

# PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Many students come to LCCC with prior learning experiences comparable to learning achieved in college classrooms. The key component of any previous experience is not the experience itself but the learning that a person has accomplished outside of the traditional classroom environment. Learning and experiences gained before LCCC enrollment need to be reviewed for alignment to LCCC course learning outcomes so that college credit may be awarded where appropriate. This review process occurs within the academic division in which the subject matter is housed and by faculty with expertise in the field or subject matter. Up to 30 semester credit hours can be accumulated in prior learning credits, exclusive of transfer credits.

Before beginning the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process, students must complete the LCCC admissions process. In addition, students must submit official transcripts from all other colleges they have attended to the Registrar's Office for evaluation. Once prior learning has been satisfactorily assessed and documented, credit acknowledgment for the parallel course will appear on the student's transcript as a P for pass.

Should students transfer from LCCC to another institution, prior learning credit **may not** transfer except as part of an associate degree or certificate; students are advised to consult the transfer institution. Occasionally students may be required to complete the upper-level course satisfactorily before credit is given for the lower-level courses in the sequence.

Students are also eligible for either accelerated sequencing or credit. In accelerated sequencing, students' progress to the next course in the sequence. This is done for placement only, and no credit is given. Course substitution may be appropriate in cases of non-sequential courses.

Some agreements between professional academies and LCCC exist within college divisions. Consult the PLA Coordinator for details.

Learn more about prior learning on the PLA page (<https://www.lorainccc.edu/prior-learning-assessment/>) or call (440) 366-4726 to set up an appointment to meet with the prior learning assessment coordinator. The PLA office is part of the Assessment and Accreditation of Student Learning team and is located in Spitzer 220.

## Prior Learning Assessment Methods

There are several PLA assessment methods (Credential Review; IRC, ITAGS, MTAGS, credit by exam, portfolios) to evaluate a student's learning for the consideration of course credit. For more information on specific PLA opportunities, please consult the PLA page (<https://www.lorainccc.edu/prior-learning-assessment/>).

### Credential Review

- **Industry Recognized Certification (IRC)**

This certification validates and verifies an individual's learning and skills in a specific field, issued by a recognized organization within an industry that is widely accepted by employers as an indication of mastery for hiring and career advancement.

- **Block Credit (20-30 Semester Credits)**

Selected non-collegiate post-secondary training and education are approved for block credit by a special arrangement between LCCC and the participating agency. They can be applied only to the associate of individualized studies or associate of technical studies. Information on programs with block credit components may be obtained from academic advisors, the Engineering, Business and Information Technologies division or the Health and Wellness Sciences division.

- **ITAG – College Credit for Industry for Industry Credentials**

Industry Recognized Credential Transfer Assurance Guides (ITAGs) are a statewide transfer program that guarantees college credit when you earn an industry-recognized credential. The award of credit is based upon the knowledge, skills, and competencies gained through credential attainment, regardless of where the learning took place to prepare for the credential. Consult the PLA coordinator for details.

- **Non-Collegiate Training**

Some programs offered by businesses, government, industry or professional organizations may be considered equivalent to college-level courses, and credit may be awarded. The student must provide official transcripts or certificates of completion and a request for non-traditional credit to the PLA coordinator. The appropriate division faculty, determining whether credit will be granted, will use the National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs published by the American Council on Education and other documentation as necessary.

### Credit-By-Exam

- **Advanced Placement Credit Award**

The State of Ohio, working through the University System of Ohio (USO), has initiated policies to facilitate the ease of transition from high school to college and between and among Ohio's public colleges and universities.

As of fall term 2009:

1. Students obtaining an advanced placement (AP) examination score of three or above will be awarded the aligned course(s) and credits for the AP examination area(s) completed.
2. General education courses and credits received will be applied toward graduation. They will satisfy a general education requirement if the course(s) to which the AP area is equivalent fulfill a requirement.
3. If an equivalent course is not available for the AP examination area completed, elective or area credit will be awarded in the appropriate academic discipline and applied towards graduation where such elective credit options exist within the academic major.
4. Additional courses or credits may be available when a score of four or five is obtained. Award of credit for higher score values varies depending on the institution and academic discipline.
5. In academic disciplines containing highly dependent sequences (sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics-STEM), students are strongly advised to confer with the college/university advising staff to ensure

they have the appropriate foundation to be successful in advanced coursework within the sequence.

- **CLEP** (College Level Examination Program)

The CLEP is a national program of examinations that can be used to evaluate non-traditional college education. LCCC grants credits for subject examinations only. Tests are administered at LCCC's DEC Testing Center. Consult the Prior Learning Assessment office or visit the CLEP examination page (<https://www.lorainccc.edu/prior-learning-assessment/college-level-examination-program-clep/>) to identify the CLEP examinations that may be taken.

- **International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB)**

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program offers a wide range of subject programs. LCCC grants credits for approved International Baccalaureate subjects with acceptable scores. Students must submit an official transcript from the International Baccalaureate to LCCC for evaluation. For more information on this program, visit the International Baccalaureate website (<https://www.ibo.org/>).

- **Proficiency Examination**

Proficiency examinations are developed by faculty and the dean and will be based on the learning outcomes of courses. Proficiency Examinations may not be available for all courses. Students should consult the PLA coordinator to determine the courses in which proficiencies may be taken. A maximum number of 30 semester hours is allowed for courses approved through the petition for credit by the examination process. No letter grade will be given for credit by examination. No student may seek examination credit for a class in which they are still enrolled after the fourth week of classes of any regular college semester, the second week for all summer terms or the first week for eight-week terms.

#### Procedures for the Proficiency Examination

1. Student must have completed the application for admission.
2. For next steps and to speak with the PLA coordinator, visit the PLA page (<https://www.lorainccc.edu/prior-learning-assessment/>).
3. Arrangements for testing will then be completed, and the student will be notified of such by either the PLA coordinator or the appropriate academic division.

## Portfolio Assessment Method (Documents, Performances, Auditions, Demonstrations)

Students whose work experience or other life experiences have enabled them to acquire knowledge and skills comparable to those taught in LCCC courses may petition an academic division for the opportunity to document such learning by portfolio (documents, performances, auditions and demonstrations) to be assessed by faculty for the possible awarding of credit or accelerated sequencing. For more information on the portfolio process, visit the FastPathOhio website (<https://fastpathohio.com/>), then consult the PLA coordinator for the next steps.

### Military Training

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans must submit an official Joint Services Transcript (JST) or a Community College of

the Air Force (CCAF) transcript to the Registrar's office for prior learning assessment of military service or training. The College awards three semester credit hours for physical education for completed basic training.

### Military Transfer Assurance Guides (MTAGS)

Military Transfer Assurance Guides provide a statewide guarantee that certain types of military training, experience or coursework align with existing college courses and will be awarded appropriate credit. The complete list of MTAGS approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) can be found on the Transfer Credit Ohio - MTAG website (<https://transfercredit.ohio.gov/students/student-programs/mtags/college-credit-military-experience/>). Other military service or training is assessed based on the recommendations of the American Council on Education as posted on the JST and LCCC academic division approval.

## Courses Taken at Other Colleges:

Please refer to the Transfer to LCCC web page (<https://www.lorainccc.edu/admissions-and-enrollment/transfer-to-lccc/>).