

COURSE CHALLENGES AND WAIVED PREREQUISITES

Background:

The Division recognizes there are circumstances where students can challenge the learning outcomes of a course. The Principal also may waive prerequisites for entry and intermediate courses. The Division will follow the guidelines for course challenges and waived prerequisites as outlined in the [Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12](#), the Waiver of Prerequisites and Credits for Waived Prerequisites section.

Definitions:

Assessment:

refers to the process of a student performing a number of tasks and showing samples of work that demonstrate the degree to which the student has achieved the expected standards for the outcomes of the course. The student's performance and the quality of the student's work are evaluated by a certificated teacher who has expertise in the subject or course in question.

Course:

refers to a course at any level in a course sequence.

Course Challenges:

are provisions that allow secondary students to challenge the learning outcomes of non-diploma exam courses—including one-credit Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses—and the school-awarded mark component of diploma exam courses through a formal assessment process.

Course Sequence:

refers to a sequence of courses that together comprise a complete set of prerequisites (for example, French Language Arts 10-1, 20-1 and 30-1).

Waived Prerequisites:

are used under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal when the student possesses the knowledge, skills and attitudes identified in the waived course or program of studies, or it is in the student's best interest to be enrolled in the subsequent course in a particular subject.

Procedures:

1. All course challenges and waived prerequisites shall be approved by the Principal.
2. Any student wishing to challenge a course must apply, in writing, to the Principal.

3. The initiation of a course challenge shall occur within the first three weeks of enrolling in a school or a semester.
4. The Principal shall make the decision to permit the course challenge/waived prerequisite.
5. The student is expected to provide evidence of readiness to challenge a course.
6. The Principal shall assign the administration and evaluation of assessment for a course challenge to an Alberta certificated teacher who has expertise in the subject or course.
7. When a student requests to challenge a course not offered by the Division, the Principal must refer the student to the Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students who will arrange course challenges with another school authority, where possible. A student who undertakes such a course challenge must assume all additional expenses, other than those normally assumed by a school for assessment. Examples of additional expense are personal transportation to the other school authority.
 - 7.1. Course challenges referred to the Division from other school authorities shall be referred to the Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students.
8. The Principal shall ensure the student assessment for course challenges encompasses a variety of strategies such as:
 - 8.1. Demonstration of:
 - 8.1.1. portfolio of work related to the subject area;
 - 8.1.2. project study report;
 - 8.1.3. performance-based tasks;
 - 8.1.4. oral skills (second languages); or
 - 8.1.5. safety procedures.
 - 8.2. Interview that:
 - 8.2.1. assesses knowledge, skills and attitudes;
 - 8.2.2. assesses breadth and depth of understanding;
 - 8.2.3. ensures the integrity of the work that has been presented; or
 - 8.2.4. addresses the affective domain of the subject area.
 - 8.3. Formal evaluation through:
 - 8.3.1. multiple-choice test;
 - 8.3.2. written test;
 - 8.3.3. oral defence;
 - 8.3.4. performance; or
 - 8.3.5. skilled task.
9. A student who successfully demonstrates through the course challenge process they possess the outcomes for the course to at least the acceptable standard, shall be awarded a final course mark and credits for the course challenged, except in diploma examination courses, which require the school-awarded mark to be blended with the diploma examination mark before a final course mark or credit is possible. The percentage mark for the course challenge is to be reported in PASI.
10. A student may attempt a particular course challenge only once. If the student is unsuccessful, but wants credit in the course, or wishes to raise their mark, the student is required to take the course.
11. When a prerequisite is waived, no mark shall be awarded and “P” for PASS shall be noted on the student’s transcript.

12. For CTS courses, the student must present documentation the prerequisite safety requirements have been met.
13. The Principal shall not charge a funded student a fee for administering a course challenge.
14. Exceptions
 - 14.1. A student may not initiate a course challenge for a course in a similar level sequence if the student has already completed a course in a higher-level sequence. For example, a student who has earned credits in Math 30-1 may not challenge Math 20-2. However, a student who has been waived to a higher-level course in a sequence may challenge the lower-level course(s) in that sequence. For example, a student who is waived into Math 30-1 may challenge Math 20-1.
 - 14.2. The course challenge provision applies only to students who believe they have the knowledge, skills and attitudes as defined by the program of studies for a given course. Students are not permitted to challenge the following courses:
 - 14.2.1. Agriculture Safety (AGR3000);
 - 14.2.2. Green Certificate Program courses;
 - 14.2.3. Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) courses;
 - 14.2.4. Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses completed in Grades 7, 8 and 9;
 - 14.2.5. Career Internship 10;
 - 14.2.6. Locally developed/acquired and authorized courses, with the exception of locally developed language courses;
 - 14.2.7. Special Projects 10, 20, and 30;
 - 14.2.8. Work Experience 15, 25, and 35;
 - 14.2.9. Workplace Practicum 20-4 and 30-4;
 - 14.2.10. Workplace Readiness 10-4; and
 - 14.2.11. Workplace Safety Systems (HCS3000).
 - 14.3. The exceptions list is routinely updated in the [Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12](#) and that list shall be the definitive list for a Principal.

Reference:

Section 31, 52, 53, 197, 222 *Education Act*
Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12