

COURSE CHALLENGE

Background

Any student who is registered in senior high school and who believes that s/he already possesses the knowledge, skills, and attributes prescribed by the Program of Studies for a course shall be allowed to demonstrate that proficiency through special assessment opportunities.

Course challenges are intended to:

- Meet the diverse needs of students,
- Encourage student ownership of their learning, and
- Acknowledge the learning that students acquire in a variety of settings not necessarily limited to school.

Procedures

1. The course challenge process must assess a student's achievement of the depth and breadth of the learner outcomes for the course. Assessment procedures for course challenges shall include a variety of formats and strategies. Students' success relative to the standards for the course shall be evaluated by teachers who have taught the course being challenged.
2. Students challenging final exams must do so during the individual school's challenge and regularly scheduled final examination periods. This will include re-writes of final examinations; in this instance the student mark will be the average of their previous course work and a weighted final exam, as per course outlines. For course challenges, where the students have not been enrolled in the course before, the final exam/assessment will be weighted one hundred percent (100%). Students will demonstrate that they have mastered the required expected learning outcomes. The challenge assessment may include a variety of assessment procedures including written submissions, and/or an oral examination or interview, in addition to the scheduled final examination. Student applications are due one (1) month prior to the school's examination schedules.
3. The student shall initiate the course challenge process, and shall take the responsibility for providing evidence of readiness to challenge a course (e.g. a portfolio, other

collection, or documentation of work and/or experience, a recommendation from a junior high teacher, etc.)

4. Course challenges shall be administered by the senior high school according to its procedures, only after the student is enrolled in the senior high school.
5. A student's readiness for course challenge shall be determined through consultation that includes the Principal, student, parent(s), and subject teacher(s). The consultation shall include discussion of the student's chance of successfully meeting the acceptable standard for the course, and the student's apparent capacity to handle successfully the course at the next level.
6. The Principal shall make the final decision about the student's readiness for the course challenge.
7. The Principal shall ensure that assessment for course challenges includes strategies that will assess the breadth and scope of the learning expectations for the course as outlined in the Program of Studies, in a timely and practical manner.
8. The Principal shall assign the administration and evaluation of assessment for a course challenge to a certificated teacher who has taught the course.
9. The Principal shall report a student's achievement in a course challenge according to the directive in the Guide to Education.
10. A student who successfully demonstrates through the course challenge process that s/he possesses the learning expectations for the course to at least the acceptable standard, shall be awarded a final course mark and credits for the course challenged except in diploma examination courses, which require the school-awarded mark to be combined with the diploma examination mark before a final course mark or credit is possible.
11. Upon a student's successful completion of a course challenge, waived prerequisite credits and a "P" for "pass" for courses lower in the course sequence shall be awarded.
12. A principal must not charge funded high school students or their families a fee for administering course challenges. Since Alberta Education funds course challenges different from course participation, these challenges must be organized and recorded separately for appropriate funding. Principals must ensure that the correct funding is applied to course challenges. Principals are responsible for maintaining accurate records for all course challenges including evidence that demonstrates complete evaluation of the course challenge

13. A student who challenges the course, either successfully or unsuccessfully, may subsequently choose to take the course.
14. If a student chooses to take a course in the same semester in which s/he attempts a course challenge either successfully or unsuccessfully, the school shall submit only the course mark. That is, in such circumstances, any mark achieved through the course challenge process is invalid, and the school will be funded for the full credit enrolment unit.
15. A student shall attempt a particular course challenge only once. If the student is unsuccessful, but wants credit in the course or wishes to raise her/his mark, the student is required to take the course.
16. Exceptions: The following courses may not be challenged:
 - 16.1. CTF courses completed in Grades 7, 8, and 9;
 - 16.2. Registered Apprenticeship Program 15-25-35;
 - 16.3. Work Experience 15-25-35;
 - 16.4. Mathematics Preparation 10; and
 - 16.5. Special Projects 10-20-30

Reference: *Education Act, SA 2012, c E-0.3*
Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12