

Marks, Results, and Appeals

Submitting School-Awarded Marks

The school where a student is formally registered and has completed the course instruction or a challenge assessment must submit a school-awarded mark to Alberta Education for that student.

School-awarded marks for all diploma examination administrations must be postmarked or transmitted to PASI and Student Records by the dates specified in the *Schedules & Significant Dates* section.

Principals must inform all students about their school-awarded marks prior to the writing of the Part(ie) B humanities, and the mathematics and science, diploma examinations. School-awarded marks should be expressed as a percentage and rounded to the nearest whole number.

Further directives about reporting student achievement in high school courses are published in the *Guide to Education, ECS to Grade 12*, available on the website at <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/guidetoed.aspx>.

Processing Final Marks for Results Statements, Transcripts, and Diplomas

Marks shown on *Results Statements* may or may not correspond to marks shown on the official transcript. The *Results Statement* for all diploma examination administrations reports the most recent diploma examination mark and the most recent school-awarded mark. The transcript reports the highest school-awarded mark, the highest diploma examination mark, and the highest final mark within a three-year period. Any difference will apply only to those students who have either a previous school-awarded mark or a previous examination mark for a specific course.

The manner in which final marks are calculated is dependent upon a number of variables. Students are categorized into three broad groups.

1. Students Registered for Classroom Instruction

Most students who write diploma examinations are registered at either an accredited Alberta high school or at the Alberta Distance Learning Centre. The school-awarded mark that is forwarded by the school is used in the blending process, subject to the following distinctions:

a. Regular Students

For regular students in diploma examination courses, the school mark* (SM) and the examination mark** (EM) are combined on a 50/50 basis to obtain the final mark.

*“school mark” refers to a school-awarded mark.

**“examination mark” refers to a diploma examination mark.

b. Students with Mature Student Status

For mature students, the school mark is used in the 50/50 blending process only if it is higher than the examination mark. If the school mark is lower than the examination mark, the school mark is disregarded and the examination mark becomes the final mark. In both cases, all three marks will appear on the *Results Statement*.

	School Mark	Exam Mark	Final Mark
Student A (Regular)	70	60	65
Student B (Mature)	80	70	75
Student C (Mature)	(65)	70	70

2. Students Not Registered for Classroom Instruction But Writing a Diploma Examination

Students rewriting an examination or mature students who are challenging a diploma examination belong in this group. If a school mark has been assigned in the current or previous two school years, that mark, or if more than one is found the most recent mark, is brought forward and used in the blending process, subject to the following distinctions:

a. Regular Students

For regular students, the school mark is brought forward and combined with the examination mark on a 50/50 basis to obtain the final mark.

b. Students with Mature Student Status

For mature students, the school mark is brought forward only if it is higher than the examination mark. It is then combined with the examination mark on a 50/50 basis to obtain the final mark. If the examination mark is higher than the school mark, the school mark is disregarded and the examination mark becomes the final mark.

	School Mark	Exam Mark	Final Mark
Student A (Regular)	70*	60	65
Student B (Mature)	80*	70	75
Student C (Mature)	(65)**	70	70

*School mark brought forward

**School mark not brought forward

If a student has written a diploma examination and no school mark exists for the current or previous two school years, the final mark is determined as follows:

a. Regular Students

For regular students, an “NSM” (no school mark) is recorded and an “INC” (incomplete) is assigned as the final mark.

b. Students with Mature Student Status

For mature students, the examination mark is assigned as the final mark.

	School Mark	Exam Mark	Final Mark
Student A (Regular)	NSM	70	INC
Student B (Mature)	NA*	60	60

*Not applicable

3. Students Registered for Classroom Instruction But Not Writing the Diploma Examination

If a student has been issued a school mark and does not have a current examination mark, the achievement record is reviewed to determine if an examination mark had been issued in the current or previous two school years. If an examination mark is found, that mark, or if more than one is found, the most recent mark, is brought forward and combined with the school mark on a 50/50 basis, regardless of whether or not the student has mature status. Mature student status is only a factor when a diploma examination is written. If no eligible examination mark is found, the final mark is assigned as “INC” (incomplete).

	School Mark	Exam Mark	Final Mark
Student A (Regular)	70	60*	65
Student B (Mature)	50	60*	55
Student C (Mature)	80	70*	75
Student D (Mature)	65	NW**	INC

*Examination mark brought forward

**Not written

Rounding of Marks

Alberta Education does not award final marks of 48% or 49% for diploma examination courses. Students may receive a school mark or examination mark of 48% or 49%, but in the blending process, a final mark of 48% or 49% is raised to 50%.

Note: If the school mark and diploma examination mark result in a blended final mark of 47.5% this mark is rounded to 48% and then raised to a final mark of 50%.

Reporting to Students

Students who write diploma examinations receive their results from Alberta Education in the form of a *Results Statement* approximately three and one-half weeks after writing (see *Schedules & Significant Dates* section). **The *Results Statement* is not an official transcript of marks.**

The *Results Statement* for all diploma examination administrations has been redesigned to show three important marks:

- the most recent school-awarded mark(s)
- the most recent diploma examination mark(s)
- the most recent final blended mark(s)

The *Results Statement* also shows the Part(ie) A Written Response mark for humanities examinations to help those students who may be considering a rescore request for the Part(ie) A.

The official *High School Transcript of Achievement* reports only the highest school-awarded mark, the highest diploma examination mark, and the highest final mark achieved within the current school year or the previous two school years.

Therefore, marks shown on the *Results Statement* may differ from those shown on the official transcript.

Results Statements are printed and distributed only once after each administration of diploma examinations. Should students require a second copy of their marks, they may obtain a *Statement of Courses and Marks* from PASI and Student Records at no cost. The request form is available on line at

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/students/transcripts/requests.aspx>. The *Statement of Courses and Marks* reports all courses that have been taken by a student, and marks awarded, from Grade 10 to Grade 12. It does not, however, report the breakdown of humanities diploma examination marks (i.e., written-response and machine-scored raw scores).

Transcripts and Diplomas

A student can submit a written request to Alberta Education, or apply on line at <http://www.education.alberta.ca/students/transcripts/requests.aspx>. This document is a record of achievement and shows the following information:

- for each course reported: the course name, language of instruction, year completed, school code, credits earned, and the highest final mark achieved
- for each diploma examination course: the three highest individual

marks (school, examination, and final), the language of instruction, and the language of examination

Transcripts reporting the above information will constitute a complete record for most students. However, the following exceptions should be noted:

- transcripts will show only one mark for courses completed before September 1, 1984, that are now diploma examination courses
- results in diploma examination courses will be recorded on the transcript only if a final mark has been calculated (i.e., no record containing an “INC” will be shown)

If a student repeats any course or rewrites a diploma examination, the transcript reports only the highest school mark, the highest examination mark, and the highest final mark achieved within the current school year or the previous two school years.

To obtain an official transcript or to have a transcript forwarded to a post-secondary institution or a prospective employer, a student must submit a written request with the correct fee per transcript to PASI and Student Records. *Transcript Request* forms are available from any high school or post-secondary institution, or from the Alberta Education website at

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/students/transcripts/requests.aspx>.

Once students have completed the prescribed courses and have accumulated the required minimum of 100 credits, Alberta Education issues the appropriate high school diploma. Alberta high school diplomas are issued at the end of each semester (April and September) and again in November. Refer to the *Guide to Education, ECS to Grade 12*, for a description of the Alberta High School Diploma requirements.

Reporting to Schools and School Authorities

Alberta Education provides multiyear reports on student achievement and participation on diploma examinations by school and school authority electronically on the Alberta Education extranet site. Alberta Education also provides detailed reports for the January and June administrations of the diploma examinations. These detailed reports are useful for identifying areas of strength and weakness in instructional programs.

The Grade 12 Diploma Examinations Program is intended to develop and maintain excellence in educational standards by certifying academic achievement of individual students and by providing information to educators and the public about the effectiveness of the educational system.

Maintaining Consistent Standards Over Time on Diploma Examinations

A goal of Alberta Education is to make diploma examination results directly comparable from session to session, thereby enhancing fairness to students across administrations. To achieve this goal a number of questions, called anchor items, remain the same from one examination to another. Anchor items are used to find out if the student population writing in one administration is different in achievement from the student

population writing in another administration. Anchor items are also used to find out if the unique items (questions that are different on each examination) are different in difficulty from the unique items on the baseline examination (the first examination to use anchor items). A statistical process, called equating, adjusts for differences in examination form difficulty. The resulting equated examination scores ensure that no matter when a student writes, the standard applied to the examination remains consistent.

Examination marks may be adjusted slightly upward or downward depending on the difficulty of the examination written, relative to the baseline examination. These equated marks will be reported to students. As a result of equating to the baseline examination, students' marks will accurately reflect their levels of achievement regardless of the examination administration session in which the student wrote.

When a diploma examination is redesigned in response to a change to the *Program of Study* for that course, the equating process may be temporarily suspended. In such a case, the equating process for that examination is re-introduced following the initial administration cycles for that examination and the reestablishment of a stable baseline.

Note: Detailed information on Maintaining Consistent Standards Over Time is available on the Alberta Education website at <http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/diplomaexams/standards-.aspx>.

Instructional Group Reports

School authorities have the option of having diploma examination results reported by instructional group; i.e., at the class level. This service is available to all superintendents for their schools for the January and June administrations only. The instructional group identifier is an optional data field on Diploma Examination School Mark transmissions. If you wish to have instructional group reports, this data field should be filled out.

The instructional group reports are only available if the Class ID has been provided. Please refer to the Client Services Help Desk (cshelpdesk@gov.ab.ca) if you require more specific information about submitting a unique Class ID for each class.

Reporting to the Public

Provincial results for the previous school year are released every fall by the Minister of Education. Prior to this release, an annual summary report containing combined provincial results for all diploma examination administrations is provided to schools. Summary results for the school year are also published in Alberta Education's annual *Results Report*, which forms part of the department's *Annual Report*.

Planning and Results Reporting

Planning and reporting by school authorities and schools throughout Alberta is carried out within the government's *Accountability Framework*, which depicts an ongoing cycle intended to enable continuous improvement and critical reflection. Via the *Accountability Framework*, school authorities and schools

- measure progress, set priorities, and use results to improve education for

students on an ongoing basis

- incorporate provincial direction and community input into their plans
- communicate school authority and school directions and results with stakeholders (provincial government, staff, parents, and the public)

School authorities plan and implement three-year education plans aligned with ministry directions, allocate resources to schools and programs, monitor progress, report annually to stakeholders, and use results to plan improvements. Schools plan and implement three-year education plans aligned with school board directions, monitor progress, report annually to stakeholders, and use results to plan improvements that will support student learning. School authorities and schools report results on all performance measures in their education plans, including the following required provincial measure: the percentage of students writing Grade 12 diploma examinations who achieved the *acceptable standard* and the percentage who achieved the *standard of excellence*.

For more information on planning and reporting, including target setting, see the *Guide for Education Planning and Results Reporting* on the Alberta Education website at

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/planning.aspx>. School administrators can also access the *Guidelines for Interpreting Diploma Examination Results* on the Alberta Education extranet site.

Multi-year Reports

Multi-year reports of diploma examination results, which include results for 2010–2011, will be available on the extranet in September 2011.

Appeal of School-Awarded Mark

A student who is concerned with a school-awarded mark may:

- appeal to his/her principal under the appeal policy set by the local school board, or
- repeat the course
- appeal to Special Cases Committee

Changes to school-awarded marks for diploma examination courses must be reported to PASI and Student Records before the official release date of the *Results Statements* (see *Schedules & Significant Dates* section).

Concern About a Diploma Examination Mark

A student who is concerned with a diploma examination mark may:

- request a rescore by forwarding a completed *Diploma Examination Rescore Application Form*
- rewrite the examination at a later administration
- repeat the course and not rewrite the examination
- repeat the course and rewrite the examination, or
- appeal to Special Cases Committee

Rescoring an Examination

A student who decides to have a diploma examination rescored must ensure that the application is received before the deadline specified on the *Results Statement* (see *Schedules & Significant Dates* section). Students must pay a fee of \$26.25 for rescoring each examination. If a diploma examination mark is increased by 5% or more as a result of rescoring, the fee is fully refunded. The **rescore mark is considered the final mark** for that particular examination whether the mark is lowered, increases, or remains the same.

For all diploma examination administrations, the most recent school-awarded mark achieved in the current school year or in the previous two school years is reported with the rescored examination mark on a new *Results Statement*. School officials are sent copies of the *Results Statements* that show their students' rescore marks.

Rewriting an Examination

A student who wants to raise a diploma examination mark may rewrite that examination at a January, June, or August session, whether or not he/she is retaking a course. Some restrictions about when a student may rewrite a particular examination may apply, as a result of Alberta Education's initiative to maintain standards on diploma examinations over time. Details about these restrictions are published on the November, April, and August examination schedules (see *Schedules & Significant Dates* section) and on the *Rewrite Fee Form*.

A student who rewrites a diploma examination that was previously written in the current or two previous school years is required to pay a rewrite fee of \$26.25 per re-written examination. The rewrite fee for foreign/exchange students (students from outside Alberta) is \$50.00 per re-written examination.

Further information about rewriting diploma examinations is available in the *Information for Students Planning to Write Diploma Examinations* brochure, which is available on the Alberta Education website at: <http://education.alberta.ca/students/exams.aspx>.

Repeating a Course

Students may repeat a course to obtain a new school-awarded mark. Students are not required to rewrite the diploma examination. In such cases, the most recent examination mark will be reported with the new school-awarded mark on a new *Results Statement*.