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by Meghan Dale

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Who Benefits from Dual Credit Programs? Evidence from British Columbia

by **Meghan Dale**

Ensuring that young people successfully graduate and transition from secondary school to postsecondary education is an important goal for every province and territory in Canada, with considerable funding and initiatives dedicated to improving student outcomes. One such initiative, employed in multiple provinces, is "dual credit" programming. While the format varies across jurisdictions, these programs in nearly all cases allow secondary school students to take courses offered by, or in conjunction with, a postsecondary institution. These courses count towards both secondary school credits and postsecondary credits, and even a postsecondary credential, hence the name "dual credit." They are offered free of charge to students and typically are taken in the final years of secondary school.

Dual credit programs have been developed in various forms worldwide since the 1970s,[1] with several different goals based on students' needs. Aims include easing the transition to postsecondary education for high-achieving students, encouraging secondary school graduation for more vocational or career-oriented students, or helping those at risk of not graduating secondary school with a more traditional curriculum to earn a secondary school diploma. Across Canada, several terms are currently used for these types of programs, although they do not necessarily target the same population in each province: dual credit, dual enrolment, and concurrent enrolment. In British Columbia, dual credit is the most widely accepted term and is typically intended for at-risk students, as identified by the school, to increase their likelihood of graduating secondary school.

The types of courses and subjects offered via dual credit programs are unique to each school and its respective partner institutions and depend on the availability of instructors. These courses can take many forms and cover many subjects, ranging from apprenticeships or other training in the trades to specific vocational training through an affiliated program, and general college and undergraduate courses and their prerequisites.

This study on the dual credit program in British Columbia explores two major themes. First, it provides a detailed description of trends in participation in the dual credit program and the demographic characteristics of secondary school students in British Columbia who took at least one dual credit course. Second, it explores the academic trajectory of these students as they transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

Data used in this study

The analysis uses the British Columbia kindergarten to Grade 12 longitudinal dataset (BC K–12), integrated anonymously with the Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS) and the Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS) through the Education and Labour Market Longitudinal Platform (ELMLP).

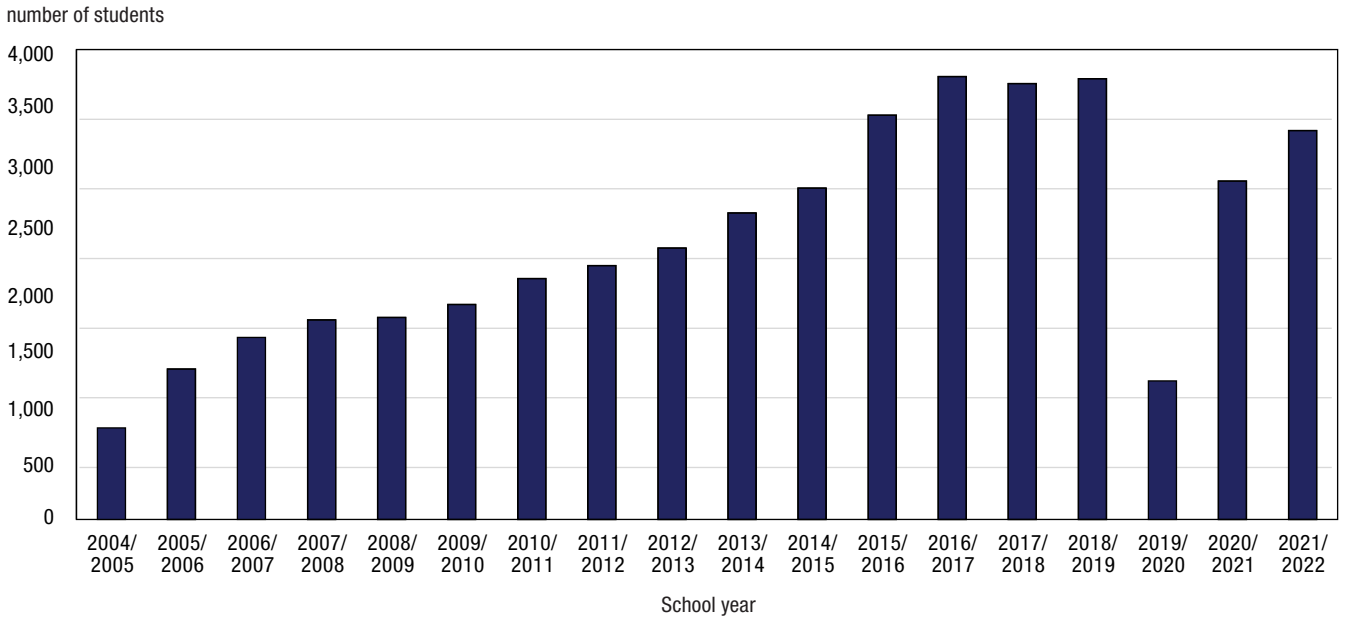
1. Fincher-Ford, 1997; Kim, 2008.

Subsets of the population were selected for different parts of the analysis. The main population of interest comprises students in grades[2] 10, 11 or 12; and "secondary" students[3] who attended a public secondary school in British Columbia[4] between the academic years of 2004/2005 and 2021/2022,[5] for a total of approximately 42,840 students. Additional selection criteria that were used to further break down the population are detailed in relevant sections below. In addition, where applicable, dual credit students are compared with students who did not participate in the dual credit program. These students are presented as a control group of non-dual credit students, and apart from not participating in the program, all other inclusion criteria remain the same. They are referred to as the "general population" group in all comparisons within the study.

How many students participate in the dual credit program in British Columbia?

Enrolment in dual credit classes grew steadily from 2004/2005 until the 2016/2017 school year. From then, it remained stable until the 2019/2020 school year, which saw a significant drop, likely because of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. After that year, enrolment rose again to near pre-pandemic levels, and in 2021/2022, approximately 2% of all students took at least one dual credit class in secondary school (Chart 1). Since the population of students in British Columbia remained relatively stable over the study period, it is the proportion of enrolment in the dual credit program that is increasing.

Chart 1
Dual credit enrolments in secondary schools, by school year, British Columbia



Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12).

2. If students attended more than one school within an academic year, they would have multiple records, which may not be assigned the same grade. For students with multiple records in one school year—common for dual credit students—the grade of the record that included the dual credit course was prioritized over other records.
3. The "secondary" classification is for the records of students who are not assigned a traditional numerical grade by the school. Students with the secondary classification include those who are taking courses at a number of levels and who are not considered by school personnel to be in a specific grade. They could also include students with special needs.
4. While dual credit programs exist in some form in all Canadian provinces, microdata for analysis are available only in British Columbia and Ontario.
5. While the BC K–12 dataset covers the 1991/1992 to 2020/2021 school years, fewer than 50 students took dual credit classes each year before 2004/2005. These years have been excluded from the analysis.

Of the 61 public school districts in British Columbia with secondary schools, 60 had at least some participation in the dual credit program from 2004/2005 to 2021/2022. Approximately 98% of students who took dual credit courses did so through a public school in British Columbia, while the remaining 2% were at independent institutions or homeschooled.

There was considerable variability in participation both by district and by year. In the most recent year of data available, 2021/2022, the highest percentage of students taking dual credit classes in a single district was 11.0%. In the same year, 17 districts had less than 1% taking dual credit classes, 12 had 1% to 2%, and the remaining 32 had more than 2%. In general, overall participation increased year over year until 2019/2020 in both large and small districts, and this increase does not appear to be related to overall student population size, location or size of the school district.

Dual credit courses are potentially available to students beginning as early as Grade 10, yet most students took a dual credit class only as they approached graduation. Nearly all students (92.6%) who participated in the dual credit program did so only once, while 7.4% participated twice or more. Of those who participated once, 83.9% did so in Grade 12, 12.5% did so in Grade 11 and 2.1% did so in Grade 10, with the remaining 1.6% falling in the aforementioned "secondary" grade category. Because Grade 12 is the primary year when students engage with the dual credit program, the following student profile analysis will focus on students in Grade 12 only.[6]

Who is more likely to be in the dual credit program?

In British Columbia, the dual credit program was initially introduced to help students at risk of not graduating from secondary school. How participating students are found is determined at the school level, typically by teachers and administrators identifying students who may benefit from postsecondary and trades course offerings.

Compared with the general population of students in secondary school, there were some marked differences in demographics. For example, while boys made up about half of the total Grade 12 population, they accounted for 64.2% of Grade 12 participants in the dual credit program. Students in the dual credit program were also less likely to be out-of-province students (including international students),[7] less likely to have taken an English as a second language class and more likely to identify as Indigenous (Table 1). The proportion of students who had participated in French immersion classes, both in Grade 12 and previously in secondary school, was similar in the dual credit population and the general population, with a difference of less than 0.1 percentage points.

Table 1
Demographic characteristics of Grade 12 students, British Columbia

Demographics	Dual credit students	General population	Difference in percentage points
	percent		
Male	64.2	50.5	13.7
Out-of-province student	1.0	5.0	-4.0
English as a second language	2.5	5.5	-3.0
Indigenous identity	12.7	9.1	3.6
Any disability or diverse ability[1]	13.6	11.1	2.5
Autism spectrum	0.7	0.9	-0.2
Gifted	1.6	1.9	-0.3
Learning disability	7.2	4.0	3.2
Mental illness	1.3	1.0	0.3

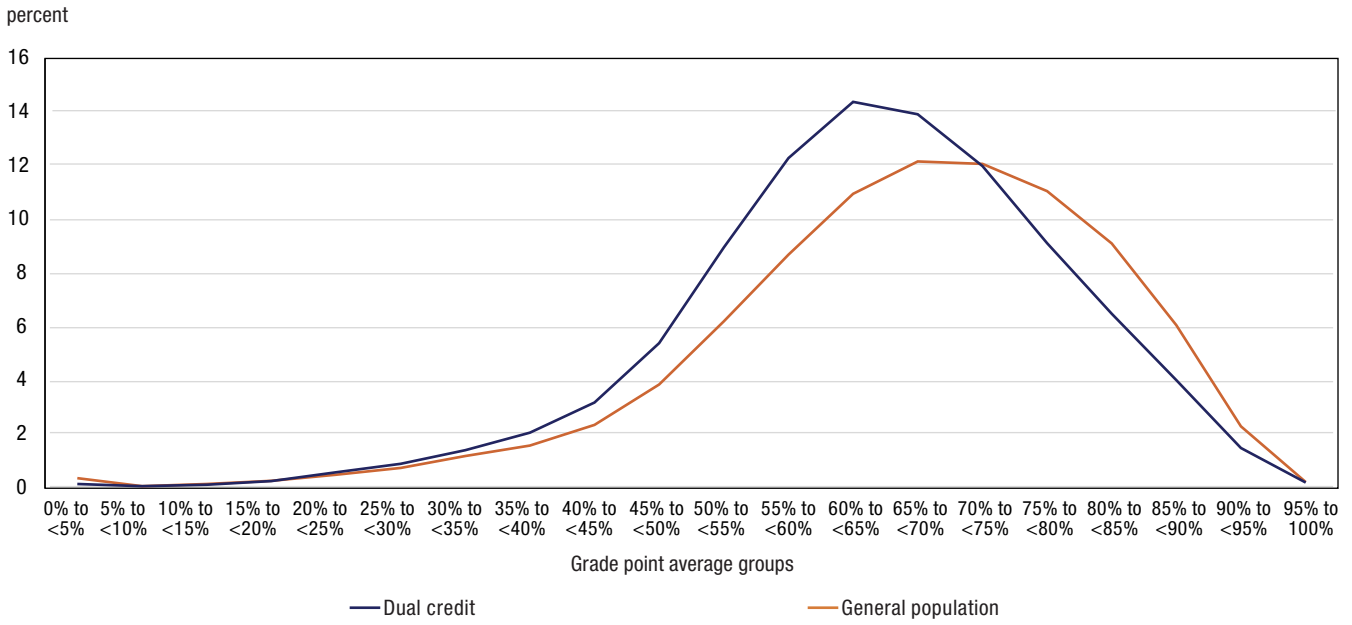
1. The labels for disabilities and diverse abilities provided are those found in the BC K–12 dataset and are defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care. Only one disability or diverse ability can be listed for a student in a given school year, often the one that is considered the most severe.
Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12).

6. For students who take more than the required four years of secondary school, records for all subsequent years in the British Columbia data are also classified as the student being in Grade 12. Only the first year when a student enters Grade 12 is considered and used in the remainder of the analysis when referencing a student's Grade 12 year.
7. In the British Columbia data, a student was assumed to be an international student if they were not a resident of British Columbia at the time of collection.

Students who participated in the dual credit program were 2.5 percentage points more likely than the general population to have an identified disability or diverse ability in Grade 12. The most common type of disability or diverse ability for students in the dual credit program was a learning disability (7.2%), which also had the greatest difference between the dual credit population and the general population among the disability and diverse ability groups. While the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care identifies other disabilities or diverse abilities, these four are the most prevalent among the dual credit students and show the largest differences between the two populations.

Academically, students enrolled in dual credit classes had poorer overall achievement than those in the general population. The mean grade point average (GPA) for dual credit students was 63.8%, while the mean GPA for the general population was 66.6% (Chart 2). However, the overall distribution is similarly shaped for both groups, with less than 10% of students having a GPA below 45%.

Chart 2
Grade point average in Grade 12 among general population and dual credit students, British Columbia



Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12).

Among academically at-risk students, dual credit students are more likely to graduate

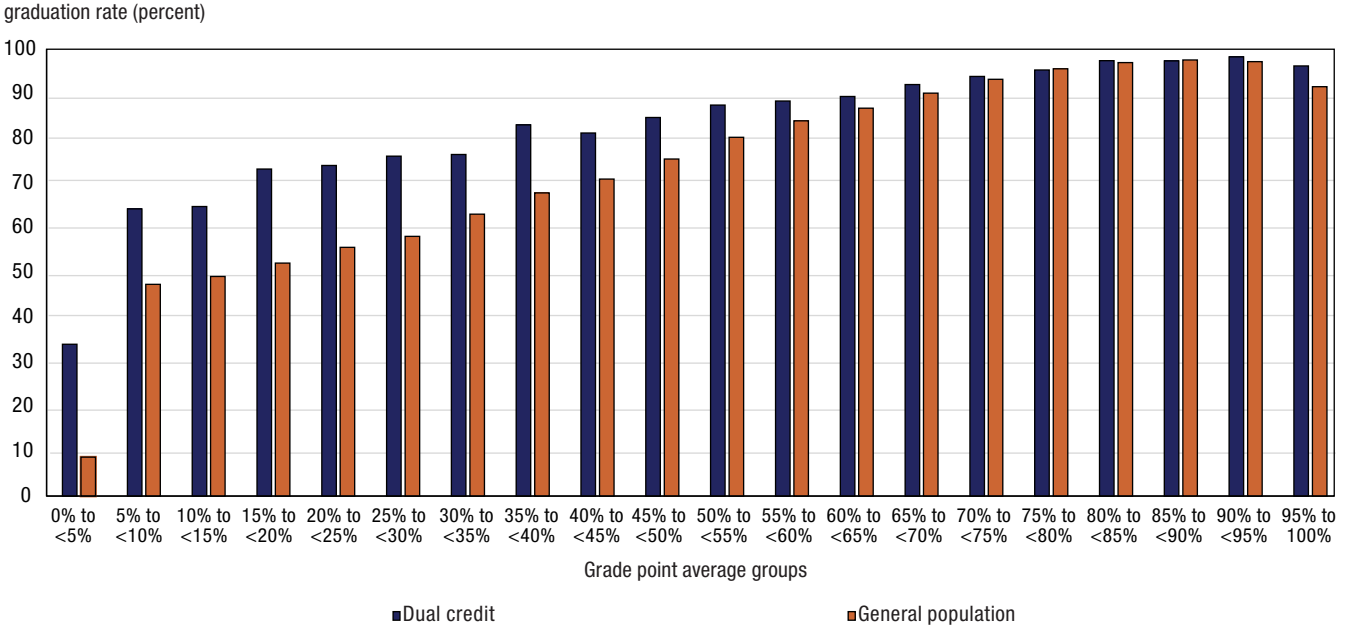
Since the primary purpose of the dual credit program is to assist students who are struggling in secondary school, there are several potential methods of determining success in the program. The first is to look at the secondary school graduation rate. A student was considered to have graduated secondary school if they received the British Columbia Dogwood Diploma or Adult Dogwood Diploma, the standard diploma for secondary student graduation in British Columbia, within six years of their first year of Grade 8.[8]

Overall, 89.0% of dual credit students graduated secondary school, while this was the case for 78.5% of the general population of students in British Columbia. While the percentage is higher for the dual credit students, despite their lower overall academic performance, the greatest differences are visible when examining graduation rates by GPA in Grade 12 (Chart 3).

8. Beyond taking longer than six years to graduate or not graduating at all, there are a variety of other circumstances where a student may not meet this diploma standard. Outcomes such as relocating outside British Columbia, dying or receiving a different type of diploma (such as a British Columbia Evergreen Certificate) cannot be identified using the BC K–12 data. Official graduation rates published by the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care correct for these measures, but it was not possible to do so in this analysis because of data limitations. As such, graduation rates should be compared only against one another and not be taken as an absolute graduation rate of secondary school students in British Columbia.

For students with a GPA of 70% or higher, the graduation rate is similar between dual credit students and the general population, approaching the ceiling with a 93% to 100% graduation rate. However, as GPAs decrease below 70%, the disparity between those participating in the dual credit program and the general student body grows wider. The graduation rate of dual credit students remained above 60% for all but those with the lowest GPA.[9] This suggests that the dual credit program may have a substantial impact on the likelihood of secondary school graduation among the most academically at-risk students.

Chart 3
Graduation rate among general population and dual credit students, by Grade 12 grade point average, British Columbia



Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12).

The subsequent analysis compares the pathways of students with lower GPAs with those of students with higher GPAs. This distinction was made by creating a "low GPA" group, representing those who had a GPA below 60%, and a "high GPA" group, representing those with a GPA of 60% or above. While a GPA below 50% is considered to be less than a passing grade, placing the distinction at 60% creates a more robust comparison group, since the low GPA group represents approximately 35% of dual credit students and 26% of the general population. This distinction was made in an attempt to better understand the impact of dual credit programming on students who were at greater risk of not finishing secondary school.

Postsecondary pathways of dual credit students differ from those of the general population

Another possible measure of success of the dual credit program is enrolment in postsecondary education at a college or university or in a registered apprenticeship program after leaving secondary school. Determining such enrolment is difficult for dual credit students, since they have atypical enrolment in postsecondary institutions compared with their general population peers. Because the dual credit program fulfills requirements for both secondary and postsecondary credentials simultaneously, students can appear in postsecondary institution records both during their secondary school studies (dual credit program) and after completing secondary school during a transition to further postsecondary education. It is thus difficult to determine which periods of enrolment are part of the dual credit program and which are separate or subsequent enrolments.

9. Both the highest and lowest GPA bins have relatively small sample sizes, which may explain why there are larger differences between them and the adjacent categories.

In addition, it is up to each individual postsecondary institution and program to determine how dual credit students are registered at that institution. For some, the dual credits count as the introductory classes for a postsecondary credential that students continue to pursue after graduation from secondary school. For others, the dual credits are given a unique category and do not contribute towards any specific postsecondary credential. For others still, the dual credit classes and any others taken within that academic year can encompass an entire credential if the credential requires only minimal credits or transitions from postsecondary credits into an apprenticeship.

Because of this ambiguity, analyzing the postsecondary pathways of dual credit students is challenging. Therefore, postsecondary enrolment is best measured by a combined approach, using both enrolment and graduation data together to make the distinction between students who are present in postsecondary education and training records because of dual credit administrative recordkeeping but are otherwise in secondary school students and those who are fully participating in a postsecondary program and go on to receive a credential from a postsecondary institution.

While the population in the previous sections included British Columbia secondary school students from the 2004/2005 to 2021/2022 academic years, the following analysis of postsecondary enrolment covers the 2008/2009 to 2016/2017 academic years. For the original starting population, these are the only cohort years with sufficient longitudinal records available for tracking postsecondary pathways after secondary school. For all types of participation in postsecondary education, students were considered enrolled if they had a record in either PSIS[10] or RAIS in a given year.[11]

Dual credit students more likely to enrol in college or register in an apprenticeship

As expected, dual credit students participated in postsecondary programs during their Grade 12 year in greater proportions than students in the general population. Students who did not participate in the dual credit program participated in postsecondary education and registered apprenticeships at lower rates during their Grade 12 year, at 4.5% and 1.7%, respectively. Conversely, 79.2% of dual credit students participated in postsecondary education and 26.6% participated in an apprenticeship program during their Grade 12 year.[12]

It was possible for a student to be enrolled in both postsecondary education and a registered apprenticeship. Many apprenticeship programs involve postsecondary studies either before or at the same time as their apprenticeship portions. In their Grade 12 year, many dual credit students were both enrolled at a postsecondary institution and engaged in a registered apprenticeship (24.2%). A small percentage (2.4%) were in a registered apprenticeship only. A larger proportion of students were enrolled at a postsecondary institution only (55.0%), indicating that the relationship secondary schools have with postsecondary institutions often involve enrolment in those institutions, regardless of whether an apprenticeship is being pursued. The remaining 18.4% of students who were enrolled in neither postsecondary education nor an apprenticeship in that year may still have been enrolled in previous years for dual credit, but because the records did not align with their first Grade 12 year, they were not captured.

There were also differences between the low and high GPA groups. Though both were more likely to be pursuing postsecondary education than any other outcome during their Grade 12 year, those in the lower-GPA group were more likely to be engaged in an apprenticeship and less likely to be enrolled in non-apprenticeship postsecondary studies (Table 2). Many students, both those taking dual credits and those in the general population, continued secondary school enrolment beyond their first Grade 12 year, taking longer to graduate and potentially taking further dual credit classes in postsecondary institutions beyond that initial year being tracked.

10. PSIS includes students at provincially funded postsecondary institutions across Canada. It excludes students in federally funded and private postsecondary institutions. In some years, PSIS information from some institutions could not be integrated into the longitudinal data. While this involves mostly institutions outside British Columbia, it may underestimate the number of students enrolled in postsecondary education.
11. While the PSIS and BC K–12 datasets use an academic year model to determine the year of enrolment, the RAIS uses the calendar year.
12. Because the RAIS uses calendar years, the Grade 12 year for the RAIS is the calendar year the student entered Grade 12.

Table 2
Enrolment in postsecondary-level programs by dual credit students during their Grade 12 year, British Columbia

	Dual credit students	
	High GPA group	Low GPA group
	percent	
Postsecondary studies	81.0	77.7
Apprenticeships	23.1	35.0
Neither	17.0	19.3

Note: Totals do not add to 100% as students can appear in both postsecondary studies and apprenticeships.
Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12), Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS), Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS).

Some dual credit students completed a postsecondary credential[13] during that first year of Grade 12. This was the case for 14.1% of the dual credit students who participated in postsecondary education in Grade 12 and 11.3% of all dual credit students. Of those who obtained a credential, nearly all (over 99%) received a college-level certificate.[14] While the typical time to graduation for these certificates is 1.1 to 1.3 years,[15] achieving this credential within a year is possible. College-level certificates are often vocational, for example, in health-related fields of study, in business administration, or in trades and as technicians.[16] However, they can also be in general arts or science programs, or in prerequisite or preparatory programs for later credentials.

Dual credit students stay in secondary school longer

Dual credit students were found to participate in secondary school, postsecondary education and registered apprenticeships for different lengths of time than the general population. Since remaining in secondary school can delay the transition to postsecondary education or an apprenticeship, the amount of time students remained enrolled in secondary school after their cohort year was examined. Dual credit students were almost twice as likely to remain in secondary school for a year after their cohort year compared with the generation population (37.0% of dual credit students vs. 19.6% of the general population). Low GPA students were more likely than those in the high GPA group to stay extra years; however, this discrepancy was more pronounced for students who were not in the dual credit program.

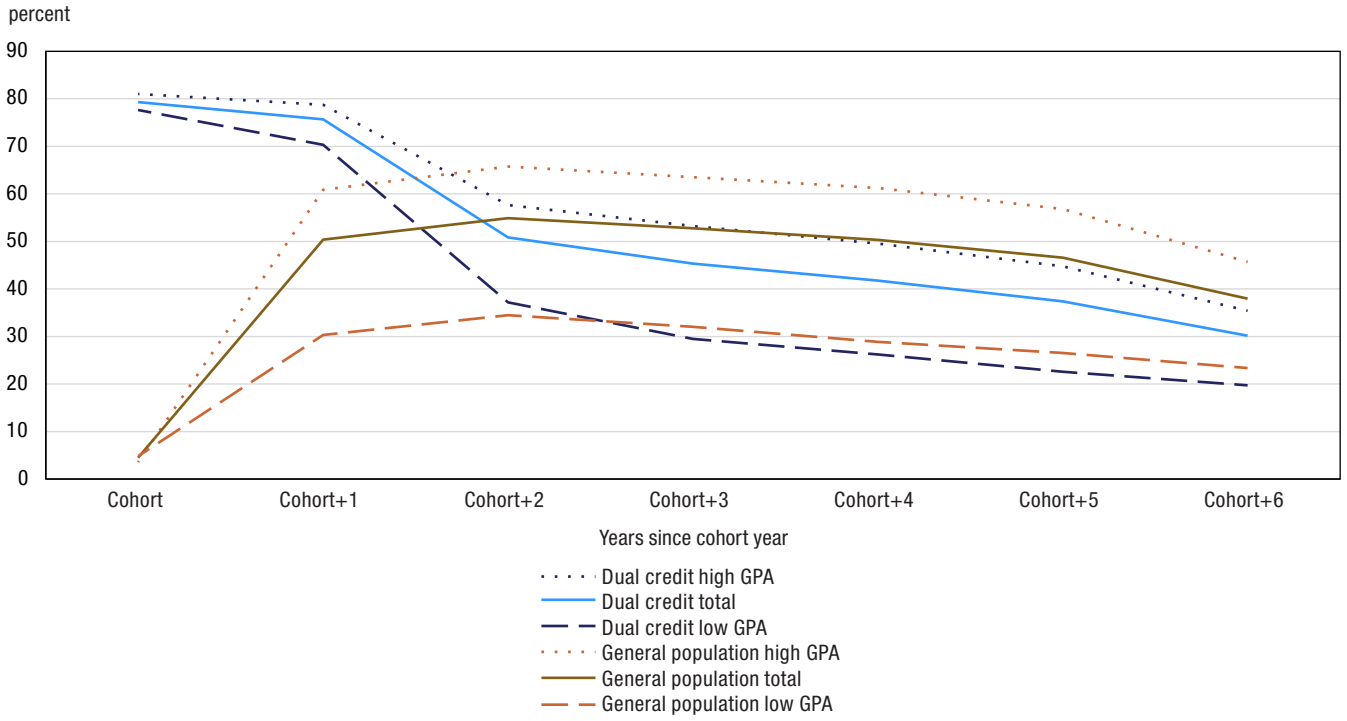
While low GPA students in the dual credit program were still enrolled in secondary school one year after their cohort year at a slightly higher rate than high GPA students (39.0% of those with low GPA vs. 35.7% of high GPA), the difference was smaller than among the general population (27.5% of those with low GPA vs. 14.8% of high GPA). While this difference between low and high GPA students persisted over time, enrolment in the BC K–12 system for both dual credit students and the general student population fell quickly to near zero in similar patterns over subsequent years. Two years after their cohort year, 3.5% to 8.8% of students remained enrolled in secondary school. Within five years, less than 1% of all students remained enrolled, except for low GPA students in the general population, whose share was 1.4%.

Higher proportion of dual credit students register as apprentices

Dual credit students were enrolled in postsecondary institutions at a higher rate than the general population during their Grade 12 cohort year (as expected, given the program definition) and one year after.[17] By two years after Grade 12 (Chart 4), dual credit students followed the same trajectory of declining enrolment over time as the general population, although their participation rate was 7 to 9 percentage points lower than the comparable general student cohort in those later years.

13. A completed postsecondary credential is a certificate, diploma or degree recognized by PSIS.
14. A college-level certificate is equivalent to a career, technical or professional training certificate, as defined by the Classification of programs and credentials.
15. Graduation of career, technical or professional training certificate students, within Canada, by student characteristics.
16. Characteristics and median employment income of postsecondary graduates two years after graduation, by educational qualification and field of study (alternative primary groupings).
17. For this study, a student's first year of enrolment in Grade 12 was considered their "cohort year," and each year after that was referred to as the number of years after the cohort year. For example, if a student was first enrolled in Grade 12 in the 2010/2011 academic year, their cohort year would be the 2010/2011 academic year, and their "Cohort+2" year would be the 2012/2013 academic year. In this way, multiple years of data can be collapsed to examine overall trends.

Chart 4
Enrolment in postsecondary institutions among general population and dual credit students up to six years after their Grade 12 cohort year, British Columbia



Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12), Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS).

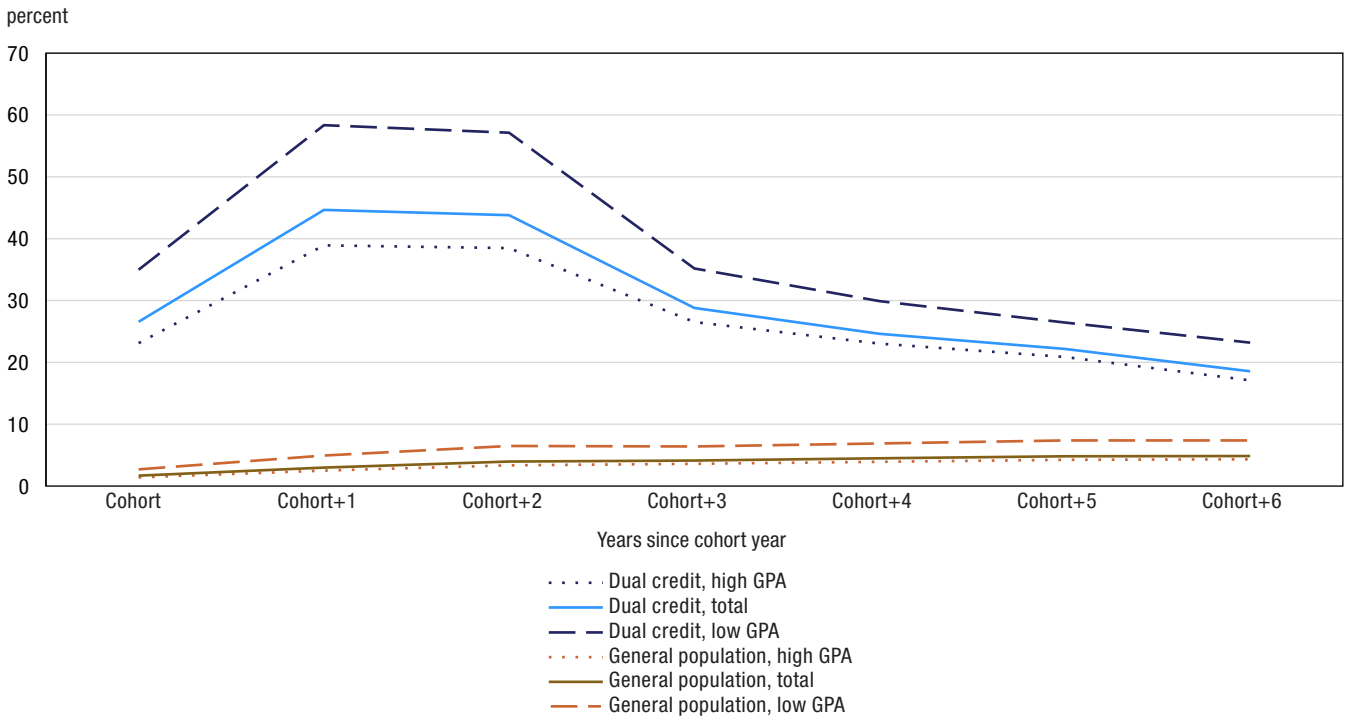
The same pattern of postsecondary enrolment was observed regardless of achievement group, but it differed between the dual credit and general population students. Even the higher GPA students within the dual credit program, while nearly as likely to graduate from secondary school as their general population counterparts, were still less likely to participate in postsecondary education two years after their cohort year. However, this may be related to the nature of that participation, discussed in the next section.

Low GPA dual credit students were only slightly less likely than low GPA students from the general population to enrol in a postsecondary institution, but both groups were substantially less likely to enrol than their high GPA counterparts. The comparable enrolment between the two low GPA groups may be the result of the lower bound on students being accepted into postsecondary institutions because of entrance requirements based on academic achievement, or the narrower band could be from pursuing shorter postsecondary programs. This is examined further in the following sections.

Additionally, as expected, most dual credit students attended an institution in British Columbia. Over 99% of dual credit students attended a British Columbia institution while in secondary school, and 94.2% of dual credit students who earned a postsecondary credential did so at a British Columbia institution. Comparatively, 85.6% of all British Columbia students who went on to earn a credential did so at a British Columbia institution rather than one elsewhere in Canada.

Finally, the largest differences when comparing the Grade 12 dual credit students and the general population were observed in the participation rates in registered apprenticeship programs. While less than 5% of the general population of students began a registered apprenticeship, up to 44.6% of dual credit students were in a registered apprenticeship program one year after the cohort year (Chart 5). Though the proportion of dual credit students who were registered apprentices decreased over time as students either switched to different credentials or completed their certification, six years after secondary school, 18.6% of the dual credit students were registered apprentices. As well, as expected based on initial registration numbers, low GPA students had higher overall participation in registered apprenticeships, though they followed the same pattern as high GPA students. In particular, two years after the cohort year, participation fell off rapidly and then levelled out to a gradual decline over the remaining years.

Chart 5
Participation in registered apprenticeships among general population and dual credit students up to six years after their Grade 12 cohort year, British Columbia



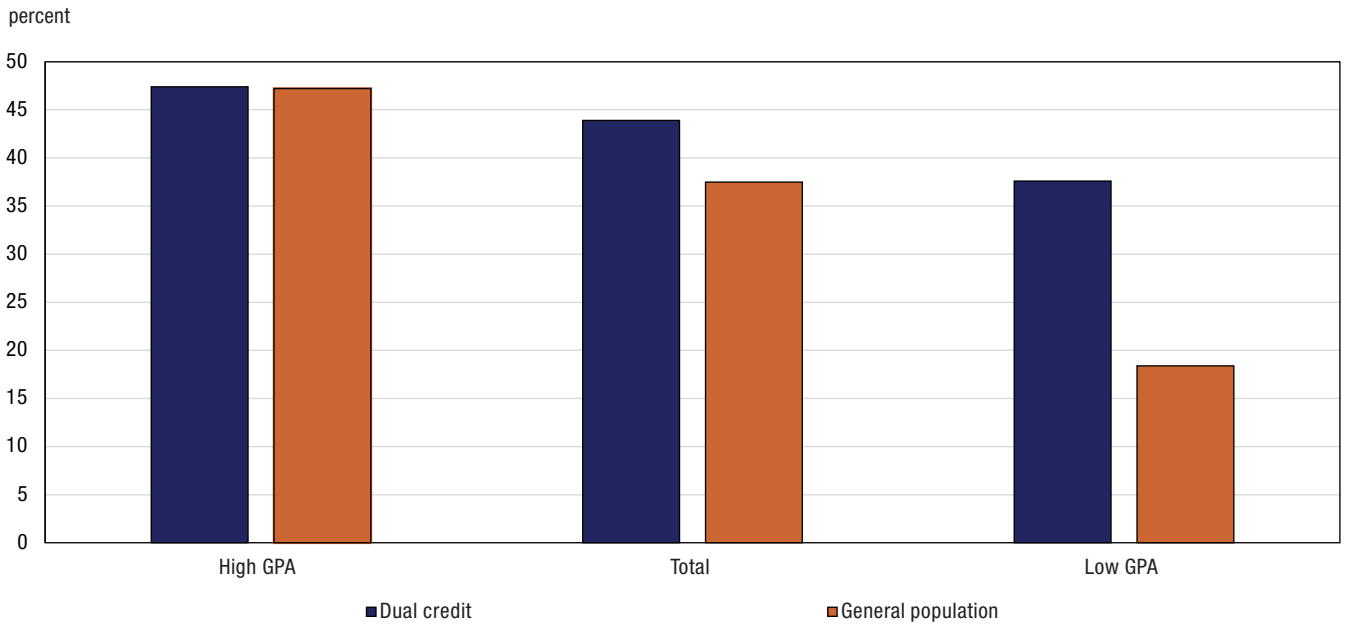
Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12), Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS).

Low GPA students in the dual credit program are more likely to earn a postsecondary credential than those in the general population

Over the six-year period after their grade 12 year,[18] 43.9% of students who took a dual credit course received at least one credential from a postsecondary institution. In comparison, 37.5% of students in the general population earned a credential over the same period. This difference was nearly entirely driven by low GPA students. Near-identical proportions of high GPA students (47.4% of dual credit students vs. 47.2% of the general population) earned a credential within that period, regardless of whether they had participated in the dual credit program. However, for low GPA students, 18.4% of those in the general population received a postsecondary credential, while 37.6% of those in the dual credit program did (Chart 6). Most of the dual credit students (75.8%) earned a single credential in this time frame, while 20.1% earned two and the remaining 4.1% earned three or more. Within the general population, students were slightly more likely to earn two credentials (25.6%); however, the majority (69.5%) earned one.

18. Because of the reporting structure within PSIS, a student is considered to have received a credential from a college or university program within six years if they are reported to have graduated at any time from one year after their cohort year to seven years later, to account for variability in convocation dates.

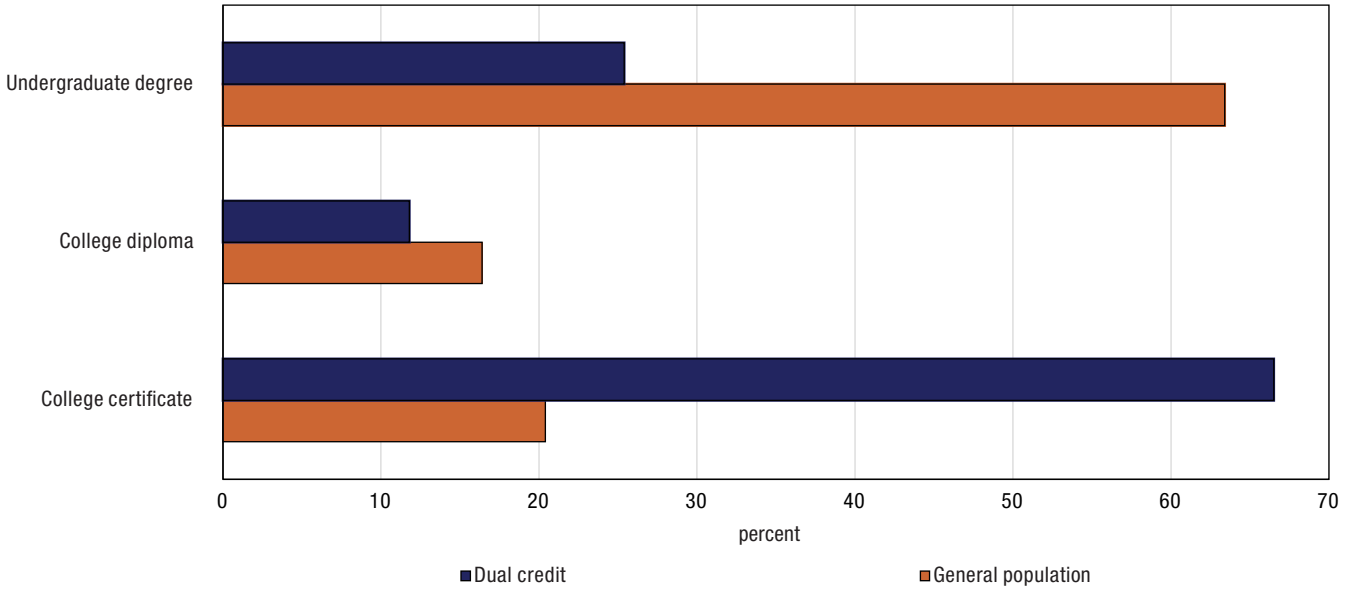
Chart 6
Percentage of students who earned a postsecondary credential within six years of secondary school, British Columbia



The most common credential earned by dual credit students was a college certificate, which generally involves a short program that takes one to two years to complete (Chart 7). The second most commonly earned credential was an undergraduate degree, and the third was a college diploma. The average time to graduate with an undergraduate degree is 4.7 years,[19] while for a college diploma, it is 2.8 years.[20] These three most commonly earned credential types were the same for general population students; however, the pattern was inverted for the top two credential types. The most commonly earned credential by far for general population students was an undergraduate degree, followed by a college certificate and then a college diploma.

19. Statistics Canada. Table 37-10-0136-03 Persistence and graduation of undergraduate degree students, within Canada, by student characteristics.
20. Statistics Canada. Table 37-10-0136-02 Graduation of career, technical or professional training diploma students, within Canada, by student characteristics.

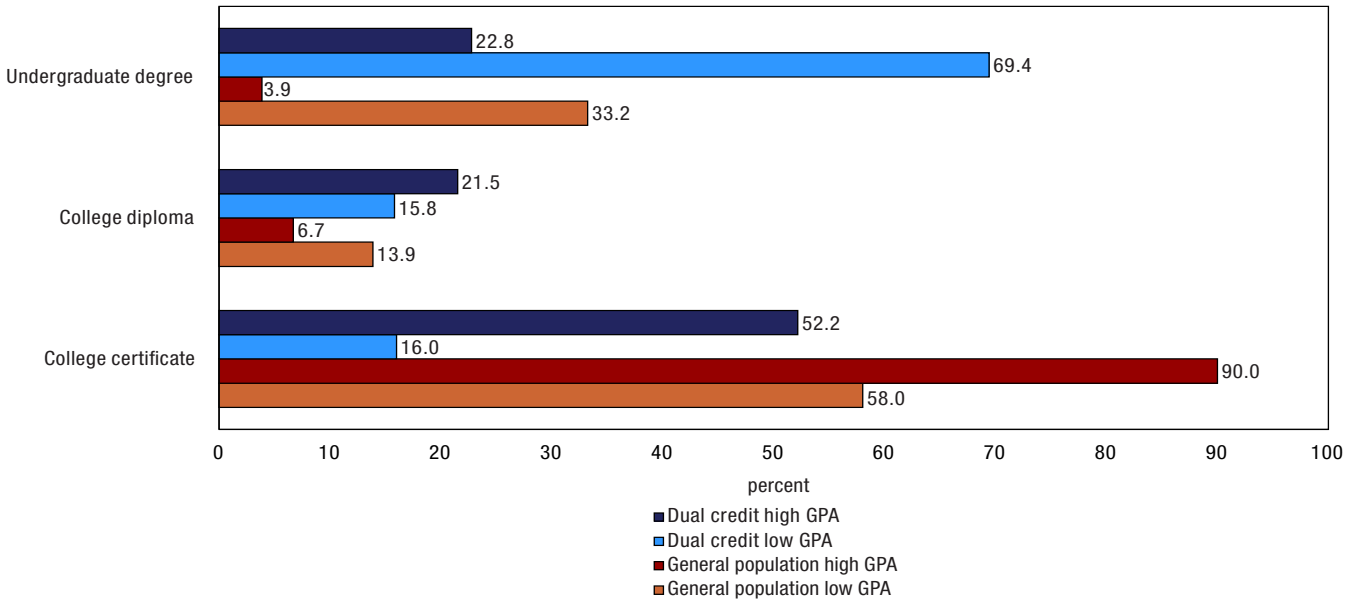
Chart 7
Percentage of students who earned a postsecondary credential within six years of their Grade 12 cohort year, by credential type and dual credit program participation, British Columbia



Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12), Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS).

For both high and GPA students who participated in the dual credit program, a college certificate was the most commonly earned credential type, though the rate at which this credential type was earned was much higher for low GPA students (90.0%) than for high GPA students (58.0%) (Chart 8). Very few low GPA dual credit students (3.9%) earned an undergraduate degree; again, this may be partly attributable to university admittance criteria. An even larger disparity was observed between high and low GPA students in the general population. While an undergraduate degree was the most commonly earned credential type for those with high GPA, a college certificate was the most common for the low GPA group.

Chart 8
Percentage of students who earned a postsecondary credential within six years of their Grade 12 cohort year, by credential type, dual credit program participation and achievement, British Columbia



Source: British Columbia Kindergarten to Grade 12 (BC K-12), Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS).

While dual credit high GPA students trend towards a similar distribution as general population high GPA students in many respects, the preference for college certificates tells a more complete story than simply the percentage of students who earn a credential. Because the dual credit program most often targets trades and vocational training, it is expected that dual credit high GPA students would pursue these credentials, both in secondary school and afterwards. These types of trades and vocational training programs are most typically found in colleges rather than universities.

In addition, the shorter duration of college programs allows for more time for those pursuing them to achieve a credential within the six-year study period.[21] It is unknown whether these students, particularly high GPA dual credit students and the low GPA general population, would earn undergraduate degrees in a similar proportion as the high GPA general population if followed for a longer period of time. However, the lack of enrolment of dual credit students in any postsecondary institution starting from two years after their cohort year implies that upon completion of their college credentials, many exit the postsecondary education system.[22]

21. Because the analysis of credentials earned is limited to only those who have finished their program and graduated, those who are enrolled in a postsecondary program but have not completed it are not captured in this analysis.
22. Registered apprenticeships could not be analyzed similarly, because few trades in British Columbia require certification to practice the trade. Thus, while participating in a registered apprenticeship can be an indicator of pursuing a trade, lack of certification should not be used to conclude the apprenticeship was not successfully completed.

Conclusion

There are many possible measures of success for students who participate in the dual credit program. Graduating secondary school, attending postsecondary education and receiving a postsecondary credential were the three outcomes examined in this study. An examination of these outcomes indicated that while dual credit students have different transitions from secondary school to postsecondary education and training compared with the general population, many complete that transition successfully. The majority of dual credit students complete secondary school and go on to pursue postsecondary education, where they are more likely to participate in and graduate from programs that provide college credentials. They are also more likely to participate in apprenticeships than the general population, though whether they complete a certification is unknown.

It can also be concluded that the dual credit program had the greatest positive impact on students who had lower grades in Grade 12. Compared with their higher GPA achieving peers who were also enrolled in the dual credit program, low GPA students saw larger increases in secondary school completion and postsecondary credential attainment rates.

An aspect of interest that was not examined in this study is how these students go on to participate in the labour market. Since most dual credit students pursue shorter-length credentials than the general population, are they entering the labour market sooner than their peers? Are their earnings comparable? Labour market information would be especially useful for following the pathways of those entering the trades without having completed a certification, to determine whether they are working in the trades they studied in the dual credit program or whether they found employment in other fields.

While average GPA was examined in this study, it would also be interesting to compare dual credit students with their peers who did not participate in the program using a more complete set of risk factors. With limited demographic data, it was not possible to determine differences in outcomes using statistical matching of students who did and did not participate in the program. Further information about the students themselves could help better identify which students are benefiting most from participation in the dual credit program.