



Credit by Demonstrated Mastery(CDM)

What is Credit by Demonstrated Mastery?

This is an option that allows students to demonstrate mastery of a course's content, getting a pass/fail grade for the course by taking an assessment and completing an artifact. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction introduced Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) to allow students to grow optionally and have effective seat time. CDM offers middle and high school students the opportunity to personalize and accelerate their learning by earning credit for a high school course through demonstrating mastery of course content, without being required to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time. Students who wish to pursue CDM will need to show mastery of course content by completing two phases. In phase I, students must complete an exam of course content. In phase II, students must create a product/performance that exhibits a deeper understanding and application of course content. This provides students the flexibility to progress as they demonstrate mastery of academic content, regardless of time, place, or pace of learning. A failed attempt at CDM is not reflected on a student's transcript.

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

No. OCS shall assess students and evaluate artifacts based upon the same standards that are applied to students earning course credit in the traditional sense. 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.

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

CDM credit is awarded as a “pass” and appear as such on a student's transcript. No course grade is given and the course is not included in the GPA calculation. Failed attempts will not appear on a student's transcript.

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

All high school and middle schools considering taking a high school course is eligible.

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. 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 honor weight for CDM credit?

No. CDM credits are awarded as a “pass” and therefore do not impact a student's grade point average.

How does CDM credit impact course prerequisites and sequencing?

When courses are taught in a predetermined sequence, a student may only apply for CDM for the next course in the sequence. For example, a student will need to take Math I before they are permitted to take Math II.

Are credit earned through this policy accepted by outside organizations such as the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), North Carolina Community College System, the University of North Carolina System (UNC), and National Collegiate Athletic Association?

Students considering collegiate athletics should be advised that the NCAA Division I and Division II colleges and universities do not recognize test-out credits in terms of meeting entrance credit requirements, and therefore CDM is strongly discouraged for potential collegiate athletes. Credits earned through CDM shall count toward the minimum credits for the purpose of high school graduation and will be accepted at NCCCS and the UNC system.

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 Math I credit should schedule Math II 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 courses, 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. DPI 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 1 assessment component of the CDM attempt. If the attempt is successful, the score will be included in the current accountability reporting.

Can students enrolled in a course decide to earn CDM in the middle of the course?

No. The CDM policy is being phased in beginning with students who wish to accelerate without enrolling in a course and to attempt CDM prior to taking a course. The CDM Committee has begun discussions about how to extend the policy to promote on-going mastery-based learning and include students taking courses and 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.