

AP 209

Course Challenge and Equivalency

Background

The purpose of students earning credits through challenge, equivalency, external credentials, and post-secondary credits is to grant credit toward graduation for learning that has occurred beyond the scope of regular schooling and which meets or exceeds the provincial standards for course completion.

Within the 2004 Graduation Program, there are 52 required credits and 28 elective credits within the minimum 80 grade 10, 11, and 12 credits for graduation. Within (or beyond) the 28 elective credits there are no limits to the number of credits earned through equivalency, challenge, external credentials, post-secondary credits, independent directed studies or board/authority authorized courses.

Procedures

1. Definitions:

- 1.1 Challenge: A formal process in which a student completes for credit, without taking the course, specific tasks to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes as prescribed in a Ministry-developed or board/authority authorized course. The entire course must be challenged; a partial credit will not be granted through the challenge process. Students will be granted only one opportunity to challenge a specific course. International students must comply with the challenge procedures set out in [the Ministry's International Student Graduation Credit Policy](#). Procedures are outline in this document. Successful challenges will receive credits without having to take the course in the Abbotsford School District. The Board is not obliged to provide challenges for provincial or locally-developed courses not taught in the District. (See section 1 below)
- 1.2 Equivalency: (Documented Prior Learning): Equivalent grade 10, 11, or 12 Ministry-developed board/authority course from an educational jurisdiction or institution outside the BC school system. Students who have completed equivalent coursework elsewhere may apply to have that coursework recognized for credit by the Abbotsford School District. There is no limit to the number of credits students may be awarded through equivalency. (See sections 2 and 3 below.)
- 1.3 External Credentials: (Ministry-Approved Documented Prior Learning): External credentials approved by the Ministry, based on an official list of the approved credentials and assessments provided annually to schools in the Ministry's [Course Information Book](#). Some external credentials are classified as required course and others as elective courses. School administrators will ensure that there are processes for students to provide appropriate documentation. There is no limit to the number of credits a student may earn by using the external credentials. However, there may be credit restrictions between credentials where the external courses or programs are deemed to be equivalent. (See section 4 below)

- 1.4 Post-Secondary Credit (Dual Credit): Students can earn credit towards graduation by earning credits for courses at specific Post-Secondary Institutions. It is aligned with the procedures for obtaining credit for Equivalency and External Credentials. Students are entitled to earn “dual credit” if they earn credit that leads to a post-secondary credential from a post-secondary institution which is a member of the British Columbia Transfer System or offered in French through Educacentre. For a list of which post-secondary courses for which credit may be earned refer to *British Columbia Council on Admissions and [Transfer Guide](#)*. Applicable post-secondary level courses count towards the required number of Grade 12 level credits needed to satisfy graduation requirements. No fee will be charged for transcript reviews. (See section 5 below).
 - 1.5 Independent Directed Studies Policy (IDS): Students are able to initiate their own area of learning and may receive credit towards graduation. Schools can recognize prior learning in a Ministry-developed or Board Authorized course that a student may not have completed. IDS credits may be awarded by boards to students who have successfully completed independent work based on a subset of learning outcomes of Grade 10, 11, or 12 Ministry courses or Board Authorized courses. A student may study one or more learning outcomes in depth, or study more broadly a wide variety of learning outcomes from a single course. IDS credits may only be used to satisfy elective requirements. IDS courses can be 1, 2, 3, or 4 credits and the maximum value of an IDS course is 4 credits. A plan of study must be developed by a student and a teacher, and approved by a principal. If students complete a portion of the outcomes for a course, schools may report their achievement to the Ministry using IDS credits.
2. Challenge Procedures
 - 2.1 A student can challenge to receive credit for Ministry-Authorized or Board/Authority Authorized Grade 10, 11, or 12 courses if s/he:
 - Is currently enrolled or registered as a home school student in the District
 - The course is not a Board/Authority Authorized Course in its first year of implementation
 - Has not completed the course or its equivalent learning outcomes through previous enrollment
 - Can give compelling evidence that s/he will succeed in the challenge.
 - 2.2 Students wishing to challenge a course must fill out the: “Course Challenge Application Form: Student Declaration” and submit this form to their counselor.
 - 2.2.1 Prior to engaging in a challenge process, principals or designated staff must review the application including any documentation of prior learning that a student presents in order to determine if credit can be awarded through equivalency. Once reviewed, the Principal and designated staff will confirm the challenge outcome by completing the [AP 209-1 Challenge Application Form](#). For further information on challenge procedures, refer to Ministry of [Education Graduation Program Order](#).
 - 2.3 Students must be able to demonstrate their readiness to challenge a course based on factors such as a recommendation from a previous teacher, or from evidence that relevant learning has been acquired outside the regular classroom setting. The demonstration is not to be an onerous

process. School staff, in consultation with students and parents, are to make the decision about readiness.

- 2.4 Principals or designated must document the challenge assessment to be delivered to each student, including a Pre-Challenge Equivalency Review (see documents: [AP 209-1 Challenge Application Form](#) and [AP 209-2 Course Challenge Application Form: Student Declaration](#), and the documentation must be made available to Ministry auditors if requested. Examples of assessment strategies that could be used in a challenge process include such things as: hands-on demonstrations, oral performances, interviews, written examinations, or presentation of a collection of work.
- 2.5 Credit awarded through challenge is measured by the same standards used for students who have taken the course through enrollment. A challenge is considered successful when a student has achieved at least a C- and fifty percent (50%). Students challenging a provincially examinable course will be awarded the School Mark portion only in the challenge procedure, and where applicable, must write the Provincial Exam during a regularly scheduled exam session.
- 2.6 Schools will award credit through Challenge via the Transcripts and Examination (TRAX) system by June 30 of the school year in which the Challenge has occurred. For courses completed via a Challenge process, schools must report the appropriate TRAX code in the “Course Type Field”. For reporting and transcript purposes, schools will assign a letter grade and percentage to all credits awarded through the Challenge process.

3. Equivalency Procedures

- 3.1 For equivalency, external credentials and post-secondary credit, school administrators will ensure that there are processes for students to provide appropriate documentation. For the purpose of determining equivalency, comparison of courses may be based on factors such as the following: comparison of learning outcomes, comparison of general subject matter, comparison of depth or breadth of coverage of subject matter, comparison of assessment methods, instruments, and standards. For equivalency to be granted there should be a match of approximately 80% or more of the learning outcomes.
- 3.2 The approval for equivalency must be made by the principal in consultation with the designated advisor, student’s parents/guardians (if applicable), and the student. There will be no fee charged for review or granting these credits; for reporting and transcript purposes, schools will assign letter grades and percentages. If there is insufficient evidence to award a letter grade and percentage, “Transfer Standing” will be awarded.
- 3.3 When equivalency is not available, students may challenge for credit.

4. Equivalency Credits for Students Who Have Left French Immersion

- 4.1 Upon completion of Français Langue 7 or 8:

- 4.1.1 If a student leaves a French Immersion Program after successfully completing Français Langue 7 or 8 then in accordance with District policy, it is recognized that most of the outcomes of French 8, 9 and 10 will have been attained. The student will be placed according to abilities and according to the offerings at the school. Prior to registration in French the student and parents must consult with the appropriate school-based personnel.
 - 4.1.2 If the student wishes to be placed in French 12, then a requirement will be to participate in an interview in French with the teacher and to write a response in French, to a French reading provided by the teacher. If the teacher determines that the student has a reasonable chance of success in French 12, then the student will be enrolled in a French 12 class for a trial of 12 hours of class time. If after this trial the teacher feels the student is inappropriately placed, then, upon consultation with the parent and student, an adjustment to an appropriate placement may be made.
- 4.2 Upon Completion of Français Langue 9 or 10
- 4.2.1 Upon successful completion of Français Langue 9 or 10 students may, if leaving a French Immersion Program, choose one of the following options:
 - 4.2.1.1 Credit for French 11 Challenge - The mark reported to the Ministry of Education for French 11 Challenge is determined by averaging the best two of the previous three years' marks in Français Langue. Note that Français Langue 8 is the lowest level course to be used to calculate the average mark. If no percentage is available, the percentage used will be the mid-point of the percentage range for the letter grade. For example, a B would be reported as 79%.
 - 4.2.1.2 Credit for French 11 Challenge and Challenge to French 12 - The mark will be determined as in (1) and reported to the Ministry of Education as the final mark for French 11 Challenge as well as the school portion of the mark for French 12, enabling the student to write the Provincial Examinations.
 - 4.2.1.3 Credit for French 11 Challenge and enroll in French 12 - If a student chooses this option, then the French 11 Challenge mark is calculated and reported to the Ministry of Education as described above.
 - 4.2.1.4 Enrol in French 11 - Students may wish to choose this option to improve their grade.

5. Procedures for External Credits

- 5.1 In order to earn credit for an approved credential, students must provide the appropriate documentation proving successful completion of the external assessment, course, or program.
- 5.2 Students may have earned an approved external credential prior to entering Grade 10. If so, they are awarded credit if they present their credential any time after they enter Grade 10.
- 5.3 For reporting and transcript purposes, schools must assign all credits received as a result of external credential both a letter grade and percentage, if possible, or “Transfer Standing” (TS) may be used.

6. Procedures for Dual Credit

- 6.1 All post-secondary level courses will be reported using course codes listed in the Course Registry.
- 6.2 For reporting and transcript purposes, schools must assign all credits earned at a post-secondary institution a letter grade and percentage. Provided a course consists of the standard number of hours for most courses offered at that post-secondary institution, such courses will be awarded 4 credits, regardless of the number of credits indicated on the post-secondary institution’s transcript. If the course is offered in modules, credits awarded should be proportionate to 4 credits for the whole course.
- 6.3 Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses do not count for dual credit.

7. Procedures for Independent Directed Studies

- 7.1 Students wishing to complete an Independent Directed Studies will need an Individual Learning Plan to be completed in collaboration with their IDS sponsor teacher. (AP 209-3 IDS Learning Plan)
- 7.2 The IDS Learning Plan shall include:
 - An outline for the directed study including, subject, grade level and the number of credits pursued (30 hours per credit)
 - Related learning outcomes from Grades 10, 11 or 12 Ministry of Education course or BAA elective course
 - Planned inquiry activities and related demonstrations of learning.
 - List of advisors and/or mentors that will support the student’s inquiry.
 - An IDS timeline outlining check-in times and significant milestones.
 - A final evaluation and grade submission upon completion of the IDS.
- 7.3 The learning plan must include signatures from the student, the IDS teacher (advisor) as well as the Principal.
- 7.4 A signed parent consent form (AP 209-4 Parent Permission Form) must be received prior to the commencement of the IDS.
- 7.5 A copy of the IDS Learning Plan must be sent to the Director of Instruction as well as the Assistant Superintendent.

7.6 A copy of the finalized contract and cover letter with signatures is to be placed in the students' G4 file.

8. When to Challenge

8.1 Students challenge requests will be reviewed twice a year:

- October 15th
- March 15th

8.2 Students will need to submit their Course Challenge Application Form prior to the dates above for a review to be considered and processed.

Appendices [AP 209-1 Challenge Application Form](#)
 [AP 209-2 Course Challenge Application Form: Student Declaration](#)
 [AP 209-3 IDS Learning Plan](#)
 [AP 209-4 IDS Parent Permission Form](#)

Reference [*Ministerial Order 192/94, The Provincial Letter Grades Order*](#)

Last Revised: June 2015

AP 209-1 Course Challenge Application Form

Student Information:

Student Name: _____ Date of application: _____

Name of school registered at: _____

School Student #: _____ Personal Id. # (PEN): _____

Date of birth _____
(dd/mm/yy)

Parent/Legal Guardian Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone number: _____

I am applying to challenge: (*course name*) _____

I wish to challenge this course and will have submitted this application by either:

- October 15 (with any provincial exam component to be written in _____)
- March 15 (with any provincial exam component to be written in _____)

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

School Official Signature

Approval Signature: _____

This application submitted by _____ to challenge

_____ Course is approved.

AP 209-2 Course Challenge Application Form: Student Declaration

All students currently enrolled in the District are eligible to challenge courses (with the exception of Board/Authority Authorized courses in their first year of implementation). Only those students who give strong and compelling evidence that they can meet the required learning outcomes and that it is in their best interest will be permitted to proceed. Challenge is intended to respond to unique needs in exceptional circumstances; it is not intended to replace the valuable experience of classroom learning, nor is it intended to be an opportunity for students to improve their course marks.

Name of course to be challenged: _____

	YES	NO
1. I have read and understood the paragraph above and know that I must be able to demonstrate a high level of competency related to the prescribed learning outcomes for this course.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I have reviewed and am able to demonstrate master of the provincial learning outcomes (IRP) designated for the course challenge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I understand that the challenge exam(s) will include provincial learning outcomes (IRP) of the full course.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I have attempted and/or received a passing grade for this course or challenge exam before.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am registered in this course at this or another school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I recognize that the challenge process will involve a number of steps which may include a portfolio, a written test, a lab/project, and an interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I am aware that the full course must be challenged.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I am aware that if this is a provincially examinable course I may be required to write the provincial exam.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I have met with a counselor and/or subject advisor who has approved this application.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I can explain my desire to challenge this course in relation to my graduation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I have acquired my knowledge as follows:

The Challenge supports my learning plan in the following way:

AP 209-3 IDS Learning Plan

Complete all parts of this form and the cover letter signed by the Principal, the Director of Instruction and the Assistant Superintendent prior to finalization of the plan. A copy of the finalized contract and cover letter with signatures should be placed in the student's G4 File.

Student Name (Print)	School	Grade	Student Number
IDS Course Code	IDS Teacher	Approved Course Start Date	Project Completion Date
BC Course(s) for Learning Outcomes to be covered:	Grade Level	Number of Course Credits Projects (1 credit= 30 hours)	
		1	2 3 4

Topic/guiding question: What will be the guiding questions or direction of your study/inquiry? Or, provide an outline for the areas of work or studies to be covered.

List at least one learning outcome from a BC Ministry of Education or BAA course attached to this IDS course:

1.
2.
3.

Attach inquiry activity, learning activity, or products: Please list inquiry activities, learning activities, or work attached to the products that will serve as evidence or demonstration of learning. Include:

- Specific type of inquiry and learning activities that you will undertake
- Activities that you be participating in, related to your IDS course

Inquiry/Learning/Activity	Evidence to Demonstrate Learning

Mentors and Experts: Name any mentors, experts, or advisors that will support you in your inquiry, activity, or learning and describe the specific types of support and guidance your mentors will be providing for you in your IDS course.

Mentor/Expert/Advisor Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mentor/Expert/Advisor Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mentor/Expert/Advisor Name: _____ Phone: _____

IDS Timeline: Create a list of “signposts” or significant events, with dates, that will serve as a timeline for your IDS course, from start to finish.

Date	Event

Identify Check-in Dates with your Mentor/Expert/Advisor: When will you be meeting with your Mentor/Advisor/Expert to discuss progress on your learning plan?

Date of Meeting	Signature of Mentor/Expert/Advisor:	Comments:

Final Evaluation:

	Hours Completed
	Percentage/Letter Grade Assigned
	Work Habits (G, S, N)
Comment	

Approval Signatures: Signatures must be obtained **prior** to the commencement of the IDS Course.

Student Name Student Signature Date

Mentor/Advisor Name Mentor/Advisor Signature Date

Administrator Name Administrator Signature Date

Director of Instruction Name Director of Instruction Signature Date

Assistant Superintendent Name Assistant Superintendent Signature Date

A signed parent consent form must also be received prior to the commencement of the IDS.

AP 209-4 Parent Permission Form

Student Name (Print)	School	Grade	Student Number
IDS Course Code	IDS Teacher	Approved Course Start Date	Project Completion Date
BC Course(s) for Learning Outcomes to be covered:		Grade Level	Number of Course Credits Projects (1 credit= 30 hours)
			1 2 3 4

Your child has been enrolled in an Independent Directed Studies course.

What Is an IDS Course?

An Independent Directed Studies course allows students to initiate their own learning under teacher supervision. The IDS course is intended to allow students to pursue curriculum in more detail (students receive course credit plus IDS credit), or to focus on one or more of the learning outcomes of a course that has not been taken (students receive only IDS credit).

Prior to commencement of the IDS course, your child, with the help of an advisor, will develop an Independent Directed Studies Student Learning that outlines the following items:

- Topic/guiding question to be addressed in the IDS course
- What Ministry of Education/BAA course learning outcomes will be covered in the IDS course
- A list inquiry activities, learning activities, or work attached to the products that will serve as demonstrations of learning
- A list of any mentors, experts, or advisors that will support your child in his/her inquiry, activity, or learning and their contact information
- A timeline of significant events/dates that will guide the IDS course
- A list of dates where student and mentor/advisor will meet and discuss progress on IDS course goals

A copy of this IDS student learning plan will be approved by the Principal and placed in your child's G4 File.

I understand the purpose, content, and demonstrations of learning that will be required to complete this IDS course and receive high school credits.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date