

My Child's Learning: A Parent Resource

Senior High School: A Path to Success



Completing high school will provide your child with knowledge, skills, and experiences that are important for future studies or for a job. For most jobs in Alberta, students need at least a high school diploma or other high school completion certification.

Choosing Courses

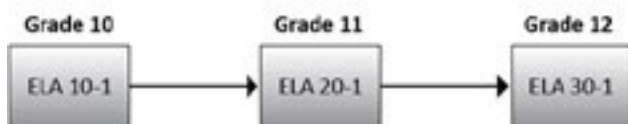
Students in Alberta schools study many subjects each year, like math, science, language arts, and social studies. From grades 1 to 9, most students in a particular grade take the same math, science, language arts, and social studies courses.

From grades 10 to 12 (high school), students have choices in the courses they take. In high school, each subject may have several different courses grouped into course sequences.

A course sequence is a set of courses in the same subject. The courses in different course sequences are designed for different goals students have after they graduate high school. With the help of a school counsellor or student advisor, students choose the course sequence in each subject that meets their needs.

Here is an example of course sequences for English Language Arts (ELA).

ELA 10-1, 20-1, 30-1: The focus in this course sequence is on the study of literature and academic writing. This sequence will meet the requirements for admission to any post-secondary program.



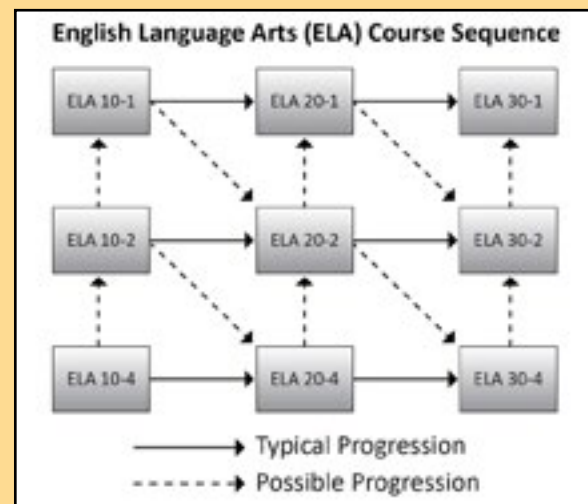
ELA 10-2, 20-2, 30-2: The focus in this course sequence is on effective communication and the study of literature for admission to many post-secondary programs.



ELA 10-4, 20-4, 30-4: The focus in this course sequence is on developing communication skills useful for employment after graduation.



It is possible for a student in one course sequence to transfer to a different course sequence. You can discuss this option with a school counsellor or student advisor.



High School Courses

School counsellors or student advisors can help students and their parents choose courses and course sequences. Choosing the right sequence allows students to develop their interests and achieve their goals for the future.

All students must take courses in the following subject areas to earn credits required for high school graduation:

- Career and Life Management (CALM)
- English Language Arts (ELA)
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Science
- Social Studies

Students also choose optional courses and programs to earn additional credits required for graduation, such as:

- Aboriginal Studies
- Art, Drama, or Music
- Career and Technology Studies (CTS)
- Languages
- Work Experience
- Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)
- Off-campus Education

There are also courses available for students who are learning English as a new language. These courses help English language learners improve their English. Some of the courses for English language learners give them knowledge and skills that will help them be more successful in their other courses.



Semesters and Timetables

High schools typically divide the school year into two parts, called semesters. Students will usually take different courses in each semester. In a high school with semesters, many classes are 80 minutes long.

Your child will be given a timetable. A timetable shows the courses your child is taking on which days and at what times.

What are credits?

- When a high school student successfully completes a course with a grade of 50% or more, she or he earns credits.
- A high school course can have one, three, or five credits depending on the number of hours of instruction and the complexity of the course.
- The school will help students understand how many credits they need each year. Students can talk to the school counsellor or student advisor for more information.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate, students need to complete the requirements for either an Alberta High School Diploma or a Certificate of High School Achievement.

Students working toward a diploma are being prepared for admission to programs in post-secondary institutions. Students working toward a certificate are being prepared to go directly into the workforce.

- Alberta High School Diploma - 100 Credits (http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildlearning/alberta_high_school_diploma.html)
- Certificate of High School Achievement - 80 Credits (http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildlearning/certificate_high_school_achievement.html)

For more information on high school completion and graduation requirements, go to <https://www.alberta.ca/graduation-requirements-credentials-and-credits.aspx>.

Diploma Examinations

Some of the courses needed for an Alberta High School Diploma require students to write a provincial examination. Students usually write the diploma examinations in Grade 12. The diploma exam courses are the 30-level courses in these subjects:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- English Language Arts
- Français (30-1 only)
- French Language Arts (30-1 only)
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Science
- Social Studies

For more information on diploma exams, talk with your child's principal, school counsellor, or student advisor or go to this website: <https://www.alberta.ca/diploma-exams.aspx>.

Planning for Post-Secondary: College, University, Technical Institutions

If your child is thinking about enrolling in a post-secondary program, here are some steps to help your child get ready:

- Identify strengths, interests, and career choices through an aptitude test. A school counsellor or student advisor can make arrangements for the test.
- Search for current post-secondary training programs, admission requirements, and scholarships in Alberta by visiting the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website (<http://alis.alberta.ca/hs/high-school.html>).

- Access high school transcripts (<https://www.alberta.ca/student-information-high-school-transcripts.aspx>).

Note: An Alberta High School Diploma does not guarantee admission to a post-secondary institution. Students should check with the post-secondary institutions for admission requirements and/or meet with a school counsellor or student advisor.

Planning for a Career in the Trades

If your child is thinking about learning a trade, these high school programs can help your child get ready.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a training program that combines on-the-job training and technical training in a trade at a college or technical institution.

- Apprentices learn mostly on the job from a qualified tradesperson. They also get technical training at a college or technical institution.
- An apprenticeship training program lasts one to four years, depending on the trade. Apprentices earn a salary for their time on the job.



Off-campus Education

The following Off-campus Education courses are available for students who want specialized business, industrial, or work experience training while they are still in high school:

- Work Experience 15-25-35
 - Students work with an employer. Students get one credit for every 25 hours of work.
- Work Study

- Students spend a part of the school day at a workplace. Students have a chance to work in different workplaces.

- Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)

- Students spend part of their time in school and part of their time in industry as registered apprentices in a trade, such as welding, automotives, and carpentry.

If your child is thinking about a career in the trades, see the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Trade Entrance Requirements at http://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/SOURCES/PDFS/Entrance_Requirements.pdf.

What is dual credit programming?

Dual credit programming is offered by some Alberta high schools. It allows high school students to participate in apprenticeship training or college or university courses to earn both high school and post-secondary credits for the same course.

For more information on dual credit (<https://www.alberta.ca/dual-credit.aspx>), talk to your child's school counsellor or student advisor.

Finding Supports

Teachers, school counsellors, and student advisors can help your child:

- choose appropriate courses
- develop strategies to improve learning
- discover and nurture talents and interests
- make decisions about what to do after high school
- examine career options
- make decisions about post-secondary education and training
- find financial assistance and scholarships for post-secondary education
- resolve personal problems.

For more information about ways to support your child's transition from senior high school to further education and training, visit the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website at <http://alis.alberta.ca/hs/high-school.html>.

Learn more about your child's education by visiting
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<http://www.mychildslearning.alberta.ca>