



**Earning Credit through Equivalency, Challenge, External Credentials, and
Independent Directed Studies**

**Policy and Procedure
for**

Pattison High School

981 Nelson Street

Vancouver, BC

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Principles

This policy and procedure is meets the Ministry requirements stated in B.C. Graduation Program Policy Guide (September 2025), B.C. Graduation Program Handbook of Procedures (2025/2026), online Course Registry, and International Student Graduation Credit Policy.

In general, for all the student applications for admission to Pattison High School, the School strongly suggests that students complete courses in the BC high school program in the school – where BC certified teachers are in a position to award credits for successful completion of an academic course.

Pattison High School recognizes that students may have successfully completed an equivalent Grade 10, 11, 12 course from an educational jurisdiction or institution outside of the B.C. school system, and that the student's learning history may qualify for a recognition of equivalency of credit that reflects work already done. In all cases, a student's official educational record, current learning plan, and academic goals will be considered in order to determine credits that are earned, valid, and qualify to be included in the transcript.

Students may earn credits toward the BC Graduation Program under policies that are variously described as:

1. **Equivalency:** the recognition of documented prior learning from outside the regular BC school system & deemed to be equivalent to the learning outcomes of a Ministry Approved or Board/Authority Authorized Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses.
2. **Challenge:** students are entitled to receive credit for undocumented demonstrated prior learning for Ministry Approved or Board/Authority Authorized Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses.
3. **External Credentials:** the Ministry authorizes certain courses or credentials for credit toward graduation that are developed outside the Ministry and taken by BC students.
4. **Independent Directed Studies (IDS):** recognition of learning in a Ministry-developed or Board Authorized Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses

The most common policy alternatives at Pattison High School are Equivalency review and Challenge process. In all cases, the school will seek evidence of Equivalency before it explores the viability of the Challenge option.



Equivalency (Documented Prior Learning)

At Pattison High School, Equivalency review is only granted for courses that meet all of the following requirements:

1. The student is currently enrolled full time at Pattison High School;
2. The course matches a Ministry-Developed, Ministry-Approved or a BAA course such that sufficient content has been covered to enable the student to be successful in further learning in the content area.
3. The student must provide documentation that the learning outcomes of the course were successfully completed.
4. The course was taken at another institution or in an education jurisdiction outside the regular BC school system.
5. A percentage score can be determined.

Conditions

1. The student must provide an academic record that indicates a minimum of 65% in the course for which Equivalency review is requested. This includes courses which are composites of more than one academic field, such as Science 10. In this case, all components are required to meet or exceed the minimal academic standard.
2. For Equivalency of grade 11 math and science courses, a student must register in a class which is the next academic 'step' that follows the course in which the Equivalency review is requested in order to confirm that the student has academic strength in the subject area.
3. Equivalency requests will be reviewed at the midterm of the trimester in which the higher level course is taken. If the student passes the higher level course then the associated grade 11 math or science course may be awarded. If the student does not pass the higher level course, then the Equivalency of the grade 11 math or science course will not be granted.
4. For PHE 10 Equivalency, there must be equivalency to 4 credits.
5. When Equivalency is awarded, the School will assign a percentage grade to the credit awarded. The School may use "Transfer Standing" (TS) if it is not possible to determine a letter grade and a percentage from the documentation.

Equivalency Review Procedure:

1. After receiving confirmation from the admissions office of the student visa approval and expected trimester registration date, the Counsellor sets up a student academic and



graduation program file, with access to the Student Admissions file in the Admissions office.

2. The Counsellor will review the student official transcript documentation and propose the equivalency for credit recognition, using the digital Pattison High School Equivalency/Transfer Standing Form when applicable. For the purpose of determining equivalency, a comparison of courses may be based on factors such as the following:
 - Comparison of learning standards
 - Comparison of general subject matter
 - Comparison of depth or breadth of coverage of subject matter
 - Comparison of assessment methods, instruments, and standards.

This information will be obtained from such evidence as course descriptions, course outlines, curriculum documents, and student work and student interview/assessment. As we collect this information, it is kept on hand for future use in determining equivalency.

3. In cases where marks are given, an effort will be made to calculate the mark as a percentage. Typically that requires a numerical mark and a maximum total. If a letter grade is shown, the midpoint of the equivalent BC letter grade scale will be used. If more than one course shown on a transcript is required to meet the equivalency of a BC Ministry course, then an average score of those individual components will be calculated.
4. The completed digital PHS Equivalency / Transfer Standing Form will be printed and signed by the Counsellor to be passed to the Vice Principal or Principal for confirmation and approval, and then returned to the Counsellor office for finalization and inclusion in the student academic file;
5. A copy of the signed PHS Equivalency / Transfer Standing forms will be passed to the Registrar to register on MyEdBC with the designated Ministry course code along with "Equivalency" or "TS" clearly identified;
6. The Counsellor will update and map out the Student Graduation plan in both digital file and in the student academic file. All the advisors, Vice Principal and Principal can access to the school server for the updated digital PHS Equivalency / TS and Graduation Plan Form for review. The Counsellor and Vice Principal are the only staff who can edit the files.

Challenge (Undocumented Demonstrated Prior Learning)

In addition to earning credits by successfully completing courses, students may earn credits through challenge. All students enrolled in Pattison High School are entitled to undertake a challenge process to assess their prior learning for any Ministry authorized graduation program



course offered by Pattison High School that school year, as well as any Pattison High School Board Authority Authorized (BAA) course taught in the school year, provided the student has not already completed the course through previous enrolment. International students must comply with the challenge procedures set out in the Ministry's International Student Graduation Credit Policy.

At Pattison High School, the challenge process is only permitted if the following three requirements are met:

1. The student is currently enrolled full time at Pattison High School;
2. The student has not already challenged the course and received a passing grade, or completed the course through previous enrolment, or been granted equivalency for the course; and
3. The student can give compelling evidence that he or she will succeed in the challenge assessment.

A student, who is granted the opportunity to challenge, will write a challenge exam. This is an exam that is similar in scope and duration to a final exam for the course. The candidate student is required to show evidence of how the student qualifies for the challenge process through documentation or other evidence of prior learning. The challenge process may require demonstration of the learning objectives connected to the course.

Guidelines for Challenge Process:

1. The challenge process is only offered in courses that are required, authorized, and currently offered at Pattison High School.
2. Students may challenge a maximum of one authorized course in each of grades 10, 11, 12.
3. Auditing a course does not satisfy the eligibility criteria for challenging a course.
4. A student may only challenge a course one time. A student who has previously received <50% in a course is not eligible to challenge that course: a failed course cannot be challenged.
5. Challenge applications may be made with the counselor anytime four weeks after the start of a trimester and four weeks before the end of a trimester. A student who wishes to challenge a course must first submit to the principal:
 - a. a written request to be permitted to challenge a course; and
 - b. evidence and documentation that the student is eligible.
6. The principal will ensure that the student meets the eligibility requirements, and coordinate with the course teacher to set a time and location for the challenge process.
7. Awarding credit through challenge should be based on the same standards used for students who have taken the course through enrollment. A challenge is considered successful when a student has achieved at least a C+ and 67 percent. For reporting and



transcript purposes, schools must assign a letter grade and percentage to all credits awarded through challenge processes.

Exemptions from Equivalency Review and Challenge Process

Pattison High School students must earn credit for the following courses through direct instruction from a BC certified teacher, not through Equivalency review or Challenge process:

1. English First Peoples 10 and 12;
2. Language Arts 11 and 12;
3. One of Science 11 or 12;
4. One Mathematics 11 or 12;
5. Social Studies 10-11, BC First Peoples 12;
6. Career Life Education; and
7. Career Life Connections.

The English 10 and 12 Literacy Assessments and the Numeracy 10 Assessment are required of all students in the BC Graduation Program – with the exception of students in the Adult Graduation Program.

External Credentials

At Pattison High School, students are entitled to receive credit if they have earned a Ministry-approved credential. The Ministry of Education and Child Care has the sole authority to review and approve external credentials and assessments, and to provide an official list of these approved credentials and assessments to schools. The list is published in the Ministry's online Course Registry.

Grade 12 level external credentials count towards the required number of Grade 12 level credits needed to satisfy graduation requirements. Although external credentials may contribute towards graduation requirements, they may or may not meet general or specific admissions requirements for post-secondary institutions.

Procedure:

In order to earn credit for an approved credential, the Counsellor office and the Principal will ensure that students provide the appropriate documentation proving successful completion of the external assessment, course or program.

Independent Directed Studies (IDS)

At Pattison High School, students are allowed to initiate their own area of learning under teacher supervision, to pursue further studies of interest, and to receive credit towards graduation.

IDS process is only granted to students under the following circumstances:

1. The Student demonstrates the ability to work independently;
2. The Principal must approve IDS courses arranged between teachers and students;
3. IDS credits may only be used to satisfy elective requirements; and
4. IDS cannot be used to meet the B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma Program requirements.

Guidelines for IDS Process:

1. IDS allows students to pursue curriculum in more detail (students receive course credit plus IDS credit), or to focus on some of the content of a course that has not been taken (students receive only IDS credit), the School recognizes learning in courses that students do not complete, and in this way can be used to report partial learning;
2. IDS courses may earn 1, 2, 3 or 4 credits. An IDS course can be up to 4 credits, where 1 credit represents the value attached to the understanding, knowledge, skills and competencies that most students can acquire in approximately 30 hours of instruction;
3. The Student does not need to complete the approved classroom course curriculum before pursuing IDS in that course; and
4. Teachers and students should develop an IDS plan that includes:
 - A process for ongoing facilitation and assessment
 - Criteria for determining successful completion of the IDS
 - Credit value (1, 2, 3 or 4 credits) for the proposed IDS
5. The proposed IDS plan is to be approved by the Principal