How students can get Prior Learning Assessment credits?

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is the process through which students can earn college credit by identifying and documenting college-level learning that has been acquired through life experiences such as military, and/or work experience, training, professional certification, independent study, volunteer activities, and hobbies.

A variety of practices exist for awarding credit for learning which has taken place outside of higher educational institutions. These include:

- **Portfolio-Based Assessment**
  - If a student has extensive experience, they can create a portfolio that documents their learning acquired through previous work experience or training.
  - Once they match their achievements and accomplishments to the college's course learning outcomes, they can submit their portfolio for review and assessment.
  - Student portfolios are evaluated by content expert faculty assessor(s) for evidence of meeting course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) with a "C" or higher grade.

- **Credit by Examination**
  - If a student feels competent in certain subject areas, they may take an approved CE.
  - Students must pass the examination with an assessment equivalent to "C" or higher.

- **Equivalency Examination**
  - Students may have taken a standardized national exam, which may be equated to equivalent college courses.
  - Examples of equivalency examinations include the Advanced Placement Examinations (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Excelsior College UExcel Exams, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), and International Baccalaureate (IB).
  - Credit is awarded if the student meets the qualifying score set by the campus.

- **Non-Collegiate Sponsored Education Credit**
  - This evaluates learning from courses completed in non-collegiate settings (e.g. professional licenses, labor union courses, agency training programs, professional workshops, and military courses).
  - Examples of such education credit include Army ACE Registry Transcript System (AARTS), Sailor Marine ACE Registry Transcript (SMART), American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service, and Professional Licenses or Industry Certifications (nationally- or state-certified professionals).

The process by which campuses conduct their Prior Learning Assessments are similar for the most part, but may be at different points of approving their PLA campus procedures. For example, some campuses have established policies, which incorporates those set at the UH Community College System level and have obtained full campus approval (including Faculty Senate approval), while others are in the midst of the approval process.

Below are some helpful links to University of Hawai‘i Prior Learning Assessment process and policies:

- [UH Community College System](#)
- [Hawai‘i Community College 2015-2016 Catalog](#) (pgs. 31-32 Credit by Examination)
- [Honolulu Community College 2015-2016 Catalog](#) (pgs. 54-56 Prior Learning Credit)
- [Kapi‘olani Community College](#)
- [Kaua‘i Community College](#)
- [Leeward Community College 2015-2016 Catalog](#) (pgs. 141-143 Prior Learning Assessment Program)
- [UH Maui College 2015-2016 General Catalog](#) (pgs. 79-80 Prior Learning Assessment)
- [UH West O‘ahu 2015-2016 General Catalog](#) (pg. 15 Credit for Prior Learning)
- [Windward Community College 2015-2017 Catalog](#) (pgs. 27-29 Prior Learning Credits)