

Indiana University of Pennsylvania Graduate Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Credit Application

Please note: To ensure that prior learning assessment credits are posted to your transcript prior to the end of the semester, the application and portfolio should be received at least two months prior to the last day of the semester. Application and portfolio must be sent by email to grad-studies@iup.edu .

First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____

Banner I.D. _____ Telephone Number (_____) _____

E-mail Address _____ Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

1. Please state how you learned about prior learning assessment credits:

2. Please list the course(s) in which you are seeking prior learning assessment credits:

<u>Course Number(s)</u>	<u>Course Title(s)</u>

3. Prior Learning Assessment Fees:
 - a. Application fee \$25.00
 - b. Evaluation fee:
 - One Department Evaluation \$100.00
 - Each Additional Department Evaluation \$50.00
 - c. Each PLA approved per credit fee \$258 per credit (PA resident, 2020-21 rate)
\$387 per credit (non PA resident, 2020-21 rate)

Application and evaluation fees are due **prior** to your portfolio submission. The PLA approved per credit fee is due **after** PLA approval and **before** the credit(s) will be posted to your transcript.

I understand that the prior learning application and evaluation fees are **non-refundable** and are due **prior** to submitting the portfolio to the School of Graduate Studies and Research. I also understand that if credits are awarded, the credits will be posted to my transcript **after** I pay the PLA approved per credit fee.

Student Signature

Date

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Graduate Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Credit
SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY

The following self-assessment survey is designed to help you determine if you have prior learning experience that may equate to course content you would be expected to learn in a course(s). The survey will also assist you with developing a portfolio to document that prior learning experience for review and evaluation to earn course credit.

Placement of Credit

1. Will the credit earned be useful for my academic goals in my degree program? How?
2. Will the credit achieved help me with my career goals? How?
3. Have I completed a plan identifying where my prior learning could be applied?

Content

4. Have I reviewed the current IUP Graduate catalog and found a courses or courses that seem to match my prior learning experience?
5. Have I already taken a course that covers the same type of content?
6. Can I apply my prior learning experiences into classroom equivalencies?

Resources

7. Do I have certificates from training, on-the-job experience or other formalized learning?
8. Do I have verification of past activities that documents my prior learning experience such as, company job description or evaluations?
9. Can I obtain letters to verify my prior learning claims?

Expected Outcomes

10. Do I expect this to be a quick way to earn college credit?
11. Have I defined what I expect to accomplish by pursuing prior learning assessment credit?
12. Do I know how many credits I would like to apply for prior learning assessment credit?
13. Are the course credits I want to apply for prior learning assessment credit listed as degree requirements/options for the degree I am pursuing?

Portfolio Preparation

14. Do I have the time and ability to organize the materials?
15. Is my level of writing equivalent to college level writing requirements?
16. Can I write about my acquired knowledge of the subject matter in a way that will demonstrate the depth of my knowledge?

Personal Commitment

17. Do I understand that researching and documenting prior learning experiences will take considerable time?
18. Will I be able to pursue this project while continuing with other commitments that I am responsible for and value?
19. Can I set a schedule for a project and stick with the schedule?
20. Am I comfortable working independently on a project?
21. Am I willing to ask for assistance when needed?
22. Do I have the financial capability to pay for the prior learning assessment fees?

**Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Graduate Prior Learning Assessment Credit**

**Guidelines for Portfolio Preparation
and
Appendix: Portfolio Certification Signature Page**

A. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are designed to assist you in preparing your portfolio for review and evaluation of Prior Learning Assessment credit(s).

1. The portfolio is to demonstrate to the evaluating professor(s)/committee that you already have the knowledge and skills to meet the outcomes of a specific course.
2. Before you develop your portfolio, you should talk with the department chair or faculty members who teach the relevant course(s) to discuss whether, or not your prior learning might qualify you for credit. Ask for a copy of the course syllabus/outline and/or course objectives, so that you can compare your prior learning with them. You should use similar vocabulary in your portfolio, and where possible, follow the course outline in describing your prior learning experience.
3. Organize your portfolio so that it is user friendly. Make it easy for the evaluator to see and understand how your prior learning qualifies you to receive credit for the specific course(s) for which you are applying. Your portfolio should be neatly arranged.
4. Your portfolio will be reviewed and evaluated by University faculty member(s) in the department in which the course is taught, so 'best quality' is critical. The writing and appearance of the portfolio should be professional and without spelling and grammar errors. If the quality of your portfolio is below acceptable standards, it will be returned to you before being sent to the department for evaluation.
5. If you duplicate any documents, be sure that the copies made are clear.
6. Include all materials from persons or agencies you mention in the portfolio. Only supporting documents that are directly relevant to your prior learning experience should be included. The inclusion of marginally or tangentially relevant documents may imply to the reviewing faculty that much of your prior learning experience is not applicable to the course(s).
7. If you are applying for credit(s) in more than one academic department, you must submit a separate portfolio for each department. This action allows the review cycle to be more efficient.

B. PORTFOLIO FORMAT (required sequence of content as listed below)

1. Table of Contents

Number each page, list page contents on the Table of Contents page and the page number where the content begins and follow the order of contents as indicated below.

2. Certification

Include a statement in the portfolio indicating that all material presented is accurate and true, to the best of your knowledge (see Appendix to this document for the Certification signature page). Submit this signed and dated Certification page with your portfolio submission.

3. Areas to be Evaluated

List the courses -by name and course number – for which you are applying for credit.

4. The Resume

Since the person who evaluate your portfolio may not know you, the resume presents your goals and achievements. It should also include your name, address and Banner I.D. number.

Include form education. Provide names, dates and places where you attended post-secondary schools or technical programs. You may wish to identify your accomplishments more clearly in narrative form. If you have received any awards, list and explain them.

List the jobs, informal training, and/or self-learning experiences, which apply to the course(s) to wish to have evaluated. Give the dates, places and duration of your learning experiences. Keep them separate to make the review more reader friendly for the evaluator to follow your presentation of content.

KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS – LEARNING OR COMPETENCIES

This section of narrative expands upon the resume. This section should describe *in great detail* the learning experiences which have prepared you to apply for course credit(s). Provide a description of the knowledge and skills gained through the prior learning experience, how you acquired the knowledge and skills, and how you use the knowledge and skills. How does the knowledge and skills relate to the course objectives? This section is your opportunity to verify, with evidence, to the evaluator(s) that you have achieved the outcomes expected of someone who would take the course.

If the knowledge was gained through prior learning from workshops, seminars, conferences, and so forth, list how long the training sessions lasted, exactly what was accomplished and if you were issued a certificate, please make a copy to submit with your portfolio.

If the skills were gained through prior learning from workshops, seminars, conferences, and so forth, list how long the training sessions lasted, exactly what was accomplished and if you were issued a certificate, please make a copy to submit with your portfolio. The skills may be manual such as, building a website or intellectual, such as assessing a learning disability. You may wish to list competencies, such as: *I can audit an account for a business. I can conduct an assessment*

for hearing loss. I can build and design a theater stage. I can prepare slides for a micro analysis of organisms.

It is up to you to provide evidence to support your competencies and expertise in the selected course. The necessary detail may vary with each individual and each situation. To assist you with providing evidence, ask yourself these questions:

1. How am I better trained than those who have not had the same or similar prior learning?
2. What special materials and/or instruments and/or software can I use?
3. How has my knowledge in these areas helped me or has been transferred and applied to other areas?
4. What relationships can I see between areas of work/industry/enterprise that I did not see before?
5. What organizational patterns are apparent to me now that I did not see before?
6. What new ideas did my prior learning experiences help me to gain?

C. Documentation of Learning

The final section of your portfolio contains documentation that is in writing that verifies your prior learning experiences. Written documentation of your expertise is critical to the review and evaluator(s). Meeting with the chair of the department or faculty who may evaluate your portfolio may assist you as you prepare your portfolio for final submission. You need to secure the best written documentation possible, such as:

1. Transcripts of certificate/course/workshop records, programs from schools, job training programs or military service schools. Be specific if the training was approved by any organization or certifying body, such as the American Council on Education, a professional organization, a government body, or a union.
2. Copies of continuing education certificates or certificates of attendance at relevant workshops, seminars, institutes or training programs. Be sure to specify if the training was approved and by whom.
3. Copies of special awards, news articles, or samples of your work.
4. As appropriate, photographs or video of your work.
5. Letters of verification relevant to the prior learning experience from supervisors, administrators or other experts in the position to judge your work.

Letters can be used to substantiate your prior learning experience, and they are a common form of documentation. Consider the following when obtaining letters:

1. The individual writing the letter must know you and have *first-hand* knowledge of your prior learning experience as you present it in the portfolio.

2. The letter must clearly state the nature of the relationship between you and the letter writer.
3. The letter must be on official letterhead.
4. The letter must focus on the duties, responsibilities, tasks and activities inherent in the prior learning experience under consideration.
5. The letter writer should describe the activity in a similar detailed fashion as the material you include in the portfolio so that it clearly establishes the context of the prior learning experience.
6. Any special accomplishments, something that resulted in a new product or process, requires documentation by persons who observed you as you developed the product or process.
7. When you request letters of verification, make it clear that the letters are for “*verification*” of prior learning, not a letter of recommendation.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Prior Learning Assessment Credit Portfolio Process

Eligibility

- Must be enrolled in a degree program.
- Must have the knowledge, skills, and prior learning experience from outside the university setting that matches a course or courses offered at IUP.

Investigate

- Obtain the PLA pdf guidelines from the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SGSR) website at www.iup.edu/graduatestudies/resources-for-current-students
- Discuss your prior learning experience with the appropriate academic department to determine portfolio requirements that may be requested beyond content in the guidelines.
- Obtain a course syllabus from the department for the course(s) for which you are requesting prior learning assessment credit evaluation.

Electronic Portfolio Process

- Complete the PLA application and pay the application fee and department evaluation fee(s).
- SGSR will send you the PLA signature page which must accompany your portfolio submission.
- Prepare your portfolio(s) according to the PLA pdf guidelines and any other instructions given to you by the academic department.
- Submit your portfolio(s) and the signed signature page to grad-studies.iup.edu
- The SGSR will route the portfolio(s) to the proper academic departments for review and evaluation, along with the PLA Department Evaluation Decision form.
- The Department will review the portfolio, complete the PLA Department Evaluation Decision form and send the form to the SGSR via grad-studies@iup.edu

Awarding of PLA Credit

- The SGSR receives the recommendation from the academic department and college dean on the PLA Department Evaluation Decision form, along with your returned portfolio.
- The SGSR notifies you of the credit recommendation or denial via your IUP email account
- If credits are awarded, payment for the PLA credit fees are due **prior** to the credits being posted to your graduate record. You must submit your PLA credit fee payment to the IUP Bursar's Office.
- Awarded PLA credits are posted to your graduate transcript by the SGSR **after** your PLA credit fees are paid and processed.

Appendix

(This form, signed and dated, must accompany your portfolio submission)

Student Certification Statement and Signature

I certify that all materials presented in this portfolio are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Student Signature

Student Banner I.D.

Date