



Ministry of
Education and
Child Care



Indigenous-Focused Graduation Requirement



Change to the B.C. Graduation Program

As part of the Province of British Columbia's commitments to truth, reconciliation, and anti-racism, the Ministry of Education and Child Care (the ministry) has implemented an Indigenous-focused graduation requirement for all students starting in the 2023/24 school year. The model for this change to the Graduation Program allows secondary students to meet the new requirement through a variety of existing and new course options (*see page 2 for more details*).

The ministry and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) engaged with First Nations, Indigenous communities, the education sector, and the public on the implementation plan for the new requirement in Spring 2022. The results of these activities informed a final implementation plan for the new requirement, which was made available in August 2022.

Background

This change represents an important next step towards lasting and meaningful reconciliation, building on work to date to incorporate Indigenous content and perspectives into the provincial curriculum, educator professional development, and professional standards for certified educators in B.C. The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement provides all B.C. students with the necessary time and opportunity to develop deeper understandings of the experiences, cultures, and histories of Indigenous peoples in Canada, in support of the K-12 mandate to develop the Educated Citizen.

The graduation requirement responds to commitments in the [Action Plan](#) for the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#), and is consistent with the obligations in the [B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement](#). The requirement also reflects ongoing work by the ministry, FNESC, and other education partners to build capacity within the public education system to address Indigenous-specific racism.

The First Nations Leadership Council, FNESC, and education partners including the British Columbia School Trustees Association, British Columbia Teachers' Federation, and the British Columbia Association of Institutes and Universities, have expressed formal support for a new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement.

Graduation Requirement Details

This change to the B.C. Graduation Program requires that 4 credits of the current 80 credit requirements for the B.C. Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma) include an Indigenous-focused course(s). Eligible options include the current provincial Indigenous-focused courses, a locally developed BAA course that meets specific criteria, or a First Nations language course (*see course list below*). Some of these courses also already satisfy other graduation requirements in Language Arts or Social Studies, and otherwise could be taken as electives.

Provincial Courses

- B.C. First Peoples 12
- Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies 10*
- English First Peoples – New Media 10*
- English First Peoples – Spoken Language 10*
- English First Peoples – Writing 10*
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies + New Media 11
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies + Spoken Language 11
- English First Peoples – Literary Studies + Writing 11
- English First Peoples 12

* INDICATES 2-CREDIT COURSE
(WOULD MEET HALF OF THE REQUIREMENT)

Locally Developed Courses

Boards/authorities can authorize locally developed courses totalling four or more credits to enable students to meet this requirement. Engaging local First Nations in developing such courses is necessary for a BAA course to meet this new requirement. This helps ensure that any such locally developed courses contain appropriate content that is relevant to the local First Nation and presented respectfully.

See [Indigenous-focused Graduation Requirement BAA Course Criteria and Process](#) for information concerning criteria for BAA/FNA courses to meet this requirement.

First Nations Language Courses (Grade 10-12 level)

- ʔayʔaʃuθəm 5 to 12 and Introductory ʔayʔaʃuθəm 11
- Dakelh 5 to 12 and Introductory Dakelh 11
- Gitxsenimx ~ Gitxsanimax 5 to 12 and Introductory Gitxsenimx ~ Gitxsanimax 11
- Halq'eméylem 5 to 12 and Introductory Halq'eméylem 11
- Heiltsuk 5 to 12 and Introductory Heiltsuk 11
- Hul'q'umi'num' 5 to 12 and Introductory Hul'q'umi'num' 11
- Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Kwak'wala 11
- Liqwala/Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Liqwala/Kwak'wala 11
- nsíylxcən 5 to 12 and Introductory nsíylxcən 11
- Nteʔkepmxcin 5 to 12 and Introductory Nteʔkepmxcin 11
- Nuučaan'ut 5 to 12 and Introductory Nuučaan'ut 11
- Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Secwepemctsin 11
- SENĆOŦEN 5 to 12 and Introductory SENĆOŦEN 11
- Shashishalhem (Sechelt Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Shashishalhem 11
- Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 5 to 12 and Introductory Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 11
- Sm'algyax 5 to 12 and Introductory Sm'algyax 11
- Státýmçets 5 to 12 and Introductory Státýmçets 11
- Tsek'ene 5 to 12 and Introductory Tsek'ene 11
- Upper St'at'imcets 5 to 12 and Introductory Upper St'at'imcets 11
- Xaayda Kil / Xaad Kil Grades 5 to 12 and Introductory Xaayda Kil / Xaad Kil 11

Implementation

The ministry and FNESC are continuing to work with the B.C. School Superintendents Association (BCSSA) and the Federation for Independent Schools Association (FISA) to host professional development opportunities for educators to support implementation of provincial Indigenous-focused courses that meet the new graduation requirement. Further information about implementation supports being offered throughout upcoming school years will be shared with schools and districts when available.