

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5410

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
College & Workforce Development

**Title:** An act relating to a systemwide credit policy regarding advanced placement, international baccalaureate, and Cambridge international exams.

**Brief Description:** Concerning a systemwide credit policy regarding advanced placement, international baccalaureate, and Cambridge international exams.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Mullet, Rivers, Palumbo, Lias and Wilson, C.).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

College & Workforce Development: 3/20/19, 3/27/19 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill  
(As Amended by Committee)**

- Requires public higher education institutions to establish a policy for granting as many credits as possible to students who earned minimum scores of 4 on International Baccalaureate (IB) exams and scores of e on Cambridge International exams.
- Directs the higher education institutions to develop a process to retroactively award credit for IB exams to students who first enrolled in the institution in the 2018-19 academic year.
- Requires the credit policies to be posted on campus websites and reviewed on a biennial basis.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Entenman, Vice Chair; Leavitt, Vice Chair; Van Werven, Ranking Minority Member; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Graham, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Kraft, Mead, Paul, Pollet, Ramos, Rude, Sells, Slatter, Sutherland and Young.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

## **Background:**

Students who demonstrate competency in a subject by scoring well on an exam may earn college credit or have the option to opt-out of an introductory college course. National exams include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Cambridge International.

### International Baccalaureate.

The IB Diploma Programme is a two-year university preparation program for students age 16 through age 19. Students in the IB Diploma Programme participate in a compulsory core that includes: a Theory of Knowledge class; an extended essay; and a creativity, activity service. The IB students take classes in six subjects: language and literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, sciences, math, and the arts. The IB courses are offered at either standard level (SL) or higher level (HL). The HL courses are comprised of 240 teaching hours whereas SL courses are 150 teaching hours. Students are required to take at least three courses at HL, but no more than four. Students must pass an exam at the end of each course. The scoring for these exams is a range of 1 to 7 points. Students earn an IB diploma if they meet the minimum requirements of the program, including completing the core program and earning at least 24 points across the six subject exams with a minimum score of 3 in at least four subjects. However, not all students seek to earn an IB diploma. Many students take individual IB classes.

### Cambridge International.

The Cambridge International programs are for students age 16 through age 19. Programs are offered in 55 different subjects in either AS or A level. The Cambridge International AS is typically a one-year program, while A level is two years. The exams at the end of a course are graded on a scale of A\* through E.

### Advanced Placement Credit Policy.

During the 2017 Legislative Session, Engrossed Senate Bill 5234 was enacted and required the institutions of higher education to establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting undergraduate college credits to students who earn minimum scores of 3 on AP exams. The institutions are required to post the policy on campus websites, conduct reviews of the policy, and report noncompliance in annual reports to the Legislature beginning November 1, 2019.

Engrossed Senate Bill 5917 passed during the 2018 Legislative Session, which required the institutions of higher education to establish policies for granting as many undergraduate college credits for general education requirements to students who completed IB or Cambridge International exams. Examples of credit policies institutions could consider were included, such as whether a four on a SL or HL IB exam or a grade of E on a Cambridge International exam may earn college credit.

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## **Summary of Amended Bill:**

The public institutions of higher education must establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting as many undergraduate college credits as possible and appropriate to students who have earned minimum scores of 4 on SL and HL IB examinations and scores of 4 or higher on A and AS level Cambridge International exams. In addition, the institutions must establish a process for retroactively awarding undergraduate college credit for scores of 4 or more on SL and HL IB examinations for students who first enrolled in the 2018-19 academic year.

The credit policies for IB must be posted on campus websites effective for the 2019 fall academic term, whereas the credit policies for Cambridge International exams must be posted for the 2020 fall academic term. The credit policies must be publicly accessible.

If an institution is unable to award general education course equivalency, the student may request in writing an evidence-based reason as to why general education course equivalency cannot be granted. General education course equivalency means credit that fulfills general education or major requirements and is not elective credit.

The institutions must conduct biennial reviews of the AP, IB, and Cambridge International policies and report noncompliance to the Legislature by November 1 each biennium, beginning November 1, 2019.

The institutions must provide an update on their credit policies to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee by December 31, 2019.

#### **Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Substitute Bill:**

The amended bill removed the requirement that the higher education institutions report demographic data of students who do and do not receive college credit. It was also specified that credit be provided for A and AS level Cambridge International exams.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

#### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill guarantees that if you are a high school student in Washington, and you pass your IB exam, you will earn college credit. The second part of this is making it as easy as possible for high school students to determine which courses get course equivalent credit. Students and parents will understand what credit the student will receive at each institution. This information allows the student to factor it into their decision regarding which higher education institution to attend. The bill strengthens the policy passed last year.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Mullet, prime sponsor; Chris Mulick, Washington State University; Joe Dacca, University of Washington; Brooke Davies, College Board; and Michael McSweeney, Washington State Parent Teacher Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.