

| Policy History |
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| Policy No. AC6 |
| Approving Jurisdiction: Senate |
| Administrative Responsibility: Provost and Vice President Academic |
| Effective Date: December 2004 |

Credit for Prior Learning Policy

A. BACKGROUND

Kwantlen Polytechnic University recognizes that students may have successfully completed course work at another post-secondary institution or have attained significant learning at a post-secondary level from work, training and other experiences outside the formal post-secondary education system. Those who have gained such learning must be able to receive credit for that learning and build on it in pursuing further education within Kwantlen. Credits granted for prior learning may be used to satisfy admission requirements to a program or the requirements for graduation.

B. POLICY

1. Kwantlen Polytechnic University will, when requested by a student and in accordance with established articulation agreements or appropriate evaluation procedures, assess learning that the student has gained through prior course work and/or life and work experiences. Where that learning can be equated to the learning outcomes or objectives of a course or program at Kwantlen, credit will be granted. Credit will normally be granted through transfer and/or prior learning assessment.
2. Each program will determine the amount of PLA or transfer credits required for graduation that will be acceptable for that program, up to a maximum of 75%.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. **Transfer credit:** refers to the granting of credit for a course successfully completed at another post-secondary institution or through a professional organization or other agency with which an articulation agreement has been reached. The course may be equivalent to a course offered by Kwantlen Polytechnic University (assigned credit) or at an appropriate year level in a subject or program area (unassigned credit).
2. **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA):** is assessment, by valid and reliable means and by a qualified specialist, of what an individual has learned outside of courses and programs at Kwantlen Polytechnic University for which the granting of transfer credit is inappropriate. Assessment will

normally result in credit (assigned or unassigned) being granted to satisfy the admission or graduation requirements of a program offered by Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

D. GUIDELINES

1. Transfer Credit

- a. The University will be guided by the Principles and Guidelines for Transfer endorsed by the British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer (BCCAT) and published in the British Columbia Transfer Guide.
- b. Students must request transfer credit in writing and provide an official transcript from each post-secondary institution or professional organization or agency at which courses were taken.
- c. When determining whether transfer credit is to be granted, one or more of the following will be utilized:
 - i. Specific articulation agreements between Kwantlen Polytechnic University as receiving institution and other post-secondary institutions or professional organizations or other agencies as sending institutions
 - ii. The B.C. Transfer Guide published in both print and electronic form (on-line) by the British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer
 - iii. Transfer guides published by other receiving institutions
 - iv. Other on-line transfer guides (e.g. Council of Ministers of Education, Canada)
 - v. Ad hoc evaluation by subject or program faculty based on materials such as a course outline, reading list, textbook(s), final examination, etc.
- d. In general, transfer credit granted will be appropriate to the time the course was taken at the sending institution.
- e. Credits obtained at a sending institution through prior learning assessment will be recognized for transfer in the same way as credits obtained through classroom instruction.

2. Prior Learning Assessment

- a. The University will be guided by the Guidelines for Prior Learning Assessment developed by the Provincial PLA Steering Committee and endorsed by the British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer.
- b. Kwantlen Polytechnic University recognizes the following methods of prior learning assessment:
 - i. Challenge Exam: A test or exam (written or oral) that is designed to validate the knowledge of the candidate as it relates to course requirements. A challenge exam may be the same test or exam given to students who formally attend the course. It is limited to questions that are directly related to the learning objectives/outcomes of the course.
 - ii. Standardized Test: Similar to a Challenge Exam. However, this test or exam is usually developed by someone other than the assessor. It is focused around widely recognized standards (as set by a department or professional/sectoral organization) that are equivalent to the course objectives.
 - iii. Products/Portfolio: Documents or objects that have been produced by the candidate and demonstrate tangible proof of accomplishment. These may include, but are not limited to, reports, computer printouts, videos, illustrations, prototype models, or an artist's

- portfolio. Students may be asked to demonstrate abilities or answer questions about the portfolio by the assessor.
- iv. **Demonstration:** Simulation or actual presentation of candidate's abilities, which may be live, recorded, or videotaped. The demonstration may include, but is not limited to, such activities as presenting a speech, role-playing a situation, creating a document on computer, giving a musical performance, performing a lab experiment, interviewing a client, operating equipment, or completing a procedure.
 - v. **Interview:** Oral questioning. The PLA interview is focused around course objectives and may include techniques such as open-ended questions, case studies, and prepared analyses. The interview is used to clarify areas of learning, and may be used in parallel with other methods, as a sole method of assessment, and/or as a means to ensure authenticity of products.
 - vi. **Worksite Assessment:** Similar to a demonstration. The candidate is observed performing tasks as a part of normal work routine, or as specifically assigned, in the place of work. Assessment is normally made by faculty assigned to a candidate, but may also be made by a work supervisor or field expert. If performed by an external assessor, it may be followed up by a self-assessment and/or interview with a faculty assessor.
 - vii. **Self-assessment:** Assessment performed by the candidate, usually with the aid of an established form or questionnaire. Normally requires a parallel assessment by a field expert and/or faculty assessor.
 - viii. **External Evaluation:** Assessment provided by an expert other than Kwantlen faculty. Assessment method may include, but is not limited to, performance evaluation, letter of validation, or worksite assessment, and may require follow-up by faculty.
 - ix. **Other forms of assessment:** As agreed on by the assessor and applicant and relevant to the course/program outcomes or objectives.
- c. For each course or group of courses, the Department responsible shall specify which methods of Prior Learning Assessment the Department recommends and record these methods in the course outline. The Divisional Curriculum Committee must approve these recommendations.
 - d. The chosen assessment method(s) must be appropriate for the subject or skill area, targeted to the learning objectives, competencies, skills, or outcomes of the course, and reflective of the level of achievement expected of any student.
 - e. Applicants for Prior Learning Assessment must have been admitted to Kwantlen and have applied for admission to a program.
 - f. Kwantlen Polytechnic University will only award credit for prior learning that is directly applicable to the student's declared program of studies. Should a student change programs, all or some of the PLA credit previously awarded may no longer apply or, conversely, the student may be able to apply for additional PLA credit that was not appropriate under the previous program of studies.
 - g. Under normal circumstances, a student may not obtain credit through Prior Learning Assessment for any course in which the student was registered at Kwantlen Polytechnic University within the previous six (6) months.
 - h. Detailed information about the exact requirements and assessment criteria should be shared with the applicant in preparation for the assessment. Methods other than those already

identified may be considered through consultation among the program PLA advisor, the assessor, and the applicant.

- i. Faculty or instructional staff who have expertise in the curriculum area will assess Prior Learning. The standards to be applied will be equivalent to those applied to students enrolled in the course or courses for which credit is requested.
- j. An applicant who disputes the results of a Prior Learning Assessment may appeal that decision under the normal appeals process. The appeal will be referred to the Dean responsible for the program in which the student is enrolled. The Dean will chair a committee of faculty in the same Department to review the credits awarded.
- k. The credits and grade(s) achieved through PLA will appear on the transcript, whether the outcome is successful or not.

E. RELATED POLICIES

Policy AR12 Transfer of Articulated Courses from other Post-Secondary Institutions to Kwantlen Polytechnic University.