

Board/Authority Authorized Courses Q & As

Q: Do courses still need to be approved by Boards of Education prior to being electronically submitted to the Ministry?

A: Yes, Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) course frameworks must be approved by Boards of Education prior to being submitted to the Ministry for review. The role of the Ministry is to ensure that new BAA courses satisfy the requirements set by the Ministry of Education outlined in the Requirements and Procedures, the BAA Course Framework Template and the BAA ESL Course Guidelines found on the BAA website: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/boardauth.htm>

Q: How is the new coding system different from the old one?

A: Rather than the Ministry assigning BAA course codes, districts and schools will select their own BAA course codes from the list of 39 new core categories available to them through BCeSIS and listed on the BAA website: (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/boardauth.htm). Any BAA course that is not coded using the new core categories will be closed as of August 31, 2009.

While the 39 codes are generic and unalterable, the course description can be changed at the school level to reflect the actual content. For example, a course with TRAX code YVPA 11A and a generic description of Visual and Performing Arts could represent Art History for one group of students; Hip Hop for another group and Jewellery and Art Design for a third. These titles would be entered by the school offering each course and would appear on a student's transcript, but the TRAX code would remain as YVPA 11A. However, it is important to note that a student can only get credit for YVPA 11A once. Therefore, if a student enrolls in more than one of the above YVPA 11 courses, the school must use the additional letters provided in the YVPA 11 category (i.e., YVPA 11B, 11C, 11D or 11E) to denote each course as separate and distinct on the student's record. TRAX will then recognize each course as distinct and the student will receive credit for each.

Q: What if a decision is made not to customize the course description on a student by student basis, what will show on a transcript?

A: By default, only the broad core category of the course will show. For example, by default, YCOT 11A will show as 'Construction Trades' rather than a customized course title - for example 'Boat Building 11'. Similarly, YESFL 10A will show as 'ESL'

rather than a customized course title – for example ‘ESL Canadian Culture’. This means that if a student then takes 2 or more courses from the same category, their descriptions would all default to the same generic description although each one would be recognized for credit. So a student could conceivably have two or more courses on their transcript simply showing as ‘Construction Trades’ with no description of what was actually taught.

Q: Is there a way to identify that all YPSYC 11A courses in SD # will be ‘Psychology 11’? Or will it be necessary to customize a course title for each student, each time?

A: The number of letter options (A, B, C, etc.) available in each of the 39 core categories should allow districts the flexibility to use one code for one course.

Q: What if a student, who has already taken a BAA in Psychology (for example YPSYC 12A) transfers to another school district, would a second course in this area taken by this student need to be distinguished by a different code?

A: Yes, since a student can only get credit for YPSYC 12A once. If the second district was using the same code, the student’s course would have to be coded as, say, YPSYC 12B. The course title would identify what the student was studying in that course.

Q: What if a student takes more than 3 courses at one grade level, using up the A, B and C course options?

A: The Ministry recognizes that some subject areas may contain a higher number of courses that may be taken by students than others. That is why there are additional letter options available in certain categories. For example, the letter options for the core category *YVPA Visual and Performing Arts* include “A” to” P.

Q: How will French Immersion courses be recognized?

A: Where courses being taught in French have been identified, separate codes where F is the second letter in the code have been created. eg:

YLRA 10A - BA Leisure and Recreational Activities 10A (course taught in English)

YFLRA10A - BA Loisirs et activités récréatives 10A (same course taught in French)

Q: Can I call the course anything I like?

A: Yes, however you are limited to 33 characters and spaces. TRAX and BCeSIS can accommodate 40 characters in the course title field, but when you count the “BA and space” at the beginning of the title and the grade “10A” at the end, this leaves 33 spaces for the course title; anything else will be cut off.