



**SAN DIEGO**  
Community College District

City College · Mesa College · Miramar College  
College of Continuing Education

# **SDCCE TO COLLEGE CREDIT BY EXAM**

## **2023-24 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL  
EFFECTIVENESS AND RESEARCH

Institutional Innovation and Effectiveness



## Context

This summary provides key findings from the 2023-24 SDCCE to College Credit by Exam Annual Report, which provides a picture of the overall noncredit-to-credit articulation credit by exam mechanism and the benefits and challenges throughout the different stages of a student's journey. There are opportunities to improve processes, communication, and outcomes for the SDCCE CTE Transitions Credit by Exam mechanism. The full report provides additional data, context, and insights about each of the stages of the students' journey. The full report also provides details on the credit by exam mechanism requirements, how this implementation has changed over time, the report's methodology (shaped by SDCCD's data architecture), and limitations. This summary focuses solely on the recommendations and key findings. [Please view our full report for more details here](https://www.sdccd.edu/docs/ISPT/workforce/docs/SDCCE-CBE-AnnualReport-2019-20-to-2023-24.pdf)<sup>1</sup>.

SDCCE to College CTE Transitions Credit by Exam is a mechanism to provide San Diego College of Continuing Education (SDCCE) career education students with opportunities to earn credit for prior learning at San Diego City, Mesa, and/or Miramar College and accelerate credit college degree completion. Faculty led course-to-course credit by exam articulated agreements and developed and maintained to allow students to earn college credit ***without fees and regardless of residency status*** after successfully completing approved SDCCE career education courses and meeting all requirements.

Over the past four years major revisions to the administrative back-end of the process have been made as well as student and faculty requirements. The business processes around SDCCE's credit by exam mechanism are still being revised; improvements are informed by past data findings and current data engagement.

Student data was analyzed with the goal of answering guiding questions related to active agreement counts, student enrollments, credit received by students, student's transition to the credit colleges, credit college enrollment in CBE pathways, and awards received by students. Student data was stratified by credit college history and grade eligibility. In this report credit college history strongly impacted credit college transitions (see [page 7 of the full report](#) for methodology).

The credit by exam grade eligibility values in this report reflect improvements of the revised final assessment grades procedures in place beginning summer 2023. ***They also highlight how the active credit college CCCApply application remains the primary barrier to students receiving college credit.*** Students without an active credit college application on file, credit cannot be transcribed. As SDCCE implements revised processes (including communication to revisions to staff, faculty, and students), we anticipate student outcomes to continue to improve.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sdccd.edu/docs/ISPT/workforce/docs/SDCCE-CBE-AnnualReport-2019-20-to-2023-24.pdf>

## Background

SDCCE to College CTE Transitions Credit by Exam is a mechanism to provide San Diego College of Continuing Education (SDCCE) career education students with opportunities to receive credit for SDCCE courses at San Diego City, Mesa, and/or Miramar college. Select SDCCE courses have agreements established at San Diego City, Mesa, and/or Miramar college. The agreements are faculty-led. These agreements enable SDCCE students to receive college credit **without additional fees and regardless of residency status** after demonstrating mastery in pre-approved SDCCE career education courses and after meeting all agreement requirements. The requirements to receive SDCCD college credit through SDCCE to College CTE Transitions Credit by Exam in 2023-24 are below. In 2023-24 students were required to:

1. Enroll in a SDCCE course tied to an active Credit by Exam agreement
2. Not have opted out of receiving credit
3. Have an active college application for City, Mesa, or Miramar College
4. Earn an "A", "B", or "C" in the course(s)
5. Earn an "A" or "B" on the approved final assessment within the course(s)
6. Satisfactorily completed noncredit course certificate (*new as of Fall 2023*)

## Process Revisions

SDCCE to College Transitions Credit by Exam has continually undergone process revisions to improve the mechanism for both students and faculty. Comprehensive process revisions and continued improvement efforts are available on [page 5 of the full report](#). Accordingly, three major process revisions were made recently to remove barriers to student success (Table 1).

*Table 1. Summary of Changes to Credit by Exam Mechanism Over Time*

Revision	Impact
<b>Fall 2022:</b> Courses that can receive college credit are indicated on the SDCCD online class search. <b>Fall 2024:</b> SD Advance webpage launched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides visibility of SDCCE credit by exam courses before enrollment</li> </ul>
<b>Fall 2023:</b> Noncredit CCCApply implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will have one requirement for credit CCCApply (CCCID) but still must complete the credit college CCCApply application.</li> </ul>
<b>Fall 2023:</b> Course grade eligibility will also include "C"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of course grade eligible students</li> </ul>

**Missing active credit CCCApply applications continue to be the largest barrier preventing the awarding of credit.**

## Guiding Questions

### Agreements

1. How many SDCCE credit by exam courses are ***tied to agreements***?

### Student Enrollments

2. ***How many enrollments could potentially earn credit*** through the SDCCE credit by exam mechanism?
3. What are the ***enrollment checkpoint trends*** over the last five years?

### Credit Received by Students

4. ***How many students are earning credit*** through the SDCCE credit by exam mechanism?
5. What are some ***barriers*** to receiving credit?

### Student Transitions to Credit College

6. How many CBE participants are transitioning to the credit colleges and are ***CBE eligible enrollment students more likely to transition to the credit colleges***?
7. For SDCCE credit by exam participants, when they transitioned, ***did they stay in the same general pathway*** as the credit they earned?

### Awards Received by Students

8. Are SDCCE CTE credit by exam participants that transition to the credit colleges ***completing degrees/certificates***?
9. Are SDCCE credit earners who transitioned to the credit colleges ***more likely to complete credit degrees*** than SDCCE noncredit earners that transitioned?
10. For SDCCE CTE credit by exam participants that transitioned and got a credit award, ***did they earn an award in the same general pathway*** as they earned credit in through the SDCCE credit by exam mechanism?

## Key Insights

Agreements ([see details on page 11 of the full 2024 annual report](#))

In 2023-24 there were 48 noncredit courses tied to 45 credit college courses. This is a minor change from prior years. The number of SDCCE courses with agreements decreased by 2%, from 49 to 48 in 2023-24, with new agreements in 2023-24 for Child Development and Digital Media and Programming. All nine SDCCE programs have at least one agreement. It is recommended to continue credit and noncredit faculty training and support for agreement development focused on core credit college requirements and industry needs.

### Recommendations:

- Continue credit and noncredit faculty training and support for agreement development focused on core credit college requirements and industry needs.
- Continue the implementation of strategies to support existing agreements and develop new agreements connected to college courses that lead to core certificate and degree requirements (and when possible lead to high wage and high demand careers).

Student Enrollments ([see details on page 13 of the full 2024 annual report](#))

***There is a significantly larger number of students that could earn college credit in the 2023-2024 year than ever before.*** The changes to final assessment grade collection have increased the CBE eligible rate of graded enrollments from 41% to 73%. In 2023-24, SDCCE had 3,492 graded enrollments within noncredit courses tied to active agreements and 2,533 (73%) were CBE eligible. Expanding course grade eligibility to include 'C' increased CBE eligible enrollments by 1%. Forty-four percent of active enrollments were ungraded or other graded enrollments. Sixty-three percent of students attempting all courses in multi-course agreements were CBE eligible.

**A student cannot be eligible for credit without an overall course grade, final assessment grade, and satisfactory noncredit course certificate. Historically, the collection and record keeping of these two grades were lacking.**

### Recommendations:

- Review sections with zero CBE eligible students.
- Continue to ensure noncredit faculty teaching noncredit courses tied to active agreements are fully trained and aware of grading requirements.

### Credit Received by Students ([see details on page 21 of the full 2024 annual report](#))

The 2023-24 academic year is expected to have credit transcribed 650 times. The three agreements with most students receiving credit were Medical Terminology (HLTH 612), Toddler Development and Care (HMDV 581) and Air Conditioning/Heating I and II (MECT 431 and MECT 432).

### Barriers ([see details on page 26 of the full 2024 annual report](#))

The primary barrier preventing students from receiving credit is the need for an active credit college application on file. ***Approximately one-third of CBE eligible students did not have an active credit college application on file.*** Without an active credit college application on file, credit cannot be transcribed.

#### Recommendations:

- Continue to support students with the credit college application and registration process from multiple SDCCD employees. Provide ongoing and regular training to faculty, deans, counselors, and staff employees
- Increase student awareness and support for completing the credit college application.
- Increase clarity of application requirements and steps to ensure students understand requirements and minimize confusion by the term 'CCCApply'.

### Student Transitions to Credit College ([see details on page 27 of the full 2024 annual report](#))

Approximately one out of twelve SDCCD CTE Transitions students in the 2022-23 academic year subsequently enrolled at the credit colleges (9%, 253 of 2,918). Students with credit history were more likely to subsequently enroll at the credit colleges than noncredit only students (85% vs 4%). Healthcare was the SDCCE program with the highest rate of noncredit only students to transition (14%).

Students that transition to the credit colleges enrolled in courses related to their CBE pathway 27% of the time, regardless of having recent credit history. Child Development and Information Technology had the largest percent of students enrolling at the credit colleges in their pathway. For noncredit only students these programs have the highest pathway enrollment: Information Technology (55%), Child Development (44%), and Skilled and Technical Trades (44%).

#### Recommendation:

- Continued faculty engagement on identification and communication of what is considered a pathway. Pursue opportunities to connect/integrate CTE Transitions Credit by Exam into existing initiatives, such as Guided Pathways.

### Awards Received by Students ([see details on page 35 of the full 2024 annual report](#))

2023-24 participants: More time is needed to pass to observe credit college awards. At the time of analysis, 2% of students that transitioned have been conferred awards (5 of 253). All of them had prior credit college history.

2022-23 participants: Six percent of students that transitioned have been conferred awards. 21 students were conferred 28 awards. Seven were noncredit only students.

***It is too early to observe the impacts on student rates earning credit college awards.*** Few awards have been conferred for 2022-23 participants and the SDCCE CTE Transitions credit by exam mechanism has shifted significantly in the past two years to improve the process. Award rates will continue to be monitored to allow more time to pass with the new process in place.

In the 2022-23 cohort, 21 students were conferred credit degrees and six of the students' awards (29%) were in the pathway that students received continuing education college credit that could be used to fulfill the degree's requirements. This rate was similar for students regardless of having recent credit history or not.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the highlighted orange boxes provided throughout this report as well as informed by the efforts of the SDCCE Credit by Exam process improvement team and recent process and practice changes.

**Reminder: The SDCCE Credit by Exam Process Improvement Team convenes monthly, is facilitated by Educational Services, and includes representatives from SDCCE Student Services, Counseling, and Instruction along with key District support roles.**

### Data Collection, Analysis, and Engagement

- **Continued Institutional support of grades:** The integration of final assessment grades was implemented in Summer 2023 and dramatically increased the percent and volume of CBE eligible students. However, Institutional support for final assessment grade policies similar to the 2020 memo on Continuing Education Grading and Credit Policies for letter grades will be beneficial. Exploration of sections with zero CBE eligible students is recommended, ([pg. 17 of the full report](#)).
- **Contextualize transition rates:** Collaborate with SDCCD Institutional Research offices to identify benchmark transition rates for SDCCE students to the credit colleges, particularly for noncredit CTE students.
- **Qualitative data collection on transitioning and CCCApply:** Engage with students to record and incorporate their voice on transitioning and credit college CCCApply experience.

### Agreement Development

- **Continued agreement development that leads to degree completion and workforce needs:** Credit by exam is an opportunity to accelerate degree and certificate completion at the credit colleges and not repeat the same content in a credit college course that they already learned at SDCCE. Not all agreements include credit college courses that are meaningfully tied to a credit college certificate, degree, or program pathway. Continued credit and noncredit faculty training and support for agreement development focused on core credit college requirements and industry needs is recommended. The implementation of strategies to support existing agreements and develop new agreements connected to college courses that lead to core certificate and degree requirements (and when possible lead to high wage and high demand careers) should continue ([pg. 11 of the full report](#)).



## Student Support and Outreach

- **Increase CTE Transitions Credit by Exam awareness:** Increasing noncredit student awareness, as well as general awareness across staff and faculty roles within SDCCE continues to be a priority need. Increased SDCCE promotion, communication, and student support for CTE Transitions Credit by Exam may be beneficial, particularly in the inclusion of syllabi and digital spaces.
- **Continue to support students with the credit college application and registration process from multiple SDCCD employees:** Increase student support for completing the credit college CCCApply application. Completion of the credit college application is the number one barrier preventing noncredit students from earning credit through the CTE Transitions Credit by Exam mechanism. Focusing on student awareness and hands-on support for completing the credit college application is recommended. With the transition to noncredit CCCApply, clear communication and guidance on the difference and how to complete both is recommended ([pg. 26 of the full report](#)).
- **Provide training to faculty, deans, counselors, and staff employees:** Provide ongoing and regular training to faculty, deans, counselors, and staff across both instructional and student services. Clear communication and understanding of the revised processes and requirements as well as awareness of current agreements is needed throughout the SDCCE community.

# OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND RESEARCH

1/31/2025