International Student Graduation Credit Policy

The policy applies to international students studying in British Columbia who wish to earn a British Columbia Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma) and who have not had their educational program instructed in one of Canada’s two official languages for at least two years prior to arriving in British Columbia. The International Student Graduation Credit Policy is not applicable to those students whose educational program was instructed in English or French for the two years prior to their arrival in British Columbia.

The policy provides HCOS with the flexibility to offer programs that meet the needs of international students while also ensuring that international students who intend to graduate satisfactorily complete specified courses in British Columbia's Graduation Program and do not earn all or certain course credits through an Equivalency review or Challenge process.

Rationale

Each year, many students come to British Columbia because they and their parents value the high quality of education provided by the British Columbia school system.

Some international students enroll in British Columbia schools to upgrade their skills in one of Canada's two official languages, or to benefit from a cross-cultural experience. These language/cultural programs do not involve the Ministry's accreditation or issuance of the Dogwood Diploma.

Other international students enroll in British Columbia schools with the goal of meeting graduation requirements and earning a Dogwood Diploma. In order to ensure adequate preparation for post-secondary education and competencies in English or French, this policy requires that international students earn credit for many core courses in the Graduation Program through enrollment in British Columbia schools. Only a limited number of courses in the Graduation Program level may be credited through challenge or equivalency assessments to ensure the international credibility of the Dogwood Diploma.

Authority

See Ministerial Order 302/04, the Graduation Program Order (PDF)

HCOS International Student Graduation Credit Policy

This policy recognizes that international students working towards a Dogwood Diploma may begin their studies in a British Columbia school at a point other than the beginning of their Grade 10 year (i.e., the start of the Graduation Program). Regardless of when students begin their graduation

programs, international students must meet all graduation requirements as well as the requirements set out in this policy in ways that ensure competence in one of Canada's two official languages in order to obtain a Dogwood Diploma.

International students who enter a British Columbia school after Grade 10 may be able to meet many of their personal goals. However, international students who enter a British Columbia school at the beginning of Grade 12 may find it difficult to meet all of the requirements for earning a Dogwood Diploma, unless they have had considerable instruction in one of Canada's two official languages prior to coming to British Columbia.

To ensure language competencies, international students, when working toward a Dogwood Diploma, are restricted in which courses may be used to receive credit through equivalency, external credentials, or challenge for skills and knowledge obtained in a language other than English or French.

HCOS may award an Evergreen Certificate (also known as a British Columbia School Completion Certificate) to students with Inclusive needs, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Student Credentials Order (PDF). To receive an Evergreen Certificate, the Director of Grad, in consultation with teachers, should ensure that the student has met the goals of his or her education program, or other criteria established by the board of education or independent school authority.

When a program leading to an Evergreen Certificate (School Completion Certificate) is advertised, or offered, communication should clearly distinguish the differences between an Evergreen Certificate and a Dogwood Diploma, indicating that an Evergreen Certificate will not satisfy university entrance requirements.

Procedures

To earn a Dogwood Diploma, all international students must meet all graduation requirements, including all required exams and assessments.

1. International students whose educational program was not instructed in either French or English for at least two years prior to arriving in British Columbia must earn credits through instruction from a British Columbia-certified teacher (not through Equivalency review or Challenge process) for the following courses:
   - ◦ A Language Arts course at the Grade 11 level,
   - ◦ English First Peoples 12 or English Studies 12,
   - ◦ A Science course at the Grade 11 or 12 level,
   - ◦ A Mathematics course at the Grade 11 or 12 level,
   - ◦ A Social Studies course at the Grade 11 or 12 level, and
   - ◦ Career-Life Education.
2. International students must earn graduation credit in Career-Life Connections under supervision of a board of education or an independent school authority.

Revision #3
Created 8 February 2021 17:17:19 by Chelsea Bitgood

Updated 7 October 2025 22:25:22 by Nita Rahn