

FINAL EXAMINATIONS AND EXEMPTIONS

Final Examinations

All middle and high school courses bearing standard and/or verified credit applied toward high school graduation will include an appropriate written final examination or other approved cumulative or summative assessment such as a performance-based assessment or cumulative project (herein referred to as 'final exams' for purposes of this policy).

1. Final exams will comprise 10% of the final course grade; each quarterly grade will comprise 22.5% of the final course grade.
2. All students enrolled in such courses are expected to participate in the final exam during the scheduled exam time for each course. Early exams will not be permitted unless pre-approved by an administrator for legitimate extenuating circumstances.
3. Final exams will be closely aligned to significant course objectives and provide an appropriate opportunity for each student to demonstrate mastery of these objectives.
4. Final exams should be structured so that students remain fully engaged throughout the scheduled exam period.

Exemptions from Final Exams

Any middle or high school student enrolled in a course bearing high school credit, that includes either an End-of-Course (EOC) Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment or state-approved industry credential or licensure exam, may qualify for an exemption from a course final exam in accordance with the following:

A. Category #1

All students in Grade 6-8, enrolled in a course bearing high school credit with a corresponding EOC SOL assessment, must participate in the EOC assessment to meet federal accountability requirements. These students may qualify for an exemption from a course final exam in accordance with criteria established in Category #2 below.

B. Category #2

Any student in Grade 9-12, enrolled in a course bearing high-school credit with a corresponding EOC SOL assessment for a verified credit that is required for the student's graduation, may qualify for an exemption from a course final exam when all of the following criteria are met:

Qualifying SOL Score – The student passes the corresponding EOC SOL assessment(s) for a course with a scaled score of 400 and above on the initial attempt or qualifying expedited retest during the initial course attempt, if taken prior to the final exam. Students enrolled in courses with more than one EOC SOL assessment will be required to pass all the EOC SOL assessments for a given course to qualify for exemption:

Examples:

- English 11 – requires both *English 11 Reading and Writing* EOC SOL;
- American Studies – requires *English 11 Reading and Writing and United States History* EOC SOL.

Class Attendance – The student has no more than 8 total absences from a course.

Class Grade - The student maintains a course grade of 80% or higher as of the date of final exam.

An exempted student may elect to take a final exam in order to improve a final course grade.

Students who do not participate in an EOC SOL assessment are required to take the final exam for that course.

If the school does not receive EOC SOL assessment results for an eligible class within two full school days prior to the beginning of the first day of scheduled final exams, then students in SOL courses will be exempted according to the same criteria in Category #4.

Students in Grades 9-12, who have satisfied the verified credit requirement for graduation in a particular content area, and who are enrolled in additional high school credit-bearing courses with a corresponding EOC SOL assessment that is not required for graduation, will not participate in the EOC SOL assessment for that course, and will be required to complete the course final exam.

The student's parent or legal guardian may submit a written request to the school for the student to participate in an additional EOC SOL assessment beyond what is required for the student's graduation or to meet the school's federal accountability requirements; however, the following stipulations apply:

- Participation in the parent-requested EOC SOL assessment is optional and may not be used to earn an exam exemption;
- Scores for parent-requested EOC SOL assessments will appear on SOL test score reports and in student extract files and the student's cumulative record;
- Scores for parent-requested EOC SOL assessments will not be included in student grade calculations, nor in calculations for state accreditation and federal accountability.

C. Category #3

Any student in Grade 9-12, enrolled in a Career and Technical Education course bearing high-school credit, including Economics and Personal Finance, with a corresponding state-approved industry credential or licensure exam, may qualify for an exemption from a course final exam when all of the following criteria are met:

Qualifying Credential or Test Score - The student passes the corresponding state-approved industry credential or licensure exam during the initial course attempt and prior to the scheduled final exam.

Class Attendance - The student has no more than 8 total absences from a course.

Class Grade - The student maintains a course grade of 80% or higher as of the date of final exam.

An exempted student may elect to take a final exam in order to improve a final course grade.

Students who do not participate in a corresponding state-approved industry credential or licensure exam are required to take the final exam for that course.

D. Category #4

Any student in Grade 12 may be exempted from a final exam in a non-EOC SOL course during the initial course attempt when all of the following criteria are met:

Class Attendance - Students have no more than 8 total absences from a course.

Class Grade - Students maintain a course grade of 80% or higher as of the date of the final exam.

An exempted student may elect to take a final exam in order to improve a final course grade. All students in Grades 9-11 are required to complete a final exam in every course unless they qualify for an exam exemption in accordance with criteria established in Categories 1-3 above.

Class Attendance Appeals

Written appeals to the principal may be made for reconsideration of exam exemption attendance requirements due to legitimate, documented extenuating circumstances.

Absences due to school-sponsored field trips, while representing the school in extracurricular activities, or on official school business as authorized by the principal, will not be counted against the student in determining eligibility for exam exemption.

Three (3) tardies to a class will constitute the equivalent of one class absence for determining exam exemption eligibility.

The decision of the principal regarding all exam exemption appeals is final.

ADOPTED: September 8, 2015

REVISED: October 11, 2016
January 8, 2019

LEGAL REFERENCE: 8VAC20-131-30

CROSS REFERENCES: IKA Grading
IKF Standards of Learning Tests and Graduation Requirements
IKF-R Diploma and Certificates