



Policy:	E-1.8
Jointly Approved By:	Board of Governors & Education Council
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Amendment Date:	
Policy Holder:	VP Education

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)

Purpose / Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to determine the equivalencies of students' prior learning experiences to formal college credits.

Scope / Limits

1. This policy applies to all current or prospective Camosun College students requesting formal assessment of their prior learning experiences for college level credit.
2. A successful assessment of prior learning will apply only to the designated module or course and will not constitute completion of any prerequisites for other modules, courses or programs.

Principles

1. Camosun College recognizes that learning which some students acquire from their life and work experiences may be equivalent to college level learning.
2. Opportunities to acquire credit in a module, course or program through assessment of prior learning experiences may be offered to students.
3. Formal credit for learning that has been assessed as equivalent to Camosun College courses and programs is granted as follows:
 - a) It is considered Camosun College resident credit. (See definition.)
 - b) It is given a grade which is recorded on College transcripts as a regular course without being identified as PLA credit. Grading is as per the College's grading system which is published in the College Calendar. If the grading is by letter grade, it is calculated into the College GPA.
4. PLA processes are developed and implemented by the department or discipline in which the credit is sought.
5. PLA processes will include assessment of performance on the full range of theoretical and practical learning outcomes of a module or course.
6. Students will request or be requested to document their learning of specific knowledge, skills and values related to the course or program learning outcomes, objectives or competencies for

which credit is requested. Documentation must support learning statements and may include and not be restricted to the following:

- a) personal profiles and portfolios;
- b) non-credit certificates/diplomas;
- c) work products and artifacts;
- d) course challenges (written, oral, performance examinations [e.g. laboratory, clinical, work-site], product assessment, standardized exams);
- e) performance evaluations (e.g. role-plays; live, video or audio presentations; lab demonstrations; simulations; work-site demonstrations); and
- f) documented learning from life and work experiences and accomplishments.

A. DEFINITIONS

1. Base Funded Courses

Provincially subsidized programming that accommodates the general needs of the public.

2. Non-base Funded Courses

Programming that is not provincially subsidized; the program fees are determined by the delivery costs of the program.

3. Official Course Withdrawal

Withdrawal from a course after the Fee Deadline and before 66% of the course has been completed, as per the Course Withdrawal Policy (see link)

4. Resident Credit

Resident credit is equivalent to having earned the credit at Camosun College for graduation purposes.

5. Academic Term

A period equal to the normal duration of the course.

B. PROCEDURES

1. Application

Having decided to apply for prior learning assessment of a module or course, students must:

- a) Begin the PLA application process before or up to and including the first week of the commencement of the regular (non-PLA) course. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the chair or program leader of the department.
- b) Consult with the Information and Registration Office to determine whether they meet:
 - i. the College's admission requirements; and
 - ii. the pre-requisite requirements.
- c) Obtain a *Prior Learning Assessment Application Form* from the Information and Registration Office.
- d) Contact the Department offering the course for which they wish to have a prior learning assessment and schedule an advisory session with the chair or program leader to discuss suitability. Bring the *Prior Learning Assessment Application Form* to the session.

If a PLA is determined to be suitable, students must:

- a) Obtain the departmental signature approving the PLA module or course and the start and end dates. Start and end dates for the PLA course are mutually agreed upon by the faculty member and the student.
- b) Submit the signed *Prior Learning Assessment Application Form* to the Information and Registration Office and register and pay fees.

2. Fees

- a) **Base-funded PLA courses:** (See definition.) Tuition fees are assessed at 50% of the current College approved rate. Applicable levy fees are assessed by the Information and Registration Office.
- b) **Non base-funded PLA courses:** (See definition.) Tuition fees are established by the department offering the program or course.
- c) PLA fees are non-refundable. Special consideration of a refund may be given in extenuating medical or compassionate circumstances as per the *Course Withdrawal Policy* (see link).

4. Withdrawal

Once registered in a PLA module or course, students may withdraw according to guidelines established in the Course Withdrawal Policy (see link); however, course withdrawal is not permitted for PLA courses of one week's duration or less.

5. Grading

Upon completion of a PLA module or course:

- a) Students are entitled to an interview with a faculty member to review their course performance;
- b) A final grade will be awarded, submitted to the Records Department by the faculty member, and entered on the student's transcript regardless of the grade received.

5. Repeating a Course

Any student who has previously taken a regular (non-PLA) module or course or module, whether successful or unsuccessful, cannot be assessed for prior learning for that same course until at least one full academic term has elapsed (see definition). Once this period has elapsed, the student must be able to demonstrate to the chair or program leader additional learning acquired which supports his/her PLA application.

6. Student Appeals

Students who wish to appeal decisions regarding final grades must refer to the *Student Appeal Policy* (see link).

C. LINKS TO RELATED POLICIES

[E-1.5 Grading](#)

[E-2.2 Course Withdrawals](#)

[E-2.4 Student Appeals](#)