Prior Learning Assessment: College Credit for What You Know

VSCS Board of Trustees

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WHAT IS PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT?

PLA is a term for various methods that colleges, universities, and other education/training providers use to evaluate and formally recognize learning that has occurred outside of the traditional academic environment. It is used to grant college credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training.

SOURCE: Council for Adult & Experiential Learning https://www.cael.org/lp/pla

PLA Boost Research

- Students save thousands of dollars
- 2x as likely to complete degree
- Students enroll in more credits

BACKGROUND

- VSCS service created in 1975 to assist non-traditional students
- Administered and supported by CCV
- National leader in the field
- +8,000 student portfolios assessed

PLA OPTIONS

Two fast options

- Credit by Examination
- CCV Course Challenge
  - Competency Based Pathways

More extensive requests

Portfolio Courses

- Focused Portfolio Development (FPD)
- Assessment of Prior Learning (APL)

Training evaluation

- Education & Training Evaluation Service (ETES)

Portfolios

- Typically enrolls adult learners (25+)
- Attracts students not served by traditional programs
- Contracted faculty make all credit award decisions
- All costs for evaluation – no charge per credit
- 100 students annually
- Credits awarded as transfer recommendations means:
  - Lower and upper-division recognition
  - Areas of Study not available in VSCS

Student Savings

- Average Assessment of Prior Learning Portfolio Award
  - 30 credits
  - +$8,000 tuition savings
  - +1,000 hours time savings

- Average Focused Portfolio Development Award
  - 12 credits
  - +$3,000 tuition savings
  - +500 hours time savings

Examples

Examples

Examples

MEG MARSHALL
FPD ALUMNA

PARTNERS

Faculty Evaluators

- VSCS subject matter experts
- Other Vermont colleges

Industry

- Contracted portfolio courses
- Workplace evaluations
- Professional networks

Others

- VSAC Career & Education Wellness
- External colleges (VT & beyond)

FREE RESOURCES

PLA Informational Webinar
- Overview and live Q & A

PLA Recommender
- Customized immediate response

Degree Acceleration Review
- PLA recommendation for new applicants

QUESTIONS? CONTACT MELISSA DEBLOIS

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VERMONT
STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM
PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Check out The PLA Boost Study here:
https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PLA-Boost-Report-CAEL-WICHE-Revised-Dec-2020.pdf