



NWT JK-12 Curriculum Renewal

FAQ: Graduation Requirements



As the Northwest Territories (NWT) works toward transitioning to a competency-driven Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 (JK-12) curriculum, there will be new requirements to graduate and earn a high school diploma. However, these will not be major changes for students or educators in the NWT, as most jurisdictions across Canada have similar requirements to graduate.

What are the biggest changes coming to graduation requirements?

The NWT's graduation requirements will be quite similar to British Columbia's with some small but deliberate differences, such as including **made-in-the-NWT courses like Northern Studies**. Northern Studies 10 will still be a required course, but it will be adapted and offered as a Grade 11 course.

The new requirements will also see more **courses around career education offered than previously**, which supports students to start planning for their futures!

The NWT will be moving from a **5-credit to 4-credit system**; this simply means that the credit values for courses will change and does not reflect reduced academic expectations of students.

There will be **changes to large-scale assessment tools**, which are things like standardized tests and exams.

What are the changes to standardized assessments?

Currently, NWT students [write diploma exams for particular courses](#) (i.e., math, chemistry, English Language Arts, social studies) and the marks they receive on those exams generally make up 30% of their final grade.

In the future, students will **only take literacy and numeracy assessments**, which are not tied to specific courses, but are a broad indicator of the student's overall skills in those subjects. As such, students' marks on these tests will **not** be factored into any of their final grades.

- In Grade 10, students will write numeracy and literacy assessments.
- In Grade 12, students will write a literacy assessment.

All students will be required to complete the numeracy and literacy assessments; however, passing is not required to meet graduation requirements..

How will literacy and numeracy tests be marked, and where can I see the results?

The marks for these tests will appear on student's high school transcripts. The results will use a 4-point proficiency scale.

Students will receive one of the following for each assessment they write:

- 1 (Emerging): The student demonstrates an *initial* understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.
- 2 (Developing): The student demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.
- 3 (Proficient): The student demonstrates a *complete* understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.
- 4 (Extending) The student demonstrates a *sophisticated* understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

One assessment – the Grade 10 Literacy – will only show as “met” or “not met” (i.e., completed or not completed).

If students don't have to pass their literacy and numeracy tests, is that a free pass?

No, students' marks on literacy and numeracy assessments will still hold significance. These marks will help teachers to plan for and support their students as they progress through high school. As well, students' scores will appear on transcripts, which may be viewed by post-secondary schools and even potential employers.

Can students re-take the literacy and numeracy tests?

Yes, up until graduation, students may write an assessment up to three times; the original attempt and two re-writes. These attempts may occur at any assessment session during the Grade 10–12 years. Only a student's best score for each assessment will appear on their final transcript.

Students used to need 100 credits to graduate, soon they will need 80 – does that mean less work/classes?

No, this is only because the credit values for each course has changed. Students will still need to complete required courses in the same subject areas (i.e., Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science).

When do the new graduation requirements come into effect?

- The NWT's new graduation requirements will take effect when the draft curriculum is implemented for Grade 10 students in the 2024-25 school year.
 - From that point on, all Grade 10 students will use the new graduation requirements.
 - Anyone in Grade 11 or 12 in the 2024-25 school year will continue to use the graduation requirements that were set when they started high school.
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Who can help a high school student who needs some direction?

[Career and Education Advisors \(CEAs\) are available to work with students](#) in Grades 9-12 in all NWT schools!

In-school supports, such as principals, teachers and career counsellors, are also available to students. School staff and CEAs will be updated on the new graduation requirements in order to continue to support students.

More information

Department of Education, Culture and Employment

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