Joining the External Credentials Program

A Partnership in Student Success

In British Columbia, students can earn credits toward graduation by completing courses or programs that are outside the BC school curriculum and that have been approved by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. These courses or programs are known as **external credentials** and must be evaluated by the Ministry to confirm specific criteria and provincial standards for learning are being met.

Submitting the *Organization Information Form* and *Application for Recognition of Credential* to the External Credentials Program (ECP) is a critical step in the approval process. These forms are used by the Ministry to determine if courses or programs will be available to BC students for credits. All organizations, regardless of prior recognition, are required to submit the *Organization Information Form*. This pamphlet provides an overview of the process for completing and submitting the required ECP forms.

> First Nations seeking participation in the ECP are to use the *External Credentials Submission Form: First Nations Language and Culture Programs* instead of the forms referenced above.
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> A separate application process is also in place for organizations seeking approval for an External Credentials Sports Program. Please contact the Sport Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports at **Sport@gov.bc.ca** to discuss the process for adding new sports credentials to the program.

Additionally, the Ministry requires that every credential submitted to the ECP have either a separate *External Credentials Submission Form: First Nations Language and Culture Programs* or *Application for Recognition of Credential* included as appropriate. The Ministry is not responsible for any costs related to preparing and submitting the applications for participation in the ECP.

PREPARATION: Beginning the application process can be as easy as reviewing the *Organization Information Form* and *Application for Recognition of Credential*, or the *External Credentials Submission Form: First Nations Language and Culture Programs*. Please make sure to have all required information described in each form available before you get started.

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Submitting Your Courses and Programs for Credentials

BE THOROUGH: Enter the required information for each section of the forms, and please be as thorough as possible in your answers. For example, when describing the grade level and credit amount for your credential, draw comparisons between your learning content and that of currently existing Ministry courses. Additionally, make sure to only enter information that is publicly accessible in your submission.

SIGN ENDORSEMENT: Please ensure that all representatives who participated in completing either the *Application for Recognition of Credentials* or *External Credentials Submission Form: First Nations Language and Culture Programs* sign their names in the Endorsement section of the form. This is essential for confirming information provided is correct and aids Ministry staff in processing the application.

ATTACH DOCUMENTATION: To receive their credits, BC students are required to present a credential that indicates successful completion of your program (e.g. certificate or a formal letter from the organization or First Nation). Please indicate in the appropriate portion of the *Application for Recognition of Credential* or *External Credentials Submission Form: First Nations Language and Culture Programs* what students will receive as proof of their accomplishment. If there is any additional documentation required to support the application, please include it as well.

CLICK SEND: The final step of the ECP application is to email the form and all supporting materials to **External.credentials@gov.bc.ca** with the subject line of [Organization or First Nation name] and [Name of form]. A confirmation email will be sent indicating that your application has been received. Applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are completed. Due to the complexity of some submissions, the Ministry is unable to provide a time estimate for approval.

All current credentials in the ECP will remain valid for graduation credits, however it is the responsibility of participating organizations to ensure that their information is accurate. Information on organizations offering approved external credentials is posted on the Ministry's ECP website and updated quarterly - please inform the Ministry promptly of any required updates to your organization's section.

For questions about the application process, please email the Ministry at: External.credentials@gov.bc.ca.

All forms required for participation in the program are available on the Ministry's ECP website.