

# administration • reference memo

---

keywords:     ·     **BOARD POLICY**  
                  ·     **POLICY FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**  
                  ·

## **POLICY FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT REVISED FEBRUARY, 19, 1996<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Definition***

Prior Learning Assessment is assessment and recognition of learning by some valid and reliable means, by a qualified specialist, of what has been learned through experience or through a combination of education/training and experience. The learning is to be worthy of credit in a course or program offered by the institution providing the credit.

In its current usage, PLA refers to the assessment of knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through life experiences, work and study not previously associated with conventional institutional credit. PLA measures and evaluates what has been learned regardless of the source of the learning.

### ***Guidelines***

To earn credit through PLA, the learner must demonstrate, by some valid means, that the learning is equivalent to that which normally would be acquired through conventional study at the post secondary level.

### ***Context***

- o Capilano College will provide adequate support services for those learners accessing PLA.
- o PLA courses and assessment services should be offered only in the language of instruction, i.e., English, of the College.
- o The ongoing development and monitoring of PLA services should involve advice from external representatives from groups such as business, industry, licensing and accrediting bodies, and professional associations.
- o PLA policies and practices will be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated and revised as needed.

<sup>1</sup> This policy is adapted from:

o *Prior learning assessment in British Columbia: An orientation for postsecondary institutions.* (1994). Burnaby, BC: Open Learning Agency Press

o British Columbia Council of Admissions and Transfer. (May, 1994). *Prior Learning Assessment, 3d Update.*

## administration • reference memo

- keywords:     •     **BOARD POLICY**
- **POLICY FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**
- 

### **Access**

- o PLA is considered to be a vehicle for enhancing access to education and/or training. No one PLA method is best for any or all situations. Methods should be selected to suite the unique needs of the particular situation. Examples could be portfolio assessments, or portfolio-assisted assessments such as product assessment, simulation/performance assessments, interviews and oral exams, and demonstrations.
- o Where possible, orientation or portfolio development courses will be offered at employment sites.
- o As PLA credibility is established and adequate assessment procedures and supporting resources are in place, the goal will be to provide PLA access to the most comprehensive range of programs to accommodate the broad range of prior learning.

### **Assessment**

- o Credit will be awarded only for demonstrated learning and not for experience.
- o Credit should be awarded only for learning which is relevant to the content and learning outcomes of the course or program to which the credit is being applied.
- o Credit should be awarded for learning which has both the theory and practical applications which are appropriate to the subject, course or program.
- o Learning for post secondary credit should be:
  - o Defined in terms of what was learned and what the person can do as a result, rather than the amount of time spent;
  - o Transferable to contexts other than the one in which it was learned;
  - o Current
  - o At a level of achievement equivalent to that of other students engaged in studies at that level in that program or subject area.
- o The number of credits to be granted is determined by the College, following assessment of the learning by content

<sup>1</sup> This policy is adapted from:

o *Prior learning assessment in British Columbia: An orientation for postsecondary institutions.* (1994). Burnaby, BC: Open Learning Agency Press

o British Columbia Council of Admissions and Transfer. (May, 1994). *Prior Learning Assessment, 3d Update.*

## administration • reference memo

- keywords:     •     **BOARD POLICY**
- **POLICY FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**
- 

specialists, with external advice as necessary. The names and qualifications of those making an assessment should be recorded.

- o Established College policies and procedures applied to assessment, including provision for appeal, shall be applied.

<sup>1</sup> This policy is adapted from:

o *Prior learning assessment in British Columbia: An orientation for postsecondary institutions.* (1994). Burnaby, BC: Open Learning Agency Press

o British Columbia Council of Admissions and Transfer. (May, 1994). *Prior Learning Assessment, 3d Update.*

## administration • reference memo

- keywords:     ·     **BOARD POLICY**
- **POLICY FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**
- 

### **Client Orientation and Preparation**

- People seeking credit through PLA should start with an adequate orientation to the process. This may occur in two phases - a short orientation seminar, followed, for some, by a more comprehensive course in education and career planning of which PLA is a major component.

### **Training of PLA Personnel**

- All personnel involved (PLA assessors, student advisors, instructors of portfolio development/career/educational planning courses) will have appropriate skills and knowledge acquired through either the completion of courses which fulfill system specifications, or demonstration of equivalent learning from other sources.
- There will be provision for continue professional development in areas related to PLA.

### **Fee Assessment**

- Fees for assessment will be set in terms of the services performed, the learning to be assessed, and on the amount of credit requested. Fees will not be set in terms of the number of credits awarded.
- Fees for a portfolio development course or seminar will be set within the College's policy for course fees.

### **Transcripts and Transfer**

- Transcript entries will identify credits awarded through PLA and the equivalent course.
- The transferability for PLA credit will be determined within the context of the articulation process and institutional admissions policies. Prejudicial judgement and decision against credit awarded by PLA will be discouraged; however, credit awarded will not necessarily be transferred to other programs or institutions.
- The percentage of a program's credits which may be obtained through PLA, transfer, challenge or equivalence cannot exceed 50% of the total credit required for the program. In addition, the final 50% of the credit required for

<sup>1</sup> This policy is adapted from:

- *Prior learning assessment in British Columbia: An orientation for postsecondary institutions.* (1994). Burnaby, BC: Open Learning Agency Press

- British Columbia Council of Admissions and Transfer. (May, 1994). *Prior Learning Assessment, 3d Update.*

## administration • reference memo

- keywords:     •     **BOARD POLICY**
- **POLICY FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT**
- 

graduation must be from enrollment while in attendance at  
Capilano College.     Date adopted by Capilano College Board: April 16/96

<sup>1</sup> This policy is adapted from:

- o *Prior learning assessment in British Columbia: An orientation for postsecondary institutions.* (1994). Burnaby, BC: Open Learning Agency Press
- o British Columbia Council of Admissions and Transfer. (May, 1994). *Prior Learning Assessment, 3d Update.*

policies\admin\policies\memo41