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Credit by Examination

The Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.023, allows students in primary grades to accelerate a grade level and students in secondary academic courses to earn credit for a course on the basis credit by examination. Credit-by-examination assessments (CBEs) must be approved by each local board of trustees.

Approved Exams

With the approval of the local board of trustees, a school district may develop its own CBEs or purchase CBEs. For each high school course, a local board is required to approve at least four CBEs, to the extent available, to include, College Board Advanced Placement (AP) and College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams. CBEs may also be developed by Texas Tech University, The University of Texas at Austin, the local school district, or another provider if the exams meet certain criteria.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC), §74.24(c)(2)

(<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter074/ch074c.html#74.24>), requires that each school district or provider of an assessment, including Texas Tech University and The University of Texas at Austin, must certify that each CBE

- covers all assessable TEKS for the course;
- has not been published or made publicly available;
- will only be administered in a secure environment under standardized conditions by a school district or institution of higher education;
- has been evaluated to ensure test scores can be interpreted as indicators of what the test is intended to measure; and
- has been evaluated to ensure consistency of test results across testing conditions.

A school district or the provider of the assessment must make public an annual report, including:

- the test development process;
- a statement certifying that the examination meets the criteria above;
- the number of students who took each examination;

- the number of students who scored 70% or above on each examination;
- the number of students who scored 80% or above on each examination; and
- the average score for all students who took the examination for each examination.

Credit by Examination for Acceleration, Kindergarten – Grade 5

Districts must develop procedures to be approved by the local board of trustees for kindergarten acceleration.

A student in grades 1-5 must be accelerated one grade if the student scores 80% or higher on each CBE including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for the grade level the student wishes to advance past. Additionally, the student must be recommended for acceleration by a district representative, and the student's parent or guardian must give written permission.

Credit by Examination, Grades 6 – 12

A student in grades 6-12 may be awarded credit based on performance on a CBE taken either with no prior instruction or with prior instruction. Students may not attempt to earn credit by exam for the same high school subject more than two times.

In order for a school district to administer a CBE for a course that has a state end-of-course (EOC) assessment instrument, the school district or the provider of the assessment must certify, prior to the first administration, that the examination

- meets the criteria listed above; and
- has been externally validated and determined to align to and appropriately address all assessable TEKS for the course; assess the appropriate level of rigor for each student expectation; and yield comparable distribution of results across tested subgroups.

No Prior Instruction

Students who have had no prior instruction must be awarded credit for the applicable course if the student receives one of the following scores:

- Three or higher on an AP exam
- A scaled score of 50 or higher on a CLEP exam
- 80% or higher on any other locally approved exam

Additionally, if a student is given credit on the basis of an examination on which the student scored 80% or higher, the school district must enter the examination score on the student's transcript, and the student is not required to take an applicable end-of-course assessment instrument for the course.

If a student fails to earn credit by exam for a high school course before the beginning of the school year when the student would normally be expected to enroll in that course according to the district's course sequence, the student must satisfactorily complete the course in order to earn credit.

Prior Instruction

Students who have had prior instruction in a course may be awarded credit for the applicable course, subject to local district policy, if the student scores 70% or higher on a CBE approved by the local board of trustees. Prior instruction is determined by the local school district.

Scheduling

School districts are required to provide at least one window each quarter for students to test, unless the exam selected by the district has a different administration schedule. Students may take a specific exam only once during each testing window. A school district is prohibited from charging a fee for credit by examination. A school district must provide opportunities for a student who is homeless or in substitute care who transfers to the district after the start of the school year to be administered a CBE at any point during the school year.

Quarterly Testing Windows

January 1 - March 31

April 1 - June 30

July 1 - September 30

October 1 - December 31

Resources

TEC, §28.023: <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.28.htm#28.023>
(<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.28.htm#28.023>)

TAC, §74.24, Credit by Examination: <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter074/ch074c.html#74.24>
(<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter074/ch074c.html#74.24>)

Texas Tech University ISD: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttuisd/cbe.php>
(<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttuisd/cbe.php>)

The University of Texas at Austin High School: https://highschool.utexas.edu/credit_by_exam.php
(https://highschool.utexas.edu/credit_by_exam)