Standard Diploma Credit
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Virginia Department of Education
Special Education and Student Services
Office of Special Education Program Improvement

Samantha Marsh Hollins, Director
Purpose

• Overview of Diploma Options and Graduation Requirements
• Standard Diploma Credit Accommodations
DIPLOMA OPTIONS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
Diploma Options

• Students with IEPs currently in high school (first time 9th graders before 2013-14 SY)
  – Advanced Studies Diploma
  – Standard Diploma
    • May use credit accommodations if eligible!
  – Modified Standard Diploma
  – Special Diploma

• Student with IEPs (first time 9th grader beginning in 2013-14 SY and beyond)
  – Advanced Studies Diploma
  – Standard Diploma
    • May use credit accommodations if eligible!
  – Special Diploma
A few tips

• It is important to view these changes through the lens of existing graduation requirements

• PAY ATTENTION to the footnotes

• PAY ATTENTION to the year the student was a first time 9th grader

• Visit the VDOE Graduation requirements page often

New Graduation Requirements for first time 9th graders in 2013-14 and beyond

- **Standard Diploma Requirements**: must earn a **career and technical education credential** that has been approved by the Board of Education.

  The credential could include, but not limited to, the successful completion of an **industry certification**, a **state licensure** examination, a **national occupational competency** assessment, or the **Virginia workplace readiness skills assessment**;

- **Advanced Studies and Standard Diploma Requirement**:
  A student must successfully complete **one virtual course**, which **may be noncredit-bearing**, to graduate with a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma; and

- **The Modified Standard Diploma is folded into the Standard Diploma, with credit accommodations for students with disabilities**
# Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50.C)

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## Standard Diploma

The following table outlines the Course Requirements as per 8 VAC 20-131-50.B.

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# Standard v Modified

## Comparison of Credit Requirements:
Standard Diploma vs. Modified Standard Diploma

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<tr>
<th>Subject or Course</th>
<th>Standard Diploma</th>
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<td>Standard Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>History &amp; Social Sciences</td>
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<td>Foreign Language, Fine Arts or Career &amp; Technical Education</td>
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<td>Electives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtual course</td>
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9/10/2014
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural Biotechnology Assessment</td>
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<td>Agricultural Mechanics Assessment</td>
<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
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<td>Agricultural Mechanics and Technology</td>
<td>New York State Department of Education (Cornell University)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agribusiness Examination</td>
<td>New York State Department of Education (Cornell University)</td>
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<td>Animal Systems Assessment</td>
<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Quality Assurance Certification</td>
<td>National Beef Quality Assurance/ Virginia Cooperative Extension</td>
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<td>Commercial Pesticide Applicator Certification</td>
<td>Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services</td>
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<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
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<td>Forestry Products &amp; Processing Assessment</td>
<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
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<td>Greenhouse Operators Certification Program</td>
<td>Southeast Greenhouse Growers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horticulture-Landscape Assessment</td>
<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural Resource Systems Assessment</td>
<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Power Equipment Certifications (Pass any one Outdoor Power Equipment Exam)</td>
<td>Equipment and Engine Training Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fork Quality Assurance Certification</td>
<td>National Fork Board/Virginia Cooperative Extension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Equipment Technology Examination</td>
<td>SkillsUSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pet Sitters Certification</td>
<td>National Association Professional Pet Sitters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Agriculture Assessment</td>
<td>National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI)</td>
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<td>Private Applicator Certification</td>
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<td>Administrative Services Assessment</td>
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<td>Adobe Certified Associate (Pass any one test in this program)</td>
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<td>Apple Mac Certification Program (Pass any one exam in this program)</td>
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<td>Banking and Related Services Assessment</td>
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<td>Brainbench Systems Administration Certifications (Pass any one test in this category)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brainbench Software Development Certifications (Pass any one test in this category)</td>
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STANDARD DIPLOMA CREDIT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Credit Accommodations

- Credit accommodations provide pathways for students with disabilities to earn the standard and verified credits required to graduate with a Standard Diploma. The content remains the same.
  - Substitute Tests
  - VMAST (2014-15 SY)
  - Locally Awarded Verified Credit
  - Instruction/Coursework Offerings

- Documentation
- Returning Students
Substitute Tests

• The Board of Education has approved a number of substitute tests that students may take to earn verified credits toward graduation.

• Listing of current Substitute Tests for Verified Credit
  http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/substitute_tests_verified_credit.pdf

• The Board of Education may from time to time approve additional tests that are recommended by the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the purpose of awarding verified credit.
Substitute Tests

• The Virginia Department of Education may partner with a local school division in the procedure to nominate an additional test.

• Such additional tests, which enable students to earn verified units of credit, must, at a minimum, meet specified criteria, which has not changed from original policy.
VMAST

• The Virginia Modified Achievement Standards Test (VMAST) will remain part of Virginia’s accountability system through 2013-2014.

• Beginning in 2014-2015, the VMAST assessments will no longer be part of Virginia’s accountability system; however, End-of-Course (EOC) reading and Algebra I VMAST will continue to be available as a credit accommodation for eligible students with disabilities.
VMAST
2014-15 SY

• Permit the continued use of the VMAST for verified credit purposes for Algebra I and End of Course (EOC) Reading.

• The student must meet of the following criteria to be eligible to take the VMAST for verified credit purposes:
  – Student must pass the high school course;
  – **Score 374 or below** on the end-of-course Standards of Learning test (SOL) after taking the test at least twice; and
  – All eligibility requirements in effect for the 2013-2014 school year. **ONLY available to students with IEPs.**
SUBSTITUTE ASSESSMENTS

What’s different?
VDOE and LEA may work together to find additional assessments for Board approval.
VMAST in 2014-15 and Beyond

Meet Criteria
Documented
IEP ONLY
Written
Consent

VMAST for Algebra I and End of Course (EOC)
Reading
Pass Course
Takes the EOC SOL Twice
Scores 374 or below on both administrations
Locally Awarded Verified Credits

• To be eligible to earn locally awarded verified credits a student must:
  – **Pass** the high school course,
  – **Score within a 375-399 scale score range on any administration** of the Standards of Learning test after **taking the test at least twice**, and
  – **Demonstrate achievement** in the academic content **through an appeal process** administered at the local level.

• Contact your division’s central office to learn about any additional local level policy regarding locally awarded verified credits.
Locally Awarded Verified Credits

- VDOE has set no maximum number of locally awarded verified credits that a student with a disability (IDEA/504) may earn towards a standard diploma.

- Local school divisions must ensure that this flexibility to offer locally awarded verified credits in reading, writing and math only applies to students with disabilities (IDEA and 504) who are eligible for credit accommodations as stipulated in each students IEP/504 plan.
Locally Awarded Verified Credits

• Only **scaled scores** from regular End-of-Course (EOC) Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments may be considered.

• **Alternate/substitute assessments**, such as VMAST and WorkKeys, **may not** be used to determine if a student can receive a locally awarded verified credit.
Locally Awarded Verified Credits

- Locally awarded verified credits, as credit accommodations, are **only** allowable for students with disabilities pursuing a Standard Diploma. Students with disabilities pursuing an Advanced Studies or Modified Standard Diploma are **not** eligible to receive locally awarded verified credits.
LOCALLY AWARDED VERIFIED CREDITS

Meet Criteria
Documented
Written
Consent

Pass Course
Take the EOC SOL twice
Scores 375-399 on one administration
Instruction/Courses

The student must successfully complete:

• English
  — 4 standard credits in English/1 verified credit each in Reading & Writing
• Mathematics
  — 3 standard credits in mathematics/1 verified credit in mathematics
• Science
  — 3 standard credits in science (2 disciplines)/1 verified credit in science
• History/Social Science
  — 3 standard credits in history and social science that include
    • Virginia and U.S. History;
    • Virginia and U.S. Government; and
    • 1 verified credit in history and social science
Instruction/Courses

• Allow parts I and II of certain required courses to each earn a standard credit towards the total number required in the subject area.

• It is not necessary to create self-contained classes, there are current examples in both general and special education

  • Student with a Disability
    Example ➔ Algebra I Part 1=1 standard math credit,
    Algebra I Part 2=1 standard math credit

  • Student w/out a Disability
    Example ➔ Algebra I Part 1=1 elective credit
    Algebra I Part 2=1 standard math credit
Economics and Personal Finance (3120)

- The **Personal Finance (3120)** course has been **revised** to include the 21 **Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS)** for the Commonwealth.

- Will meet Economics and Personal Finance requirement if the student has earned at least **3 standard credits in history and social science**.
  - The economics strand in these courses would be deemed a credit accommodation.

- Upon completion of the revised Personal Finance (3120) course, the student **may** take the WRS assessment to earn the Board-approved Workplace Readiness Skills for the Commonwealth credential, **must pass the assessment**!

- This approach would **satisfy the graduation requirements** for economics and personal finance, history and social sciences, and the industry credential.

- Superintendent’s Memorandum No. 105-13, April 19, 2013.  
INSTRUCTION

2 Part Courses
Certain courses
Standard Credits in content areas
Person Finance/WRS/Economics

Meet Criteria
Documented
Written
Consent
Each IEP team/504 committee should determine the credit accommodations needed by the student on a subject by subject basis. A student might use credit accommodations for one subject or all subjects. The team/committee is responsible for determining and documenting those determinations.
Forms/Documentation/Procedures

- A sample eligibility form to assist IEP teams/504 committees in documenting the eligibility process is available on the VDOE website.

- A sample transition IEP that provides the minimum requirements to document credit accommodations on the IEP.
  http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/credit_accommodations.shtml

- Until online IEP vendors produce the changes to local forms, procedures to document the use of credit accommodations in the IEP (i.e., present level of performance (PLOP), prior notice, accommodations page, etc.) will be left to individual divisions.
Forms/Documentation/Procedures

• Divisions may change the appearance, level of detail, or order of the information in the document, but the eligibility criteria must remain intact.

• The level of detail required in the eligibility form is a local decision; however, the specificity must be sufficient for individuals responsible for implementation of the approved credit accommodations to proceed as the IEP team intended.

• An IEP team/504 committee may use one form to document all credit accommodations.

• For IDEA eligible students at the secondary level the discussion must occur at the annual IEP meeting and more often if the need arises. 504 committees should consider accommodations on an as needed basis.
Forms/Documentation/Procedures

• Credit accommodations that are available exclusively to students with disabilities must be documented in accordance with the Board of Education approved guidelines for standard diploma credit accommodations for students with disabilities.

• Informed written consent of the parent or age of majority student is required for the use of credit accommodations.

• Although a 504 plan does not require consent, the eligibility form for credit accommodations does. Therefore, informed written parental/student consent for credit accommodations applies to 504 students as well.
Returning Students

• Students with disabilities through the age of eligibility (through 21st birthday) who received anything other than a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma remain eligible for a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and therefore may return to school.
Returning Students

• In light of the additional pathways to the Standard Diploma with credit accommodations, divisions are encouraged to contact recipients of any diploma other than a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma through the age of eligibility and inform them of the change in policy and remind them that they may return;

• How these students are contacted is a local decision.
VDOE Resources

VDOE Credit Accommodations
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/credit_accommodations.shtml

Substitute Tests
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/

VDOE Career and Technical Education
VDOE Contact Information

• Special Education and Student Services
  – Marianne Moore, Marianne.Moore@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804) 225-3252

• Career and Technical Education
  – Joseph Wharff, Joseph.Wharff@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804) 225-3370

• Standards of Learning and Testing
  – Student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804)225-2102
VDOE Contact Information

- Science, Eric.Rhodes@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804)786-2481
- Mathematics, Michael.Bolling@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804)786-6418
- English, Tracy.Robertson@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804)371-7585
- History/SS, Christonya.Brown@doe.virginia.gov
  – (804)225-2893