

COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAMS WITH EXAMS

ADVANCED PLACEMENT, CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DATE: August 2023

TO: High School Administrators, School Counselors, College Access Staff,
Teachers, College/University Staff and Faculty

FROM: Council of Presidents (COP)
Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW)
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)
Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)

SUBJECT: College Preparatory Programs with Exams- Questions and Answers

College preparatory programs with exams (CPPE) provide students an opportunity to earn college credit through standardized assessment exams. In Washington, the standardized assessment exams include Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge Assessment International Education (Cambridge International or CI), and International Baccalaureate (IB).

Representatives from higher education and K-12 developed this document. The answers reflect how high schools and institutions of higher education in Washington implement and administer various elements of college preparatory programs with exams.

This document does not provide legal guidance. If there are legal questions, an institution should reach out to the appropriate institutional legal contacts.

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What are College Preparatory Programs with Exams?

College preparatory programs with exams, in Washington, are defined as high school courses for which students may earn college credit through recognized standardized exams, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International exams.

2. Is CPPE considered dual credit?

Yes. Advanced Placement, Cambridge, and International Baccalaureate programs enable students to take high school courses, taught by high school teachers, at the high school. Upon completion of the course, students may take a standardized exam. Depending on the exam score, they may earn college credit. Colleges determine the type and amount of credit earned based on the exam and the exam score.

3. What is the difference between College Preparatory Programs with Exams and concurrent enrollment programs?

In Washington, college preparatory programs with exams include AP, Cambridge and IB. As noted in Question 1, these programs enable students to take rigorous high school courses that prepare them to take a standardized exam upon completion of the course. Depending on the exam score, they may earn college credit.

Concurrent enrollment programs in Washington include Running Start and College in the High School. Concurrent enrollment programs enable students to take college courses from an institution of higher education while enrolled in high school. College credit may be earned and recorded on a high school transcript as high school credit depending on the concurrent enrollment program.

Articulated college (or dual?) credit programs, in Washington, include Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Credit. Articulated credit programs provide an opportunity for a student to earn college credit retroactively for high school coursework in a professional-technical field aligned with a college course. For CTE Dual Credit, earned college credit is dependent on an articulation agreement between an institution of higher education or consortium of institutions of higher education and a district or school. Credit is awarded only by the institution of higher education that establishes an articulation agreement between the district and the college for the high school course. Students may receive a college transcript based on performance in the articulated college course.

4. How do I know how many CPPE Courses to take?

Depending on your post-high school goals, taking CPPE courses can be a great way to develop the academic skills need for college and many careers. The most important factors are fit and. More courses does not mean "better." More important factors are fit and mindful credit accumulation. A student's high school curriculum choices should be determined by their personal, career, and educational goals and interests, with an emphasis on fit, including academic readiness and preparation. Intentional enrollment in all dual credit programs is encouraged within the context of fit, readiness and relevancy to long-term educational and career goals so that students maximize their opportunities and avoid unintentionally eliminating college and career pathways.

Students are encouraged to align dual credit opportunities with their personal High School & Beyond Plan (HSBP). The HSBP begins by 8th grade and creates an individual plan for high school and beyond that can be revised to accommodate changing interests or postsecondary goals. To learn about [High School and Beyond Plans](#).

5. Is the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) a College Preparatory Program with Exam?

No. In Washington, CLEP is not considered a dual credit program. CLEP is a "credit by testing" program. Students may receive college credit based on CLEP exams at some institutions of higher education. To learn more, students should reach out to the college or university of interest.

6. Is the Graduation Alliance program through the American Council of Education (ACE) dual credit?

No. In Washington, ACE CREDIT is not considered a dual credit program. Students may receive college credit at some institutions of higher education, but they are not universally recognized nor often used to fulfill core program requirements. To learn more, students should reach out to the college or university of interest.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND SUPPORT

7. Are there requirements for a student to participate in a CPPE program?

Yes. Students enrolled in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in Cambridge International and Advanced Placement. Note the exception of AP world language and culture courses which may be offered in 8th grade. Students in grades 11-12 are eligible to participate in the International Baccalaureate's Diploma Programme. High schools and districts determine what programs to offer and are responsible for student placement in courses and programs.

8. Can students participate in more than one CPPE program during a high school trimester or semester?

Yes. Students can participate in more than one CPPE program if offered by a high school. High schools and districts determine what programs to offer and are responsible for student placement in courses and programs.

9. What is the responsibility of the public school district, charter school or tribal compact school to inform potential CPPE students about these programs?

Per [RCW 28A.230.090](#), a public school district, charter school or tribal compact school must provide general information about dual credit opportunities to all students, and the students’ parents and guardians, as part of the students’ High School and Beyond Plans.

10. What determines the courses a student can take?

Each high school makes its own determination on what CPPE courses/programs to offer in accordance with RCW 28A.320.195 academic acceleration policies for high school students.

TRANSCRIPT AND TRANSFERABILITY

11. What is the difference between dual credit and college equivalency credit?

Dual credit is an umbrella term specific to Washington. Dual credit is one of six programs in which a student in high school may earn both college and high school credit for a course. College equivalency credit is the type (i.e., general education, major related, elective) of credit and the amount of credit (i.e., 5 credits, 10 credits) that is equivalent to an exam score (AP/IB/CI) or completion of a college level course (Running Start and College in the High School).

12. Are all courses taken as part of CPPE programs shown on the high school transcript?

Yes. College preparatory programs with exam courses need to be recorded on the public high school transcript. The standardized transcript must contain the appropriate course designation for each completed course within a program. See [OSPIs Transcript FAQ](#) for additional guidance.

13. What are the appropriate course designator codes to use for each type of dual credit course?

High School Transcript Course Designators are below:		
A= Advanced Placement	C= College in the HS	I= Intl. Baccalaureate
R= Running Start	K= Cambridge Intl.	T= CTE Dual Credit (formerly Tech Prep)

14. How do students send CPPE exam scores to institutions of higher education? When a student completes an assessment from a college preparatory program with exam, the national or international organization offering the program creates an official transcript. The transcript is an official copy of a student’s assessment results. The student then requests that the organization send the transcript directly to an institution of higher education. A fee may be charged by the organization for the transcript.

An institution of higher education cannot review and potentially award credit for an exam unless the institution receives an official transcript from the national or international organization.

For Advanced Placement the official transcript is referred to as the AP Score Report and is issued by The College Board. The AP Score Report is sent directly to colleges and universities as identified by the student to The College Board.

For International Baccalaureate, the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) provides an official transcript of grades. The transcript is sent directly to colleges and universities as identified by the student to IBO.

For Cambridge, Cambridge International provides a results sheet, a certificate similar to a diploma, indicating tests and scores (grades) which can be transmitted electronically to colleges and universities identified by the student.

15. What does my score mean at an institution of higher education?

Credit awarded for exam scores differs by institution of higher education. The type and amount of credit awarded is based on the learning outcomes of the course or program and the exam score and is determined by faculty in the relevant discipline.

In Washington, [RCW 8B.10.054](#) requires all public higher education institutions to establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting as many undergraduate college credits as possible and appropriate to students who have earned the following minimum exam scores:

3 or higher on AP exams

4 or higher on standard level and higher-level IB exams

E(e) or higher on A- and AS-level Cambridge International exams

16. How does a student know what credit will be awarded for an exam score?

All public institutions of higher education and many private institutions post credit awarding policies on their college or university websites.

[RCW 28B.10.054](#) requires all public Washington higher education institutions to post exam credit policies on institutional websites.

In addition, if an institution of higher education is unable to award a general education course equivalency, the student may request in writing an evidence-based reason as to why general education course equivalency cannot be granted.

Washington public four-year colleges and universities provide information about course equivalencies awarded for AP, IB and Cambridge standardized exam scores.

College/University	AP/IB/Cambridge Exam Score Course Equivalencies
Central Washington University	https://www.cwu.edu/registrar/transfer-equivalencies-policies
Eastern Washington University	https://catalog.ewu.edu/transfer-students/

The Evergreen State College	https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/priorlearningassessment
University of Washington Bothell	https://www.uwb.edu/admissions/apply/faq
University of Washington Seattle	https://admit.washington.edu/apply/freshman/
University of Washington Tacoma	https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/admissions/prospective-freshman-admissions
Washington State University	https://admission.wsu.edu/apply/ap-ib-and-running-start/
Western Washington University	https://admissions.wvu.edu/apply/ap-ib-cic

The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges provides information about course [equivalencies awarded for each AP, IB, and Cambridge International exam score](#) that are recognized by all community and technical colleges in Washington. Colleges may award additional credits based on local policies, when appropriate.

17. Are college preparatory programs transcribed by a college or university?

No. The national or international organization offering the program is responsible for transcribing the assessment scores.

An institution of higher education cannot review and potentially award credit for an exam unless the institution receives an official transcript from the national or international organization.

18. Is the college credit earned through CPPE programs considered transfer credit?

Yes. Credit earned from an entity or institution different than the college or university a student attends is defined as transfer credit. This includes AP, IB and Cambridge. Policies associated with these programs will often be found in the transfer credit policies of an institution.

While credit earned through AP, IB or Cambridge is considered transfer credit for all institutions for higher education, students enrolling at a public four-year college or university are still considered first-year students for admissions purposes if they have:

- Earned a high school diploma or equivalent, and Enrolled in a college or university with fewer than 40 quarter/26 semester credits of college-level coursework, or
- Enrolled in college with 40 or more quarter/26 or more semester hours of college-level credit or an associate’s degree and enter a public four-year college or university directly from high school.

All students who answer yes to at least one of the following statements are considered first-year students:

- I plan to enter university/college in the summer or fall after graduating from high school.

- I participated in a Washington recognized dual credit program where I earned or will earn college credit while in high school, regardless of the number of credits earned or earned associates degree, and I plan to enter university/college directly after graduating from high school.
- I have never attended a college or university since leaving high school, regardless of my age or high school graduation status.

19. If a student earns college credit from two different dual credit programs, and those credits and/or exam scores transfer with the same equivalencies to a college, can the student earn both forms of college credit?

No. A student will only earn college credit for the same college courses with substantially the same content once. EX: If a student earns a score on the AP PSYCH exam equivalent to PSYCH 101 and earns college credit for a College in the High School PSYCH 101, the student cannot receive college credit twice for PSYCH 101.

20. Do in-state and out-of-state colleges and universities award credit for college preparatory programs with exams?

Yes. However, an institution of higher education, regardless of where the institution is located, determines the type and amount of college credit awarded, if any. The type and amount of credit awarded is based on the type of assessment (i.e., IB standard level and higher level, Cambridge A and AS level) and the score on the assessment. There are **some** colleges and universities that do not accept any credit from college preparatory programs with exams. Students are encouraged to reach out to potential institutions of higher education to learn about institutional and degree major policies.

21. Are there credit limits applied to college preparatory programs with exam credits?

Yes. Most institutions of higher education have credit limit policies that apply to all students, whether they are matriculated or not. Students should connect with the institutions of higher education to identify institutional credit awarding policies.

ADMISSIONS

22. Do institutions of higher education prefer a particular dual credit program?

Yes. While Washington's public colleges and universities **do not give** preference in the admissions process to any one type of dual credit and recognize the value of various college preparatory experiences for students, there are some private in-state and private and public out-of-state colleges and universities that prefer certain college preparatory programs with exams and concurrent enrollment programs over others. Students should connect with the institutions of higher education to learn more about institutional admissions criteria and processes.

23. Is there value in participating in college preparatory programs with exams without taking an assessment?

Yes. Dual credit is an opportunity for growth and exploration. Dual credit programs provide students with an introduction to college including coursework, study habits, college culture, course content and expectations. College requires preparation, commitment and organization. For some students this is a different experience compared to prior educational experiences. Dual credit programs offer a bridge between K-12 and higher education that gives students a strong start in their first year of college. Participating in dual credit also provides students with an opportunity to explore their educational and career options.

The primary value is exposure, experience, exploration and preparation for college. Advanced courses are a way students can explore the intersection of their academic and personal interests and begin to prepare for life after high school and develop a sense of self.

Additionally, college preparatory programs with exams can complete a students' graduation pathway for ELA and Math. For AP/CI/IB dual credit courses, students must earn at least a 1.0 high school credit with a grade of C+ or higher each term to qualify for using the course as a Graduation Pathway. Students do not need to take or pass the corresponding AP/CI/IB exam to use this course-based Dual Credit Graduation Pathway, but earning the required exam scores are a second way that students can complete their Graduation Pathway through CPPE opportunities.

Finally, students may earn college credit in addition to high school credit by earning an appropriate grade on an exam for Advanced Placement, Cambridge International and/or International Baccalaureate. Washington's public colleges and universities believe the experience of participating in a dual credit course provides value in the experience, preparation and exploration. Students will gain valuable knowledge, skills and experience even if they choose not to take the exam.

24. What if I do not complete the assessment for a college preparatory program with exam?

The assessment is not required for completing and passing any college preparatory program with exam course. Washington's public colleges and universities believe the experience of participating in a dual credit course provides value in the experience, preparation and exploration. Students will gain valuable knowledge, skills and experience even if they choose not to take the exam.

The assessment and an eligible score as determined by an institution of higher education is required, however, to be eligible for college credit.

25. Is more credit better?

In general no, the more important factors are fit and mindful credit accumulation. Students' high school curriculum choices should be determined by their personal, career, and educational goals and interests, with an emphasis on fit, including academic readiness and preparation. Intentional enrollment in all dual credit programs is encouraged within the context of fit, readiness and relevancy to long term educational and career goals so that students maximize their opportunities and avoid unintentionally eliminating college and career pathways.

Students are encouraged to align dual credit opportunities with their personal High School & Beyond Plan (HSBP). The role of the HSBP is to create an individual plan, a "personalized pathway", throughout high school and revise this plan to accommodate changing interests or postsecondary goals on what they expect to do the year following graduation from high school. To learn [more](#).

26. How will my scores/classes affect my enrollment decision?

The decision to enroll in a college or university is determined by the student. Students are encouraged to reach out early to their intended college(s) to learn more about how CPPE credit may transfer.

OFFERING COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAMS WITH EXAMS

27. Do colleges and universities offer college preparatory programs with exams?

No. None of Washington's higher education institutions offer college preparatory programs with exams (e.g., AP/IB/CI). These are high school programs that may be eligible for college credit based on the exam score. All of Washington's community and technical colleges and public and private baccalaureate institutions accept credit from these programs. Students should choose an institution of higher education based on their educational goals. Students can see if their AP/IB/Cambridge test score will earn course credit at Washington's public colleges and universities at the following websites:

- [AP/IC/CI Test Equivalencies](#) at [Washington's Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities](#)
- [AP/IB/CI Equivalencies](#) at Washington's Community and Technical College

Students should reach out and talk with an admissions contact regarding any questions about course equivalencies and transfer.

28. If my district is interested in offering CPPE programs, where can I get more information?

Each college preparatory program with exam is offered by a different national or international organization.

Advanced Placement is open to any high school, and they may select any course(s) that best meet their students' needs. There is no requirement to offer a minimum number of courses. Each fall, [schools register](#) with The College Board for participation.

To offer the Cambridge International program schools must [complete a registration](#) process with Cambridge Assessment International Education.

To offer the International Baccalaureate program, schools must [complete an authorization](#) process through the International Baccalaureate Organization.

29. What qualifications must a high school teacher meet to be eligible to teach a CPPE?

The national and international organizations offering AP, Cambridge and IB require that teachers meet the qualifications by the local authority to teach in the school in the subject or grades they work with. In Washington this would be the state requirements for certification in a given subject area as established by the Professional Educator Standards Board..

For IB, the International Baccalaureate Organization also requires teachers to have taken a minimum of Category 1 training in the subject they teach or their position (e.g., Head of School or coordinator) as offered by the [IBO professional development program](#).

For Cambridge, no training is required but [professional development](#) focused on Cambridge is highly encouraged.

For AP, all teachers must submit a syllabus to The College Board for approval. No training is required but [professional development](#) focused on AP is highly encouraged.

FEES AND ASSOCIATED COSTS

30. What costs are associated with CPPE programs for students?

The student costs associated with college preparatory programs with exams differ by each program.

Advanced Placement students do not pay any costs associated with taking an AP class. If a student chooses to take an AP exam, [the cost per exam](#), except for AP Seminar and AP Research courses. Fees may be reduced and subsidized for eligible students from low-income families.

Cambridge International students, similar to AP, do not pay any costs associated with taking a Cambridge International class. If a student chooses to take an exam or earn an Advanced Certificate of International Education, [fees are incurred](#).

International Baccalaureate students pay an [exam fee](#).

In some districts with fee waivers and subsidy programs, qualifying low-income students may pay no [fees](#) for AP, Cambridge and IB. Schools and districts may apply for OSPI grant funding to defray costs to students through the Exam Fee Reimbursement Grant (FP 686) or [Consolidated Equity and Sustainability Grant](#) (FP 154) to cover student fees for AP, Cambridge, and IB exams.

31. What costs are associated with CPPE programs for districts and schools?

The school or district costs associated with college preparatory programs with exams differ by each program.

- Schools and/or districts offering AP may be required to pay for teacher training.
- Schools and/or districts offering Cambridge pay an annual fee which may be waived with a sufficient volume of exams or teacher training.
- Schools and/or districts offering IB pay an annual fee to offer the diploma program and may be required to pay for teacher training.

LEGISLATION

32. Is there an RCW for college preparatory programs with exams?

Yes. [RCW 28B.10.054](#) requires all public higher education institutions to establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting as many undergraduate college credits, as possible and appropriate, to students who have earned the following minimum exam scores:

- 3 or higher on AP exams
- 4 or higher on standard level and higher-level IB exams
- E(e) or higher on A- and AS-Level Cambridge International exams.

[RCW 28B.10.054](#) requires all public Washington higher education institutions to post exam credit policies on institutional websites.

In addition, if an institution of higher education is unable to award a general education course equivalency, the student may request in writing an evidence-based reason as to why general education course equivalency cannot be granted.

Washington public four-year colleges and universities provide information about course equivalencies awarded for AP, IB and Cambridge standardized exam scores.

College/University	AP/IB/Cambridge Exam Score Course Equivalencies
Central Washington University	https://www.cwu.edu/registrar/transfer-equivalencies-policies
Eastern Washington University	https://catalog.ewu.edu/transfer-students/
The Evergreen State College	https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/priorlearningassessment
University of Washington Bothell	https://www.uwb.edu/admissions/faq/firstyear
University of Washington Seattle	https://admit.washington.edu/apply/freshman/
University of Washington Tacoma	https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/admissions/prospective-freshman-admissions
Washington State University	https://admission.wsu.edu/apply/ap-ib-and-running-start/
Western Washington University	https://admissions.wvu.edu/apply/ap-ib-cic

The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges provides information about course equivalencies awarded for each AP and IB exam score that are recognized by all community and technical colleges in Washington. Colleges may award additional credits based on local policies, when appropriate. Further [information](#).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

33. Can a student use either their course grade OR exam score towards satisfying their graduation pathway requirement?

Yes. For AP/CI/IB dual credit courses, students must earn at least 1.0 high school credit with a grade of C+ or higher each term to qualify for using the course as a Graduation Pathway. Students do not need to take or pass the corresponding AP/CI/IB exam to use the course-based dual credit graduation pathway. However, students may also use their AP/CI/IB exam scores to meet the exam-based dual credit graduation pathway.

The list of eligible AP/CI/IB courses for this graduation pathway is the same as the list for dual credit exams. Students may use a combination of credit from different AP/CI/IB courses to meet the total 1.0 credit requirement and/or C+ grade requirement if the

courses are on the list. Below is the list of accepted dual credit courses/exams.

The required exam score is [listed next to the organization name](#).

Advanced Placement Courses/Exams (exam score 3 or higher)

- English Language Arts: English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Psychology, US History, World History, US Government and Politics, or Comparative Government and Politics
- Mathematics: Statistics, Computer Science, Computer Science Principles, or Calculus

Cambridge International Courses/Exams* ("E" or better on one of the approved Advanced or Advanced Subsidiary (A/AS) CI exams)

- English Language Arts: English Language, Literature in English, English General Paper, Psychology, History, Sociology, Global Perspective and Research, or Law
- Mathematics: Mathematics or Further Mathematics

International Baccalaureate Courses/Exams (4 or higher on one of the approved IB exams)

- English Language Arts: Language A: Literature, Language A: Language and Literature, Business and Management, Economics, Geography, History, Information Technology in a Global Society, Philosophy, Psychology, or Social and Cultural Anthropology
- Mathematics: any IB math course

CONTACTS

For additional information, contacts are listed below. Questions related to higher education should be directed to one of the higher education sector leads and questions related to K-12 should be directed toward the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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