

CREDIT-BY-EXAM FOR WORLD LANGUAGES REGULATIONS

The Alexandria City School Board (Board) recognizes that instruction, learning and outcomes equivalent to those achieved in 140 clock hours of instruction can be attained in a variety of ways. Therefore, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) allows students in grades 6-12 with the ability to comprehend and communicate in languages other than English to earn up to three (4) standard (World Languages) credits through division-approved, national or international assessments approved by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for the World Languages Seal of Biliteracy.

DIVISION-APPROVED ASSESSMENTS

Credit-by-Exam measures students' foreign language proficiency through nationally-normed tests such as AAPPL, OPI, and the WPT for most languages. Credits are awarded when students demonstrate at least a Novice-High proficiency level. Languages available for high school credit are dependent on assessments approved and vetted by VDOE for the World Language Requirement of the Seal of Biliteracy.

Division-approved assessments:

- Have a standardized administration;
- Have been determined to be valid and reliable by an external body;
- Are used in other states or internationally;
- Are scored independently of the school division;
- Have been rigorously reviewed to align with the course objectives for which the waiver is being requested;
- Are scored either by a computer or an outside assessor who is proficient in the language of the exam; and
- Award standard credit(s) that equate with mastery of the World Languages course content and skills.

AWARD OF CREDIT

If successful, students will receive a "pass" grade for the equivalent course(s) which will appear as a "P" on transcripts to signify the levels have been successfully completed. Students will not receive a letter grade that will impact their grade point average (GPA).

Standard credits achieved through this option are considered equal to any other standard credit in terms of class rank, grade point average, extracurricular eligibility, and high school transcripts.

If students wish to graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma (ASD), they need to earn World Languages credits. These are earned by taking three years/credits of one language (3 x 1) or two years/credits each of two different languages (2 x 2). Students pursuing the Standard Diploma may apply a maximum of two credits of one language (2 x 1) to fulfill the elective requirement.

Students can earn up to four credits based on their level of proficiency as demonstrated by the exam. If a student was placed into a level III or IV class because of their language skills, they can

47 take the test to earn retroactive credit for prior levels. Multiple credits for the same world language
48 course cannot be given.

49
50 Students who earn world language credit(s) while in grades 6-8 will not be placed into a higher
51 level class until grade 9, as they are not offered at the middle school level.

52
53 The exam is scored by either a computer or an outside assessor who is proficient in the language
54 of the exam. Results are final and cannot be appealed. Credits will be awarded based on the
55 following:

56

Proficiency Level	Credits Awarded	Next Course Placement	Next SHS* Placement
Novice-High	1.0	Level III	SHS II
Intermediate-Low	2.0	Level IV	SHS III
Intermediate-Mid	3.0	AP	AP
Intermediate-High	4.0	AP or Advanced Topics (Offered for Chinese, French and German), if applicable	AP, if applicable
Advanced-Low	4.0	N/A	N/A
Advanced-Mid	4.0	N/A	N/A
Advanced-High	4.0	N/A	N/A
Superior	4.0	N/A	N/A
Distinguished	4.0	N/A	N/A

57 * Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS)

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59 If a proficiency assessment provides more than one modality, (i.e., listening, reading, speaking and
60 writing) and offers a rating for each mode of communication, the lowest rating will be used to
61 determine the number of credits awarded. (For example, if a student receives the following scores:
62 Listening: Intermediate 2, Reading: Intermediate 3, Writing: Intermediate 1, Speaking:
63 Intermediate 3, then the Writing Score of Intermediate 1 will be used to determine the number of
64 credits awarded. For VDOE-approved assessments that require multiple modalities, the speaking
65 and writing components are required.)

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67 ELIGIBILITY

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69 Students in grades 6-12 are eligible to take a credit-by-exam assessment if they can read, write,
70 speak and listen in the language of the exam tested. Students must be able to complete all work
71 independently at the Novice-High proficiency level or higher. For example, students must be able
72 *in the language being tested*, to:

73

- 74 ● Ask and answer simple questions;
- 75 ● Make simple statements in a conversation in response to another person;
- 76 ● Communicate basic information;
- 77 ● Express likes and dislikes;
- 78 ● Fill out a basic form; and

- 79 • Read and write a list of daily activities.

80
81 Students interested in earning credit-by-exam should first complete the *Self-Assessment Grid*
82 available through the ACPS Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership web page.

83
84 In lieu of the assessments listed in the Test Administration Section, students currently enrolled in
85 World Languages Level IV or Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS) III courses will take the exam
86 at the end of the school year. Taking that assessment allows them to meet the World Languages
87 requirement for the Seal of Biliteracy.

88
89 Students who achieve a Novice-High proficiency level or higher may also receive World
90 Languages credit (for a lower-level language course) if they were initially placed in a higher-level
91 language course and have not met the required credits for the Advanced Diploma.

92
93 Award of credit-by-exam does not convert any past failing course grade to a passing grade.

94 95 **TEST ADMINISTRATION**

96
97 Students may register online through the ACPS Department of Teaching, Learning, and
98 Leadership web page. Afterwards, students will be contacted to confirm the testing date, time and
99 location.

100
101 For students under the age of 18, parent(s), legal guardian(s) or the student's school counselor must
102 provide an electronic signature to verify that all information provided in the registration form is
103 correct.

104
105 A student may attempt to achieve credit-by-exam once per year. There is one main testing date in
106 the fall and one make-up date in the spring. (Registration for spring testing requires approval of
107 the World Languages Instructional Specialist). Seniors who transfer into the school division mid-
108 year may take the test in the spring. Both will be held on non-student days (i.e., teacher work days).
109 Assessments are offered to ACPS students at no cost the first time they test for a particular
110 language. Re-tests are at the expense of the student and the cost varies per test.

111
112 Parents/legal guardians will be notified of their student's results by U.S. mail.

113 114 **TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

115
116 All students with disabilities and those identified as English Learners (EL) are assessed with
117 appropriate accommodations in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

118 119 Students with Disabilities

120 Pursuit of credit-by-exam by students with disabilities will be prescribed by the student's
121 Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

122 123 English Learner Students

124 For English Learner (EL) students who have a home language of Arabic or Spanish, and who are

125 at Level 1 or Level 2 on the WIDA *Access for ELLs* test, accommodations will be made to ensure
126 test prompts are in the student’s home language. For most tests, the directions and prompts are in
127 English.

128

129 **WORLD LANGUAGES ASSESSMENT OFFERINGS**

130

131 ACPS currently offers credit-by-exam for more than 90 languages. As more languages become
132 available through nationally-normed assessments, the offerings are periodically expanded. In
133 addition, if the opportunity arises to partner with another jurisdiction, credit-by-exam for
134 additional languages not offered by ACPS may be provided through the other jurisdiction’s
135 administration of such assessments. In such cases, the number of credits awarded may necessarily
136 be adjusted to align with the administering jurisdiction’s policies.

137

138 The current list of languages available for credit-by-exam, the type of assessment utilized for each
139 language and the associated cost for retakes are all found on the ACPS Department of Teaching,
140 Learning, and Leadership’s web page.

141

142 **SEAL OF BILITERACY**

143

144 Since 2015-16, the Virginia Board of Education’s Seal of Biliteracy certifies attainment of a high
145 level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English by graduating high school
146 students. The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to students who pass all required End-of-Course
147 Assessments in English at the proficient or higher level (11th grade SOL), and who score an
148 Intermediate-Mid level or higher in another language on a nationally-normed exam. The Seal of
149 Biliteracy is awarded and placed on a student’s high school diploma.

150

151 **APPEALS**

152

153 Assessment results for credit-by-exam are final and cannot be appealed.

154

155

156 Established: April 26, 2018
157 Revised: May 1, 2018
158 Revised: September 7, 2018
159 Revised: October 4, 2019
160 Revised: December 16, 2021

161

162

163 Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:4.

164

165 8 VAC 20-131-110.

166

167 *Guidelines for Graduation Requirements; Local Alternative Paths to*
168 *Standard Units of Credit*, Virginia Board of Education (Oct. 2015).

169

170	Cross Refs.:	IAA	Notification of Learning Objectives
171		IGBG	Homebound, Correspondence and Alternative Means of Instruction
172		IGBGA	Online Courses and Virtual School Programs
173		IGBF	English Learners
174		IKEB	Acceleration
175		IKF	The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements
176		IKF-R	The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements
177			Regulations
178		IKFD	Alternative Paths to Attaining Standard Units of Credit:
179			Credit-By-Exam for World Languages
180		JO	Student Records

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CREDIT-BY-EXAM FOR WORLD LANGUAGES REGULATIONS

Students who enroll in high school as freshmen before July 1, 2018, as sophomores before July 1, 2019, as juniors before July 1, 2020 or as seniors before July 1, 2021 are required to earn standard and verified units of credit as specified in the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education. A “standard unit of credit” or “standard credit” is a credit awarded for a course in which the student successfully completes 140 clock hours of instruction and the requirements of the course.

Commented [1]: Struck as this is fully phased in.

The Alexandria City School Board (Board) recognizes that instruction, learning and outcomes equivalent to those achieved in 140 clock hours of instruction can be attained in a variety of ways. Therefore, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) allows students in grades 6-12 with the ability to comprehend and communicate in languages other than English to earn up to three (43) standard (World Languages) credits through Division-approved, national or international assessments approved by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for the World Languages Seal of Bilingualism.

DIVISION-APPROVED ASSESSMENTS

Credit-by-Exam measures students’ foreign language proficiency through nationally-normed tests such as AAPPL, OPI, and the WPT for most languages. Credits are awarded when students demonstrate at least a Novice-High proficiency level. Languages available for high school credit are dependent on assessments approved and vetted by VDOE for the World Language Requirement of the Seal of Bilingualism.

Commented [MS2]: Added to clarify the scope of the offerings (Currently over 100 languages)

Division-approved assessments:

- Have a standardized administration;
- Have been determined to be valid and reliable by an external body;
- Are used in other states or internationally;
- Are scored independently of the school division;
- Have been rigorously reviewed to align with the course objectives for which the waiver is being requested;
- Are scored either by a computer or an outside assessor who is proficient in the language of the exam; and
- Award standard credit(s) that equate with mastery of the World Languages course content and skills.

AWARD OF CREDIT

If successful, students will receive a “pass” grade for the equivalent course(s) which will appear as a “P” on transcripts to signify the levels have been successfully completed. Students will not receive a letter grade that will impact their grade point average (GPA).

Standard credits achieved through this option are considered equal to any other standard credit in terms of class rank, grade point average, extracurricular eligibility, and high school transcripts.

If students wish to graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma (ASD), they need to earn World Languages credits. These are earned by taking three years/credits of one language (3 x 1) or two years/credits each of two different languages (2 x 2). Students pursuing the Standard Diploma may

47 apply a maximum of two credits of one language (2 x 1) to fulfill the elective requirement.

48
49 Students can earn up to ~~four~~three credits based on their level of proficiency as demonstrated by
50 the exam. If a student was placed into a level III or IV class because of their language skills, they
51 can take the test to earn retroactive credit for prior levels. Multiple credits for the same world
52 language course cannot be given.

Commented [MS3]: Adjusted to permit students to obtain two credits in two different languages.

53
54 Students who earn world language credit(s) while in grades 6-8 will not be placed into a higher
55 level class until grade 9, as they are not offered at the middle school level.

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58 of the exam. Results are final and cannot be appealed. Credits will be awarded based on the
59 following:

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Advanced-Low	4 3.0	N/A	N/A
Advanced-Mid	4 3.0	N/A	N/A
Advanced-High	4 3.0	N/A	N/A
Superior	4 3.0	N/A	N/A
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61 * Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS)

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63 If a proficiency assessment provides more than one modality, (i.e., listening, reading, speaking and
64 writing) and offers a rating for each mode of communication, the lowest rating will be used to
65 determine the number of credits awarded. (For example, if a student receives the following scores:
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85 Students interested in earning credit-by-exam should first complete the *Self-Assessment Grid*
86 available through the ~~Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS)~~ Department of Teaching, Learning,
87 and Leadership Curriculum & Instruction web page, at
88 ~~https://www.acps.k12.va.us/Page/2313.~~

89 In lieu of the assessments ~~listed~~ offered below in the Test Administration Section ~~V~~, students
90 currently enrolled in World Languages Level IV or Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS) III
91 courses will take the ~~AAPPL~~ exam at the end of the school year. Taking that assessment allows
92 them to meet the World Languages requirement for the Seal of Biliteracy.

93
94 Students who achieve a Novice-High proficiency level or higher may also receive World
95 Languages credit (for a lower-level language course) if they were initially placed in a higher-level
96 language course and have not met the required credits for the Advanced Diploma.

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98 Award of credit-by-exam does not convert any past failing course grade to a passing grade.

99 100 **TEST ADMINISTRATION**

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102 Students may register online through the ACPS Department of Teaching, Learning, and
103 Leadership Curriculum & Instruction web page. Afterwards, students will be contacted to confirm
104 the testing date, time and location.

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144 language and the associated cost for re-takes are all found on the ACPS Department of Teaching,
145 Learning, and Leadership Curriculum and Instruction's web page,
146 at: <https://www.aeps.k12.va.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=2315>.

147
148 **SEAL OF BILITERACY**

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150 Since 2015-16, the Virginia Board of Education's Seal of Biliteracy certifies attainment of a high
151 level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English by graduating high school
152 students. The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to students who pass all required End-of-Course
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