

# SCHOOL-INITIATED COURSES (SICs)

## Student-initiated Projects (SIPs)

### FAQs

#### WHAT IS A SIC/SIP?

**1. How are SICs/SIPs defined? For what purposes are each intended?**

A School-initiated Course (SIC) is a course developed by the professional staff of a school or school division to meet local needs. Each SIC must meet the requirements established by the Department as detailed on the design checklist (<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/index.html>).

A Student-initiated Project (SIP) is a project initiated by a student in an area of special interest not provided in the Senior Years curriculum. A SIP must be initiated and written by the student with the assistance or guidance of the professional staff of the school or school division. Student progress must be evaluated relative to clearly articulated student learning outcomes and credit granted for learning or growth experienced during the project. Each SIP must meet the requirements established by the Department as detailed on the design checklist (<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/index.html>).

**2. Can SICs or SIPs be designed on the basis of instructional hours or hours of student participation?**

No, SICs or SIPs must be designed on the basis of student learning outcomes. SICs or SIPs designed for a full credit should articulate outcomes based on the understanding that they can be achieved by most students in 110 hours of instructional time (half credit in 55 hours). In awarding student credit for a SIC or SIP, the determining criterion is student achievement of the stated student learning outcomes and not based on instructional hours or hours of student participation. For example, a debating SIC credit should not be awarded because a student participated in 10 debates but because the student achieved the stated learning outcomes.

**3. Can a SIC or SIP credit be given for achievement or participation in extracurricular or community activities?**

No, SIC and SIP credits cannot be given for extracurricular activities or the regular activities of organized community groups.

While students acquire valuable information, learn important skills, and develop positive values through many life experiences and activities outside the jurisdiction of the school, including participation and voluntarism in the programs of community, educational, and service organizations, these experiences and activities cannot be recognized using the Senior Years credit system. The educational system must, however, recognize that some individuals achieve the highest standards of excellence in their pursuit of individual non-credit interests. Schools are encouraged to recognize such excellence in various ways, including scholarship criteria, student portfolios, resumes, and recognition certificates.

- 4. While recognizing that SIC and SIP credits cannot be given for any extracurricular activities or the regular activities of organized groups, what are some specific examples of these?**

Specific examples of the types of extracurricular and community activities that do not qualify for SIC or SIP credit are activities such as St. John Ambulance First Aid, CPR, 4H, athletic or artistic training/competition, drivers education, coaching, volunteer fire fighting training, volunteer candy-stripping, or participation in community cultural or leisure activities. These and other extracurricular and community activities, while very important to recognize for students, are considered non-credit interests.

- 5. Are there any opportunities for credit when a student participates in community or cultural activities?**

Yes, a student can earn a maximum of 1 credit for community service using the Community Service Student-initiated Projects (CSSIP) and 1 credit in cultural exploration using the Cultural Exploration Student-initiated Projects (CESIP). Students are allowed to have a maximum of 3 SIP credits to meet Manitoba Education graduation requirements.

For example, a student who participates in community or cultural activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Program may use some of the hours in the service component to meet some of the requirements of the CSSIP and some of the hours from the cultural exploration component to meet some of the requirements of the CESIP.

- 6. What are Community Service Student-initiated Projects (CSSIP) and Cultural Exploration Student-initiated Projects (CESIP)?**

Students in schools and Adult Learning Centres (ALCs) can make a contribution to their community by volunteering for worthwhile causes or organizations or by participating in cultural exploration activities. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned from such activities can increase a student's self-esteem and maturity and provide more awareness of the needs of others in the community. Through such projects, students may earn a credit toward the senior years diploma.

The volunteering or activity done by students participating in a CSSIP or CESIP is not the responsibility of the school, school-division, or Manitoba Education but an opportunity made available to students to obtain credit for individual activity.

- 7. How are the Community Service Student-initiated Project (CSSIP) and the Cultural Exploration Student-initiated Project (CESIP) different from other SIPs?**

No departmental registration is required for CSSIPs or CESIPs. To obtain the credit, students provide evidence to the school of project completion by presenting written documentation for activities in which they participate outside the school system. Sample forms are available at (<<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/lc/index.html>>). For individual cases, please contact your school or school division to find out the policy around CSSIPs and CESIPs.

- 8. Can a SIC replace a Department-developed/-approved curriculum? What is the link between Department-developed curricula and SICs?**

No, SICs may not be used to replace Department-developed/-approved curricula. Where a Department-developed/-approved curriculum exists, it must be used.

Where a SIC is offered in a subject area where a Department-developed/-approved curriculum is available, that SIC must be at least 50% different from the Department-developed/-approved curriculum in its expected student learning outcomes.

**9. Can a school take a Department-developed/-approved full credit curriculum and revise it to a half-credit, and then offer it as a SIC?**

No, since there would be a significant overlap with the Departmental curriculum, this is not permitted. While a school might use the Department-developed/-approved curriculum as a consultation or background resource, the requirement that the student learning outcomes of the SIC be significantly different from the outcomes of Department-developed/-approved curricula must be respected. A Department-developed/-approved full credit curriculum has an integrity of design that would be violated by arbitrarily dividing it in half. Specific decisions have been made by the Department not to allow full credit curricula to be offered as half credits for this reason. SICs should not be used to circumvent these decisions which were taken in conjunction with particular subject area specialists.

**10. What course designation applies to SICs?**

All SICs are designated “X1G”, where “X” indicates the Senior Years level of the course (Grade 9 is Senior 1, Grade 10 is Senior 2, Grade 11 is Senior 3, and Grade 12 is Senior 4) and where the 1 indicates “developed by schools or school divisions/districts and approved or registered by Manitoba Education.” For example, a Grade 9 Sociology SIC would have a designation of 11G and a Grade 11 Sociology SIC would have a designation of 31G.

**11. How can schools identify a SIC designed for less able learners or for highly able/gifted learners?**

The titles of such courses should indicate the nature of the course content or intent. Regardless of the intent of the SIC, all SICs are offered as a G level course.

**12. Are SIC and SIP credits “second-rate”, as compared to Department-developed/-approved curricula?**

SICs and SIPs should not be regarded as “second-rate” credits. The process of SIC and SIP development at the local level must be rigorous. The standards of quality and excellence with respect to student progress and achievement, especially as reflected by the identified student learning outcomes, should be equivalent to those of Department-developed/-approved curricula at that grade. The policies of the Department with regard to SICs and SIPs are intended to ensure that these mechanisms are credible components of the educational system’s mission to ensure high quality education and training for all students. SIC or SIP registration submissions that do not meet acceptable standards of educational excellence are not registered by the Department.

**PRE-SUBMISSION**

**13. I have an idea for a new school initiated course. How long does the process take?**

It generally takes a minimum of one year because a course needs to be thoughtfully constructed using the design checklist, approved by the principal and school division and then registered by the Department prior to being offered to students through a course calendar. For example, consider the following timeline:

Dates	Activity
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Prior to November of School Year 1	Teacher works on the SIC framework using the Design Checklist.
November of School Year 1	Principal approves course and submits it to the School Division for approval
December of School Year 1	School Division approves course and submits it to the Department for registration
January of School Year 1	Department registers the course
February of School Year 1	School publishes calendar of courses to be offered the following year
September of School Year 2	Students start taking course

#### **14. How do I create a SIC framework?**

An essential component of a SIC framework is the identification of expected student learning outcomes. These are concise descriptions of the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn as a result of the SIC.

A completed SIC framework must meet all of the criteria on the design checklist (available at <<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/index.html>>).

#### **15. What do I need to take into consideration before creating a SIC?**

SICs can duplicate or overlap with Department-developed/-approved curricula by 50 percent or less. The remaining 50 percent of its student learning outcomes must be developed locally. Schools/school divisions/districts are responsible to ensure that students do not receive dual credit for identical or similar learning.

Consideration should be given to all the compulsory courses students would take at a grade level when determining the amount of overlap. For example, a SIC for Grade 9 Outdoor Education is likely to have more than 50% of its outcomes in other Department-developed/-approved compulsory curricula when consideration is given to Physical Education/Health Education, Social Studies and Science courses at the Grade 9 level.

#### **16. Where can educators find information about the development requirements, the registration submission requirements and processes, and SIC/SIP graduation requirements?**

Information on these topics is contained in the document entitled *Locally-developed Curricula: School-initiated Courses and Student-initiated Projects, A Handbook for Senior Years Schools*. This document is available online at <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/index.html>. Additional copies are available from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau (Catalogue No. 80301). (See the Department's web site, <<http://www.mtbb.mb.ca/catalogue/en/>> for on-line ordering.)

#### **17. Can a school register more than one SIC or SIP with one registration form and one SIC framework? For example, could a school register courses entitled Grade 9-12 Women's Studies 11G, 21G, 31G, and/or 41G using one registration form and one SIC framework while indicating that the higher level courses are continuations of the lower level courses but at increasing levels of knowledge and skills?**

No, a separate SIC framework - and, in particular, course specific statements of expected student learning outcomes -- is required for each course or project submission at each grade. In the example given in the question above, a separate submission, including a separate SIC framework, is required for each of the four courses named. The student learning outcomes for

these courses should reflect the expectation for increasing growth in knowledge and skill from grade to grade.

## **REGISTRATION:**

### **18. How do I register a new SIC?**

School staff should complete the registration form and submit it to the school division office. The registration form should be accompanied with a SIC framework that meets all the requirements on the design checklist (<<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/index.html>>). The school division will review the SIC and if it is approved, send it to the Department for additional review and registration. The SIC will be registered by the Department for student credit when it meets all the criteria on the design checklist.

### **19. Is there a deadline date for SIC/SIP registrations?**

No specific dates are identified for registration of SIC/SIP submissions to the Department but submissions must be made well in advance of offering the SIC to the students to allow for processing of the review. Submission of SIPs should be made prior to the student beginning the project.

It is strongly suggested that SIC/SIP submissions be forwarded to the Department at least one (1) month prior to the enrolment of students in the SIC/SIP. Again, credit cannot be offered to a student for a SIC or a SIP until the school receives confirmation of the Department's registration.

For example, the normal operating cycle of most high schools involves students selecting courses for the next school year in February or March. Therefore, SIC/SIP submissions should be submitted to the Department by December 31<sup>st</sup> which would be approximately one month prior to advertising SIC/SIP courses to students.

A separate registration form, including a separate SIC framework, is required for each course or project submission at each grade.

### **20. Can registration of a SIC or SIP submission be declined?**

Yes, the Department can decline to register a SIC or SIP which does not meet the requirements of Departmental policy. No credit can be granted for a SIC or SIP that has not been registered by the Department. This is why it is important for SIC/SIP applications to be sent to the Department well in advance of offering the SIC to students.

### **21. Is there an appeal process if a SIC/SIP submission is declined registration and accreditation for student credit?**

Declining a SIC/SIP submission for Departmental registration may be appealed to the Director, Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch (English Program and Senior Years Technology Education Program) or Directeur, Bureau de l'éducation française (Français Program and French Immersion Program) or Director, Adult Learning and Literacy Branch (Adult Learning Centres). The letter of appeal should directly and specifically address the reasons provided by the Department for declining the registration.

## **APPROVAL:**

### **22. Who approves SICs and SIPs?**

School divisions are responsible for approving SICs and SIPs. The Department is responsible for registering SICs and SIPs. The Department can refuse to register a SIC or SIP that does not meet the requirements of Departmental policy. The requirements upon which divisional approval must be based are set out in *Locally Developed Curricula: School-initiated Courses and Student-initiated Projects: A Handbook for Senior Years Schools* (available online at <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/>). If you require support in meeting these requirements, please contact the Department.

### **23. What is the responsibility of the school division coordinator for SICs/SIPs?**

School divisions/districts are encouraged to

- review the policy for SICs in terms of submission, registration, and graduation requirements and to develop/revise divisional and school policies, procedures, and practices accordingly
- review all current and historical SIC offerings in each school to determine their match with existing local needs, priorities, and resources
- initiate SIC/SIP programming development to meet the requirements detailed in *Locally Developed Curricula: School-initiated Courses and Student-initiated Projects: A Handbook for Senior Years Schools* (<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/>)
- review school publications and registration forms related to SIC course offerings and graduation requirements
- submit all approved SICs to the department for registration annually

### **24. Can credit for a SIC/SIP be awarded to a student if the SIC or SIP has not been registered with the Department?**

No, the school needs to receive confirmation of the Department's registration of the school's SIC or SIP submission in order to have the correct code to report student marks.

### **25. Are all SICs and SIPs approved by the local school division registered automatically by the Department?**

No, registration is not automatic. Departmental staff review each submission against established criteria found on the design checklist

(<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/ldc/index.html>).

When the criteria are met, the SIC or SIP is registered and the course can then be offered to the student(s).

### **26. What is the difference between a SIC registration number and the course code?**

A SIC registration number is an alpha-numeric code that is issued annually upon SIC registration. The course code is the 4-digit numeric code used to report student marks and credit to the Student Records Office in Russell. If the SIC involves Worker's Compensation coverage, the SIC registration number is used on the Worker's Compensation application forms.

### **27. How do I get a code for my SIC?**

When the school is notified of the SIC being registered by the Department, the code for the SIC is included in the information to the school.

## **RE-REGISTRATION:**

### **28. How do I re-register SICs?**

If you have submitted a SIC previously and it has been registered with no request for revisions, improvements, or updating, you can meet the requirement for re-registering the SIC each year by submitting a completed registration form with a notation that the SIC framework is unchanged.

If you have submitted a SIC previously and you have been requested by the Department (in its response to an earlier submission) to make revisions, improvements, or updates to the SIC framework, please submit a completed registration form and an accompanying revised SIC framework to your school division who will approve it and send it to the Department for registration.

### **29. Can I re-register a SIP?**

No, every SIP is to be developed by the individual student who will be completing the project. Therefore, no SIP re-registrations are possible.

### **30. Why are schools/school divisions/districts required to register SICs each year?**

Annual registration is required because department developed curriculum may have been developed or revised since the first registration of a course. The newly developed or revised curriculum may overlap with the SIC.

For example, several schools/school divisions created a SIC for Psychology. The Department developed Psychology 40S to answer the demand for this course. Once the Department developed course was available, SICs for Psychology could not be registered with the Department because schools could now use the Department developed course and code.

Each school year, schools/school divisions must register all SICs and SIPs to be offered during that school year, including new SIC/SIP registrations and re-registration of SICs registered previously (both those that remain unchanged and those that have been revised/improved/updated). Forms are available from the Department for this purpose.

Through the registration process, the Department is able to ensure that all SICs/SIPs approved by the local school authority are acceptable for awarding student credit and that they will be accepted by Student Records for reporting of student credits/marks.

Courses cannot be reported to Student Records for student credit until they have been registered with the Department.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **31. How many School-initiated Courses (SICs) and Student-initiated Projects (SIPs) can students include to meet graduation requirements in Grades 9 – 12?**

Students may include a maximum of 11 SIC credits and a maximum of 3 SIP credits in the 30 credit total required for graduation.

SICs and SIPs can be used to meet Manitoba Education graduation requirements for courses approved under the Senior Years Technology Education Program and/or Senior Years Apprenticeship Option within the limits provided for SICs and SIPs (that is 11 SICs and 3 SIPs).

**32. Can a SIC/SIP be included as one of the compulsory credits for graduation?**

The general rule is SICs/SIPs are part of the 17 optional credits for graduation. However, under the Substitution of Credit in Unusual Circumstances guidelines, a SIC/SIP could be used as a substitution for a compulsory subject. For individual cases, consult your school division policy on substitution of credit. All substitution of credits must be reported to the Department using the form found at <[http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy/gradreq/substitution\\_form.doc](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy/gradreq/substitution_form.doc)>

**33. If a school division/district require more than the provincial requirement of 30 credits for graduation, may that school then allow students to take more than the provincial limit of 11 SICs and 3 SIPs?**

Yes, the limit of 11 SICs and 3 SIPs applies to current provincial graduation requirements of 30 credits. Schools may exceed this provincial minimum and may then allow or require more than the 11 SICs and 3 SIPs within their augmented requirements for graduation. School divisions should establish clear and consistent policy related to this issue.

## **SHARING SICs**

**34. Can the Department provide copies of SIC frameworks for SICs being offered in schools across the province?**

In principle, the Department cannot provide copies of SIC frameworks for SICs that it registers as it does not hold copyright on these materials. The school division/district of the school that creates the SIC holds the copyright. However, if a school division checks off the box on the registration form allowing the Department to share the SIC with other school divisions, then the Department can provide copies.

**35. How can educators access copies of SIC frameworks for SICs being offered in schools across the province?**

Copyright on SIC frameworks is held by the school division/district of the school that develops them. Educators interested in accessing copies of SIC frameworks for SICs being offered in schools across the province should request these from the copyright holder, that is, the school division/district.

Please note that school divisions/districts are under no obligation to provide copies of SIC frameworks and they may choose to charge for this service.

## **COPYRIGHT**

**36. Who is responsible for copyright issues related to SICs?**

The school/school division that develops the SIC framework is responsible for all matters relating to copyright, including ensuring that any materials, ideas, etc. accessed or adapted from outside the school division/district have copyright permission from the copyright holder. The school



division/district is responsible for ensuring that its processes comply with copyright law. Any school division/district that provides copies of its SIC framework for SICs to another jurisdiction must ensure that doing so falls within the copyright permissions negotiated for the initial SIC framework (these usually limit numbers, place, type, and use of distribution). Particular caution is urged related to electronic transmission of any SIC outlines containing copyrighted material as typical copyright permission agreements do not apply to electronic versions, only to print versions.

**37. Who owns the copyright to a SIC?**

Copyright on SIC frameworks is held by the school division/district of the school that develops them.

**GENERAL:**

**38. What are the linkages between SIC, work education, and workers compensation?**

The Department can provide Workers Compensation coverage for students engaged in achieving learning outcomes on workplace sites external to the school. In order to obtain this coverage, the school must register the student for Workers Compensation with the Department and this registration requires the school to indicate the course -- which may be a SIC or a SIP -- in which the student is enrolled which entails the work experience as a delivery mechanism. Schools must therefore complete the SIC/SIP registration process **prior** to registering students for Workers Compensation coverage. The Department will not provide Workers Compensation for students in SICs or SIPs that have work experience components unless and until that SIC or SIP has been registered with the Department.

**39. Who can teach a SIC or monitor a SIP?**

Only a person holding a valid Manitoba teacher’s certificate is qualified to teach a SIC or monitor a SIP. Schools should not offer and a student can not receive credit for a SIC or SIP if that course (project) is not taught by a certified teacher. Where the services of non-certified resource persons are utilized in a SIC or SIP, such persons must come under the direct supervision of a certified teacher designated by the principal.

**40. Who do I contact at the Department?**

Grades 9 – 12 English Program and Senior Years Technology Education Program	Grades 9 – 12 Français Program and French Immersion Program	Adult Learning Centres
Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch Manitoba Education 1567 Dublin Avenue Winnipeg MB R3E 3J5 Telephone: 204-945-0254 Toll-Free: 1-800-282-8069 (ext. 0254) Fax: 204-948-3668	Curriculum Development and Implementation Branch Bureau de l’éducation française Division Manitoba Education 509–1181 Portage Avenue Winnipeg MB R3G 0T3 Telephone: 204-945-6927 Toll-Free: 1-800-282-8069 (ext. 6927) Fax: 204-945-1625	Adult Learning and Literacy Branch Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy 350–800 Portage Avenue Winnipeg MB R3G 0N4 Telephone: 204-945-8247 or 204-945-4784 Toll-Free: 1-800-282-8069 (ext. 8247 or 4784) Fax: 204-948-1008

