



Heritage Woods Secondary School

Independent Directed Study (IDS) Application 2026-2027

An **Independent** Directed Study course is taken by students who want to extend their learning in a subject area or work in an area of study where they have already exhausted the current curricular offerings and/or have a passion for the subject well beyond the typical course work or where coursework does not exist. Students work independently, with a supervising teacher mentor.

Ministry Policy

This policy enables students to initiate their own area of learning and to receive credit towards graduation. It is intended to encourage schools to allow students to pursue further studies of interest.

- A student may study one or more learning outcomes in-depth, or study more broadly a wide variety of learning outcomes from a single course.
- IDS credits may only be used to satisfy elective requirements.
- Grade 12 IDS credits may count toward the minimum of 16 Grade 12 credits required for graduation.
- An IDS credit **cannot** be given if the learning has “substantial overlap of learning outcomes” with another course available for the student to take

Summary of process PRIOR to application:

1. **A student or teacher** may recognize an area of interest or passion for a student beyond the typical and offered curriculum. Either the student or teacher initiates a conversation.
2. The student has exhausted all options within current curriculum in field of study and/or has a passion well beyond the typical coursework.
3. The student has a teacher mentor who has agreed to supervise the coursework.
4. The student has contacted mentors outside the school who will be part of the process if necessary (i.e. coach, mentor, teacher, employer, etc).
5. The student has had documented in-depth conversations with teacher mentor and any other necessary people involved in the project, including, but not limited to: the goals of learning, how they will show their learning along the way, how mentoring will take place (i.e. during a block when the teacher has another class or outside of class time) what the end product(s) will look like, and how long it will take.

Process for application:

1. Pick up an application and proposal form from your counsellor.
2. Discuss application and proposal requirements with teacher mentor and/or other mentors (**at this point, student or teacher may decide that the IDS course is not a good fit**)
3. Read and fill out application form with teacher mentor.

4. Fill out proposal in consultation with teacher mentor – **remember, you are essentially creating your own course with your teacher mentor. You need to be as detailed as possible and give clear evidence that you have thought the entire process through before an IDS will be approved.** That is not to say that there isn't room for change in the process as you move forward, but you need to have a clear, detailed, initial plan for goals for learning, coursework, assessment and evaluation in mind – all in consultation with the teacher mentor.
5. Get forms signed by teacher mentor (and community mentor if applicable).
6. Hand in to counsellor (if this is during course selection process, hand in the documents with your course request form, and choose it as an option on the course request form).
7. Vice Principal will meet with student to review and discuss.
8. If approved, Vice Principal will direct student to meet with counsellor to make adjustments to student timetable.

Role of Teacher Mentor

1. Student and teacher write proposal together.
2. The IDS student/course is an additional course that the teacher/student create in order to allow the student pursue a passion. You have chosen to be this student's mentor because you recognize and want to support that passion.
3. If, at any time, a student is not maintaining their expectations, teachers should follow standard protocol (i.e. maintain attendance, due dates, contact home, contact counsellor or admin).
4. Decide a time that fits best for meeting regularly. Sometimes this is during another scheduled and/or related class time. However, this can also be outside the timetable (during FLEX, after school). It is not considered part of another class.

Ongoing Expectations

1. Ongoing documentation of the process on the part of the student – this could be in the form of journal entries or online portfolio.
2. Regular meetings.
3. Coursework and meetings should equal to about 90-120 hours
4. Final reflection or presentation.

Student name: _____

Student number: _____

Teacher Mentor name: _____

Community Mentor Name (if applicable): _____

Sign below to indicate you have read and understood all the above:

Student signature

Teacher Mentor signature

Community Mentor Signature
(if applicable)

Independent Directed Study (IDS) Proposal

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Student Name: | Student Number: |
| Teacher Mentor: | |
| IDS Grade Level (circle one): 10 11 12 | |
| Choose one: Semester One Semester Two Full year (outside timetable) | |
| Subject Area of Study: | |
| Topic/Guiding Question: Please outline the specific aspect of the area of study you are interested in pursuing. | |
| Outline your reasons for wanting to pursue this area of study: | |
| Outline previous experience which shows you are a good candidate for an IDS course (course work, volunteer work or work experience, clubs, associations, teams): | |
| Why are you a good fit for the IDS type of course? Highlight any skills or experience related to self-directedness, experience with inquiry-based learning, initiative-taking and independence: | |

Learning Goals: What do you hope to learn through this course? What do you want to know? Be able to do? Understand?

Course Hours: Outline a rough estimate of how long each unit/project/portion of project will take.

Resources, Facilities or Equipment required: (facilities, equipment, materials, online resources, community members, etc., that will be necessary for your learning)

Course Schedule: Outline rough schedule for meeting times with teacher and/or mentor. This may be during a regularly class or outside of class time.

Assessment: What are the indications along the way that you are meeting your goals? How often will you be assessed? What will be assessed? What will be the criteria for determining successful completion?

Student signature

Teacher Evaluator signature

Counsellor signature

Vice Principal's signature

NOTES if NOT APPROVED: