



Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) Frequently Asked Questions for Students and Parents

1. What is Credit by Demonstrated Mastery?

This is an option which allows students to demonstrate mastery of a course's content, getting credit and a "CDM" indicator on the student's transcript by taking an assessment and completing an artifact. In 2013 the NC Dept. of Public Instruction instituted State Board Policy *GCS-M-001-13: Credit by Demonstrated Mastery* in order to ensure students grow optimally in our public schools and have effective seat time. Transitioning away from seat time, in favor of a structure that creates flexibility, allows students to progress as they demonstrate mastery of academic content, regardless of time, place, or pace of learning. Failed attempts at CDM are not reflected on a student's transcript.

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

No. Cumberland County Schools will 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 a CDM credit (i.e., assessment scores greater than or equal to 90% on the local exam and/or eligible CTE courses or a "superior" scale score on the appropriate state assessment, EOC, and a required artifact) 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 seat-time.

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

Any North Carolina public high school student, grades 9-12, who is able to show a deep understanding of the content without seat-time and classroom learning experience is eligible. It is also open to 6-8 students, but only for certain high school courses offered at the school.

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

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 to receive credit.

5. Can the school or district deny a student the opportunity to attempt to earn CDM credit? No, the NC state board policy prohibits this. However, there are courses which are excluded from CDM by the state. Honors, AP, and IB courses are excluded, as are CTE work-based learning courses (co-op, internship, and apprenticeship), CTE courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement of the course, CTE Advanced Studies courses, English Language Learner (ELL) courses, and Healthful Living required courses.

6. May students earn CDM credit for honors courses?

No. CDM is only available for some standard-level courses. CDM credits are awarded as a pass/fail grade and therefore do not impact a student's grade point average.

7. 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 all students.

8. 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 who has not taken Math 1 would not be permitted to obtain CDM credit for Math II.

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

No. Students considering collegiate athletics should be advised that NCAA Division I and Division II colleges and universities do not recognize test-out credits in terms of meeting college entrance credit requirements, and therefore CDM is strongly discouraged for potential collegiate athletics. Credits earned through CDM shall be used to count toward minimum credits for the purpose of high school athletic eligibility.

10. May students earn CDM for Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses?

Yes, with the exception of specific courses excluded by the NCSBE 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.

11. 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.

12. 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 course, such as AP and IB. The NC Virtual Public School is also a source of courses for students who need to replace a course for which they have earned a CDM credit.

13. If a student chooses to earn credit by demonstrated mastery, 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 assessment component of the CDM attempt. A timeline with specific testing windows will be provided to applicants.

14. 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 "CDM" and appear as such on the student's transcript. No course grade is received and the course is not included in the GPA calculation. Failed attempts will not be reflected on a student's transcript.

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

Yes. It is recommended that early graduation decisions be made through discussion between parents, students, counselors, and school administrators.

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

No, the CDM policy is for students who wish to accelerate without enrolling in a course.

17. Can a student take a course after receiving credit by demonstrated mastery for that course?

No.

18. Are particular scores required on Phase I assessments to move to Phase II?

Yes. For EOC courses (Math I, Biology, and English II), a student's must achieve a Level V at a scale score which exhibits a superior understanding of the content to move to Phase II artifact development. Scale scores requirements will be defined by the State Board of Education. For non-EOC courses, students must achieve a grade of 90 or higher on the local exam to qualify for Phase II artifact development.

For North Carolina CTE courses that are eligible, a student's Phase I examination component will be the CTE Post-Assessment. For these courses, students must achieve a scale score of 90 or higher to qualify for Phase II artifact development. When students successfully earn CDM for a CTE course, the credit shall be included in the required credits to earn CTE concentrations. Students should be aware that awarding articulated credit at the community college requires both a course grade of at least B ***and*** a post-assessment score of 90 or higher. At this time, students who obtain course credit via CDM will not be eligible for articulated credit. For non-EOC courses, students must achieve a grade of 90 or higher on the local exam to qualify for Phase II artifact development.

19. Is CDM available all year?

A testing window is offered each spring and each fall for **high school students** to provide an opportunity for students to use EOC tests or CTE Post- Assessment to earn credit by demonstrated mastery. For **middle school students** a testing window is offered each spring. The applications for high school students are due in August and January with testing windows in September and February. The applications for middle school students are due in January with a testing window in February.

