

Graduate Course Approval Guidelines - Out of District Coursework

In determining which courses will be approved for reimbursement and/or for Credit Application to Salary Movement, this chart will be consulted. Please note that the decision is a holistic one - this chart is meant to show the continuum of characteristics and describe points on the continuum.

	Characteristics that can disqualify a course	Characteristics that might be of concern	Characteristics that are preferred for credits/reimbursement
Provider	Commercial Vendor	Professional Organization or Specialized Program	College
Instructor	Unknown credentials	Educator Affiliated with Professional Organization or School	Professor or College-Affiliated Instructor
Mode of Instruction	100% Asynchronous	Synchronous online or combination of synchronous & asynchronous	Face-to-face or combination of face-to-face & online
Length of course	No required completion date	6 months- a year to complete	Reflective of college term
College Credits	Credits provided by college that is selling the credits to a vendor	Instruction by organization with credits provided by college that would accept the credits in their own program; the credits become part of a college transcript Examples: RBT, Responsive Classroom	College credits directly from the college/university that is providing the class

Other characteristics of a class that would strengthen the likelihood of approval are:

- The connection between the needs of students and/or school and district goals.
- A cohort of educators taking a class which they would then share out with colleagues at school, or directly apply to curriculum and work with students.

Online graduate courses will be approved to apply toward a lane change and reimbursement only if they meet the following criteria:

- The online course has a specific start and end date with a minimum of 15 hours of work per graduate credit;

- The online course is not designed as a self-paced "module" course without a specific beginning and ending date;
- The online course has a designated instructor or instructors, and a cohort of students who are participating in the course simultaneously;
- The online course requires regular weekly interaction with the professor, such as discussion boards that require the class members to log in and participate in discussions;
- The online course has regular weekly interactions with other students, such as discussion boards that require class members to log in and to participate in discussions;
- The online assignments are regular, posted and graded by the professor;
- The online course has graded mid-term and/or final examination or project;
- The online course is offered directly by a regionally accredited college or university, and not through an unaccredited educational "partner;"
- The online course offers graduate credit, and not other measurements such as quarters and points.