

Career Online High School Frequently Asked Questions

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The Los Angeles Public Library, in partnership with Gale/Cengage, offers free grants to qualified adult learners so they can earn an accredited high school diploma and career certificate online through Smart Horizons Career Online Education's Career Online High School (COHS).

What is Career Online High School (COHS)?

Career Online High School (COHS) is an online high school diploma and career certification program available through the Los Angeles Public Library.

Who can apply to COHS?

Adult residents (19 and over) of the city of Los Angeles who wish to earn their high school diploma are encouraged to apply. Minors should pursue their high school education through existing resources such as the Los Angeles Unified School District.

How will people be selected for the program?

Begin by taking the online self-assessment. Then enroll in and complete one Part 1 prerequisite course within 2 weeks. If you complete the prerequisite in time, you will be contacted by the library. Candidates are accepted on a rolling admission basis.

Will COHS students receive their GED or high school equivalency certificate?

No. This is not a GED program. Successful graduates will earn a high school diploma and a career certificate from an accredited high school. They will not receive a high school equivalency certificate.

What is the difference between a GED and high school diploma?

When a student completes the GED, TASC, or HiSET exam, they receive a high school equivalency certificate. There are several differences between an equivalency certificate and a diploma. The most significant difference is that some colleges, institutions, and organizations require a high school diploma and may not accept a high school equivalency certificate. In addition to providing a high school diploma, COHS gives students the benefit of earning a career certificate and completing additional job preparation documents and training.

What type of career certification will be offered?

Through COHS, students may earn a certificate in the following areas:

- Childcare and Education
- Certified Protection Officer
- Commercial Driving
- Food and Hospitality
- General Career Preparation
- Homeland Security
- Office Management

- Retail Customer Service

If I choose a major like child care, how will I train to work with children?

COHS provides all of the coursework you need to qualify for a childcare certification, but you will need to find a local agency in your community to fulfill the hands-on training hours required.

What is the career portfolio?

To arm you with the tools you need to find a job, COHS will teach you to create essential documents, such as your resume and a cover letter. All students must complete this.

Is all coursework web-based?

Yes.

What device(s) can I use to access my coursework?

You must use a desktop or laptop. A smart phone, tablet or iPad will not support the learning management system. Internet is required.

Is all coursework in English?

Yes. At this time, all coursework is available in English only.

How do I get help as a student?

Once enrolled, COHS pairs each student with an academic coach, who provides the student with an individual career path, offers ongoing guidance, evaluates performance and connects the student with the resources needed to master the courses.

How long will it take for students to complete the program?

If chosen for a grant, students will be given up to 18 months to complete the program, which will consist of 18 credits. Students accepted into the program may transfer up to 14 credits from their former high school. Depending on how many credits the student is able to transfer, the program can be completed in as few as five months.

Is a high school transcript necessary to apply?

While access to a high school transcript is strongly encouraged in order to transfer credits to COHS, it is not a requirement to apply. Enrollees without access to their high school transcript need to complete all 18 credits within 18 months.

What is the history of COHS?

COHS began in 2011 and was accredited by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission in February 2012. Since February 2012, more than 819 students have enrolled in the program nationwide with a retention rate of 73%. The Los Angeles Public Library began offering scholarships to attend COHS in April 2014.

Will my local community colleges and universities accept a Career Online High School diploma?

The prevalence of online “diploma mills” and counterfeit degrees has unfortunately created some skepticism around the legitimacy of diplomas from online institutions. Career Online High School is NOT a diploma mill. Career Online High School is accredited by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, the national commission that confers the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) accreditation seal. While Career Online High School itself is a new institution and may not immediately be familiar by name, it is easy to demonstrate that the school is recognized across the nation as a quality school system, delivering a SACS accredited online high school diploma. It is important to understand that a high school diploma alone (from any type of accredited high school), is not enough to guarantee a student admission into a college or university, as each postsecondary institution has its own minimum standards including admissions exams, standardized test scores and other criteria.

What if I need help with the admissions process following graduation?

Career Online High School is committed to the success of its graduates as they advance into the workplace or postsecondary education and training. Any alumni of the COHS program who has questions about their transcripts or meeting college admissions requirements may call 1-888-408-5783 or email enrollment@shcoe.org for support.

Are COHS staff credentialed? When are they available to assist students?

All COHS instructors and academic coaches are state-certified and located in Florida. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Time; however, coaches have evening hours twice a week. Staff is not exclusively assigned to students enrolled through LAPL at this time. The COHS will reach out to all students at least once every two weeks – and more often for students in need.

How many students have graduated from the program so far?

The Los Angeles Public Library launched this program in April 2014. As of March 2017, there have been 77 graduates from the Los Angeles Public Library’s COHS program. Many graduates have gone on to get promotions at their workplaces, find new jobs, and enroll in college.

Does the Library offer other resources for education and job preparation?

The Los Angeles Public Library is committed to helping people achieve their education and job preparation goals. The Library encourages people to visit its 73 locations, and its web-based resources at www.lapl.org, and to explore the library and community resources at www.lapl.org/cohs-edu

How do I get started?

Complete an [online self-assessment](#). After you have successfully finished the self-assessment, you will be invited to take one two-week prerequisite course in the career area of your choice. Upon successful completion of the course, you will be contacted by the library within five business days to discuss enrollment in the program.