

FLEXIBLE LEARNING

2020-2021

The Prince Edward Island Department of Education and Lifelong Learning (the Department) offers a number of flexible learning opportunities for students in Prince Edward Island high schools. Flexible learning occurs in situations when the curriculum is not currently part of the *Senior High Program of Studies and List of Authorized Materials*, the method of curriculum delivery is not in a traditional classroom setting, or both.

These opportunities include:

- independent study courses;
- cooperative education courses;
- external credential courses;
- local courses;
- academic diploma programs;
- summer school courses;
- distance education courses.

Each of these flexible learning opportunities currently available in Prince Edward Island high schools will be described below.

Independent Study Courses (ISC521A/621A)

The Independent Study Course allows students to engage in personally meaningful, authentic, real-world learning within an inquiry and problem-solving framework. Students have the opportunity to investigate a self-selected topic or theme that extends the curriculum of an authorized provincial course(s) and contributes to their knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning. The Independent Study Course should be a student-directed investigative project that is planned in collaboration with a supervising teacher and community mentor, is monitored frequently, and allows the student to assume the role of first-hand inquirer. This study should uncover new questions and ideas for further inquiry and may solve real-life community issues. This course will showcase a student's care, attention to detail, and overall pride in their work while requiring a considerable commitment of time, effort, and energy on the part of the student. Early planning is required for a student to enroll in this course. Independent Study Courses are developed cooperatively by the student and a supervising teacher, and approved and supported by the parent/guardian(s), supervising teacher, school counsellor, and school principal. Final approval is required by the Department before a student can begin the Independent Study Course. Independent study courses can be taken as a Grade 11 credit (ISC521A) or a Grade 12 credit (ISC621A).

Cooperative Education Courses (CWS501A/502A/601A/602A)

Cooperative Education is an experiential method of learning that formally integrates classroom studies with learning through productive work experiences in a field related to a student's academic or career goals. It provides progressive experiences in integrating theory and practice. Each cooperative education course is a partnership among students, schools, and the community, with specified responsibilities for each. Each course consists of a classroom component and a placement component. Prior to the placement, all students must demonstrate an understanding of the pre-placement orientation expectations and participate in the development and implementation of their personalized placement learning plans. These plans outline the specific goals the students, teachers, and employers have regarding opportunities to apply and extend knowledge and practice and refine skills to demonstrate student achievement of placement expectations that reflect current workplace practices and standards.

External Credential Courses

External Credential courses will acknowledge the value of student learning outside the public school system by recognizing, for high school credit, credentials obtained outside of regular school instructional time by an education service agency external to the public school system. External high school credit will be awarded for courses, programs, or assessments that have been evaluated and that match or exceed provincial high school standards. External credentials must contribute to the Essential Graduation

Learnings, and must meet the standards defined in Minister's Directive MD 11-01. External credentials will be reflected on the student's high school transcript, thereby enhancing the transcript for the student.

The following linked document provides a comprehensive list of all external credentials that are currently available to all Prince Edward Island high school students: [External Credentials Providers](#)

Academic Diploma Program

The Academy Diploma Program (ADP) is a specialization program approved by the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning which enables students to gain sector-specific skills and knowledge in the context of engaging, career-related learning environments. ADPs help students to focus on graduation and pursuing their post-secondary goals. This program is part of the PEI Career Education Framework, which was developed in 2008, and will assist in the students' transition from secondary school to apprenticeship training, college, university, or the labour market by providing them with real world knowledge, skills, and experiences related to potential future educational and career pathways.

Participating in an ADP enables students to

- customize their secondary school education to reflect their interests and talents while meeting the requirements for the PEI High School Graduation Certificate;
- select a bundle of eight to ten required credits focused on sector-specific knowledge and skills that are
 - valued by the sector and post-secondary educational institutions;
 - designed to help prepare students for a post-secondary destination of their choice in a particular economic sector;
 - designed with the flexibility to allow students to shift between pathways (e.g., to switch from a path leading to college to an apprenticeship focus), or to discontinue the program if their career plans change in Grade 11 or 12;
- provide evidence of achievement of the required components of the ADP (e.g., sector-recognized certifications) for prospective employers and post-secondary educational institutions;
- explore, identify, and refine career goals, and make informed decisions about their postsecondary options;
- take part in community based learning opportunities that will help them gain confidence in their ability to be successful, refine skills and work habits, and make informed choices about future career pathways and next steps;
- participate in pathway exploration experiences aligned with their field of interest;
- develop skills, knowledge, and work habits related to Literacy and Essential Skills and the Innovation Skills Profile, which are required in a particular sector, and have their performance of their skills, knowledge, and work habits assessed and documented;
- enhance the above skills in the context of engaging, sector-specific learning environments; and
- access resources, equipment, and expertise that may not be available in their school.

For further information about ADP programs, click the following link: [ADP Programs in Island High Schools](#)

Local Courses

The Department of Education and Lifelong Learning is committed to ensuring that all students have access to a quality education. The Department is also committed to meeting the changing needs of students by encouraging flexibility and discretion at the local level. Over a number of years, provincially authorized senior high local courses have been offered to accommodate the special interests and abilities of students, to provide for innovative practices, and to address local community interests through the development of local courses at the senior high level which do not duplicate provincially authorized courses.

All schools offering the senior high program must ensure students meet the provincial graduation requirements. This is done by offering provincially developed and authorized courses. Schools may enhance their programs by offering local courses, if this can be accomplished given sufficient numbers and interest. Local courses are developed at the school level. As a result, course offerings will vary greatly from school to school. However, all local courses that are developed must conform to departmental standards of curriculum development.

Currently, there exists a moratorium on the development of new local courses.

Summer School Courses

Each summer, the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning development offers some high school courses at selected locations. The courses offered vary from year to year, but in the past, have included courses in English, mathematics, physics, cooperative work study, and English as an additional language.

The availability of courses taught during the summer depends on the availability of resources required to offer courses and student demand.

Distance Education Courses

Distance Education is a mode of instruction in which the student and teacher are separated in either time or space or both, and where two-way communication takes place through non-traditional means for the most part. There is a broad range of both individualized and team instructional approaches and strategies used in distance education. Distance education communication may utilize various technologies and media, including but not limited to print, computers and computer networks, telecommunications, and audio-visual equipment and resources.

Distance education is seen as a means to provide students with equitable access and/or a diversity of programs as approved by the P.E.I. Department of Education and Lifelong Learning. Typically, this option is employed when a particular high school does not have the capacity to offer a particular course, when a student requests to take a course by correspondence from another jurisdiction, or a student has a medical condition that limits participation in school-based programming.

All distance education requests must be approved by the P.E.I. Department of Education and Lifelong Learning prior to enrollment. The Department will not be responsible for course fees if approval has not been granted.

For students to access Distance Education for medical reasons, the school must apply to the Student Services Division of the Education Authority on behalf of the student. If approved for

distance education, Student Services will forward to the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning. Final registration depends on course availability.

Application for Flexible Learning

Students must contact their school advisor to access any of the flexible learning options listed. In most cases a specific form will need to be completed as part of the application and/or approval process.

Flexible learning options provide greater opportunities for students to complete their high school diploma. Students who are considering flexible learning options should discuss their choice with their school advisor as each option has specific learning demands. Student Services and/or the Department may consult with the school advisor to ensure that the student has the necessary prerequisite courses and skills to commence a flexible learning program or course.