

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

Frequently Asked Questions

Is a credit earned through the CDM policy intended to be “different” than a credit earned in the traditional manner (completing the course)?

No. Schools and districts shall assess students and evaluate artifacts based upon the same standards that are applied to students earning course credit by the traditional method. The achievement levels required to earn CDM through a two-phase assessment already reflect a more rigorous expectation of students who want to earn credit in this manner than those of students who complete the course with the traditional seat-time.

Who is eligible to request an opportunity to earn credit by demonstrating mastery?

All students in North Carolina Public Schools who want to earn credit for high school courses.

Is there a limit to the number of courses for which a student may earn credit using the CDM policy?

No. Students may earn credit using CDM for as many courses as they wish and districts may not impose local limitations. However, students may only make **one attempt per course**. Students who are unsuccessful after one attempt must register for and complete the course in the traditional manner to receive credit.

May students earn CDM credit for honors courses?

No. CDM is only available for standard-level courses. CDM credits will be indicated on the transcript similar to a ‘pass’ and therefore do not impact a student’s grade point average.

Can the school or district deny a student the opportunity to attempt to earn CDM credit?

No. This is an opportunity available to all students.

May a student earn the CPR credit through CDM?

No. CPR is part of the Healthful Living requirement and NC State Board of Education policy specifically excludes CPR from CDM.

Are Charter Schools required to offer the CDM process?

No. Charter Schools are not required to participate but may decide to offer students the opportunity to earn course credit by demonstrated mastery.

Does CDM replace differentiation in meeting the learning needs of students?

No. CDM is not a replacement for differentiated services to meet the learning needs of students. CDM is in fact a way to differentiate and personalize learning based on individual student needs of content replacement. CDM does not replace the typical accelerated pathways of learning compacted curriculum by groups of advanced students, which are quite common in many LEAs.

What measures are in place to ensure consistency between LEAs across the state with the CDM process?

State Board of Education policy GCS-M-001 Course for Credit, Section 13, specifies required parameters. Additionally, NCDPI has developed *Guidelines* and a *CDM Toolkit* for LEAs to use to develop and implement the local CDM process. As always, the SBE does want to respect an individual LEA's context and needs, thus the CDM policy does allow local decisions among some components. The guidelines specify additional requirements of the policy as well as components that are under the oversight of the local school district/LEA.

May a student receive credit through CDM for a course not offered at his/her school?

No, a student may not receive credit through CDM for a course not offered at his/her school. This is a local decision.

May students earn credit by demonstrated mastery for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Courses?

Yes, with the exception of specific courses excluded by SBE policy (work-based learning courses such as co-ops, internships and apprenticeships; courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement such as ProStart, Early Childhood Education I/II and Nursing Fundamentals; Advanced Studies courses). For CTE courses, an industry credential may be accepted as the required artifact component. Students will still be expected to complete the post-assessment, if one is available, or a teacher made exam if the state does not provide a post-assessment. If the student earns credit, the post-assessment score would be reported in the technical attainment performance measure.

When a student earns credit by demonstrated mastery for a course, what should schools use to replace the course in the student's schedule?

Generally, students should replace the course with the next course in the sequence, i.e. a student using CDM to earn a NC Math 1 credit should schedule NC Math 2 in its place. High school students might also use CDM credit to create space in their schedule that can be filled with a community college course available through Career & College Promise or other advanced course, such as AP and IB. The NC Virtual Public School is also a source of courses for middle school and high school students who need to replace a course for which they have earned a CDM credit.

Can students graduate early based upon credits earned through this policy?

Yes. CDM credits work like traditional credits towards graduation. The Department of Public Instruction recommends that early graduation decisions be made through deep discussion between families, students, and appropriate educational staff.

If a student chooses to earn credit by demonstrated mastery for an EOC course, will the student have to take that EOC for the course they passed through CDM?

Yes. Students attempting to earn a CDM credit for a course with an EOC, must take the EOC as the Phase I assessment component of the CDM attempt. If the attempt is successful, the score will be banked for appropriate use.

Can students enrolled in a course decide to earn CDM partway through the course?

No. The CDM policy is being implemented for students who wish to accelerate without enrolling in a course. The CDM Committee has already had discussions about how to extend the policy to students enrolled in courses and students in a credit recovery situation. When the policy is extended to those students, the guidance document will be updated to reflect guidelines applicable to those students.

Because classroom situations (science labs, conversation in world languages, etc.) cannot be replicated on a standardized assessment, how should these situations be assessed?

Districts and schools may choose to require, as part of an artifact or as an additional requirement, student performance tasks that replicate these situations. For example, for world languages, the school may require a student to demonstrate conversational ability as part of earning the CDM credit during the Phase II assessment of the CDM process.

Are credits earned through this policy accepted by outside organizations such as the NCHSAA, NCCCS, UNC-GA, and NCAA?

It depends. Each organization will handle CDM within its own parameters. Please see the CDM Guidelines for more information regarding external organizations. <http://cdm.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/CDM+Implementation+Guide>

How does the CDM policy and its implementation impact quality points and a student's grade point average (GPA)?

CDM credits are awarded as a "pass" and will appear as such on the student's transcript. No course grade is received and the course is not included in the GPA calculation.

If students transfer between LEAs, how will the school/district know if the student has gone through the CDM process?

Currently, there are plans to ensure CDM will be apparent on the official transcript.

In a sequence of courses, such as English I, II, III or IV, could a student theoretically receive credit for all four courses?

Yes. A student may earn CDM for all courses. If a student did earn CDM for all four courses through the multi-phase assessments, this indicates a clear need for a personalized learning plan. DPI would strongly recommend that the CDM team closely work with students/families and other educators, such as counselors and AIG staff, to ensure appropriate programming is in place for students with this high ability and long-term needs and implications are addressed.

Who provides the assessments students will use to meet the foundational knowledge component and progress to the artifact stage? It is not fair to have different tests.

For EOC courses, the EOC will be given during an early testing window to provide the information needed for the Phase I assessment. Because EOGs cannot be administered off-grade level, DPI recommends using the previous year's EOG as an indicator for Phase I assessment but LEAs may choose to add additional local examinations to determine foundational knowledge in the appropriate subject areas. For non-EOC/EOG courses, LEAs will determine the appropriate examination to use. School districts may decide to aggregate all the tests in the district for a course and either choose one or build one for purposes of CDM. Districts may also decide that the school CDM team will determine the assessment to be used for CDM purposes. With the exception of EOC courses, DPI does not currently require all tests or exams to be the same for student purposes. The State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction expect all teachers and principals to administer tests in a professional manner that adequately tests students on the relevant course standards.

Can students potentially stay at home and graduate?

No. CDM policy does not relieve schools, parents or students of the requirement that students attend school until age 16.

Could this be used to accelerate students that know content, are very bright but are at risk?

Yes. CDM may be used for any student who would benefit from earning CDM and is able to meet the requirements. CDM may support a pathway towards graduation that was not available before.

Can CDM replace current differentiated pathways for advanced students, such as AIG students who are curriculum compacting 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Math in two years to access Math 1 in Grade 8?



No. CDM should not replace current compacted pathways for groups of students. CDM should not be an additional requirement to determine who will work at a faster rate within the classroom. CDM is meant for individual students who need content replacement and subject acceleration clearly, without any learning of the content in the school setting.