and students may choose courses known to provide immediate pathways to work.
  - o E.g., graduates of the Electrical Foundation Program through the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) may qualify for advanced standing as indentured candidates within the apprenticeship system.
- Students who are eligible for dual credit can continue to pursue their chosen post-secondary credential regardless of lesser qualifications attained in its pursuit.
  - o E.g., the above Electrical Foundation Program covers more than level one training.
- That the post-secondary credit policy is separate from the funding policy also envisages that students may take courses that result in dual credit without the course being claimed for funding from the Ministry.
- Related policy statement: “[...] help prepare students for specific occupations.” “Post-secondary transition programs [...] lead to Grade 12 graduation as well as help students make smooth transitions to further education or training.”

#### **5. Can students take dual credit courses that are applicable to more than one post-secondary credential (e.g., English 101)?**

- Dual credit students must have a post-secondary transition plan listing all courses that are part of their post-secondary transition program.
- The Ministry’s expectation is that these plans identify the post-secondary credential each student will pursue and that all listed courses are required for the identified credential.
- For clarity, “required” means that the course will appear on the students’ post-secondary transcript and the post-secondary credential will not be awarded without that course being completed.
- The Ministry recognizes that some courses are applicable to multiple credentials.

o e.g., English 151 - Academic Writing Strategies is required to earn the Early Learning and Care Diploma from Camosun College, in addition to being a required course for other credentials from Camosun.

o e.g., a dual credit student attending Camosun and looking to earn the Early Learning and Care Diploma is likely to start with one or more of the following required courses, all of which would be eligible.

- Early Learning and Care (ELC) 110 - Perspectives on Child Growth and Development 1
- Early Learning and Care (ELC) 150 - Health and Wellness for Early Learning & Care
- English 151 - Academic Writing Strategies

• A student who does not have a planned credential, outlined in their transition plan, that includes English 151 would not be eligible for funding for the course.

• Related policy statement: “The post-secondary courses lead to a post-secondary credential...”. “[...] help prepare students for specific occupations.”

## **6. Is there a limit on how many dual credit courses a student can take, and does dual credit participation impact their eligibility for other electives?**

• There are no limits on the number of dual credit courses a student can take. The only requirement is that they begin the courses before they graduate—in Grade 11 or Grade 12.

o Eligible students may take dual credit courses in more than one school year.

o Whether the participating student is in Grade 11 or Grade 12, dual credit courses count as elective credit at the Grade 12 level.

• School-aged students may amass as many credits as they like through other electives; the 28 elective credits required to receive a Dogwood Diploma is a minimum, not a cap.

o Students planning on dual credit should not be steered away from other electives.

• Related policy statements (from the Graduation Requirements policy): “...**students must earn a minimum of 80 credits [...]. The 80 credits include [...] a minimum of 28 elective credits.**” “These 28 credits may be from Ministry-Authorized or Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses, post-secondary courses or external credentials...”.

## **7. Are graduated students eligible for dual credit?**

• No, only students in Grade 11 and Grade 12 who have not yet graduated are eligible.

o In 2020, a policy clarification statement from the Ministry confirmed that dual credit is only available to students who have not yet graduated.

• For the purpose of dual credit, a student is a graduate as of June 30 of their Grade 12 year.

o Note: this assumes they successfully completed B.C.’s graduation requirements.

- Graduates may complete dual credit courses that end after June 30 if they are started prior to June 30.
  - o The beginning of a course is signaled by the first day of class, not the day of program acceptance or registration.
- In rare cases, an exception may be granted for a graduated student.
  - o E.g., a student was registered for a dual credit course set to start before June 30, but the course was subsequently postponed by the post-secondary provider, which shifted the course start date until after June 30.
  - o School districts must have evidence to support their requests for exceptions and obtain approval from the Ministry's Funding & Financial Accountability Branch (EDUC.SRSD@gov.bc.ca).
- Related policy statements: "The Ministry of Education and Child Care recognizes post-secondary courses for funding purposes if they are part of the school-age students' planned programs of study leading to graduation." "Students begin taking the post-secondary courses that are part of their transition program during their Grade 11 or Grade 12 year."
- Related policy statement (from the K-12 Funding - General policy): "Courses taken in BC outside of the public school system (through colleges, post-secondary institutions, private organizations, etc.) are not funded unless [...] the course is taken for credit towards grade 12 graduation."

## **8. When do post-secondary transition plans need to be in place?**

- Post-secondary transition plans must be in place prior to the start of dual credit courses listed within those plans.
- Those post-secondary transition plans must identify the intended career, the appropriate credential, and the courses required by the post-secondary institution to be awarded that credential.
- Students must sign their planned program of courses before their first day in any of those courses.
- Students with a plan in place in Grade 10, prior to being eligible for dual credit, or in Grade 11, must revisit and resign their plan each year.
- Related policy statements: "For students in post-secondary transition programs, schools prepare a document listing all courses that are part of students' post-secondary transition programs, and students sign the document." "Students in post-secondary transition programs annually update and sign a planned program of courses."

## **9. Where can dual credit courses be delivered?**

- Ministry policy allows for dual credit courses to be delivered on post-secondary campuses, online, and in high schools.
- The choice of location is a local one and is often specified within the delivery agreement between the school district and post-secondary program provider.

- o Delivery agreements are one form of evidence that the board of education has arranged, supported, or permitted the dual credit course or program.

- Related policy statement: "School districts establish transition programs with post-secondary partners." "A board may recognize as part of a student's educational program an educational activity that is not provided by the board."

- Related policy statement (from the K-12 Funding - General policy): "Courses taken in BC outside of the public school system (through colleges, post-secondary institutions, private organizations, etc.) are not funded unless permission and support is arranged through the Board of Education [...]."

#### **10. How much credit should students be awarded for post-secondary courses?**

- When reporting dual credit, almost all courses should be awarded 4 credits to appear on the student's high school transcript.

- o This is true regardless of how many post-secondary credits are assigned to the course.

- When a student takes a dual credit program that consists of more than one post-secondary course, each course should be reported as above.

- Should a program not include identifiable courses, report a 4-credit course for approximately every 120-hours of learning.

- o Consideration can be given to study expected to occur outside of class.

- Inversely, in rare cases, post-secondary institutions may offer short courses, making it appropriate to bundle and report several as one 4-credit course.

- Related policy statements: "... the 1701 data collection process [...] requires course claims to be reported according to the actual course credit value (with a single credit representing the value attached to the knowledge, skill and aptitudes most students can acquire in approximately 30 hours of instruction), not the number of credits defined by the post-secondary institution. ▫ Assign 4 credits for most single dual-credit transition claims." "For the reporting of modular courses [...] consider each four credit course as approximately 120 hours."

#### **11. What are the main things that school districts can do to comply with the Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes Policy?**

- Ensure that the post-secondary course is eligible (i.e., meets one of the following criteria).

- o Is listed in the most recent British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer Guide.

- o Is specified in individual Career Technical Centre (CTC) program agreements.

- o Is included in a B.C. public post-secondary institution's calendar as a course required for a credential.

- Ensure that the course is appropriate for the student. o Is listed among the courses in their post-secondary transition plan.

- o Is required for the student to earn the post-secondary credential they plan to pursue.
- o Is aligned with the specific occupation the student envisions.

- Ensure that the student is eligible.

- o Is enrolled in Grade 11 or Grade 12.
- o Has signed a planned program of courses before beginning dual credit.
- o Has started dual credit prior to graduation (i.e., June 30 of their Grade 12 year).

- Ensure the school district has paid the student's post-secondary tuition.

**12. What if the information in this document conflicts with other documents produced by the Ministry?**

- This document does not supersede the Ministry policies, particularly:
  - o Earning Credit through Equivalency, Challenge, External Credentials, Post Secondary Credit and Independent Directed Studies
  - o Graduation Requirements
  - o K-12 Funding - General
  - o Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes
- In the case of a conflict between this document and earlier policy clarification statements from the Ministry regarding the Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes policy, the guidance in this document will prevail.

**13. Who should I contact for further guidance regarding dual credit?**

- The Student Transition team, Education Programs and Policy Branch, Learning and Education Programs Division, will coordinate responses. Please direct all dual credit questions to [dualcredit@gov.bc.ca](mailto:dualcredit@gov.bc.ca)

**Part 2 - Additional Questions submitted to [dualcredit@gov.bc.ca](mailto:dualcredit@gov.bc.ca):**

**14. Can a dual credit student switch tracks, changing post-secondary institutions or programs?**

A student's post-secondary transition plan should identify the student's desired future occupation and the related post-secondary credential.

- All dual credit courses must be part of the school-aged students' planned program of studies leading to high school graduation and leading to the identified post-secondary credential; any student taking multiple dual credit courses should only be enrolled in courses required for that post-secondary credential.
- The academic and career counselling required to produce a transition plan may include discussion of whether the planned post-secondary credits could be transferred to other programs or institutions.

- Schools and students must annually update and sign-off on their post-secondary transition plan, which creates opportunity for revision.
- Revisions may include updating the post-secondary provider and/or desired credential while keeping the targeted future occupation, and it may include refining that specific occupation within the same sector; such changes would ideally only be required in rare cases and with reasons documented by the district.

**15. Post-secondary institutions often permit students a choice of courses to fulfil a requirement toward a post-secondary credential—are those courses eligible for funding?**

- Dual credit students must have a post-secondary transition plan listing all courses that are part of their post-secondary transition program.
- The Ministry’s expectation is that these plans identify the post-secondary credential each student will pursue and that all listed courses are required for the identified credential.
- For clarity, “required” means that the course will appear on the students’ post-secondary transcript and the post-secondary credential will not be awarded without that course being completed.
- The Ministry recognizes that some credentials have course requirements that students can satisfy by taking a set number of courses from a provided list.
- When taken to fulfil a requirement in pursuit of the student’s targeted post-secondary credential, the student’s choice of course is permissible for funding purposes.
  - e.g., a student wanting to be a human resources manager and taking dual credit at Camosun College to get a start on that institution’s Business Administration—Human Resources Management & Leadership program could take either the Negotiations & Contracts course or the Multi-Party Decisions in Government course, since students in that program may choose which course they take for credit towards the credential.
- A student who does not have a planned credential, outlined in their transition plan, that includes the student’s course, would not be eligible for funding for the course.

- Related policy statement:

*“The post-secondary courses lead to a post-secondary credential...”*

*“[...] help prepare students for specific occupations.”*

**16. How do the July 1, 2023, changes to the K–12 Student Reporting Policy impact dual credit?**

- The [K–12 Student Reporting Policy](#) requires that parents and students receive five communications of student learning—three written, and two informal—in a school year.
  - With different types of semester systems, schools adjust accordingly to communicate a portion of what’s required over the year.
- These communications are “in relation to the Learning Standards of the curriculum.”

- Dual credit courses are post-secondary courses, not a part of the K–12 curriculum, so the reporting policy doesn't apply.
- However, schools offering dual credit should collaborate with their post-secondary partners to engage in frequent communication regarding student learning.
  - o At a minimum, students and their caregivers should be aware of their mid-term standing.
- Moreover, schools should be in frequent contact with students and offer supports if and as needed.