



STUDENT PLA GUIDE

**Earn credit for what you already know in
Advanced Manufacturing Disciplines
Through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**

*Demonstrate what you know and can do for college credits. **

**Students must demonstrate skills and knowledge at the college-level in alignment with Advanced Manufacturing course competencies, in order to earn credit. Credit decisions are made by Advanced Manufacturing Faculty.*

What is PLA?

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) allows you to demonstrate your knowledge, skills, and learning that you've acquired from the military, work, training programs, self-directed study, and

experience. A faculty member will evaluate your learning to determine if it is equivalent to what students learn in the classroom, at a passing level. The PLA methods available to help you show what you know are:

- ✓ **Challenge Exams** – These enable you to “test out” of the course or portions of the course
- ✓ **Hands-On Practical Demonstrations** – These enable you to show what you can do to earn credit for the course.
- ✓ **Learning Portfolios** – These enable you to describe what you know and provide evidence (such as letters from your supervisors, videos, products and components you have designed and/or produced, etc.) to make a case for credit. If you are successful in making your case, you will earn credit for the course.
- ✓ **NIMS Certificates** – Some NIMS (National Institute of Metalworking Skills) Certificates may help you prove your mastery of course competencies.

Every Advanced Manufacturing course has a list of competencies that students are expected to master. These competencies are the ones that you will demonstrate to earn credit for a course. The faculty determines which PLA methods work best to showcase your knowledge and skills.

*For example, for the **MAC 110 Introduction to Engine Lathe** course, there are nine competencies. The faculty has determined that the student needs to take a challenge exam for five of the competencies. The remaining four competencies require the student to do a hands-on demonstration. If the student passes the exam and the hands-on demonstration, the student earns three credits for MAC 110.*

What if I was trained in the military?

You are a perfect candidate for PLA. If you went to a special school or received training that was evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE) as worthy of college credits, you simply need to present your **JST**. Otherwise, you can still go through the regular PLA process listed above to earn credits.

What are some examples of competencies?

Keeping with our example of **MAC 110 Introduction to Engine Lathe**, you may be required to do the following to earn credit for this course:

EXAMPLES OF COMPETENCIES

Demonstrate these competencies by taking a Challenge Exam	Demonstrate these competencies with a Hands-on Practical Demonstration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate engine lathe safety <input type="checkbox"/> Identify tool holders and tool holding for turning applications <input type="checkbox"/> Identify all cutting tools for the lathe <p>Must pass this test before performing the hands-on practical demonstration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use various types of lathe spindle tooling <input type="checkbox"/> Perform facing and center drilling operations <input type="checkbox"/> Perform turning between centers operations <input type="checkbox"/> Perform special lathe operations, which will consist of drilling, boring reaming, knurling, recessing, parting, and tapping <input type="checkbox"/> Calculate and machine 60-degree thread forms and various other threading operations <input type="checkbox"/> Calculate and cut various types of tapers <p>Students may submit a high quality video of themselves performing the competencies listed above with the equipment, tools, and machines necessary. A letter of verification from the student's supervisor attesting to the student's skills and competencies is also required. The student must submit the component or product produced in the video to the faculty assessor for inspection.</p>

Demonstrate these competencies by taking a Challenge Exam	Demonstrate these competencies with a Hands-on Practical Demonstration
	Or, students may opt to do the hands-on practical demonstration. The student will be provided with the equipment and tools necessary to demonstrate the required competencies. A faculty assessor will evaluate your demonstration

It sounds hard. What if I can't perform all of the competencies?

You must pass the challenge exam and the hands-on practical demonstration with a “C” grade or higher. If you have had significant training and experience, you will know if you can do this or not. If you fail the exam or the hands-on practical demonstration, you will not earn any credit. However, this does not appear on your transcript. Your next step is simply registering to take the course!

What is a Learning Portfolio?

Some courses may require you to submit a written learning portfolio. A portfolio is a written narrative (like a term paper) that addresses the required competencies for the course. You would write about each of the required competencies describing how you know about them, your experience with them, and how you have applied your knowledge of the competency in different ways. You must also provide evidence (called documentation or artifacts) to prove that what you are saying is true. This evidence might be a letter from a supervisor or other expert attesting to your knowledge and competencies, or it might be a video, or a component you produced, or a speech you made, or even a professional development transcript or NIMS certificate. A faculty assessor will evaluate your portfolio to see if you have made the case for credit. If you are successful, you will earn credit for the course. If you do not make the case for credit, you would take the course when your schedule permits.

How do I know if I am eligible for PLA?

You must be enrolled in an Advanced Manufacturing degree or certificate program. PLA is only for students who have significant training and experience in the subject. Your program advisor will provide you with a list of the competencies for the courses that interest you.

How do I get started?

Talk to your program advisor about how to initiate the process. It starts with the easy-to-complete *Learning Claim Application* in the back of this guide.

What are students saying about PLA?

"I earned six credit hours through PLA! This saved me over \$300 and a full semester of taking my courses part-time at night."

"I was nervous, but prepared. It felt great knowing I was college material!"

*"I know how to use the machines and prefer to show what I know so it all worked out fine for me. I earned credit for **MAC 101 Introduction to Machine Shop** and was able to start right away taking courses the courses I really wanted."*

Advanced Manufacturing PLA Student Learning Claim

Application for Prior Learning Assessment

Student Name/ID:
Course for which credit is being sought:
Circle One: Associate Degree Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Electro-mechanical Engineering</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Engineering Graphics</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Machining</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Welding</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other, please list here:</i> _____
Advanced Manufacturing Credits Completed and Applied to the Degree or Certificate Program:
General Education Credits Completed:
How many Advanced Manufacturing credits are you seeking with this Learning Claim:
Program Advisor Approval Signature:
Program Advisor Approval Expiration Date <i>(if appropriate)</i> :
<p><i>I understand that I am applying for credit for the knowledge and skills I have learned outside of the traditional college classroom. I will make a case for awarding credit to me by demonstrating my skills, describing how I learned them, and providing documentation (such as work samples, letter of verification from a supervisor or expert, a video, or other evidence of my college-level knowledge and skills). Credit is not guaranteed. I have talked with an academic advisor to make sure my request does not duplicate other courses I may have taken or will take as part of my program of study.</i></p> <p><i>By signing here, I am acknowledging that I have read the above paragraph and that I understand that all of my work must be my own in keeping with the Academic Honesty policy. I also recognize that my written work will be checked for plagiarism by turnitin.com or other plagiarism detection software.</i></p>
Student Signature:
Date:

PART 1 – Employment/Work Experience

Are you currently employed? YES NO

If YES – Enter **Job Title** here, along with a brief description of your responsibilities, or upload your job description or resume here.

➤ How many years have you been working in this field?

➤ What is your immediate employment goal?

➤ What is your long-term employment goal?

If NO—Enter **Job Title** here for your previous position, along with a brief description of your responsibilities or upload your resume here.

➤ How many years of experience do you have?

➤ What is your immediate employment goal?

➤ What is your long-term employment goal?

Do you hold any current/valid Certifications or Licenses?

List certifications here that already carry ACE or NCCRS credit recommendations or that have already been evaluated by CCCS faculty and approved for credit. The student can check the ones s/he holds. Leave a few blank lines for the student to write in other certifications that may not have been evaluated yet.

- Do you have any NIMS' certifications?
- Did you receive any machining training and experience in the military?

Have you completed an apprenticeship or are you close to completing an apprenticeship? NO If YES, please check the appropriate box below:

- Four-Year Apprenticeship Program
- Minimum of two years into Apprenticeship content completion

If yes, for what trade/skill?

Part 2 – Education Plan

Do you plan to eventually earn a bachelor's degree?

- If YES, please list the name of the college or university here:

When do you expect to complete your associate degree or certificate program?

- 2015/2016 Academic Year
- 2016/2017 Academic Year
- 2017/2018 Academic Year
- 2018/2019 Academic Year
- 2019/2020 Academic Year
- 2020/2021 Academic Year
- Uncertain

Are you in the U.S. Military?

- Branch
- Occupation Specialty
- Special Schools or Training

Are you a Military Veteran?

- Branch
- Rank at Retirement

Do you plan to eventually earn a bachelor's degree?

- If YES, please list the name of the college or university here:

- Occupation Specialty
- Special Schools or Training

Part 3 – Course Selection

Please list the course or courses for which you are seeking credit, based upon your learning from the military, work experience, hobbies, self-directed learning, continuing noncredit education, or other learning sources. **Be sure to obtain your program advisor's approval before completing your Learning Claim.**

CCCS Course Number	CCCS Course Name	Course Description and/or upload Course Syllabus here	Basis for the Credit Claim	Documentation or Demonstration
Course #1	Course Title		Such as work experience	Choose from Written Portfolio or Demonstrate the Skill or Course Challenge Exam
Course #2				
Course #3				
Course #4				

Part 4 -- Student's Case for Credit

Course #1	Challenge Exam	Student Narrative (Portfolio, if approved)	Student's Practical Demonstration and Documentation
Please type in each competency as per the syllabus. Ideally, this is "auto filled" from a database	The Challenge Exam is proctored in the Test Center. Exam results are immediately available once the exam is completed.	If a portfolio is approved for your course, please describe how you attained this competency here. If a demonstration or course challenge exam will accompany this narrative, then it can	You may upload a video and a letter of verification from an expert/authority/supervisor on the required competency or competencies. The video must be of high quality and show you using the equipment and tools necessary to demonstrate the skill. You are also required to present the outcome/product of

Course #1	Challenge Exam	Student Narrative (Portfolio, if approved)	Student's Practical Demonstration and Documentation
	If you are required to take a Challenge Exam for all or some of the competencies, simply check this column where appropriate.	be brief. If this is a portfolio, this needs to be more specific with the Narrative aligned with the competencies. It is like a term paper and should include citations.	your work to the assessor for review. For a practical demonstration, you are seeking an individualized assessment from a faculty assessor using this form. The assessor would determine how best to assure the competency is met. Ideally, the faculty will decide in advance how to best assess this competency. They would list it here on the template. And, they would build a rubric to go with the assessment.
Competency #1			
Competency #2			
Competency #3			
Competency #4			
Competency #5			
Competency #6			
Competency #7			
Competency #8			
Competency #9			
Competency #10			
Competency #11			
ASSESSMENT RESULTS			

Course #1	Challenge Exam	Student Narrative (Portfolio, if approved)	Student's Practical Demonstration and Documentation
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: To be completed by Faculty Assessor and/or Division Chair			
Date Received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Practical Demonstration/Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Challenge Exam 			
Date Assigned to Assessor:			
Date Assessed:			
Assessment Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Approved, Credit Awarded <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Other Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____			
Assessor Signature/Date:			
Approval Date: Upon approval, please submit this form to the Registrar for transcription.			