

Evaluating Out-of-Province Course Completions for Senior Years Credits

A Guide for
School Administrators

***EVALUATING OUT-OF-PROVINCE
COURSE COMPLETIONS FOR
SENIOR YEARS CREDITS***

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2007

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth

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Evaluating Out-of-Province Course Completions for Senior Years Credits Recording Template

Introduction

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth allows course credits completed outside of Manitoba by students who are registering in Manitoba schools to be evaluated and accepted as Senior Years credits. Once accepted, these credits can be used to meet Manitoba provincial high school graduation requirements.

Out-of-province students entering our public school system as resident pupils* or international students should have their pre-existing course completions at the Senior Years level evaluated to determine whether Manitoba credit can be granted. Thereafter, they should be placed in courses that will allow them to obtain the Manitoba provincial high school diploma and achieve their educational and career goals.

Principals of schools are responsible for making placement decisions as well as determining whether out-of-province course completions should receive Manitoba Senior Years credit(s).

Students with interrupted schooling may occasionally arrive with an educational background that amounts to less than a Grade 9 standing. For suggestions on placement of these students, please refer to the Students with Interrupted Schooling section on page 5 of this document.

This document outlines considerations, procedures, and resources to help schools evaluate course credits completed outside Manitoba and determine appropriate grade-level equivalencies that will facilitate placement of students arriving from out of province.

* “Resident pupils” are entitled to an education in Manitoba public schools. The term “resident pupil” is defined in *The Public Schools Act* of Manitoba.

Principles/Considerations

1. Responsibility for determining the student's placement at a grade level that is appropriate to the age and skill level of the student lies with the school.
2. The procedures and criteria used in the evaluation of out-of-province course credits should be clear, rational, consistent, and reliable.
3. The approach to evaluating out-of-province course credits should take into account the diversity of educational systems in other jurisdictions, and the student's age and skill level. Special consideration must be given to students' previous learning opportunities, which may have been limited by difficulty accessing education, disrupted schooling, war, or other factors.
4. The same basic methodology should apply to all students, and results should be recorded to ensure consistency, fairness, and equity. (See point 7 on page 4.) Evaluations of out-of-province course credits should take past practice into account. Over time, this record may help the school develop criteria that will serve to meet this goal.
5. Students and parents* should have adequate access to an evaluation of the out-of-province course credits. A local (school or divisional level) appeal process should be in place.
6. It is recognized that school administrators require a margin of flexibility in making decisions.
7. The Manitoba High School Diploma is not to be issued solely on the basis of the evaluation of out-of-province credits. Schools may not issue a Manitoba High School Diploma without the student being enrolled and having successfully completed at least one (1) credit (equivalent to 110 hours of instruction) within the Manitoba curricula in a Manitoba school.

* In this document, the terms "parent" and "parents" refer to both parents and guardians. The term "parents" is used with the recognition that in some cases only one parent may be involved in a child's education.

Procedures for Evaluating Out-of-Province Course Credits and Transcripts of Results

1. Establish the validity of the documentation presented. The transcript should, except in exceptional circumstances, be an official original document or a certified copy of the original. Generally, transcripts are issued by government departments/ministries of education. It is necessary to meet with the student and parent to gather information.
 - a. Translation may be necessary. If possible, the student should submit a true and exact translation of the documentation.
 - b. Where it is impossible or difficult for the student to do so, translation with the help of school or community resources is an option (see Resources for Evaluating Out-of-Province Credentials section on pages 8 to 9).
2. To determine the student's placement, attempt to situate the documentation within the framework of the education system from which it is issued. If assessing all or most of the student's credits is impossible or if the student lacks certain credentials or transcripts, the school will want to determine at what minimum grade level it can place the student and then move forward on a credit-by-credit basis. A follow-up assessment of this placement should be undertaken to confirm the placement.
3. For students at the Senior Years level, efforts should be made to equate the out-of-province course credits with similar courses offered in the Manitoba school system. If need be, a variety of criteria can be applied to determine the student's level and type of educational programming:
 - a. What was the normal full-time duration of the school day? school year? Was it a credit system? How many hours per credit?
 - b. Contents of program: What courses were studied? Were there compulsory versus optional courses? Can two or more courses be blended to meet Manitoba requirements for a single course credit?
 - c. Type of program: Vocational? Academic? Advanced? Can the quality of program be determined?
 - d. Level of achievement: How was achievement recorded—letter grades? percentage marks?
4. An immediate and informal evaluation of the student's skill level may be necessary until the student's transcript and records arrive. However, schools must be aware of provisions within the Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation 155/2005 under *The Public Schools Act* which require that a school board "ensure that a pupil [who is eligible to be enrolled] is not denied educational programming . . . for more than 14 days after the pupil seeks to be enrolled in a school within the division or district, regardless of whether that school has received the pupil's pupil file" (7(1)).

5. Record out-of-province credits with code 0691. This code is to be used for assigned credits (courses that have an equivalent in Manitoba) and unassigned credits (courses that have no Manitoba equivalent, for example, locally developed curricula). Schools should use the designation “S” for “Standing” to report credits granted. The Manitoba High School Diploma is not to be issued solely on the basis of the evaluation of out-of-province credits. All students must successfully complete at least one (1) Manitoba course credit (equivalent to 110 hours of instruction) in a Manitoba school before being awarded the Manitoba High School Diploma.
6. Prepare an education plan for the student if necessary. What kinds of educational support(s) and programming will the student need to succeed? The school will also want to consider the career aspirations of the student and his/her prior schooling. Will he/she choose to work or study after graduation? What type of education and training will the student pursue? What type of work? This is especially important for students with limited English or French language skills, significant interrupted schooling, or special needs. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth’s English as an Additional Language (EAL) website contains resources and information that can be consulted. The website’s address is www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/diversity/eal/. Resources for programming for students with special needs can be found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/index.html.
7. An evaluation statement should be prepared and recorded both for the school’s records and the student’s cumulative file. An “Evaluating Out-of-Province Course Completions for Senior Years Credits Recording Template” form is provided on the last page of this document. This form can be photocopied or downloaded from the Department’s website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/op_credits/. This record should include the evaluation report and copies of all documents contributing to the evaluation of out-of-province course credits.
8. If the decision is not accepted by student/parent, a formal process for appeal should be available to the student. This appeal process should begin at the school level and progress to the divisional level. The final decision is the responsibility of the board of trustees of a division.

Students with Interrupted Schooling

For students arriving with a background of interrupted schooling, consideration should be given to both their educational needs and a placement at an age-appropriate grade level. This determination must be made on the basis of each student's circumstances. Age-appropriate placement may be acceptable in one case and not in another. Some students may benefit from being placed in a lower grade level allowing for more schooling to answer to their educational needs. Since granting credits does not replace formal schooling, a general rule of thumb is to place arriving students at the Grade 9 level as an initial placement. An education plan should be made based on an interview (with student, parents, etc.), portfolios, and an assessment in language, literacy, and other subjects. This combination of approaches should help confirm the student's appropriate grade level. The intent is to offer these students the foundational schooling that will help them succeed beyond the high school.

Consideration may be given to the student's previous complementary education, informal education, and strengths and skills. Credits may be granted following an assessment of the student's abilities. It is recognized that the school, having spoken with the student and parent, and gathered and studied all available and pertinent information, is in the best position to make this decision.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's English as an Additional Language (EAL) website contains resources and information that can be consulted. The website's address is
<www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/diversity/eal/>.

The Program and Student Services Branch of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth provides educators with support for individualized programming. A handbook for developing and implementing individual education plans (IEPs) can be found at
<www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/iep/index.html>.

Frequently Asked Questions

How should the school report out-of-province credits?

Code 0691 allows the recording of out-of-province credits for one-half credit and one credit courses. Credits should be reported using the designation “S” for “Standing.” When using code 0691, no breakdown is needed. Only the total number of credits allocated to the student is reported. For further information, refer to the *Subject Table Handbook: Student Records System and Professional School Personnel System* at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/sth/index.html>.

What if the student appears ready to or wishes to pursue post-secondary education and training or work?

Students requiring a Grade 12 equivalency and whose intention it is to proceed to post-secondary education and training or work should be directed to post-secondary education programs or visit the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) website at <www.gov.mb.ca/tce/jobseek/plar.html>.

Until what age does an individual have the right to attend school?

Students have the right to attend school until they receive a graduation diploma or until the last school day of June in the calendar year in which they become 21 years of age, whichever comes first.

How should the Challenge for Credit Option be used in the event that concerns make placing the student difficult?

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth recognizes that students may, in exceptional circumstances, have already acquired the knowledge, skills, and attitudes or learning outcomes of a particular course. The Challenge for Credit Option provides a process for students to demonstrate that they have achieved learning outcomes as defined in the Manitoba curriculum for a directly-related course. Requirements to earn a credit via challenge should not be more demanding than the requirements to earn the credit through regular instruction; this should involve demonstrating that the student can meet the curriculum learning outcomes in an appropriate way.

This option can be used in situations where particular needs exist, such as

- students transferring into a Manitoba school from another jurisdiction whose placement in a subject/grade would be facilitated by such a provision
- students who were previously home-schooled
- students who can demonstrate that they have met course requirements through life experiences such as independent study, world of work, volunteer activities, and hobbies

Further information on the Challenge for Credit Option is available at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy/gradreq/choice_report.pdf. Schools should consult their divisional policies and procedures related to the Challenge for Credit Option.

Can arriving students be credited for demonstrated skills in languages other than English and French?

The Special Language Credit Option, introduced in 1974, provides for the recognition of Manitoba's linguistic diversity. Senior Years students proficient in languages other than English or French are eligible. This includes students who have

- come recently to Canada
- maintained a proficiency in a first or a heritage language
- developed proficiency in an additional language in an alternative setting

Further information is available at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/lancredits/index.html.

What are the school's obligations in terms of a timely placement?

The Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation 155/2005 under *The Public Schools Act* directs that all students in Manitoba, particularly those with special needs, are entitled to receive appropriate educational programming that fosters student participation in both the academic and social life of the school. The regulation requires that a school board ensure that a "resident pupil" transferring into a school is not denied educational programming in the following circumstances:

- (a) for more than 14 days after the pupil seeks to be enrolled in a school within the division or district, regardless of whether that school has received the pupil's pupil file;
- (b) pending
 - (i) the conduct of any assessment, or
 - (ii) the preparation of an individual education plan for the pupil. (7(1))

Resources for Evaluating Out-of-Province Credentials

How should the school evaluate the standing of students arriving from other provinces/territories?

Visit the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) site at the following address to find *Secondary Education in Canada – A Student Transfer Guide*: <www.cmec.ca/tguide/2004/index.en.html>. Summaries of provincial and territorial curriculum guides and graduation requirements can be found by visiting the CMEC site at <www.cmec.ca/tguide/index.en.stm>.

How should the school evaluate the standing of students arriving from outside the country?

- Published by UNESCO, World Data on Education (WDE) focuses on basic descriptions of the main characteristics of the organization and functioning of national education systems. The database is available online by visiting <www.ibe.unesco.org/countries/WDE/WorldDataE.htm>, selecting “access the databank,” and then selecting “Search” at the bottom of the page.
- The information network on education in Europe, or Eurydice, makes available the database Eurybase, which covers all education systems that are part of the network. Eurybase can be accessed online at <www.eurydice.org/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/DB_Eurybase_Home>.
- The Sistemas Educativos Iberoamericanos (Ibero-American Education Systems) publishes information on the education systems of Ibero-American countries at <www.oei.es/quipu/>.
- Information on the structure of education in the United States, including information on the types and levels of education offered, how people progress through the system, and the characteristics of recognized degree programs and other programs of study, is available online at <www.ed.gov/NLE/USNEI/>.

Other Resources

- The International Centre in Winnipeg operates a “Language Bank” service of translators and interpreters. Information is available online at <www.international-centre.ca/LanguageBank.htm>.
- The Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. works primarily with immigrants of refugee origins. Volunteers or staff can assist with interpretation for some languages. Information is available at <www.miic.ca>.
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth’s website outlines graduation requirements for Manitoba high school students at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy/grad_require.html>.
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth’s website provides information about Grade 9 to Grade 12 Mature Student Graduation Requirements at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/mature>.

For additional information, contact Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth.

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