

Instruction

3001 STANDARD UNITS OF CREDIT

Students who enroll in high school are required to earn standard and verified units of credit as specified in the regulations of the Board of Education. The standard unit of credit is based on a minimum of 140-clock hours of instruction and successful completion of the requirements of the course. The ATI-UMW School 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, the School Board waives the requirement that a student receive 140 clock hours of instruction to earn a standard unit of credit as provided below.

The total number of standard credits that can be achieved via the waiver option is 26. Students may earn fractional credits via waiver. In order to attain a standard unit of credit by means of a waiver of the 140-clock-hour requirement:

- the outcomes of the work for which standard credit is awarded must be equal to progress and learning achieved in 140 clock hours of instruction;
- upon completion of the assigned work for the course, a student must have demonstrated mastery by meeting specific objectives and performance requirements of the course that match or exceed the expectations of students who have received 140 clock hours of instruction with similar standards, competencies or objectives; and
- the evidence of mastery of the pertinent content and skills for a student receiving a waiver must be fully documented, retained securely by the school division, and available for review by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) upon request.

Procedures

Criteria for awarding a waiver of the 140-clock-hour requirement for the course must be clear, objective and clearly communicated to the student and the student's parents prior to a student embarking on the effort. The consequences of standard credits achieved by waiver with regard to class rank, grade point average, and extracurricular eligibility must also be clearly defined and communicated to students and parents before a student embarks on the effort. A student must receive approval from the executive director before pursuing the work, task or assessment that is required to meet the waiver criteria.

Miscellaneous

The Superintendents' Advisory Council will identify a process for developing accommodations for students with limited English proficiency. Pursuit of credit by waiver by students with disabilities will be prescribed by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

Students who attain credit by waiver of the 140-clock-hour requirement will receive a grade for the course. The fact that a student has received credit via waiver will be reflected on the student's transcript.

A student who is pursuing credit via waiver is enrolled in the relevant course for purposes of determining eligibility for extracurricular activities.

Waiver Pathway Options

Waivers are available by three pathways:

1. Courses that award a standard credit and have less than 140 clock hours of instruction: For students attaining standard units of credit by this waiver method, the school division maintains documentation based on this policy that defines its rationale for the reduction of instructional time and substantive evidence that it provides equivalent instruction with equivalent outcomes in the reduced clock hours.
2. Independent study, work sample portfolio, demonstrated performance and locally-developed or Standards of Learning assessment: Evidence of the student's learning must encompass a comprehensive assemblage of media products, artifacts, and performance that demonstrates the student has mastered academically rigorous material and meets or exceeds approved learning standards, competencies or objectives for the course. The required content and evaluative criteria for the products must be defined prior to the advent of student work and based on the same objectives as the standard course. The assemblage of evidence and overall process must be managed by a licensed and endorsed teacher in the area of the coursework with a series of program checkpoints throughout a specified timeline for the study. The checkpoints and timeline must be clearly articulated and communicated to the student.

The executive director and/or other site administrator, in partnership with the managing teacher must determine whether the work is of commensurate depth and quality as work performed in the traditional secondary classroom and meets predefined evaluative criteria communicated to the student. The student must meet a predefined performance level on a locally-developed assessment for the coursework. This may be an oral examination, performance (e.g., recital/concert), written test or some other objective tool or process developed by the school division. Applicable Standards of Learning assessments may also be used for this purpose.

3. Demonstrated achievement via national or international assessments:

The assessment must:

- have a standardized administration;
- be determined to be valid and reliable by an external body;
- be used in other states or internationally; and
- be scored independently of the school division.

Before a waiver may be granted under this option, the division must have completed a rigorous review of the assessment, in accordance with this policy, and determined that it is aligned with the course objectives for which the waiver is being requested. The division determines a qualifying score for awarding a standard credit that equates with mastery of the course content and skills and communicates that score to the student. The student must provide evidence to the ATI-UMW executive director or designee through performance, product, interview and/or school staff professional judgment that the student has some command of the course content and should be allowed to demonstrate mastery-level performance for a standard credit.

The ATI-UMW executive director in partnership with the superintendent's council will develop a process for determining a qualifying score for awarding a standard credit that equates with mastery of the course content and skills and the frequency of attempts, to be approved by the Superintendents' Advisory Council.

If ATI-UMW selects an assessment that has a monetary cost, it will ensure equitable access to this option.

Appeal Process

The Superintendents' Advisory Council shall appoint a review panel comprised of at least three educators to resolve disputes regarding the attainment of standard units of credit via waivers in accordance with this policy. Different panels may be appointed for individual schools or groups of schools. The panel may review whether a student was properly denied permission to seek a standard unit of credit via waiver and whether a student was properly denied a standard unit of credit after having been determined to be eligible to seek the standard unit of credit via waiver. Based on the evidence it reviews, the review panel may: award the standard credit; deny the standard credit; or make additional assignments prior to determining whether to award the standard credit. The decision of the review panel will be final.

Continuing Role of State Assessments

While the division may use the Standards of Learning assessments for awarding a standard credit as outlined above, the Standards of Learning assessments and any other assessments approved by the Virginia Board of Education will continue to be used in their traditional role as determiners of awarding verified credits.

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

8 VAC 20-131-110.

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

Cross Refs:

IAA Notification of Learning Objectives

IGBG Homebound, Correspondence and Alternative Means of Instruction

IGBGA On-Line Courses and Virtual School Programs

IGBF Limited English Proficient Students

IKEB Acceleration

IKF Standards of Learning Tests and Graduation Requirements

IKFA Locally Awarded Verified Credits

3002 Grading Scale and Grade Point Average Calculation

Grading Scale

The Academy of Technology and Innovation will use a 10-point grading system to measure learning mastery. Grade points are awarded for each level of mastery. An additional grade point (1.0) are awarded for Dual Enrollment (DE) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

Number Range	Learning Mastery Indicated	Grade Assigned	Grade Point Average (Standard)	Grade Point Average (AP/DE Course)
90-100	Exceeds Mastery	A	4.0	5.0
80-89	Demonstrates Mastery	B	3.0	4.0
70-79	Approaching Mastery	C	2.0	3.0
60-69	Minimal Mastery	D	1.0	2.0
0-59	Below Expectations	F	0.0	0.0

Grade Point Average Calculation

The student's grade-point average (GPA) is determined by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the number of credit-bearing courses included in the transcript. Grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number with anything .50 or higher rounding up to the nearest whole number and anything lower than .50 rounding down to the nearest whole number.

3003 Explicit Content in Instructional Material

The purpose of this policy is compliance with the Code of Virginia policy § 22.1-16.8:

Instructional material; sexually explicit content; parental notification. For the purposes of this policy, "sexually explicit content" has the same meaning as provided in subsection A of §2.2-2827. Using the definitions provided by the Code of Virginia, the instructional personnel of ATI-UMW will review their instructional materials annually and identify any that contain sexually explicit content.

Instructional materials do not include standardized national or state assessments, such as PSAT, SAT, MAP, and AP or SOL exams. Content and websites visited by students without specific directions from instructional personnel are not considered instructional materials.

Families will be notified of the use of materials containing sexually explicit content at least thirty (30) days prior to their use via e-mail. Materials containing sexually explicit content does not automatically disqualify them from use.

Families at ATI-UMW have the ability to view any instructional materials being used in courses and can request alternative materials for their students.