

J-220 CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT) POLICY

POLICY

Gateway Technical College provides opportunities for students to be awarded credit for prior learning (CFPL) which occurred outside the classroom. Prior learning assessment (PLA) is the process of faculty evaluation of student learning obtained through sources other than college-level coursework. Students may earn academic credit in designated college course if they have learning that can be assessed to be of college level and equivalent to a course(s) offered at Gateway. The following standards apply to the prior learning assessment process:

- 1) The prior learning assessment process is available only to students who are accepted into a postsecondary program at Gateway e.g. associate degree, technical diploma, certificate, or apprenticeship program. Students must be actively enrolled and pursuing a credential from Gateway Technical College.
- 2) No more than 75 percent of a degree, diploma, or certificate may be earned through transfer credit and/or credit for prior learning.
- 3) When PLA credit is awarded, it is on a proficiency basis. Grades of “PR” are awarded. PLA credit does not count toward the student’s grade point average.
- 4) Gateway utilizes PLA to verify and assess student learning compared to Gateway course competencies and learning outcomes as outlined in Worldwide Instructional Design System (WIDS) through a standardized, pre-approved PLA for designated courses.
- 5) The three types of PLA methods are:
 - a. Exam. Gateway accepts satisfactory results for exams such as [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#), [College Level Examination Program \(CLEP\)](#), [International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#), and [Dantes Subject Standardized Test \(DSST\)](#). Gateway offers course-specific internal exams for designated courses.
 - b. Demonstrative. Demonstrative exams include performing a set of skills as outlined in the prior learning assessment.
 - c. Portfolio. Portfolios include submission of standardized approved documents and artifacts as the prior learning assessment.
- 6) Current prior learning opportunities are maintained on the Gateway website by registrar’s office.
- 7) Credit may be awarded for verified prior learning assessed by Gateway appointed faculty and content experts using a [prior learning assessment \(PLA\)](#), not for the experience itself.
- 8) Students are responsible for any incurred fees for AP, CLEP, IB, or DANTES testing, and for utilizing the Gateway testing centers.
- 9) Gateway charges the standard WTCS fees to students completing a PLA. These fees are non-refundable and will be charged to a student’s account upon completion of the PLA. A separate fee is required for each PLA completed.
- 10) All PLAs are considered a part of a student’s official academic record and will be maintained digitally, inclusive of all documents/artifacts presented in a portfolio. In

cases where documents or artifacts are intellectual property, or must be returned to the student because of their personal value, the PLA approval form signed by the reviewing instructor and school dean, inclusive of the assessment rubric, will be kept on file.

- 11) Pursuant to the MOU signed by the 16 WTCS institution presidents, the minimum threshold for awarding CFPL through proficiency credit (PR) on PLAs is that 80% of course competencies must be successfully met. All WTCS colleges accept PR credits earned at other WTCS institutions. For all other institutions, it is the responsibility of the student to inquire with the accepting institution whether or not PR credits from Gateway will be accepted.

PROCEDURES

General Procedures for Credit for Prior Learning

Students who have learning which they believe matches the content of a Gateway course review information on the credit for prior learning opportunities webpage to determine if an assessment exists.

- 1) Students work with the prior learning and degree completion coordinator, faculty and/or registrar's office staff to coordinate the completion of the assessment. If students decide to proceed with the assessment, they complete the Credit for Prior Learning Registration form.
- 2) The student completes the assessment. Students submitting a portfolio are encouraged to make a complete copy of the portfolio for their own use before submission. Faculty conduct portfolio assessments and may request further information from the student.
- 3) The faculty member completes the grading rubric for the assessment and approves or denies credit for the course.
- 4) The prior learning and degree completion coordinator reviews the assessment and grading rubric, documents completion by faculty, and effects entries to the student transcript.
- 5) The student is charged a non-refundable fee based on the PLA method.
- 6) The prior learning and degree completion coordinator will notify the student in writing of the final outcome of their CFPL Assessment Request.

Designating a Gateway Course as Eligible for Prior Learning Assessment Credit

- 1) All CFPL course approvals must be on file in the Registrar's Office. No PLA shall be administered for a course that is not designated as being eligible for Prior Learning Assessment credit. If the academic department wants to offer a PLA option for a course, it must first submit a new PLA proposal to the Registrar's Office, and receive official notice of approval to offer a course for CFPL before assessing the student's learning.
- 2) Gateway appointed faculty and content experts will create and document the terms of the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and the grading rubric.

- 3) The proposed assessment will then be reviewed for quality assurance by the prior learning and degree completion coordinator and/or associate registrar. The prior learning and degree completion coordinator is responsible to:
 - a) Ensure that PLAs adhere to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning's (CAEL) guidelines
 - b) Ensure that the standardized Gateway Technical College rubric for PLA development is followed
 - c) Coordinate the review and upkeep of all PLAs to maintain current academic quality and integrity in line with current learning competencies and course outcomes being taught in the classroom.
- 4) The proposed assessment is then reviewed by the school dean overseeing the course, who will provide signed approval or denial.
- 5) The prior learning and degree completion coordinator advises the faculty member and content expert of the approval and posts the new PLA opportunity on the college website.

Joins Services Transcripts - Military Students

- 1) Students of military background may submit their official Joint Services Transcript (JST) to Gateway for a [military CFPL evaluation](#).
- 2) There are no fees attached for military students to receive CFPL based on a JST evaluation.
- 3) Gateway faculty and content experts review the JST in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes and American Council on Education (ACE) credit recommendations to determine if credit can be awarded.
- 4) A maximum of 12 elective credits will be awarded from all JST experiences.

Appeals

CFPL appeals follow the same Academic Concerns Policy as outlined within Student Due Process Rights Policy J-101 found in the Gateway Student Handbook. National standardized assessments that allow for test repeats will be honored by Gateway if the score earned through a repeat meets the credit granting threshold. However, internally developed and Gateway administered PLA's may only be attempted once. Should a student fail a Gateway developed and administered PLA, they must then enroll in and pass the course to receive credit.