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SUBJECT:     **Personal Development Credit Policy**

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Approval Date:

Approved By:

Effective By:

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## **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

Personal development credits will be awarded for approved courses, programs, for approved courses or programs of a high school standard that contribute to the Atlantic Essential Graduation Learnings and meet standards defined in the policy directives and guidelines that follow.

The *Personal Development Credit Policy* will acknowledge the value of student learning outside the public school system by recognizing for high school credit, achievements and credentials earned in the community.

Personal development credits will be reflected on a student's high school transcript thereby enhancing the transcript for the student.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

### *Students*

Any student registered in any public senior high school program.

### *Core Program*

Those courses which, according to Section 49 of the *Ministerial Education Act Regulations*,

- (1) "Each school board shall provide, as part of the Public School Program, in each school under the jurisdiction of the school board" and,
- (2) "Each school board shall provide, in grades 10 to 12 inclusive, as part of the *Public School Program*, but not necessarily in every school under the jurisdiction of the school board."

### *Credit*

Awarded in recognition of successful completion of an approved course that would normally be completed in a minimum of 110 hours of scheduled time.

### *Essential Graduation Learnings*

Areas of learning, as identified by the Department of Education, in consultation with the other Atlantic Canadian provinces, that are essential to a student's development. These are aesthetic

expression, citizenship, communication, personal development, problem solving and technological competence.

*External Program Provider*

An education service agency or organization external to the public school system.

*Personal Development Credit*

Awarded by the school in recognition of the successful completion of a course or program outside of *Public School Programs* delivered by an approved provider.

### **3. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the Personal Development Credit is to provide greater flexibility in meeting graduation requirements by providing high school credit to students who have successfully completed an approved program or course of study external to the public school system and/or have demonstrated high school standards of proficiency in languages not offered in the public school program.

### **4. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all students registered in any Nova Scotia senior public high school and to all agencies or organizations applying to be an approved external provider.

### **5. POLICY DIRECTIVES**

#### **Approving External Course and Program Providers**

External program providers must satisfy mandatory eligibility criteria set by the Department of Education.

To be considered as approved providers of Personal Development Credits, the program or course must be recognized provincially, nationally, or internationally.

Only courses or programs of study that meet the requirements of an external high school credit will be approved by the Department of Education.

Approvals will be in effect for three-year terms unless the Department of Education or the external provider requests that the provider be removed from the approved providers list.

#### **Granting Personal Development Credits**

Personal Development Credits may be granted in grades 10, 11 and 12.

Personal Development Credits may be half or full credits.

Personal Development Credits will not duplicate the courses or programs that are part of Nova Scotia's *Public School Program*.

Within the 18 credits a high school student requires for graduation, **one elective credit** can be a personal development credit.

A personal development credit may not be used to fulfil a student's requirement for the 13 mandatory credits required for graduation.

A student may have an unlimited number of personal development credits entered on their transcript, beyond the 18 required for graduation.

Students who have earned a personal development credit from an approved provider prior to entering grade 10 may be awarded that credit any time after they enter grade 10.

## 6. POLICY GUIDELINES

The Department of Education will develop guidelines on roles and responsibilities, publish eligibility criteria for external program providers, set appropriate course codes, and create materials to support implementation of this policy.

School Boards and schools shall inform parents, guardians and students about Personal Development Credits and related procedures.

## 7. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Department of Education will

- a. communicate this policy to all education partners and collect information from school boards about the use of the policy to enhance students' graduation transcripts following Ministerial approval;
- b. establish the criteria and standards required for an external program or course of study to meet the requirements of a personal development credit;
- c. create a list of approved external providers and the programs or courses of study offered that meet standards established by the Department;
- d. create a process for students to follow when applying for a Personal Development Credit;
- e. review programs or courses of study provided by external providers on a regular basis to ensure they continue to meet established standards; and,
- f. evaluate this policy within two years of its initial implementation.

School Boards will communicate the policy to schools and monitor its implementation.

Schools will ensure that the policy is implemented and monitored.

## **8. MONITORING**

The Deputy Minister of Education is responsible for monitoring overall compliance with this Policy.

The Department of Education will establish an internal Personal Development Credit Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee is to monitor the implementation of this policy, to work with school board staff, and to provide advice to the Deputy Minister regarding any issues that arise related to policy implementation.

The Department of Education, through the Personal Development Credit Advisory Committee, will monitor policy implementation and report annually on the number of students who have had personal development credits recognized on their high school transcripts.

## **9. REFERENCES**

*Nova Scotia Public School Programs*

## **10. INQUIRIES**

For further information about this policy please contact English Program Services at the Department of Education.