

COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAMS WITH EXAMS (CPPE) ADVANCED PLACEMENT, CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Council of Presidents (COP)
Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW)
Office of 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 with qualifying scores on 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 rigorous 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. Are College Preparatory Programs with Exams considered dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, and/or an articulated dual credit program?

No. These terms relate to college-level courses that high school students may take in high school or at a college-level proficiency. Depending on the exam score, students may earn college credit.

College Preparatory Programs with Exams are considered dual credit in Washington, but are not considered dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, or an articulated dual credit program.

“Dual credit,” in Washington, is the opportunity to earn college and high school credit awarded through one of the six dual credit programs. These include Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International (CI), College in the High School (CiHS), Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Credit, International Baccalaureate (IB), and Running Start.

“Concurrent enrollment,” in Washington, is a partnership between K-12 schools and postsecondary education institutions through which credit-bearing college courses offered by a public or private college and taught by higher education faculty or college-approved high school teachers, are taken by high school students who have not yet received the credits required for the award of a high school diploma and for which earned credits are recorded on a college or university transcript. Courses may be offered either in high school through a CiHS program offered by a college or at a public college through Running Start, and earned credits may be recorded on a college transcript.

“Dual enrollment,” in Washington, is generally defined as a student enrolled concurrently in two different postsecondary institutions.

Articulated 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 for high school coursework in a professional-technical field aligned with a college course. For CTE Dual Credit, college credit is dependent on an articulation agreement between a college or consortium and a district or school. Credit is awarded only by the college 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 goals after high school graduation, taking CPPE courses can be a great way to develop academic and practical skills for college and many careers. It should be noted that taking more courses does not mean a student is performing “better.” A student’s high school curriculum choices should be determined by their personal, career, and educational goals and interests, as reflected in their High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) with an emphasis on academic and career readiness and preparation.

Students should be intentional about enrolling in any dual credit program to maximize opportunities and gain exposure to college and career pathways. They are encouraged to align dual credit opportunities with their HSBP, which begins in the 7th grade and creates an individualized plan for high school and beyond that can be revised to accommodate changing interests or postsecondary goals. Click here to learn about [High School and Beyond Plans](#).

5. Is the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) a CPPE?

No. In Washington, CLEP is not considered a dual credit program. CLEP is academic credit for prior learning. Students may receive college credit based on the results of 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 Learning Evaluations are 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. With the exception of AP world language and culture courses, which may be offered in 8th grade, students enrolled in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in Cambridge International and Advanced Placement. 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. Can students participate in a CPPE program and another dual credit program, such as College in the High School, Running Start, or CTE Dual Credit during a high school trimester or semester?

Yes. Students can participate in more than one dual credit 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.

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

In 2024, the legislature passed [SHB 1146](#), requiring all public schools serving students in 9th through 12th grade to provide an annual notification to students and families. The notification must include information on all dual credit options available to students and any financial assistance associated with them. This notice must be provided by email and other means prior to course registration or scheduling for the next school term and, to the extent feasible, made available in the primary language of the student's parent or legal guardian. For more information on the dual credit notification requirement, visit [OSPI's Dual Credit Programs webpage](#).

11. 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](#) on academic acceleration policies for high school students, those who meet or exceed state learning standards or successfully complete an advanced course in a particular subject must be enrolled in the next most rigorous level of advanced coursework that aligns with the student's HSBP. Districts must provide notice to students and families about their academic acceleration policy and provide students with the opportunity to opt out if advanced coursework does not align with their HSBP.

TRANSCRIPT AND TRANSFERABILITY

12. 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 college credit that is equivalent to an exam score (AP/IB/CI) or completion of a college level course (Running Start, CTE Dual Credit, and CiHS).

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

Yes. CPPE 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.

14. 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= International Baccalaureate
R= Running Start	K= Cambridge International	T= CTE Dual Credit

15. How do students send CPPE exam scores to institutions of higher education?

When a student completes an assessment from a CPPE provider, the organization offering the program creates an official exam score report or “transcript.” The score report is an official copy of a student’s assessment results. The student then requests that the organization send the score report directly to a college. A fee may be charged by the organization for the official score report.

Colleges cannot review and potentially award credit for an exam unless they receive an official exam score report from the sponsoring organization.

For AP, the official AP Score Report is issued by the College Board. The AP Score Report is sent directly to colleges and universities identified by the student.

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

For CI, 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.

16. What does my score mean at a college?

Credit awarded for exam scores varies by college. The type and amount of credit awarded is

based on the learning outcomes of the course or program and the exam score, as determined by faculty in the relevant content area.

In Washington, [RCW 28B.10.054](#) requires all public colleges 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- and higher-level IB exams
- E(e) or higher on A- and AS-level CI exams

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

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

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

In addition, if a college 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 CI standardized exam scores.

College/University	AP/IB/CI Exam Score Course Equivalencies
Central Washington University	https://www.cwu.edu/about/offices/registrar/transfer-information/index.php
Eastern Washington University	https://catalog.ewu.edu/transfer-students/
The Evergreen State College	https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions-and-aid/transfer-students/transfer-credit-policy
University of Washington - All Campuses	https://admit.washington.edu/apply/transfer/exams-for-credit/
Washington State University - All Campuses	https://admission.wsu.edu/apply/ap-ib-and-running-start/
Western Washington University	https://admissions.wvu.edu/apply/ap-ib-cic

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) provides information about course [equivalencies awarded for each AP, IB, and CI exam score](#) that is recognized by all community and technical colleges in Washington. Colleges may award additional credits

based on local policies, when appropriate.

18. Are college preparatory program exam scores transcribed by a college or university?

No. The organization offering the program is responsible for officially reporting or transcribing the assessment scores.

A college cannot review and potentially award credit for an exam unless the institution receives an official score report or transcript from the sponsoring organization.

19. Is the college credit earned through CPPE programs considered transfer credit? Yes. Credit earned from an entity or institution different from the college or university a student attends is defined as transfer credit. This includes AP, IB, and CI.

Policies associated with these programs will often be found in the transfer credit policies of an institution. Most Washington colleges have a transfer credit equivalency guide listed on “Transfer Credit” webpages to assist students with determining how college credits and exam scores will transfer.

20. Is a student who earned college credit through a dual credit program and enrolled directly in a college the summer after graduating high school considered a transfer student?

No. While credit earned through AP, IB, or CI is considered transfer credit for all colleges, students who meet the criteria below and enroll at a public four-year college or university are considered first-year students for admissions purposes if they have:

- Earned a high school diploma or its equivalent and enrolled in a college or university with fewer than 40 quarter credits or 26 semester credits of college-level coursework.
- OR enroll in a college or university with 40 or more quarter credits or 26 or more semester credits of college-level credit, or an associate degree, and enter a public university directly from high school.

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

- a. I plan to enter university/college in the summer or fall after graduating from high school.
- b. I participated in a state-recognized dual credit program where I earned or will earn college credit while in high school, regardless of the number of credits earned or whether I earned associate degree, and I plan to enter a college or university directly after graduating from high school.
- c. I have never attended a college or university since leaving high school, regardless of

my age or high school graduation status.

21. 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 once for the same college courses with substantially the same content. For example, if a student earns a score on the AP PSYCH exam equivalent to PSYCH 101 and earns college credit for a CiHS PSYCH 101, the student cannot receive college credit twice for PSYCH 101.

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

Yes. However, all colleges, regardless of where the institution is located, determine 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- 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 colleges of interest to learn about institutional and degree major policies.

23. Are there credit limits applied to CPPE credits?

Yes. Most colleges have transfer credit limit policies that apply to all students, whether they are matriculated or not. Students should connect with the college to identify institutional credit awarding policies.

ADMISSIONS

24. Do colleges prefer a particular dual credit program?

Some do. 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 CPPE and concurrent enrollment programs over others. Students should connect with their college(s) of interest to learn more about institutional admissions criteria and processes.

25. Is there value in participating in college preparatory programs with exams without taking an exam?

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. 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. Advanced courses are a way students can explore the intersection of their academic and career personal interests, begin to prepare for life after high school, and develop a sense of self.

Additionally, CPPE options can fulfill a student's graduation pathway requirement 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 may use either the qualifying grade (C+ or better) OR a qualifying exam score to meet a graduation pathway.

Finally, students may earn college credit in addition to high school credit by earning an appropriate score on an exam for AP/CI/IB. Washington's public colleges and universities, along with many private institutions, believe participating in dual credit courses 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.

26. What if I do not complete the exam for a CPPE course?

The exam is not required to complete and pass any CPPE course for high school credit.

To be evaluated for college credit, taking the exam and earning an eligible score, as referenced in [RCW 28B.10.054](#) and determined by each college, is required.

27. Is more credit better?

Not necessarily. The more important factors are fit and mindful college credit accumulation. Students' high school curriculum choices should be determined by their personal, career, and educational goals and interests, with an emphasis on the appropriateness of courses, including academic readiness and preparation. Intentional enrollment in any dual credit program is encouraged within the context of 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 support students in creating and annually revising their postsecondary goals to accommodate changing interests about what they expect to do following graduation from high school. To learn more about the High School and Beyond Plan, click [here](#).

28. How will my scores/classes affect my admissions decision?

Admissions decisions are based on the entirety of the student's academic record prior to admission to an institution. This includes GPA, coursework (both content area and rigor), and students' experiences and activities. 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

29. Do colleges and universities offer CPPE?

No. CPPE are high school programs that may be eligible for college credit based on the exam score. All of Washington's public two- and four-year colleges accept credit from these programs. Students should choose a college based on their educational goals. Students can see if their AP/CI/IB test score(s) will earn course credit at Washington's public colleges and universities at the following websites:

- [AP/IB/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.

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

Each CPPE is offered by a different national or international organization.

AP 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 CI program, schools must [complete a registration](#) process with Cambridge Assessment International Education.

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

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

The national and international organizations offering AP/CI/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 \(PESB\)](#).

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 CI, no training is required but [professional development](#) focused on Cambridge International standards 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

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

The student costs associated with CPPE differ by each program as well as by school and/or district.

AP students do not pay any costs associated with completing AP coursework. Students may be required to pay for [the cost of each AP exam](#). Fees may be reduced by the College Board for eligible students from low-income families.

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

As is standard with all CPPE programs, IB students do not pay for the course but do pay an [exam fee](#).

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

The school or district costs associated with CPPE 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

34. 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- 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.

For more information on course equivalencies, see question #17.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

35. 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 eligible courses and required exam score is [listed next to the organization name](#).

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 Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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