Thank you for your interest in the high school completion program at Kirkwood Community College. This video will help explain our high school completion program, the options available to you as a student, as well as how to get started at a Kirkwood location on attaining your high school diploma.

At Kirkwood Community College’s high school completion program, we believe that all students deserve the opportunity to achieve personal and academic success. Our program works with students who are at least 17 years of age or older. In certain circumstances, such as our high school distance learning program, we can work with students under 17 years of age. We have even had 80 year old graduates, so it’s never too late to earn your high school diploma!

Students choosing to come to Kirkwood to earn our Adult High School diploma or an Iowa High School Equivalency diploma no longer work with a traditional high school. However, we also can work with students currently enrolled in traditional high schools as well as home school programs through arrangement with local school districts.

At Kirkwood Community College, we offer four main avenues to work toward earning your diploma:

1) The Iowa High School Equivalency Diploma

2) A Kirkwood Adult High School Diploma

3) School-sponsored programs

4) Kirkwood High School Distance Learning, or Kirkwood HSDL
Iowa currently uses the HiSET assessment® for its high school equivalency diploma. The HiSET® is an examination-based option. This means in order to earn your Iowa High School Equivalency diploma, you will be required to take a series of 5 exams. The 5 exams are subject-area tests, reviewing your skills in Math, Reading, Writing, Science, and Social Studies. To pass, you must earn a passing score on each HiSET® test, and also have an overall passing score. In Iowa, the overall total score required to pass the HiSET® is 45. Prior to official testing, you will be required to take and pass a series of HiSET® practice tests to demonstrate you are ready for official testing. Preparation work may be necessary prior to taking HiSET® tests.

In Iowa, the cost of the official HiSET® test series is $50, which is paid prior to scheduling your first official test. This $50 fee provides you with 12 months to take and complete all 5 exams. A $10 diploma fee is also required at the last official HiSET® test. Preparation work at Kirkwood is available at no charge. In Iowa, the minimum age to be eligible to take official HiSET® tests and earn an Iowa High School equivalency diploma is 17.

Please be aware that there are NO online or correspondence testing programs for achieving an Iowa High School Equivalency Diploma. Preparation work may be done online, but the only way to earn an Iowa High School Equivalency Diploma is by taking official HiSET® tests at an approved testing center.

You may be wondering why the GED® exam is no longer available in Iowa. On December 31, 2013, GED® testing service retired the 2002 GED® test series and introduced a new version of the GED®. The state of Iowa, along with other states, chose to move to a new test for high
school equivalency, choosing the HiSET® assessment. Any student who did not complete the 2002 GED® test series is required to start over with the HiSET® assessment.

Another option to earn a high school diploma is to work toward earning a Kirkwood Adult High School Diploma. The Kirkwood Adult High School diploma is a credit-based option where a student takes and completes high school courses to earn credits toward a diploma. Prior courses taken at an accredited high school can count toward the adult HS diploma requirements.

Kirkwood Adult diploma courses are free for qualified students. The number of courses a student needs to take depends on the number of courses taken at previous high schools. You have 4 months from the date of registration to finish a course. If you do not finish a course in that four month window, a $25 re-registration fee is required if you choose to continue working on the course. If you choose to use your course textbook outside the learning center and take it home, a $60 refundable book deposit fee is required for each textbook taken out on loan. Again, books are always available for use at no charge in our learning centers. Students age 17 and older are eligible to work toward a Kirkwood Adult High School Diploma.

If you are currently enrolled in high school, there is also the potential to work at a Kirkwood Learning center to earn your local high school diploma. Some students work on just one or two courses, while others will work to finish their school’s diploma with our staff. The costs and eligibility for these school-sponsored options will depend on a number of factors. If you are interested in this option, the first step is to contact
your local school district to see if your school has an agreement with Kirkwood.

Kirkwood also has a high school distance learning program called Kirkwood HSDL. This program is designed primarily for students still enrolled in high school. For additional information on the HSDL program, visit our website at www.kirkwood.edu/hsdl

Whether you work on your Iowa High School Equivalency diploma, Kirkwood adult high school diploma, or any of our diploma options, we offer a variety of class formats and styles to help you earn your degree. Through our independent study classes, online programs, and—in select locations—structured face-to-face classes, our high school completion staff will work with you to find the best fit possible to help you earn your diploma.

We also partner with the United Way of East Central Iowa and Kirkwood’s continuing education division in offering the KPACE program. KPACE allows you to work on earning your high school diploma while also receiving training in manufacturing, health care, or information technology at the same time. Enrollment in these programs is limited. If you are interested in the KPACE program, please visit with our staff for more information.

Many students also ask us how long it will take for them to earn their diploma. Because each student and his or her situation is unique, it is difficult for us to estimate how long it will take for you to earn your diploma. Once you’ve started your program of study our learning center staff will be able to give you a better estimate on how long it will take.
At this time, we’d like to share the story of one of our students. Brittany will explain to you why she decided it was the right time to come back to school and work on her diploma.

If you’ve decided that the time is right and you want to earn your diploma, here are your next steps:

After finishing this video, you will be asked to take a short quiz over the topics covered in this video. The quiz is located below the video on the webpage. Complete the quiz and print out the confirmation screen you receive after completing the quiz. If you are interested in earning our Adult High School Diploma, we will need a copy of your high school transcript. This will allow us to reduce the number of courses you will need to take with us. To get a copy of your transcript, contact the last high school you attended and ask them to send you a copy of your transcript, and bring this copy with you when you go to your nearest learning center.

Next, contact your nearest learning center to set up a time for orientation. Some learning centers will take appointments for orientation, while others will allow you to come on certain days or times. This information will be provided after you complete the video and quiz.

As part of orientation, you will take CASAS tests. CASAS tests are required of all students working toward an Iowa High School Equivalency or Adult HS diploma. They are separate from your HiSET® or adult diploma testing, and help determine the best program of study for you. After your CASAS exams are complete, our staff will set up a
time to visit with you regarding the diploma option that works best for you, and get you started toward earning your diploma.

Kirkwood Community College has learning center locations in every county in the Kirkwood Service area. Learning Centers are located in Belle Plaine, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Monticello, Tipton, Vinton, Washington, and Williamsburg. We also have classes that meet at the IowaWorks office located in Lindale Mall. Hours and days of operation vary by location. After completing the video quiz, you will be provided with a list of learning center locations and contact information.

If you have further questions, please visit our website, which has more information on our program and the services we provide. Our web address is [www.kirkwood.edu/highschool](http://www.kirkwood.edu/highschool)

We thank you for taking the time to learn more about the high school completion program at Kirkwood Community College. We hope to see you soon!