

Dual Credit Students

and their transition to college

2021



	Page
01 Key Findings & Executive Summary	3
02 Research Questions	7
03 Demographic Characteristics	8
04 Updating Previous Research	12
05 Extending the Analysis	24
06 Conclusion + Next Steps	33
07 Appendix	35

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

In 2020 the School-College-Work Initiative (SCWI) shared a report entitled “[Dual Credit Students and Their Transition to College](#)”. The research was focussed on application, offer, enrolment and retention trends for dual credit college applicants in Ontario. The focus group for the analysis was all dual credit students in Ontario, including those who had been provided a voucher from SCWI to cover costs associated with the process of applying to an Ontario college. Students in School Within a College programs or Adult Dual Credit programs had the support of a College Advisor and were provided with an OCAS voucher when they were completing their application to college. Dual credit students who were provided vouchers represent a small proportion of all dual credit students. In cases where it is feasible, we compare application behaviour for these dual credit groups to a system-wide benchmark.

Overall findings from that research revealed that Dual Credit programs are providing a critical and necessary support to at-risk high school students. We observed that applicants who participated in this program and applied to similar credential programs as students with a typical high school diploma were, for the most part, just as likely to get an offer to, and subsequently enrol at, an Ontario college. Applicants who used vouchers show a slightly lower rate of enrolment and retention, but this could be due to a wide range of factors unrelated to the participation in the Dual Credit program.

Key findings from 2020

- Almost 95% of all dual credit applicants received an offer to attend college, regardless of whether or not they used a voucher.
- Over 90% of all dual credit applicants apply to a diploma, advanced diploma, or certificate credential program.
- Almost 90% of all college applicants to these same three credential program types across the entire system received offers to college. This is slightly lower than the offer rate for dual credit applicants.
- Overall, dual credit applicants are more likely to enrol in a college program than all applicants across the entire system. However, those who use a dual credit voucher are less likely to enrol than either group.
- College retention rates for dual credit applicants are typically on par with all applicants across the system.

Continuing the Research

Upon delivery of the 2020 report to program stakeholders and partners, there was much interest in continuing the research. In spring 2021 the SCWI engaged in a virtual tour with regional stakeholders to share the results and assess where best to direct further research. Drawing from these discussions, we have updated the findings from the previous report with another year of data, and are also expanding the scope of the research, based on questions and inquiries we received from our partners. In particular, this year's report includes analyses of both college delivered dual credits and team-taught dual credits.

College delivered dual credits are college courses or Level 1 apprenticeship in school training delivered by college faculty. For the most part, these are delivered face-to-face on a college campus. Students who

successfully earn the college credit based on the college standard are granted a secondary school credit that counts towards their graduation requirement and is included on their Ontario Student Transcript (OST). Each of these students has the support of a Dual Credit Teacher – usually a teacher from their school board. A team-taught dual credit is based on carefully matching a secondary school curriculum and a college curriculum and is jointly delivered by both a secondary school teacher and a college faculty member. Content for these team-taught courses can include college courses and the in-school academic portion of the Level 1 Apprenticeship training.

We are pleased to share these findings with you here.



Key Findings

- Findings observed in the first report continue to remain true:
 - Dual credit students continue to receive offers at a rate comparable to, or even better than all applicants.
 - Dual credit students using vouchers continue to enrol at a lower rate than other dual credit students, or all applicants.
 - While dual credit students are retained at similar rates to all students system wide, those dual credit students using vouchers are less likely to be retained.
- Dual credit students apply to multiple programs as compared to applicants system wide, who primarily apply to only one program.
- 80% of dual credit students typically apply within a year of receiving their OSSD. This differs from the system-wide cohort, where only 41% of applicants applied in the same year they received their OSSD.
- Dual credit students are persistent, which may be a complete departure from their secondary school experience:
 - More than 90% receive an offer to a college program, even if they have to apply more than once.
 - 70% of Dual Credit students who have enrolled in a preparatory program have subsequently enrolled in a regular program.¹
- Students in either college delivered or team-taught dual credits receive offers and subsequently enrol at similar rates.

¹Preparatory programs are taken by students when they do not have all the necessary qualifications for the program they would prefer to take. Despite their popularity, there are no flags in the OCAS data warehouse to identify “preparatory” programs. For this study we flagged on MCU program titles that had ‘pre’, ‘prep’, ‘foundations’, and ‘fundamentals’ in the title. After reviewing the list, we subsequently removed “Police Foundations” and “American Sign Language/English Pre-Interpreter” from our analyses.

Recommendations

01

Vouchers and in-person support are clearly valuable tools to help students complete their college applications. Expanding these supports should be considered.

02

Although financial need is not a requirement for entry into the Dual Credit program, dual credit students using vouchers likely need other financial supports throughout their post-secondary education. Educators and administrators in the post-secondary education system should seek to identify possible sources of funding for these students.

03

When dual credit students apply to a program they may not be qualified for, colleges should offer alternate or preparatory program opportunities. Upon completion of the alternate program, dual credit students will often subsequently apply again to a regular or oversubscribed program.

04

It should be possible for colleges to continue a connection with dual credit students since there is not a gap between their dual credit and attending college.

05

College Advisors should clearly articulate to dual credit students that supports and services will continue to be available to students once they enrol in college. It may be worth proactively directing dual credit students to the appropriate advocates within the colleges they have applied to.

06

Colleges should consider reaching out to these students once they issue offers, including students who have already completed their dual credit, and working to better understand the constraints preventing these students from enrolling.

07

Upon issuing alternate offers to dual credit students, rather than to the program they originally applied to, colleges should be proactive about reaching out to the applicants to explain why they offered the program they did, articulating the end-to-end path the student can take and how it may be very similar to their original goal.

Research Questions

As with the previous report, we frame the analyses shared here around some specific questions. In addition to the fundamental questions regarding applications, offers, and enrolment for dual credit students, new questions we examine include:

- ❓ Do dual credit students take a break between earning their OSSD and their college experiences?
- ❓ Are there any differences in application behaviour between high school students who take only one dual credit and those who take more than one? How many applicants take more than one dual credit?
- ❓ Are there any differences in application behaviour between team-taught and college delivered dual credit students?
- ❓ What do we know about the dual credit students who started to apply to college but did not complete the process by providing a payment to formally submit the application for consideration by a college?
- ❓ When dual credit students enrol in preparatory programs do they subsequently enrol in the associated highly competitive/oversubscribed programs?
- ❓ When dual credit students enrol in college certificate programs, do they use them as a pathway to other credentials?
- ❓ What is the grade distribution for students who take a dual credit?

Demographic Characteristics



In this section, we begin the report by examining some basic descriptive data about dual credit students. Between 2017 – 2020 there were approximately 48,000 dual credit students, of which 4% used an SCWI voucher.

Gender (2017 – 2020)

As with our observations last year, we continue to see very little difference between the number of female and male applicants. There are slightly more women applying, which is in line with what we observe with all applicants.

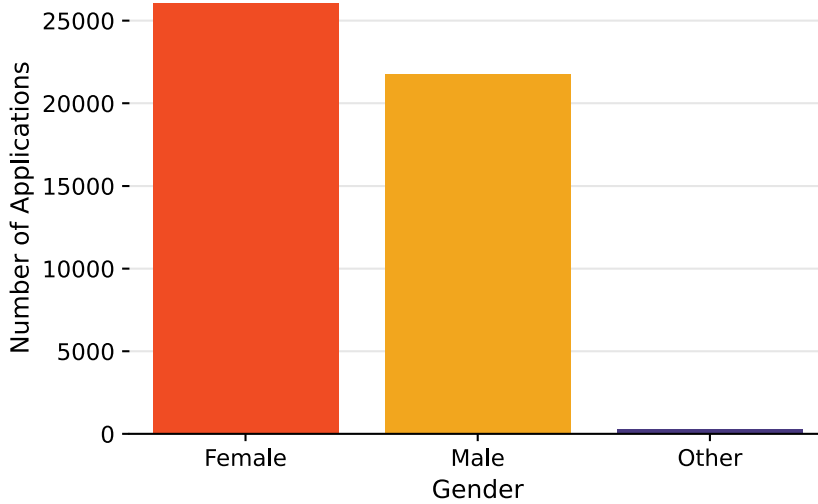


Figure 1
Number of Applications,
by Gender

*All Applicants
With a Dual Credit*

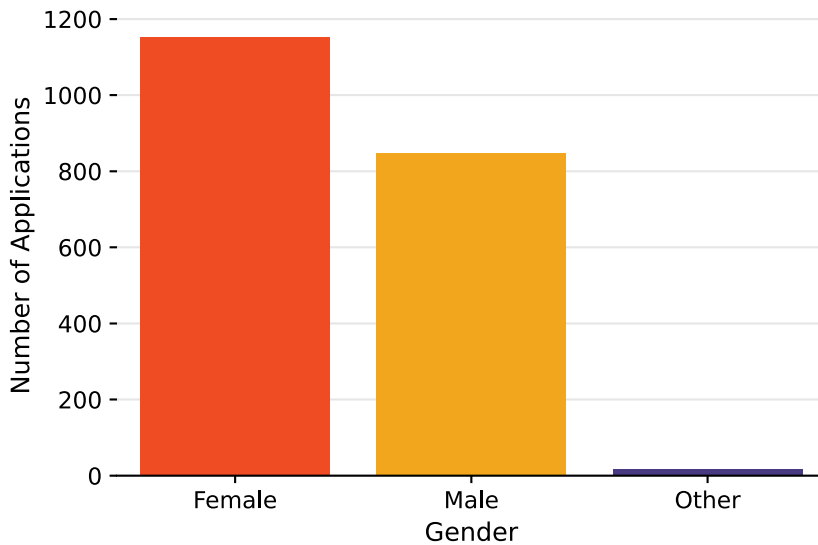


Figure 2
Number of Applications,
by Gender
*All Applicants With a Dual
Credit Who Applied With
an SCWI Voucher*

Age (2017 – 2020)

We see here that the majority of college applicants who have a dual credit are between the ages of 18 – 20 years old. This is similar to the age distribution we see for all applicants, although there is a larger proportion of all applicants system wide who are older than we see with the dual credit applicants. Dual credit applicants tend to be younger, in general. In fact, 60% of all dual credit students are 19 or younger, while 72% of those who use a voucher are in the same age group.

It should be noted that age is calculated as how old the applicant will be on December 31 of the year they applied. In this discussion, we show the distribution for age of applicants up to 30. There are older applicants system-wide, but very few with dual credits. In fact, only 33% of all applicants are 19 or younger.

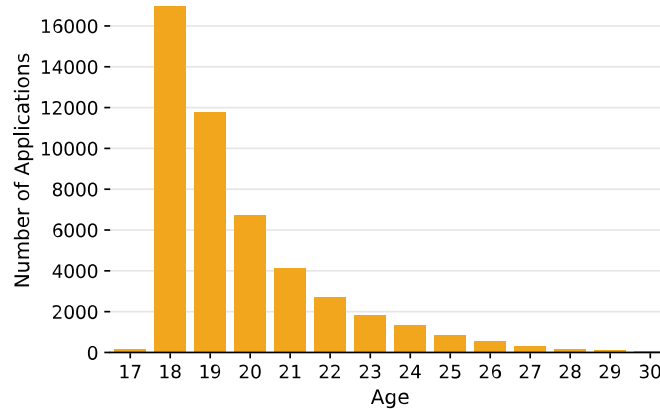


Figure 3

Number of Applications,
by Age

*All Applicants
With a Dual Credit*

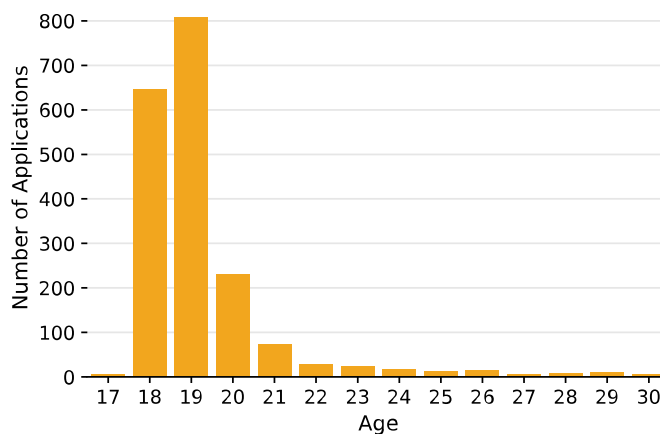


Figure 4

Number of Applications,
by Age

*All Applicants With a Dual
Credit Who Applied With
an SCWI Voucher*

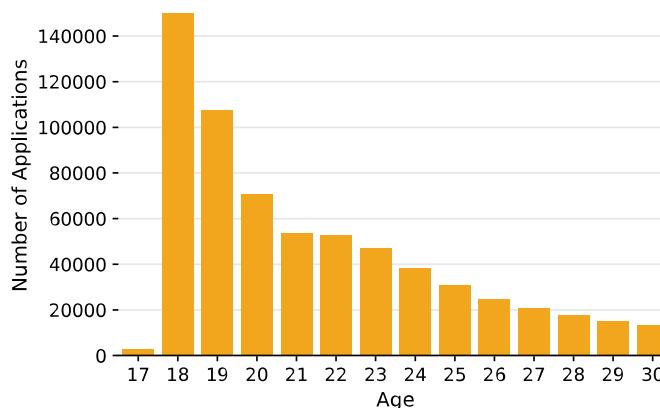


Figure 5

Number of Applications,
by Age

System Wide Applicants

Applicant by language preference (2017 – 2020)

Applicants are categorized as Anglophone or Francophone based on the language preference they select in their college applications. Students who attend a French language school board may choose to select English as their preferred language. The results here are as expected. Dual credit students who are Francophone are more likely to apply to La Cité Collégiale, Collège Boréal, or Algonquin College, whereas Anglophone dual credit students typically apply to Humber College, Durham College, and Fanshawe College. There are very few French language students applying to typically English colleges. These application patterns reflect overall application trends observed by all applicants.

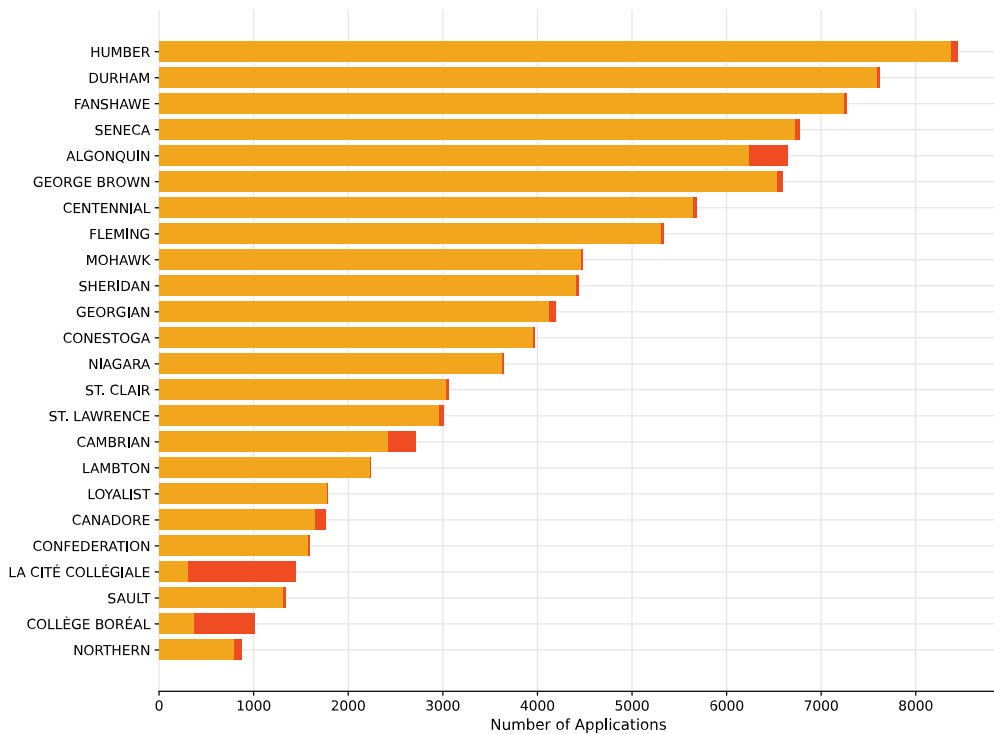


Figure 6
Number of Dual Credit Applications by Language Preference
All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

French ■
English ■



In this section we provide both an update to the analyses shared in 2020 and delve into a number of new research areas. Where methodologically feasible, we continue to differentiate between dual credit applicants, dual credit applicants who used a voucher, and all applicants in general. We begin by looking at conversion rates between applications, offers, and enrolments. Following this, we also examine application behaviour by number of program choices, program credential and study area selection. Finally – we look at retention rates for dual credit students. As a quick reminder, we are looking at applicants to the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 academic years.

Updating Previous Research

Update - Applications, Offers, and Enrolments

As with last year, we see that dual credit applicants continue to receive offers at similar rates to all applicants. 93% of all dual credit applicants received offers, while 92% of those applicants who used a voucher to apply also received an offer. In both cases, this represents a greater proportion of offers than the 86% seen across the entire system.

Dual credit students who use vouchers to apply continue to enrol at a lower rate than the rest of dual credit applicants, and all applicants in general. Last year we posited that dual credit students who use vouchers face additional challenges with respect to funding. We noted that

changes to OSAP introduced in early 2019 included reductions to the household income threshold for eligibility, changes to repayment requirements, and the elimination of full education grants. In addition to these changes, students are required to provide a \$500 deposit to colleges in early spring to secure their placement in a college program. The combined impact of these two financial changes could be a contributing factor explaining why fewer dual credit students using vouchers are enrolling. Colleges could consider targeting financial support for this group of students to boost enrolments.

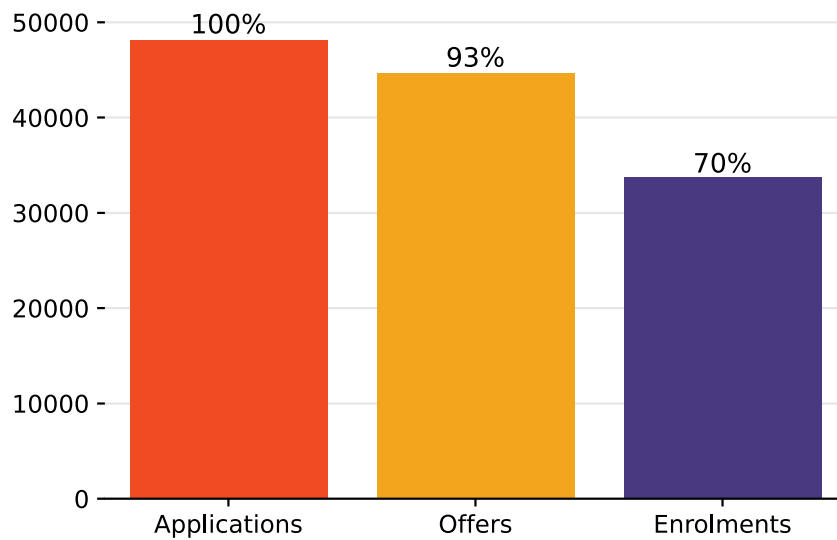


Figure 7
Number of Applications,
Offers, and Enrolments
All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

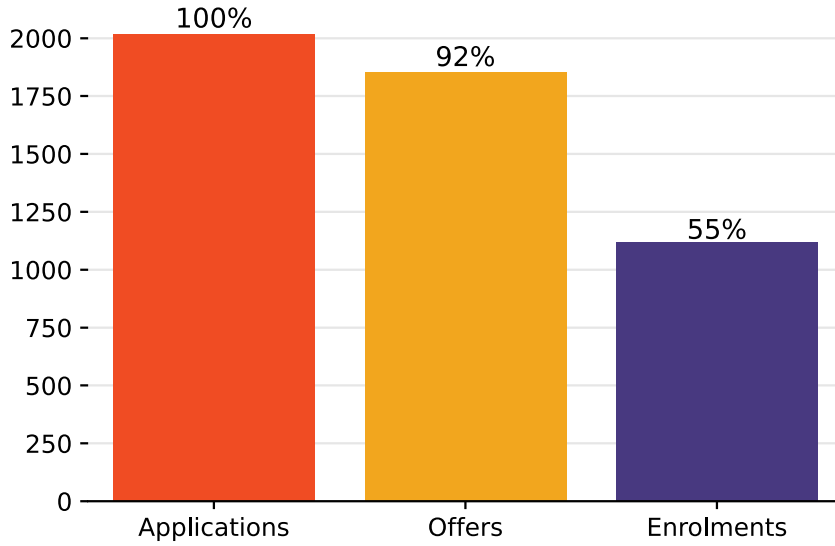


Figure 8
 Number of Applications,
 Offers, and Enrolments
*All Applicants With a Dual
 Credit Who Applied With
 an SCWI Voucher*

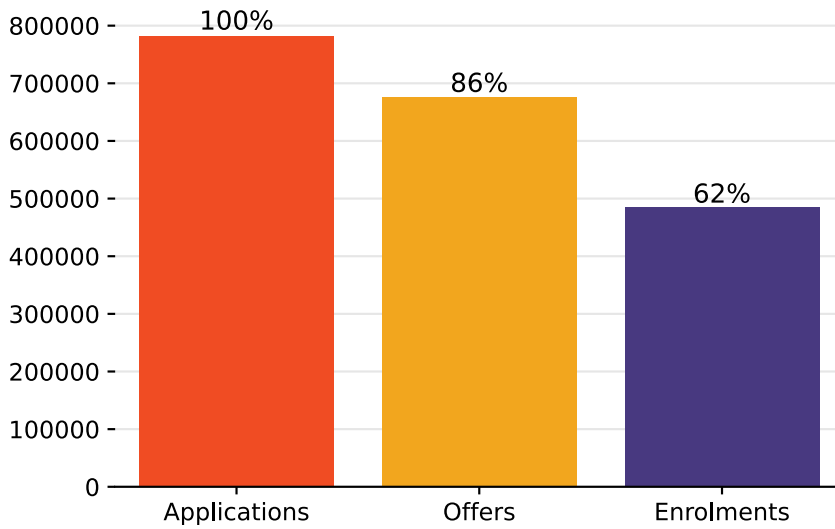


Figure 9
 Number of Applications,
 Offers, and Enrolments
System Wide Applicants

Number of Program Choices

When applicants apply to an Ontario College, they can make up to five program choices, with up to three at any single college. Typically, applicants rank them in order of preference, from first to fifth. Approximately one quarter of Dual Credit applicants choose only one program, while another quarter choose five programs. However, if they are

using a voucher, just over one quarter will make three program choices. On average, dual credit students make 2.9 program choices per person, while those who use a voucher make 2.8 program choices. This is slightly higher than the system-wide average of 2.3 program choices per person.

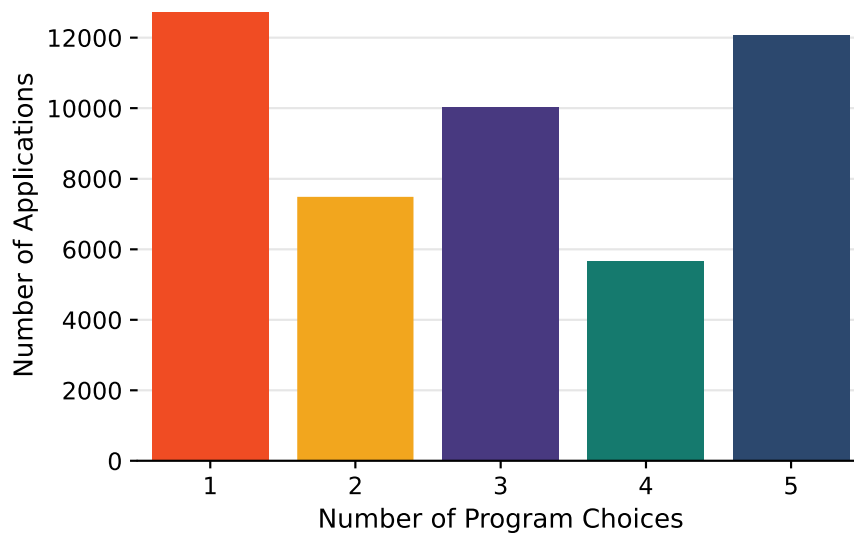


Figure 10
Number of Program Choices Per Application
All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

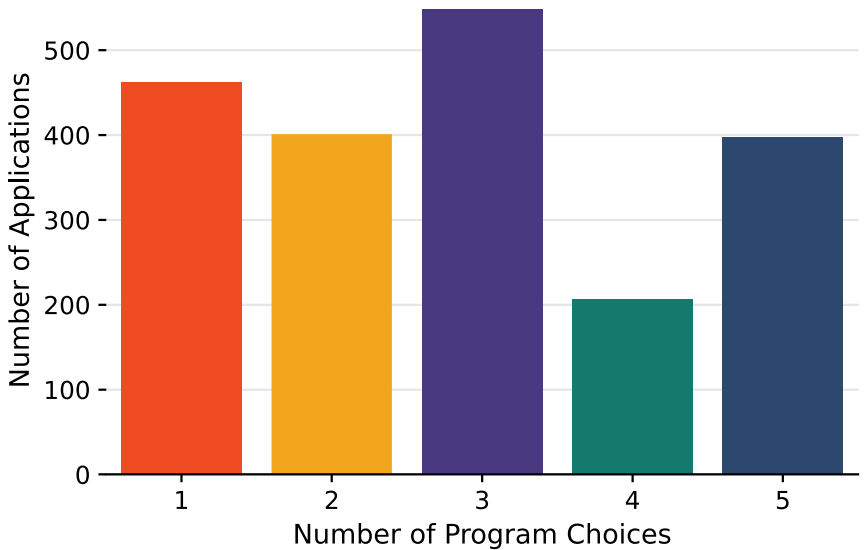


Figure 11
 Number of Program Choices Per Application
All Applicants With a Dual Credit Who Applied With an SCWI Voucher

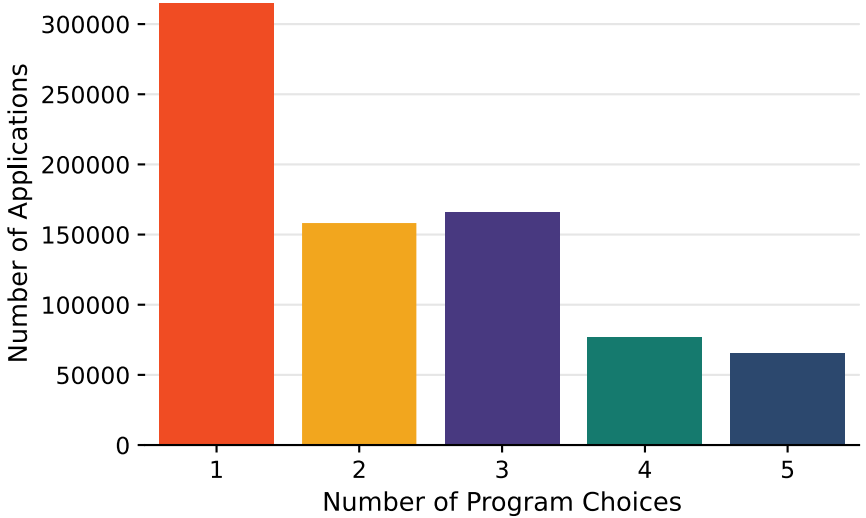
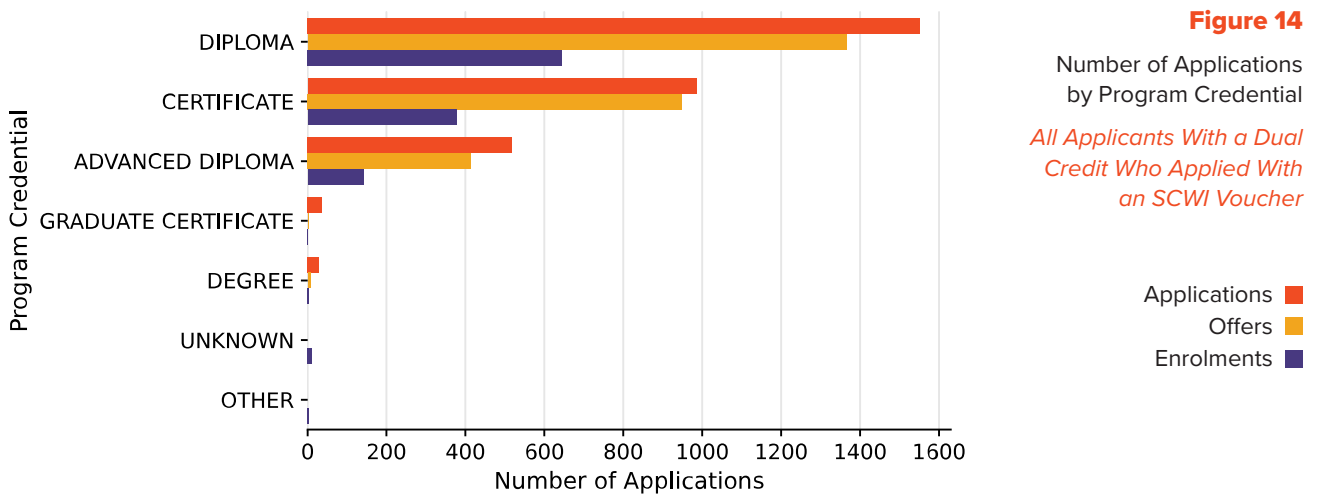
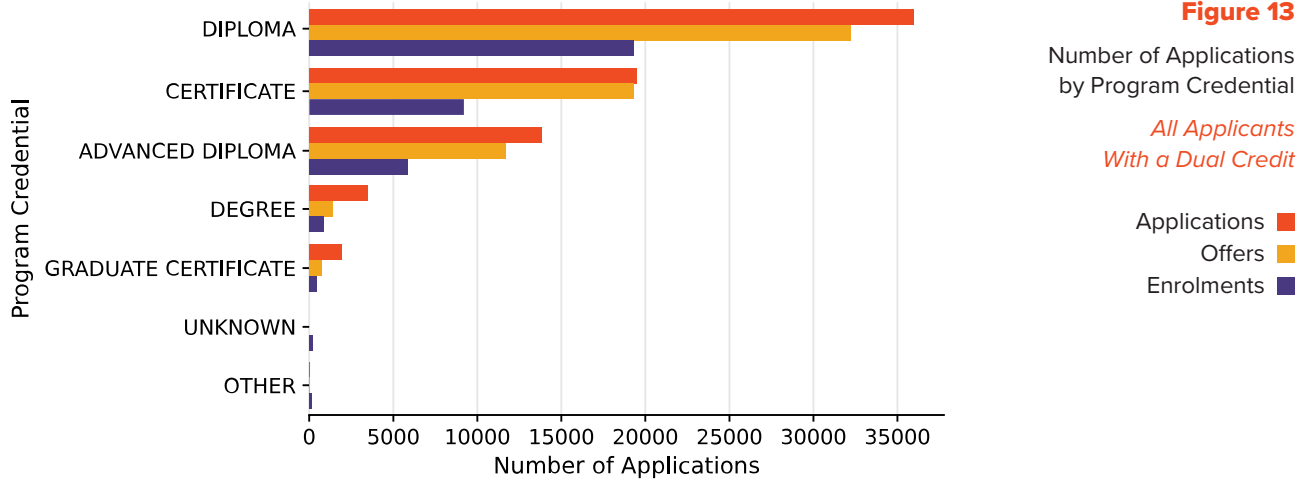


Figure 12
 Number of Program Choices Per Application
System Wide Applicants

Program Credential

Dual credit students apply to a wide variety of credential types. However, approximately half apply to a diploma program, whether they use a voucher or not. This is inline with what we observe for all applicants across the

system, where 43% of all applications are to a diploma credential. Further in this report we will look at credential type more closely and assess if and/or how dual credit students move from one credential type to another.



Study Area

In the Ontario post-secondary education system there are literally thousands of different programs available from our 24 CAAT (Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology) Ontario colleges. And, in many cases, these programs may offer similar (or even identical) content, but with different course names and codes. Assessing any patterns and trends at a program level could be nearly impenetrable. One way to begin is to group the data at a higher level – in this case, Study Area. All programs are assigned to a common study area: Applied Arts, Business, Technology, or Health. We will use these categories in our ongoing discussions.

In **Figures 15** and **16** we share the distribution of dual credit students across study areas. As we observed last year, dual credit students using a voucher continue to be most likely to apply to a program in the Applied Arts. The remaining applications are fairly evenly distributed across the remaining study areas. Interestingly, there is some variation between the dual credit students using vouchers and those who do not. Of those who do not use a voucher, they are a little less likely to apply to a Business program than their counterparts.

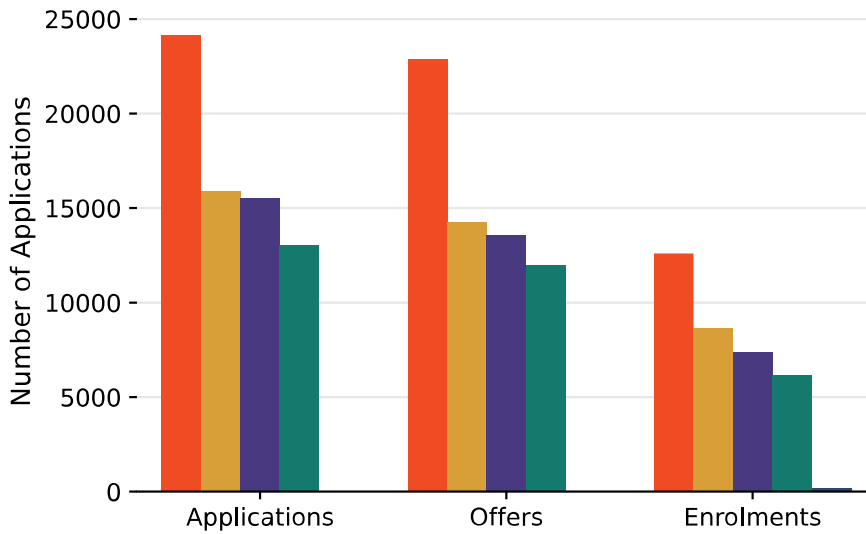


Figure 15

Number of Applications, Offers, and Enrolments by Study Area

All Applicants With a Dual Credit

- Applied Arts
- Technology
- Health
- Business
- Unknown

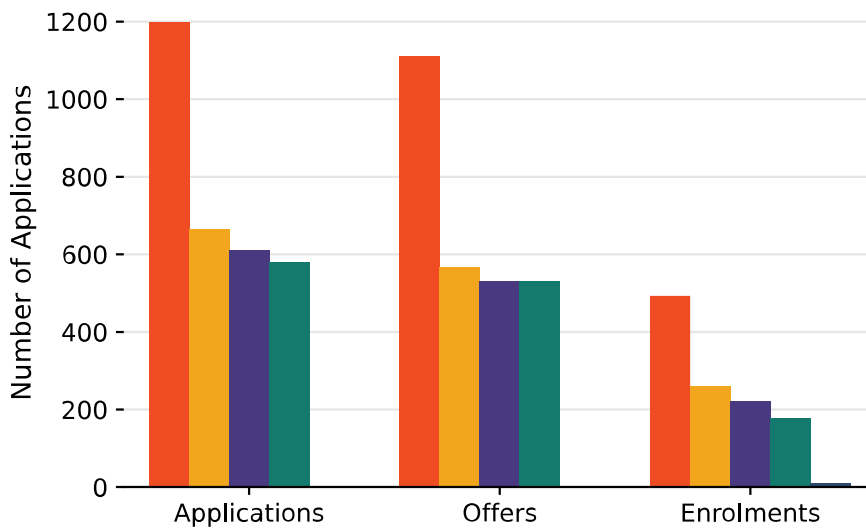


Figure 16

Number of Applications, Offers, and Enrolments by Study Area

All Applicants With a Dual Credit Who Applied With an SCWI Voucher

- Applied Arts
- Technology
- Health
- Business
- Unknown

Top 10 Applications			
Dual Credit Applicants		Dual Credit Applicants with an SCWI Voucher	
Preparatory/Upgrading	Media	Preparatory/Upgrading	Child/Youth Worker
Law and Security	Mechanical	Law and Security	Electronics
Nursing Related	Education	Social Services	Business Management
Social Services	Business Management	Media	Civil
Electronics	Child/Youth Worker	Education	Fashion
Top 10 Enrolments			
Dual Credit Applicants		Dual Credit Applicants with an SCWI Voucher	
Preparatory/Upgrading	Education	Preparatory/Upgrading	Nursing Related
Law and Security	Media	Law and Security	Child/Youth Worker
Nursing Related	Mechanical	Social Services	Electronics
Electronics	Business Management	Education	Fashion
Social Services	Child/Youth Worker	Media	Mechanical

Retention

While it is important to understand applications and offers, it remains critical to also examine student retention in the post-secondary system. Understanding the conditions under which students may be likely to leave college should help colleges develop appropriate supports for former dual credit students to help them complete their program.

As with last year, retention is inferred via enrolment records. For example, we know that a diploma credential is a two-year program. As such, we'd expect to see an applicant enrol in four terms. If they started in September 2018, then we check the Winter 2019, Fall 2019, and Winter 2020 enrolment files. If the applicant shows up four times, we infer that they were retained.

As should be clear, it is difficult to speak with 100% confidence about retention. It is unknown, for example, if someone has simply taken a few terms off, or if they have permanently left a program. For the purposes

of this report, retention means the student remained enrolled at an Ontario college, in the same credential type.

Last year we were unable to look at retention for every credential type for dual credit students who used a voucher, as the voucher program was too new. This year, with another year and half of enrolment data, we can compare all dual credit students and those who used vouchers for every credential type.

In **Figure 17** we see 44% of all dual credit students have been retained in a diploma program, whereas in **Figure 18** we see 30% of voucher using dual credit students have been retained. This is a lower rate of retention when compared to 51% across the entire system for diploma programs as seen in **Figure 19**. Similar differences among the three groups can be observed across all credentials, save for advanced diploma credentials, where dual credit students who use vouchers are much less likely to be retained.

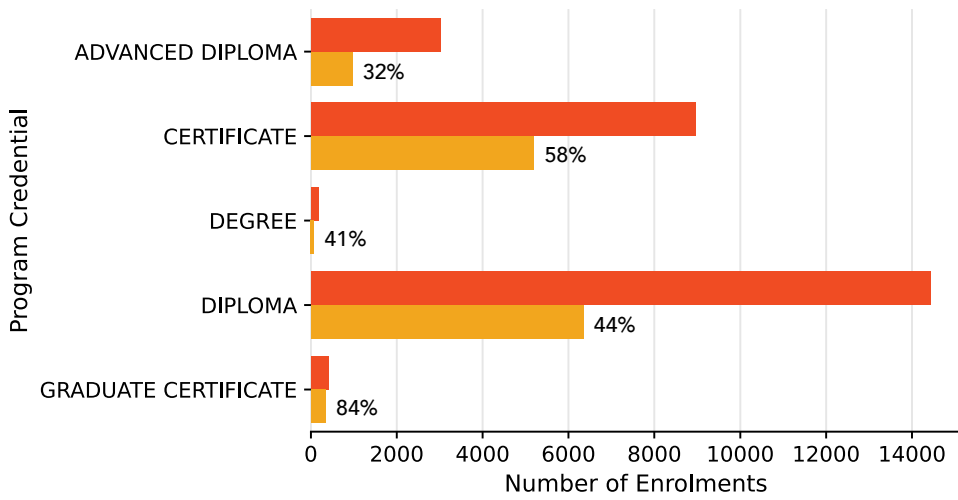


Figure 17
Student Retention
*All Applicants
With a Dual Credit*

Started ■
Retained ■

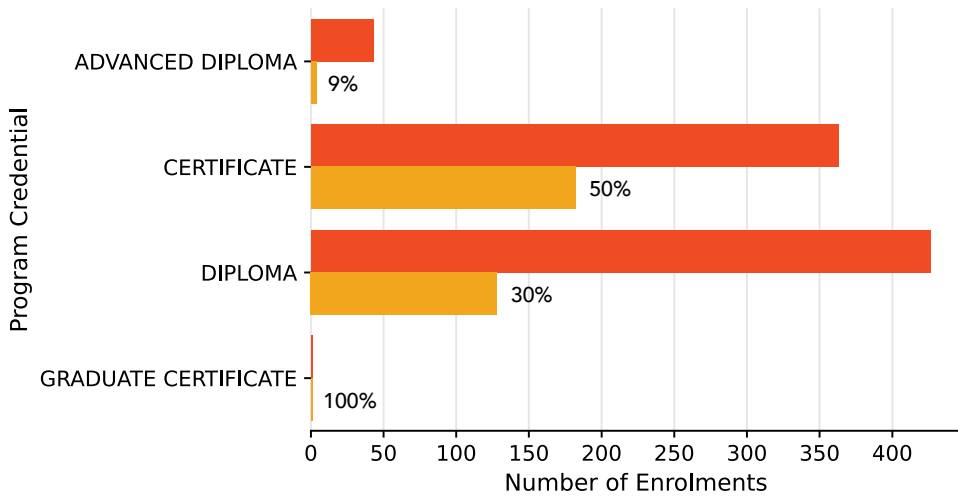


Figure 18
Student Retention
*All Applicants With a Dual
Credit Who Applied With
an SCWI Voucher*

Started ■
Retained ■

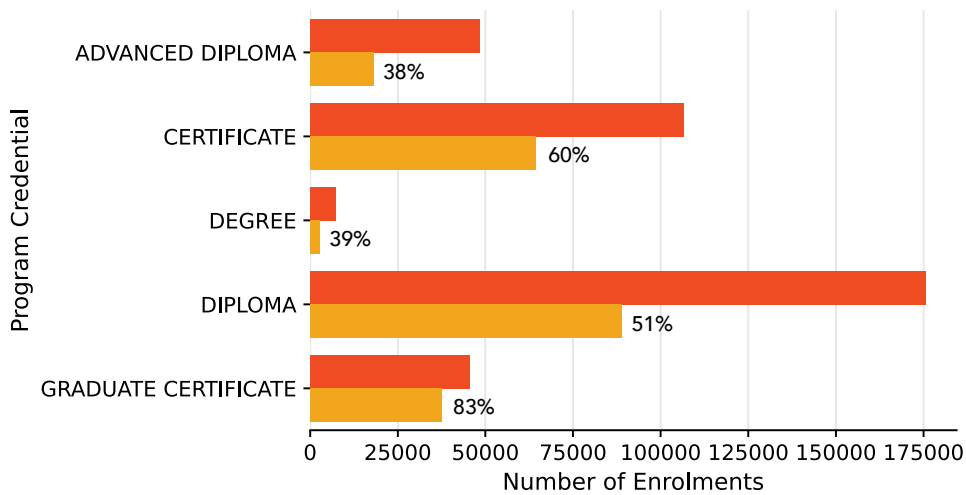


Figure 19
Student Retention
System Wide Applicants

Started ■
Retained ■

Applications and Enrolments – by College

In this section, we look at the conversion of applicants to enrolled students at each college, by three groupings – dual credit students, dual credit students who use a voucher, and all applicants system wide. Some interesting college-specific pieces jump out. Some colleges who typically receive fewer dual credit applicants (for example,

Lambton College and Sault College) have a strong track record for converting these applicants into enrolled students. This may be due to process related issues such as providing counselling support for dual credit students as they navigate their options.

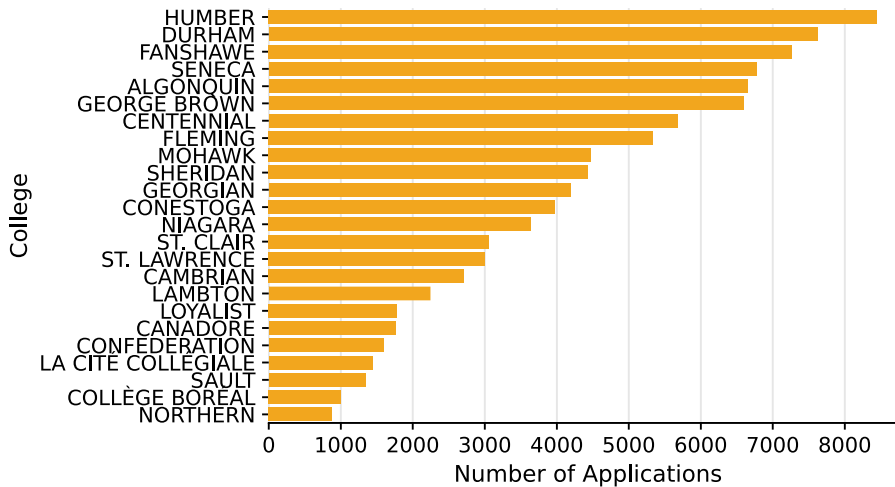


Figure 20
Number of Applicants
by College
All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

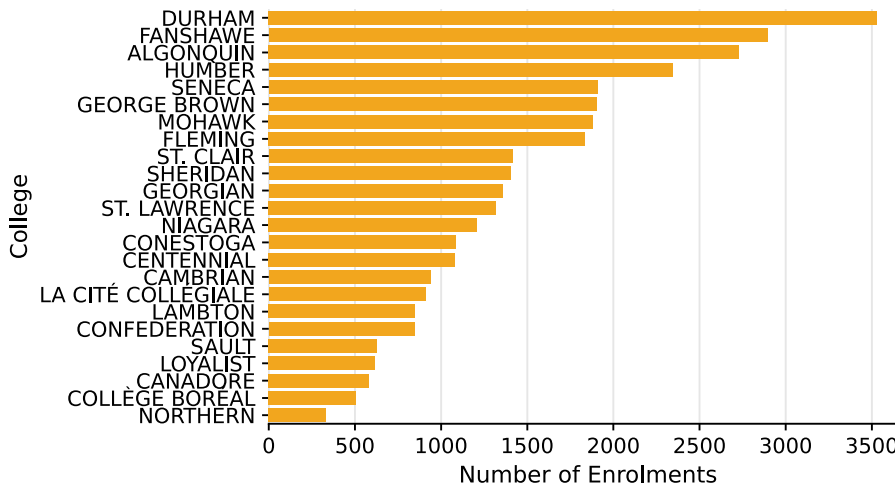


Figure 21
Number of Applicants
who Enrolled by College
All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

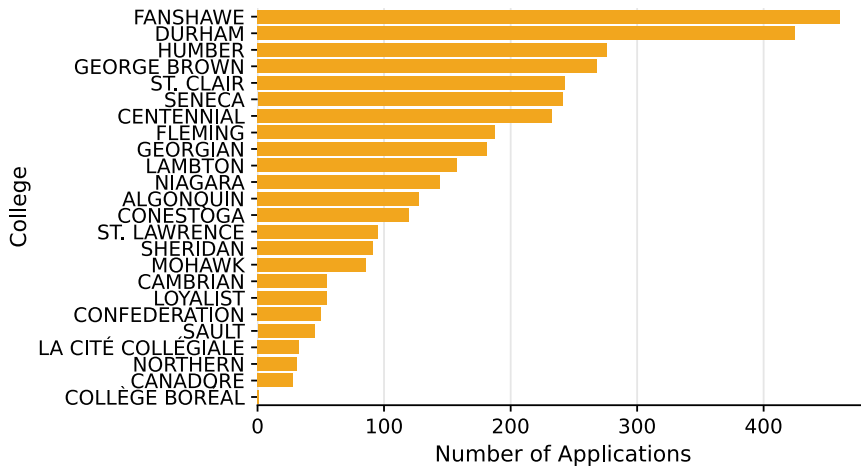


Figure 22

Number of Applicants
by College

*All Applicants With a Dual
Credit Who Applied With
an SCWI Voucher*

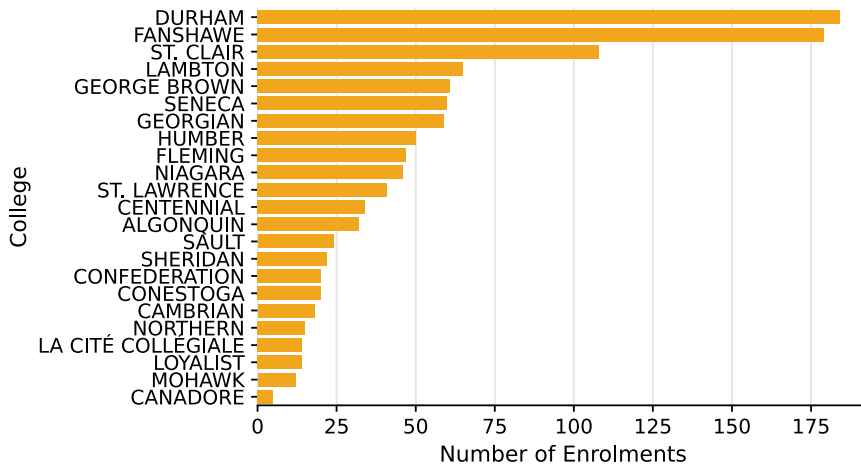


Figure 23

Number of Applicants
who Enrolled by College

*All Applicants With a Dual
Credit Who Applied With
an SCWI Voucher*

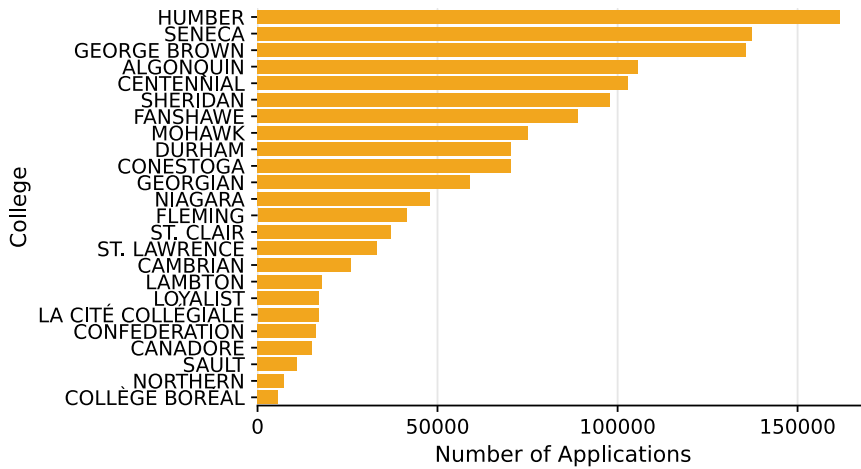


Figure 24

Number of Applicants
by College

System Wide Applicants

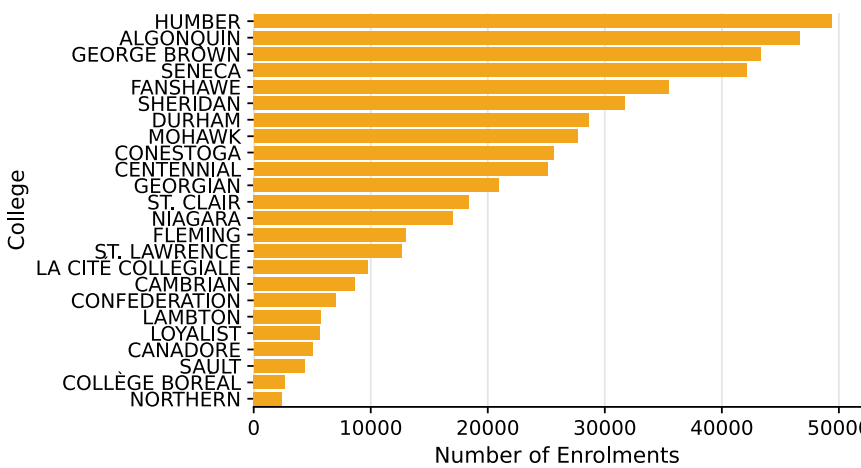


Figure 25

Number of Applicants
who Enrolled by College

System Wide Applicants

Extending the Analysis



In the first section of this report, we focussed on updating some foundational, descriptive analyses with the most current data available. Moving into this next chapter, we are excited to share findings for new avenues of investigation for dual credit students. These questions came about from our discussions with stakeholders and partners in the Dual Credit program.

Q1

Do dual credit students take a break between their high school credential and their college experiences?

Most dual credit applicants do not wait to apply to college. Approximately 80% apply to enrol in college immediately upon receiving their OSSD, with almost the same proportion enrolling immediately as well. This is a much higher rate than the system-wide group. Of all applicants to colleges in 2017 – 2020, only 41% applied within the same year they received their OSSD.

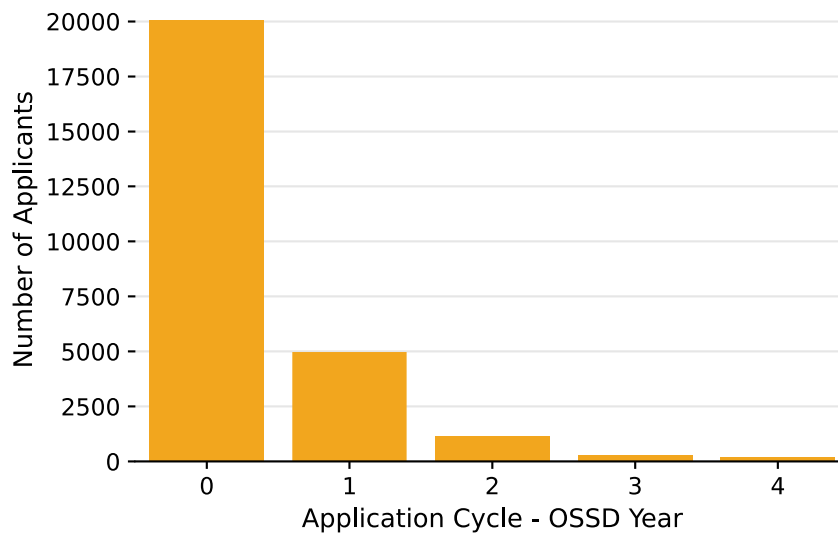


Figure 26

Time Between OSSD Being Issued and Applying to a College for the First Time

All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

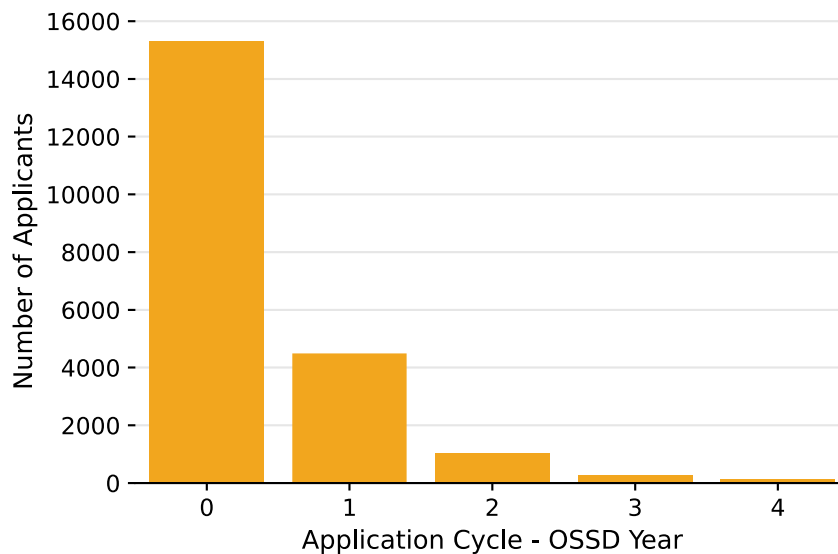


Figure 27

Time Between OSSD Being Issued and Enrolling at a College for the First Time

All Applicants
With a Dual Credit

Q2

Are there any differences in application behaviour between high school students who take only one dual credit and those who may take more? How many students take more than one dual credit?

For this question, we have looked only at high school students whose OSSD was issued in 2020. Of all students who took dual credits, 64% only took one. Of those who took a single dual credit, 80% applied. For the remaining 20%, they either did not apply at all, or they may have started an application, but did not complete it. There is little to no variation in the application behaviour for dual credit students who took only one dual credit, as compared to those who took two or more.

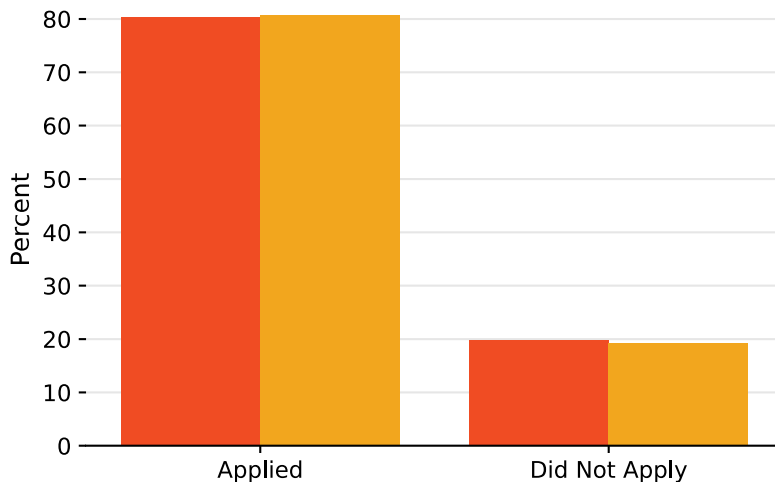


Figure 28
Application Status
of Dual Credit Students
*Subset of Students who
Received their OSSD
in 2020*

One Dual Credit Course ■
Multiple Dual Credit Courses ■

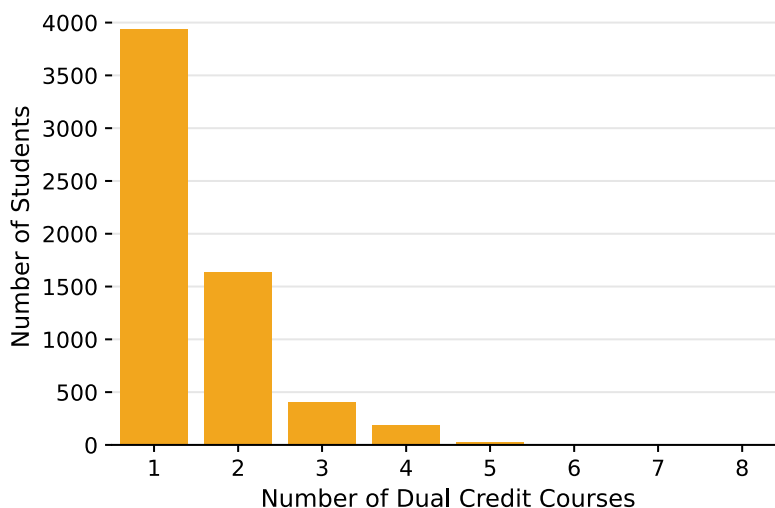


Figure 29
Number of Dual Credit
Courses Taken by Students
*Subset of Students who
Received their OSSD
in 2020*

What grades are dual credit students achieving in their courses?

Dual credit students do well academically in their dual credit courses. We know they get offers at comparable rates to all other students, and as you can see from the grade distribution below, they are not only passing their dual credits, but they are thriving. This supports the underlying assumption of the Dual Credit program that students who take these credits have the potential to succeed in college courses. Furthermore, college retention for dual credit students may not be related to academic issues, but rather associated with other external factors.

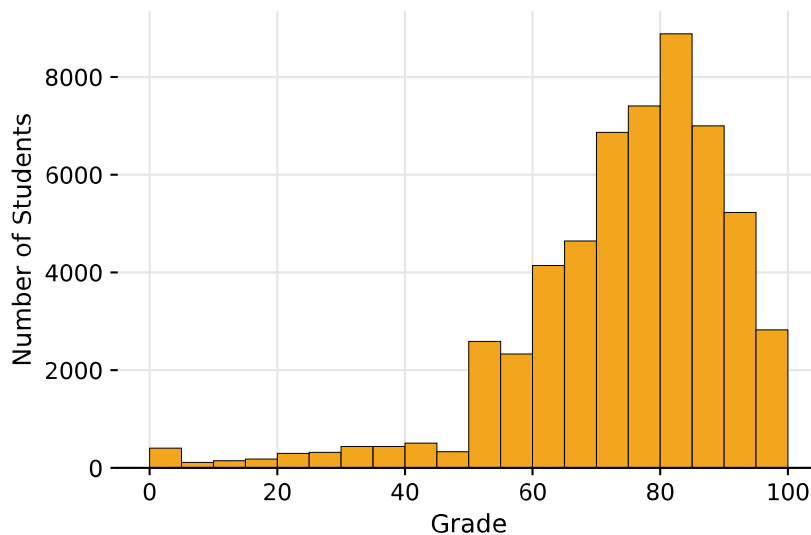


Figure 30

Grades of Individual
Dual Credit Courses

*All Applicants
With a Dual Credit*

Q4

Are there any differences in application behaviour between team-taught and college delivered dual credit students?

As noted earlier in the report, for this study we are examining both college-delivered dual credits and team-taught dual credits. In 2020, 20% of all dual credit seats were delivered in team-taught programs.

When we look at overall conversion rates in **Figure 31** between applications, offers, and enrolments, team-taught students are slightly more likely than college delivered students to receive offers and subsequently enrol.

In **Figure 32** we are looking at the relationship of applications to offers. When an applicant applies twice, and only receives one offer, both applications are counted, but only one offer is counted.

Extending this further, we also provide in **Figure 33** an analysis of individuals, rather than applications. If an applicant applies twice or more, they will only be counted once in the application tally. This second lens reveals that dual credit students are persistent – regardless of what type of dual credit course they take.

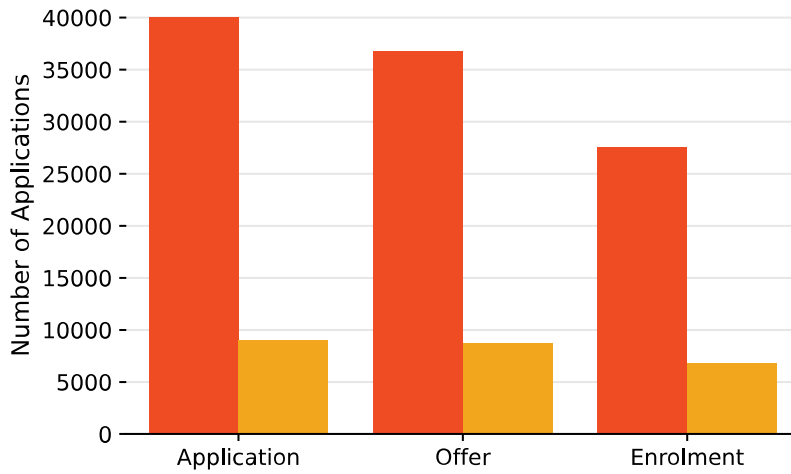


Figure 31

Dual Credit Applications, Offers, and Enrolments by Dual Credit Course Type

Every Application is Included in the Total Count

College Delivered ■
Team-Taught ■

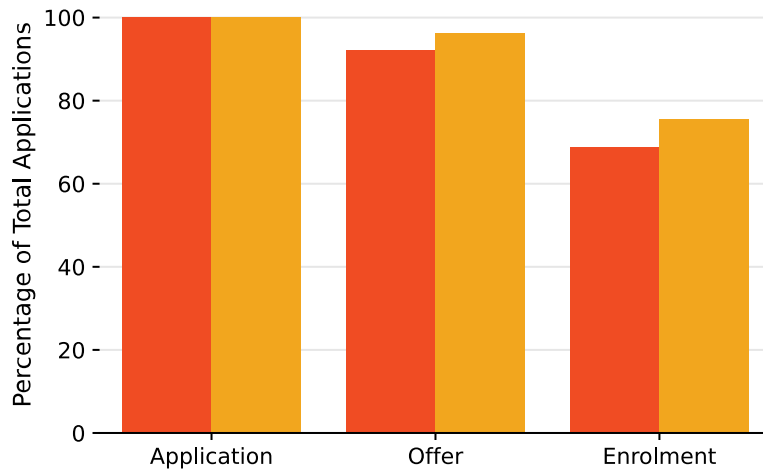


Figure 32

Dual Credit Applications, Offers, and Enrolments by Dual Credit Course Type

Conversion Rate Calculations Based on Every Application Made

College Delivered ■
Team-Taught ■

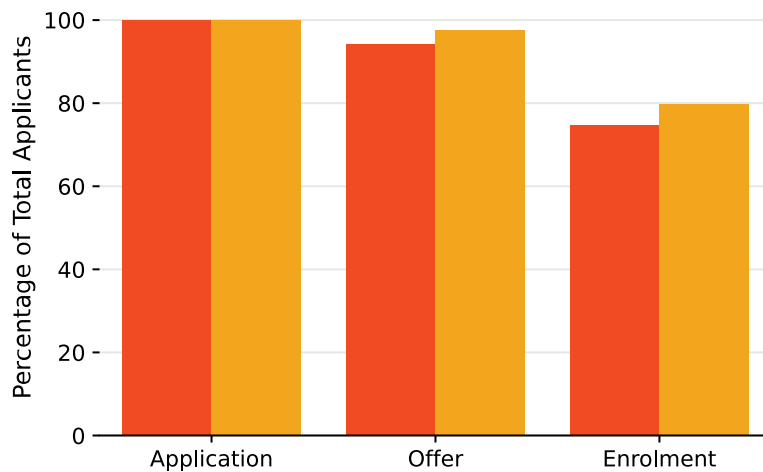


Figure 33

Dual Credit Applications, Offers, and Enrolments by Dual Credit Course Type

Conversion Rate Calculations Based on Number of Applicants, Regardless of How Many Applications They Made

College Delivered ■
Team-Taught ■

What do we know about the students who started to apply to college but did not submit the application?

Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, a new feature of the program was introduced for students in two specific types of Dual Credit programs: School Within a College programs and Adult Dual Credit programs. Research indicated that students in these programs might benefit from an additional “nudge” to encourage them to enter post-secondary education or training programs after having finished their diploma requirements while being involved in Dual Credit programs. Modelled loosely on the former Life After High School initiative, students in these SCWI programs had the benefit of the addition of College Advisors whose role was to provide additional supports to assist students in exploring post-secondary opportunities, application processes and the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

In addition to several small group and one-on-one sessions, students applying to post-secondary programs had their application fee paid through the use of a voucher. These vouchers are purchased by SCWI from OCAS and given to eligible students participating in a SWAC or ADC program. When a student applies to an Ontario college, they do so through the OCAS Applicant Portal, which accepts the vouchers in lieu of payment. This provides some financial relief to students who may face many barriers to entry for post-secondary education. SCWI has been purchasing vouchers for distribution to dual credit applicants since 2017, for use in the 2018 Application Cycle.

In this analysis, an application is considered as “completed” once the applicant has paid. Virtually every dual credit applicant who used a voucher, and by association also had one-on-one support, completed their application, whereas 18% of all dual credit student applicants started an application but did not complete it.

Q6

Do dual credit students who enrol in certificate programs use them as a pathway to other credentials? (2017 – 2019)

After having examined dual credit pathway progression through post-secondary between preparatory and regular programs, we also investigated how these students moved from their certificate programs to other credential types. In this analysis we have included only people who enrolled in a certificate program before 2020 so that we could see a subsequent enrolment.

Of the 6500 dual credit students who took a certificate credential, 28% of them subsequently enrolled in a diploma program. This is comparable to behaviour we observe across the whole system, where 26% of all applicants who took a certificate credential subsequently enrolled in a diploma program. These findings, when taken in conjunction with the transition from preparatory programs to regular/oversubscribed programs suggest that dual credit students are motivated to get an advanced credential, and willing to take the preliminary steps necessary to accrue required pre-requisite qualifications.

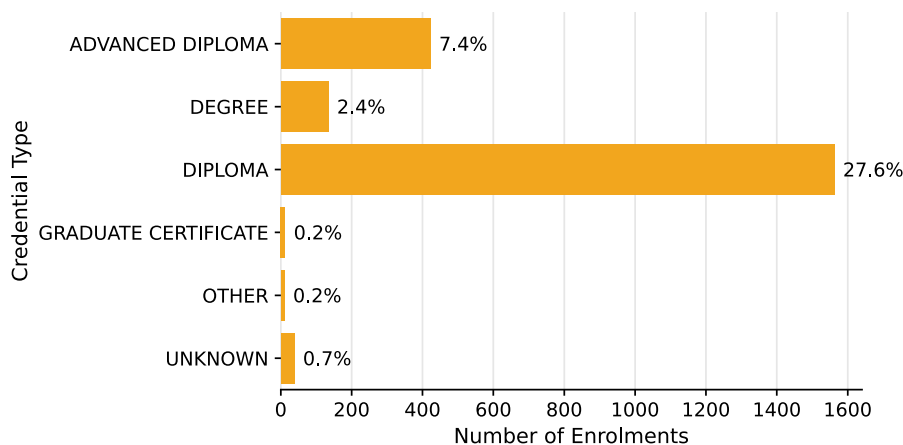


Figure 33

Credential Type of Second Program for Students Who Have Previously Enrolled in a Certificate Credential

All Applicants With a Dual Credit (n=5668)

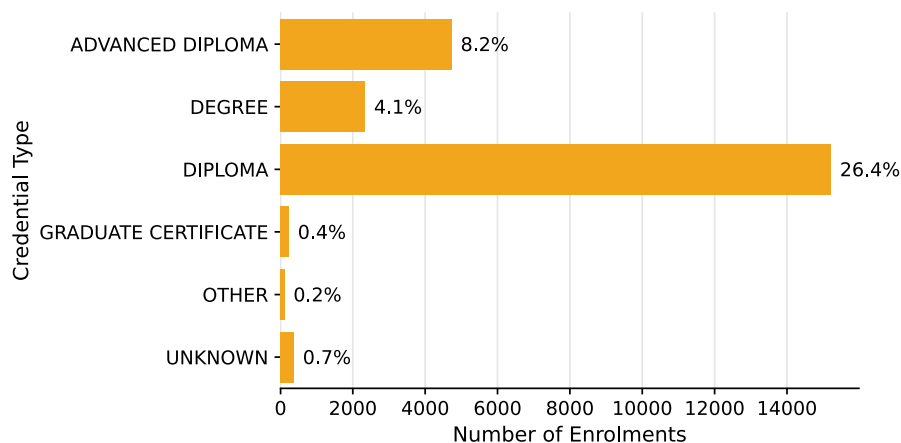


Figure 34

Credential Type of Second Program for Students Who Have Previously Enrolled in a Certificate Credential

System Wide Students (n=57682)

Q7

Do dual credit students who enrol in pre-programs, like health, eventually move into highly competitive/oversubscribed programs? (2017 – 2019)

One of the most interesting questions we are seeking to answer is with respect to how dual credit students persist in post-secondary education once they enter college. Are they thriving? One way to look at this is from the point of student transition from preparatory programs to other associated programs in the same general area.

In this analysis, we have only looked at people who enrolled in a preparatory course before the 2020 academic year as those who enrolled in the 2020 application cycle would not have the chance to be seen in a second enrolment file yet. In general, 12% of dual credit students are enrolled in a preparatory program. This is compared to 10% at the system wide level.

Within this group, we see that just over 2600 dual credit students have enrolled in a preparatory program. Of those, 41% subsequently enrolled in a regular program and 23% enrolled in an oversubscribed program.

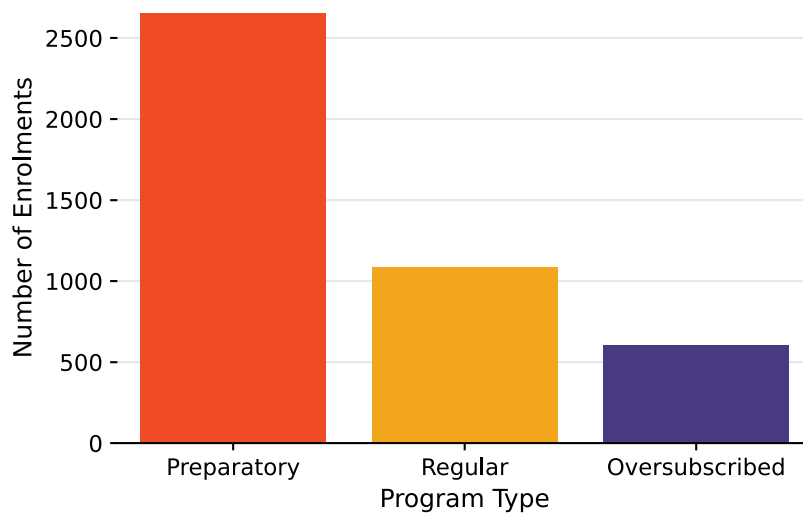


Figure 35

Enrolment by Program Type

All Students with a Dual Credit Who Enrolled in a Preparatory Program

Conclusion + Next Steps



Thank You

We are pleased to have shared these findings and insights with you regarding the School-College Work Initiative. Following on last year's report, we were able to investigate specific questions to gain a better understanding of dual credit students and determine where best to provide further support to help them succeed.

One of the findings to highlight is dual credit students who use a voucher are more likely to start and complete their college application than other dual credit students. Students using a voucher are part of the Wrap Around SWAC and Wrap Around Adult Dual Credit programs, which also include personal support from a College Advisor to work through a college application. This represents an opportunity to support all dual credit students and possibly all secondary school students, with similar personalized approaches.

This type of support is likely more critical now, with the onset of COVID-19 and the shift to online learning for many students. This shift has made it less feasible for College recruiters and guidance counsellors to provide valuable in person support for at risk students.

Further consideration could also be given to financial supports. Dual credit students who use a voucher are less likely to be retained than those who do not use a voucher, and all students system wide. Surveys have shown that up to 80% of all applicants have some measure of concern about their ability to finance their post-secondary education.² Targeting financial support to dual credit students using a voucher, who may already face other systemic barriers, could be an opportunity to increase retention in this group.

Finally, dual credit students continue to apply and receive offers to colleges at comparable rates as non-dual credit applicants across the system. This is cause for celebration! Many people have come together to provide support to these students, and the effort is delivering long-term impacts on student success. We will be sharing this report broadly to highlight the many strengths of the Dual Credit program including the Wrap Around SWAC/ADC that may have application in other initiatives designed to ease the transition for at-risk students between high school and post-secondary education.

Questions?

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact David Armstrong, Project Officer at davidarmstrong@ontariodirectors.ca.

² OCAS Applicant Experience Survey (2018, 2019, 2021)

Appendix



Background

The School-College-Work Initiative (SCWI) coordinates the delivery of the Dual Credit program in partnership with participating Ontario high schools and colleges. This program was introduced in Ontario schools in 2005 as part of the ministry's Student Success strategy. The program represented one of several new learning opportunities informed by an approach that enables students to build on their strengths and interests in school and get a head start on their post-secondary education and training. Today, all seventy school boards that have secondary schools and all Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology are involved in providing secondary school students with dual credit learning opportunities.

These programs deliver college content to high school students, and upon completion, provide a credit toward their Ontario Secondary School diploma. They are specifically intended to support at-risk students towards the completion of their Ontario Secondary School diploma while simultaneously providing an exemplar of what college could provide in hopes of encouraging these students to both complete high school, and, hopefully, pursue a post-secondary education.

It should be noted that not all dual credit courses are the same. In this study, we are examining college-delivered dual credits which are college courses or Level 1 apprenticeship in-school training delivered by college faculty. For the most part, these are delivered face-to-

face on a college campus. Students who successfully earn the college credit based on the college standard are granted a secondary school credit that counts towards their graduation requirement and is included on their Ontario Student Transcript (OST). Each of these students has the support of a Dual Credit Teacher -- a teacher from their school board. We are not including team-taught dual credits. A team-taught credit is based on carefully matching a secondary school curriculum and a college curriculum and is jointly delivered by both a secondary-school teacher and a college faculty member. Content for these team-taught courses can include Level 1 Apprenticeship college courses and the in-school academic portion of the apprenticeship training.

In addition to several small group and one-on-one sessions, students applying to post-secondary programs had their application fee paid through the use of a voucher. These vouchers are purchased by SCWI from OCAS and given to students taking a dual credit course. When a student applies to an Ontario college, they do so through the OCAS Applicant Portal, which accepts the vouchers in lieu of payment. This provides some financial relief to students who typically face many barriers to entry for post-secondary education. SCWI has been purchasing vouchers for distribution to dual-credit applicants since 2017, for use in the 2018 Application Cycle.

Terminology

Application Cycles

As you proceed through the report, it is important to be aware of certain peculiarities of the college application system. In Ontario, college applications for domestic students are received in, and referred to by an application cycle. The cycle is named for the earliest term (Fall) a student may actually start. As such, a student

who applies in the 2020 Application Cycle could enrol in Fall Term 2020, Winter Term 2021, or Spring Term 2021. However, they may submit their application as early as October 2019. You can use the terms Application Cycle and Academic Year interchangeably if that helps better understanding the timing.

Describing the Data

The data used in this analysis have been drawn from the OCAS Data Warehouse. It consists of a combination of information provided via Ontario high school transcripts, and Ontario college application and enrolment records. The information from these two sources is linked via a unique ID.

With respect to high school transcripts, every year, OCAS receives transcripts for all Ontario high school students who will be eligible to apply for college. With these in hand, identifying applicants who took a dual credit in high school is a relatively straightforward process. All high school courses are given a designated code. In the case of a dual credit, a college delivered course code will have the letters 4T or 4Y in the 4th and 5th places of the sequence, while a team-taught delivered course code will have a T in the Note column of the transcript. Of course, not everyone who applies to an Ontario college is doing so immediately upon graduation from high school. In some cases, there have been high school records where a course is indicated to be both a college delivered and a team taught course. This is in error. Anyone with this coding error has been removed from the analysis, and efforts are ongoing with the school boards to remedy this issue.

Informed by these coding processes, the data drawn for this analysis represents every college applicant in

our system whose high school transcript has a course with the required parameters identifying it as a dual credit course. After cleaning it up, we have a data set comprising of 36,709 unique applicants, who submitted a total of 48,111 applications between 2017-2020. This variance between applicants and applications is due to the fact that some students applied in multiple application cycles.

It should be noted, however, the 2021 Application Cycle is still ongoing, with applications and offers still in progress and enrolments just beginning. As such, the discussions and analyses represented in this report have been undertaken for applicants from the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 application cycles, and present results tallying the number of applications they have made.

The comparison between dual credit applicants and system-wide applicants is presented here with our best effort to ensure consistency between the two groups. In order to align the system wide grouping with the dual credit groups, we selected only applicants who applied to a diploma, an advanced diploma, or a certificate program, given that these are the three credential types to which dual credit students from an Ontario high school were most likely to apply. We also selected only Canadian applicants, to ensure we did not skew the data with international applicants.



DC Dual
Credit
School College Work Initiative