

2026–27 Procedural Guidelines for Implementing Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

CDM Procedural Guidance

The following information reflects joint guidance from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Offices of: Accountability, Testing, Advanced Learning and Gifted Education, Teaching and Learning, and Career and Technical Education. Each office administers guidance as follows:

- Accountability-End-of-Course (EOC) test scores and application to school accountability
- Testing- EOC testing policy and procedures,
- Advanced Learning and Gifted Education-world language courses and locally developed final exams,
- Teaching and Learning-World Languages, and
- Career and Technical Education-career and technical education (CTE) courses and each proof of learning type.

CDM Mastery Participants

The North Carolina State Board of Education policy [CCRE-001](#) Course for Credit provides guidelines for offering CDM to North Carolina students. CDM is the process in which public school units (PSUs) use a body-of-evidence to award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to enroll in the course for credit. The CDM process is open to all public school students in grades 9–12 in high school courses and in grades 6–8 for high school courses offered in middle school. In the English course sequence, only English I may be taken prior to high school. PSUs may choose to offer CDM to students in grades 6–8 for middle school content. End-of-grade tests may not be used for middle grade CDM purposes. Students must take the end-of-grade assessment based on grade level enrollment, with the exception of NC Math 1 at grade 8.

Note: CDM is optional for charter, lab, regional, and residential schools.

The table on the following page outlines the requirements for each phase of the CDM process.

Process to Demonstrate Mastery

Phase I	Student completes a standard assessment required for the course to demonstrate foundational knowledge. Examinations shall include, where applicable • EOCs • World Language Courses¹ • Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Assessment, or • Locally developed final exam² <i>Retesting is not permitted.</i>	For EOC courses, a student must achieve the following scale scores: • NC Math 1 > 563 • NC Math 3 > 563 • Biology > 361 • English II > 565 For CTE courses, students must achieve the minimum scale score to qualify for Phase II. For all other courses using a locally developed exam, a student must achieve 90% correct to qualify for Phase II.
Phase II	Student completes the artifact development process and any other criteria a PSU requires to demonstrate deep understanding and application of course content.	Credit is indicated on transcripts as “CDM”

When a student attempts to earn credit in a course utilizing a state test, schools must complete the test administration (i.e., Phase I) during one of the CDM testing windows. PSUs may administer locally developed assessments outside of the CDM window.

The 2026–27 test windows are as follows:

- July (last 10 school days of the month);
- September and October (last 5 school days of each month),
- March (last 10 school days of the month), and

¹ PSUs may elect a proficiency-based exam from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) approved assessment list or use a locally developed final exam.

² PSUs may elect to use locally developed assessments for Phase I.

- the state fall and spring EOC testing windows.

EOC Administrations

PSUs administering EOCs for CDM must have an approved *Flexible Testing Permission Request* in NCTest. All CDM EOC tests must have the CDM Student Interface Question (SIQ) selected and must be administered online, except for students with a documented need for paper testing. EOC tests must be administered in a school and cannot be administered remotely.

EOC Online Testing Procedures for CDM Windows

- Appropriate school-level courses must be established in NC Education for each EOC test a school will administer.
- A user with the LEA Test Coordinator (TC) role in NC Education must enter a valid test window (flexible, fall, spring) in the Test Window Scheduler (TWS) in NC Education.
- Courses will be created the night after the TWS is completed.
- Students must be manually enrolled in the course by local NC Education users (refer to the NCTest Admin Guide).
- The CDM Student Interface Questions (SIQs) box must be checked for these students prior to starting the test. If the SIQ box is not checked prior to starting the test, it may be checked after testing. The overnight process will fix reports. Additional SIQs must be manually entered for students requiring accommodations during the test administration (refer to the NCTest Admin Guide).
- Test administrators are expected to complete EOC training with their district or school test coordinator during the most recent test training opportunity, and they must follow all policies and procedures located in the most current publication of the North Carolina End-of-Course Test Administration Guide.

EOC Scoring and Reporting for CDM

- EOC online test results for CDM will be available in the Online Scoring and Reporting System in NCTest. Schools can view the results under *Course-Level Reports by Test Administration* as soon as reports are released by the PSU test coordinator.
- Scoring for EOC tests with constructed response items will be returned to PSU test coordinators within approximately seven business days.

- The PSU test coordinator must have a signed copy of the CDM student record or district documentation of awarded course credit on file.
- Using the *Class Roster Report* in the online system, the PSU test coordinator must select “Met” or “Not Met” for each eligible student in the Phase II status column upon completion of their phase II project.
- District or school TCs must provide a copy of the final form sign-off for CDM completion to their Regional Accountability Coordinator.
- The only report that will be available for CDM purposes is the *Class Roster Report* located in the *Online Scoring and Reporting System*.
 - The roster will include every student who participated in the test administration.
 - Test scores will not be shown for any student.
 - The report will display a status of Met/Not Met for Phase I or Phase II for each EOC test.
 - If a student name does not display on the report, CDM was not selected in the SIQ. After returning to NCTest and selecting the SIQ the report will update overnight and display the student’s score the next day.
- Grade reports and goal summary reports will not be available for students participating in CDM.
- Individual student reports are available for students administered EOC tests for CDM purposes and will only reflect a designation of “Met” or “Not Met”.

Use of EOC CDM Test Scores for Accountability

Scores for students who successfully complete both phases of the CDM process and are granted credit for an EOC course are counted in the NCDPI’s accountability reporting during the same accountability year that the test was administered. If both phases are not completed during the current school year, the scores will not be used for accountability purposes.

World Language Courses

When a student is administered a proficiency-based exam from the NCDPI approved assessment list for the Global Language Endorsement for phase 1 of the CDM process, the score received can be applied to the highest-level language course proficiency outcome, as specified in, [CDM Course Proficiency Outcomes](#). Additionally, the [World Languages Proficiency Outcomes Document](#) describes the minimum student outcomes for the various K-12 programs and courses in Classical Languages, Dual

Language/Immersion (DL/I), Heritage Languages, and Modern Languages, including American Sign Language (ASL), that are offered across the state. If a student is administered a locally developed final exam for World Languages, he/she will follow the guidelines for all other locally developed final exams to complete CDM.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Administrations

CTE courses are categorized into four Proof of Learning (POL) types.

- Performance-based Measurement (PBM)
- Credential
- Local
- CTE State Assessment

The administration of each CTE POL type is distinctly different. Guidelines for administering the CDM process for each CTE POL type are outlined in tables on the following pages.

CTE Performance-based Measurement (PBM) Proof of Learning (POL)

Phase	Assessment or Activity	Details
Phase I	• Student completes a locally developed assessment. • Student must achieve at least 90% correct to qualify for Phase II.	• The PSU develops a local assessment that measures student mastery on all course standards in the <i>CTE Course Management System</i>.
Phase II	• Student completes all components of the PBM outlined in the course PBM Guide. • Student must achieve a 90% or higher on the overall PBM when the PBM has a numeric score or the Proficient level on all Proficiency Scales. • Student result is entered in NCCTE Admin.	• A CTE teacher with experience administering and evaluating the PBM using the course <i>PBM Guide</i> evaluates the student's PBM. • Refer to the current <i>NCCTE Proof of Learning Administration, Credential and Reporting Guide</i> and course <i>PBM Guide</i> for information on administering and reporting PBM results.

CTE Credential Proof of Learning (POL)

Phase	Assessment or Activity	Details
Phase I	• Student completes a locally developed assessment. • Student must achieve at least 90% correct to qualify for Phase II.	• The PSU develops a local assessment that measures student mastery on all course standards in the <i>CTE Course Management System</i>.
Phase II	• Student earns the credential(s) identified as the POL. • Student result is entered in NCCTE Admin.	• Credential(s) identified as the POL are listed in the current <i>CTE Course Management System</i>. • The PSU CTE CIMC PPOC coordinates the credential assessment administration. • Credential assessments must be administered according to the guidelines set by the credentialing entity (vendor). • Refer to the <i>NCCTE Proof of Learning Administration, Credential and Reporting Guide</i> for information on administering credential assessments and reporting results.

Local Proof of Learning (POL)

Phase	Assessment or Activity	Details
Phase I	- Student completes a locally developed assessment. - Student must achieve at least 90% correct to qualify for Phase II.	The PSU develops a local assessment that measures student mastery on all course standards, in the <i>CTE Course Management System</i>.
Phase II	- Student completes the artifact development process to demonstrate deep understanding and application of course content. - Student result is entered in NCCTE Admin.	The PSU develops an artifact development process that measures student mastery and application of all course standards, in the <i>CTE Course Management System</i>.

CTE State Assessment Proof of Learning (POL)

Phase	Assessment or Activity	Details
Phase I	- Student completes the CTE State Assessment. - Student must achieve at least 90% correct to qualify for Phase II.	- CTE State Assessments are administered online via the NC Test application during the designated testing window. - Refer to the current NCCTE <i>Proof of Learning Administration, Credential and Reporting Guide</i> for information on administering CTE State Assessments.
Phase II	- Student completes the artifact development process to demonstrate deep understanding and application of course content. - Student result is entered in NCCTE Admin.	The PSU develops an artifact development process that measures student mastery and application of all course standards, in the <i>CTE Course Management System</i>.

Use of CTE State Assessment Scores for State and Federal Reporting

Scores for students who successfully complete both phases of the CDM process and are granted credit for a CTE course are counted in CTE accountability measures.

Ineligible CTE Courses

See State Board Policy [CCRE-001](#) for information about CTE courses that are excluded from CDM.

Additional Information

The *North Carolina Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery* is located on the Office of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education website found at [Credit by Demonstrated Mastery | NC DPI](#). Documentation available on this website offers detailed procedures for implementing the CDM policy and answers several frequently asked questions about the CDM process.

If PSUs have specific questions, comments, or concerns regarding the CDM process, contact Erica Shoulders-Royster. erica.shouldersroyster@dpi.nc.gov. If PSUs have specific questions regarding CTE administrations for the CDM process, contact Jessica Edwards. jessica.edwards@dpi.nc.gov. If PSUs have specific questions regarding world languages for the CDM process, contact Ann Marie Gunter. ann.gunter@dpi.nc.gov.