Prior Learning Assessment Credit Manual

COLORADO COMMUNITY
COLLEGE SYSTEM

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Introduction to Prior Learning Assessment Credit (PLA Credit)

Prior learning assessment is a set of well-established, researched, and validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit. It is a process that allows learners to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular field or fields and have that learning evaluated for college credit (CAEL).

In February 2015, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupation Education (SBCCOE) approved an update to the former Credit for Prior Learning policy which was submitted by the Credit for Prior Learning Subcommittee. The newly named PLA Credit Policy (BP 9-42) and accompanying System Procedures (SP 9-42) are designed to allow students with prior learning acquired outside an institution of higher education to challenge Colorado Common Course Numbering System (CCNS) courses and to earn credit toward a program of study (See Appendix A: Policy and Procedures). In accordance with the Colorado Student Bill of Rights in regard to core courses, the CCCS PLA Credit policy and procedures allow students an opportunity to challenge these and any other CCNS courses by demonstrating their mastery of the requisite competencies.

This manual addresses the details necessary for implementation and required for compliance with the policy as well as recommendations for creating systems and efficiencies that support and encourage colleges to offer a full array of PLA Credit opportunities to students.

The manual is written for faculty and staff members who will be responsible for carrying out the PLA Credit implementation on their campuses and for helping to maintain the PLA Credit System at their college moving forward. This manual is not intended for student use; students should be encouraged to visit the PLA Credit website at cccs.edu/PLA, the PLA Credit Dashboard at placredit.com, or your institutions PLA Credit student website.

PLA Credit Definition:

The learning addressed in this manual is defined as college level knowledge or skills that have been attained outside of a traditional academic environment and that have not been previously evaluated for or awarded college credit.

Students who apply for PLA Credit are never required to register or pay tuition for the course(s) they are challenging.

Standards for Awarding PLA Credit

PLA Credit may be awarded if the following standards have been met

> Student has been admitted to the college
> Student has declared a course of study (certificate or degree)
> The learning is college level

PLA Credit may be applied toward a degree program, certificate, general education requirements, academic concentration, and general electives that count toward the student's elected course of study. NOTE: Students should be informed that changing a course of study will result in a reassessment of the applicability of PLA Credit.

PLA Credit may satisfy prerequisite requirements using the same policy that applies to other course equivalencies.

PLA Credit cannot be used to satisfy college/program residency requirements. The student must complete a minimum of 25% of the credits required for their program through the institution that awards the degree or certificate.

All work assessed for PLA Credit must meet or exceed "C" level work.

PLA Credit cannot duplicate any previously awarded credit (to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning).

PLA Credit is awarded only for those courses directly applicable to the declared degree program or certificate.

PLA Credit is specifically noted as such on the transcript (see PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures)

The credit is not calculated into the student's grade point average (GPA).

If credit is denied credit for a Portfolio or if the student does not pass an exam, the PLA Credit does not appear on the transcript.

Once PLA Credit is posted to the transcript, it cannot be removed. If a student changes their program of study, the credit will remain on the transcript, but may no longer count toward degree or certificate requirements.

The credit hours awarded for PLA are not included as a part of the student's semester enrollment.

The credit will be transcripted for the same semester in which it was earned but the credit hours do not count as part of the student's total enrollment for the purposes of financial aid or any other purpose predicated on total hours of enrollment for a given semester.

In accordance with SP 9-42 Section IV A, "Within the system: PLA Credit must be accepted for transfer amongst colleges provided that the credits apply to a degree or certificate program at the institution the student is entering."

PLA Credit Methods:

Colleges may choose from any of the following approved methods to evaluate students for PLA Credit. Guidance for these is provided in the PLA Credit Methods and Procedures section of this manual.

See the PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix (Appendix B: Matrices) for standardized test cut score information and published guide CCNS course crosswalks

Standardized Exams: CLEP, AP, IB, DSST/DLPT, and UExcel Examinations. Other exams may be used but must be evaluated by faculty subject matter experts for cut scores and CCNS crosswalks.

Institutional Challenge Exams: Developed and evaluated by CCCS faculty.

Published Guides: Such as the American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to College Credit for Workplace Training, the ACE Military Guide and the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS).

Faculty Evaluated Local Industry and Workplace Credit: Faculty evaluate training in local business and industry to identify PLA opportunities for workers seeking higher level degrees or certification.

Portfolio Assessment: A compilation of verifiable artifacts and evidence that demonstrate the student's mastery of CCNS course competencies. This evidence may include any of the other PLA Credit methods, individual skills demonstrations, and/or narratives documenting learning.

Before engaging in course evaluations based on standardized tests, published guides, and challenge exams, please reference the PLA Credit Crosswalk which contains CCNS course equivalency evaluations previously approved by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and/or CCCS discipline-specific subject matter experts.

Student Support

Institutions should develop an intake/application form for students who wish to be evaluated for credit based on prior learning. This form will be used to guide students through the process and as the official record of each PLA Credit challenge. See examples of PLA Credit intake forms in Appendix E: Sample Forms.

The PLA Credit Application Form should contain:

PLA Credit Rights and Responsibilities information and the steps students must follow at the institution.

All rules and requirements that influence their choice to apply for PLA Credit including the fact that PLA Credit will not count toward their semester enrollment and that PLA Credit fees are non-refundable, regardless of evaluation outcome.

Student number (S#) required to properly transcript credit

Declaration of program of study

Course(s) to be petitioned

Institution specific instructions and requirements by PLA Credit method including Challenge Exam and Portfolio Cover Sheets

Instructions for identifying and delivering appropriate transcripts and documents for evaluation

Faculty/staff signatures as required for approval

Current local PLA Credit contact information

Student signature

Date the completed application is received for entry into the student record. (See Appendix E: Sample Forms)

Veteran and Military Students:

Students who present as former or present members of any branch of the military should be advised by specialists who are familiar with the Joint Services Transcript and the specific eligibility requirements Veteran and Military members are required to meet. See the *PLA Credit for Military Service Members and Veterans* section of this manual for more information.

Approved PLA Credit Methods and Procedures

Standardized Tests

CCCS colleges will award PLA Credit for verified nationally recognized standardized tests. These exams include, but are not limited to:

AP   The College Board Advanced Placement Tests

CLEP   The College Board College-Level Examination Program

DSST   Formerly DANTES Subject Standardized Tests

DLPT   Defense Language Proficiency Test

IB   International Baccalaureate

UExcel Formerly Excelsior College Examinations

Standardized Test Steps and Procedures:

CCCS institutions are not required to offer standardized tests on site, although many do. As applicable, students should be able to contact the Testing Center to learn about the institution's requirements for offering standardized tests. Institutions that offer testing should have specific written instructions about how to register for the exam and how to engage in the institution's PLA Credit system.

Students should meet with an advisor to determine which test(s) might satisfy their program requirements. Students should first be informed that only credits within the student's declared program may be transcribed.

All students who request PLA Credit evaluation for Standardized Tests will need to have an official test transcript submitted from the official testing agency to the institution office responsible for awarding PLA Credit. Costs associated with this evaluation are the responsibility of the student.

College staff will transcribe the credits within 30 days of receipt of the transcript and the PLA Credit application Form, as able.

Students should be advised that credit will not be awarded if the score received on the test does not meet minimum standards as defined in the PLA Credit Matrix.

The campus Student Records office will transcribe course credit upon receipt of the properly executed PLA Credit form and inform the student when the course is transcripted according to established practices. The office should also note the date the application is received for the student record.

All PLA credits are transferrable among all CCCS institutions as applicable to the degree or certificate requirements of the receiving institution (SP 9-42).

PLA credits will be transcripted in a way that is consistent throughout CCCS for the purposes of tracking PLA Credit and student outcomes. See PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures.

Institutional Challenge Exams

Institutional Challenge Exams are faculty-developed tests. They assess a student's mastery of the competencies required for the CCNS course being challenged.

Institutional Challenge Exams are the equivalent of a comprehensive final exam and may include a skills demonstration. A student must pass with a "C" grade or better to receive PLA Credit through a Challenge exam.

The only exception to this grade requirement is that some technical or licensure accrediting bodies, which use course outcomes as part of their assessment/licensure process, may require a "B" grade or better for certification. In this instance, the Department Chair or a discipline faculty member will endorse PLA Credit eligibility.

Colleges and a list of the exams they have developed will be posted on both the PLA Credit Dashboard by college (PLACredit.com) and the PLA Credit website (cccs.edu/PLA) to help students and other colleges locate testing opportunities.

Best practice: A grading rubric should be developed to define "C" level mastery and to ensure equity in grading both within and across institutions. Institutional Challenge Exams based on CCNS competencies could be developed and shared by institutions, at their discretion, to minimize duplication.

Challenge Exam Steps and Procedures:

Colleges should create a Challenge Exam form to track the student's process from application through evaluation. The original and a copy of the completed Challenge Exam form can be used as documentation for faculty and student records.

Students should be advised as to which test(s) are available that will satisfy the requirements of their chosen program of study. Only credits within a student's declared program may be transcribed.

Best practice: Students meet with departmental faculty to discuss their level of preparation before proceeding with testing.

Students will pay the Challenge Exam administration fee according to institutional procedures. Advisors should make sure students know that this cost is not covered by Financial Aid.

Students will arrange for the test in accordance with institutional procedures. Advisors should have this procedure information available for students to minimize confusion.

Best Practice: Test is administered through the Testing Center or by an objective individual in a quiet area.

Evaluation: The completed exam will be given to the appropriate faculty member for evaluation.

The faculty member will determine if the student has earned PLA Credit ("C" level work or better), contact the student with the results, and, if the student earned a "C" or better, submit appropriate documents to the records office within 30 days of the test, as able.

If the student does not pass the exam, no entry will be made in the student's academic record.

Best practice: Evaluators are mindful of time constraints on the student and give priority to grading exams in a timely manner.

The Faculty Evaluator will keep the exam and a copy of the completed Challenge Exam form for one year or in accordance with institutional records retention requirements. Students have the right to view the graded exam but faculty members will retain the completed test.

Evaluators will return the original signed and completed Challenge Exam Form to their campus Student Records office for posting of the exam credit to the student's academic record.

Colleges will develop a set of guidelines for allowing re-testing including the use of different versions of the test and an established period of time for further preparation prior to re-test.

Best practice: Faculty Evaluators give unsuccessful exam takers information to help them better prepare for a re-test if appropriate or advise them into the course as necessary.

Students who are eligible to re-take an exam must pay the appropriate fees for each attempt, regardless of outcomes.

The campus Student Records office will transcribe course credit upon receipt of the properly executed PLA Credit form and inform the student when the course is transcripted according to established practices. The office should also note the date the application is received for the student record.

All PLA credits are transferrable among all CCCS institutions as applicable to the degree or certificate requirements of the receiving institution (SP 9-42).

PLA credits will be transcripted in a way that is consistent throughout CCCS for the purposes of tracking PLA Credit and student outcomes. See PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures

Published Guides

Approved Published Guides with credit recommendations for PLA Credit include:

American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training
www.acenet.edu/credit/

ACE Military Guide – Guide to the Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces
www.militaryguides.acenet.edu

National College Credit Recommendation Service Credit Recommendations (NCCRS)
www.nationalccrs.org

Locally evaluated industry and workplace certifications and training

See the PLA Credit Dashboard or Crosswalk Matrix

Published Guides Steps and Procedures (non Military):

Institutions should have established procedures in place for advising students who express an interest in earning PLA Credit based on prior work or training experience.

Advisors will ask students if they believe they have prior training experience or credentials that might be eligible for college credit. Or Advisors may encourage students to enter their training and work information in the PLA Credit Dashboard to generate a PLA Credit report.

If the student has received training and/or earned a credential, Advisors should check the PLA Credit Dashboard or PLA Credit Matrix to determine if the training has been previously evaluated for college credit.

Students with ACE or NCCRS transcripts should submit official copies to the institution office responsible for awarding PLA Credit along with the PLA Credit Application Form.

Best Practice: The institution has an established set of steps for students to follow that includes requirements, such as an official transcript, to help expedite the process and all instructions are included on the PLA Credit Application Form.

Students without official transcripts, who have earned an eligible credential or completed evaluated training, should submit appropriate supporting documentation as described on the institution's PLA Credit Application Form.

The PLA Credit Matrix should be used first to determine previously evaluated crosswalks to CCNS courses for specific training and credentials.

Institutions may evaluate Published Guide recommendations to determine appropriate crosswalks to CCNS courses if the training or credential has not been previously cross-walked to a CCNS course.

A subject matter expert selected and approved by the appropriate academic department will evaluate recommendations to determine CCNS equivalencies prior to awarding PLA Credit for the course.

Evaluated CCNS credit crosswalks based on Published Guide recommendations can be submitted for inclusion in the PLA Credit Matrix. (See Appendix B: Matrices, for the form and instructions).

By including crosswalks in the PLA Credit Matrix, we hope to keep subject matter experts from duplicating their efforts, but inclusion in the PLA Credit Matrix is not a requirement for awarding credit.

If possible, college officials should transcribe the credits within 30 days of receipt of the transcript and/or PLA Credit application with supporting documents. Colleges that process a high volume of requests may need more time to complete this transcription process. In all

cases, students should be given information about expected timeframes at the time of application.

The campus Student Records office will transcribe course credit upon receipt of the properly executed PLA Credit form and inform the student when the course is transcripted according to established practices. The office should also note the date the application is received for the student record.

All PLA credits are transferrable among all CCCS institutions as applicable to the degree or certificate requirements of the receiving institution (SP 9-42).

PLA credits will be transcripted in a way that is consistent throughout CCCS for the purposes of tracking PLA Credit and student outcomes. See PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures

PLA Credit for Military Service Members and Veterans

Credit for learning gained in the U.S. Military is generally transferred based on the American Council on Education (ACE) credit recommendations found on a Joint Services Transcript (JST) for current or former Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, or Navy personnel or on a Community College of the Air Force Transcript (CCAF) for Air Force personnel.

NOTE: CCAF is regionally accredited, so credit may be transferred directly for courses shown on the CCAF Transcript.

College Transcript Evaluators or Records staff can create JST accounts and receive electronic copies of the transcripts by signing up at https://jst.doded.mil. Service members or veterans can also request a copy of their JST on this DOD site and, if needed, can request updates or corrections to their JST with service-specific support. The JST eliminates the need for the DD Form 295.

Military learning experiences for which credit is awarded must be applicable to the student's declared degree or certificate program.

Credit may be transferred from the JST for military training school, occupation/rank, and coursework as recommended in the ACE Military Guide. Always use the ACE Identifier (Course and/or Occupation) to describe the credit, being careful not to duplicate credit awards in the same subject area.

Standardized test credit, which is current on the PLA Credit Matrix and meets cut score requirements, may be transferred directly from the JST as long as the JST lists the examination name, score earned on the exam, and the date it was taken. Credit should go on the transcript under the PSTAN institutional code, not the PJST code (See PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures).

Credit on the JST is generally transferred for Lower-Division Baccalaureate Degree and Upper-Division Baccalaureate Degree academic levels.

Military Training determined by ACE to be in the Vocational category is not considered to be at the college level and should not be considered independently for college credit.

Students who wish to use military training determined to be in the Vocational category to challenge CCNS courses, may, as appropriate, use these recommendations as part of a Portfolio that demonstrates the full array of required skills/competencies. (See Portfolio section)

Staff should cross-reference the ACE Identifiers on the JST with the ACE Military Guide (http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Guide-Online.aspx). The information needed to compare military training course curriculum and competencies, as well as military occupation (job performance) competencies with CCNS courses is contained in this ACE Guide. The ACE site can be searched by course and by occupation. Using either or both may help to find information related to curriculum and competencies which describe the service member's military learning and will aid in the transfer of appropriate credit for that learning.

If the training, occupation or credential has not been previously cross-walked to a CCNS course, faculty subject matter experts or other qualified staff must evaluate the ACE recommendations to determine appropriate crosswalks to CCNS courses

If there is no ACE credit recommendation made for an entry on the JST, credit should not be awarded and students should be advised about other PLA Credit options such as Challenge Tests and Portfolios.

Evaluated CCNS credit crosswalks based on ACE recommendations may be submitted for inclusion in the PLA Credit Matrix (see Appendix B: Matrices, for instructions). By including crosswalks in the PLA Credit Matrix, we hope to keep subject matter experts from duplicating their efforts, but inclusion in the PLA Credit Matrix is not a requirement for awarding credit.

If a direct crosswalk to a CCNS course is not appropriate, colleges may award elective credit as it applies to the student's degree requirements. Students may also use ACE recommendations as part of a larger body of evidence in a Portfolio to capture CCNS credit.

If possible, college officials should transcribe the credits within 30 days of receipt of the transcript and/or PLA Credit Application Form with supporting documents. Colleges that process a high volume of Military and Veteran PLA requests may need more time to complete this transcription process. In all cases, students should be given information about expected timeframes for completion at the time of application.

All PLA credits are transferrable among all CCCS institutions as applicable to the degree or certificate requirements of the receiving institution (SP 9-42).

PLA credits will be transcripted in a way that is consistent throughout CCCS for the purposes of tracking PLA Credit and student outcomes. See PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures

ACE/ACP Project

CCCS is a founding partner on the ACE Alternative Credit Project grant (ACE ACP) which began in 2014. The ACE ACP includes more than 50 colleges and universities and three systems across the country. The project is designed to evaluate general education courses delivered by nontraditional education providers and to make recommendations, as appropriate, for college credit for students successfully completing them.

The project has created an evaluated pool of low-cost or no-cost, lower division courses, and general education courses across 20-30 subject areas.

CCCS colleges agree to accept these courses for PLA Credit and have evaluated many of them to crosswalk to CCNS credit (See PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix).

Courses that have been evaluated for ACE ACP credit, but not crosswalked to CCNS courses may still be accepted for PLA Credit subject to the same procedures described in the Published Guides (non Military) section of this PLA Credit manual.

Students with ACE ACP credit must submit official ACE transcripts to the institution office responsible for awarding PLA Credit along with a PLA Credit Application Form. Colleges may accept transcripts from the education provider, at their discretion, but it is suggested that the ACE official transcript be the preferred credential to minimize opportunities for fraudulent claims.

Each college in the system has an ACE ACP microsite page which is linked to the main project site http://www.alternativecreditproject.com/. These are excellent resources if you have questions about the project or want to see what students see when exploring this PLA option. When you search any CCCS school, you will see the list of courses that have been evaluated for the crosswalk with their CCNS equivalents. The ACE ACP list is the same for all CCCS colleges.

Faculty Evaluated Local Industry and Workplace Credit

CCCS institutions may evaluate non-collegiate training programs that result in industry certifications, professional licensure, apprenticeship completion, and other workplace skills development.

The business, employee, and the college all benefit from this kind of evaluation. After an evaluation, employers can use PLA crosswalk opportunities to leverage limited employee education funds. They may also be able to use this crosswalk as a way to attract employees who are looking for support in furthering their education. For employees the benefit may be in realizing that their work and training in the "real world" is actually worth college credit which could induce more people to return to school than might have otherwise. For colleges, the relationship with the business, and the support of their employees, could result in increased enrollments and contract support for specialized training.

The inclusion of these evaluations in the PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix will then allow employees to have more ease and flexibility in choosing a program that fits their college plans.

The method of evaluating local industry training will vary between colleges, industries, and training design. It is suggested that colleges take the time to engage faculty and staff in the creation of local evaluation standards and practices that are equitable for all participants and defensible for students who may want to extend their education beyond the community college.

Best practice: The following are suggestions for developing these standards and practices to ensure a strong partnership with the employer while maintaining the academic integrity of your programs (CAEL):

> Before you decide to conduct a full evaluation, take steps to make sure the training is of a caliber that will meet your college-level curriculum requirements and standards. Use the following checklist to make your determination:
>
> Does the training subject align with an academic offering?
>
> How long has the employer been offering the training?
>
> Does the employer have a training department?
>
> Did the employer create the materials for the training or were they purchased from a vendor?
>
> Who teaches/trains the employees and what are his/her credentials?
>
> How are training records maintained?
>
> How does the employer assess the training? Is there a pre- and post-test? Does the employee have to "pass" the training as opposed to just attending it? Are there grades?
>
> How long is the training program (contact hours, days, weeks, months)?
>
> Is there a training plan or syllabus available for the faculty to review?
>
> Are there hands-on demonstrations or simulations? How are these assessed?
>
> Once it has been determined that there is comparability between the training and an academic course or competencies, then it is good practice to do a site visit, preferably when training is taking place. The institutional liaison should bring along a faculty member or members from the discipline to meet the employer's staff and tour the site. This firsthand experience helps the faculty to get an idea of whether further time should be spent in doing an evaluation.
>
> If faculty determine that the employer's training program is established and ready for an evaluation, then the various documents from the checklist above can be collected and reviewed. The overarching objective is to see if there is comparability between the training and an academic offering.

Faculty will look for alignment with competencies for a course or courses. The extent to which there is alignment will determine if credit can be awarded. Often, credit is awarded in a range from .05 credit hours to full credit. Documentation should be reviewed by the faculty department and or Director/Dean before approving credit for the training.

In instances where partial credit for a course is considered, colleges should be prepared to offer students an academic plan that allows the credit to be used or expanded to full course credit through supplemental coursework or modular/competency based learning.

An Agreement/MOU/Contract should be drafted for both the college and the employer. It should cover the following:

Duration of the Agreement

The training should be reviewed on a regular basis – initially, it is wise to review the training annually.

The employer is responsible for providing the college updates should the training be revised in any way.

The training documentation required by employees that will be recognized by the institution for credit.

Any exceptions to credit recognition

The offices or titles of the persons that should be notified in writing should the Agreement need to be terminated or revised.

The institution should have a designated office where the agreement is kept (Registrar's Office) and where it will be maintained.

As colleges conduct these evaluations and establish crosswalks to CCNS courses, they should plan to submit them for inclusion in the PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix (See Appendix B: Matrices for instructions). By including crosswalks in the PLA Credit Matrix, we hope to keep subject matter experts from duplicating their efforts, but inclusion in the PLA Matrix is not a requirement for awarding credit.

Faculty/Industry and Workplace Credit Steps and Procedures:

Institutions should have established procedures in place for advising students who express an interest in earning PLA Credit based on prior work or training experience including having the information associated with previous evaluation activities with local employers available.

If the student has received training and/or earned a credential, Advisors should check the PLA Credit Dashboard or PLA Credit Matrix for CCNS credit crosswalks, and/or the ACE National Guide or NCCRS to determine if the training has been previously evaluated for college credit.

Students who have earned an eligible credential or completed evaluated training are responsible for providing appropriate supporting documentation as described in the institution's PLA Credit Application Form.

The campus Student Records office will transcribe course credit upon receipt of the properly executed PLA Credit form and inform the student when the course is transcripted according to established practices. The office should also note the date the application is received for the student record.

All PLA credits are transferrable among all CCCS institutions as applicable to the degree or certificate requirements of the receiving institution (SP 9-42).

PLA credits will be transcripted in a way that is consistent throughout CCCS for the purposes of tracking PLA Credit and student outcomes. See PLA Credit Transcripting Procedures

Portfolio Assessment

Knowledge and skills acquired through work and lifelong learning may be evaluated and validated through a formal portfolio assessment process. Institutions may undertake this evaluation and development work themselves or may choose to use an outside vendor.

Best practice suggests that students should meet with a faculty subject matter expert or advisor prior to beginning to develop a portfolio to be sure that the learning is sufficient to warrant the effort. Students who need more preparation in the subject should be advised appropriately into further learning.

A portfolio is a formal academic framework that students use to align their learning against the competencies/learning outcomes of a course or courses for the purpose of having a faculty subject matter expert evaluate their learning for college credit. It also provides documentation or evidence to support the student's request for credit. Each course for which portfolio credit is requested must be in the CCNS and must be part of the student's certificate or degree requirements.

There are two primary types of portfolios: those designed to challenge Major or General Education courses and those designed to challenge Applied Sciences or Career and Technical Education courses. Department Chairs and/or faculty will determine which format best suits the course to be challenged.

The Major or GE portfolio requires students to demonstrate learning through a narrative form supported by documentation or verifiable artifacts specific to the course content. Applied Skills

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portfolios are designed to assess workplace learning and require students to demonstrate mastery of the applied skills in addition to a more abbreviated narrative describing their learning and/or department developed assessment tests. Applied Skills Portfolios may also require employer recommendations or industry certifications as appropriate. See Appendix E: Sample Forms for sample portfolios

Faculty and student roles in the portfolio process

Preparation and content of the portfolio is the responsibility of the student, but institutions are required to provide a "course, workshop, or orientation session designed to assist students in identifying, describing and documenting skills and knowledge gained through prior learning experiences." (SP 9-42, Section 3, D Portfolios).

Once a student has prepared the portfolio, it must be submitted for assessment. A faculty member or other subject matter expert will evaluate the portfolio and determine if the student has provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate attainment of the learning outcomes and/or met the competencies of the course at the level of a "C" or better. To ensure equity and neutrality, the faculty member who supports the student while developing the portfolio should not be the same faculty member who evaluates it.

Resources for developing and delivering a Portfolio Preparation course are available on the PLA Credit website at cccs.edu/PLA. Third party vendors such as Learning Counts (www.learningcounts.org) are also a viable option for the Portfolio course requirement. Colleges may outsource portfolio development and opt to do evaluations in house or may accept portfolio evaluations and credit recommendations from the third party vendor. These decisions are made at the institutional level.

Minimum Requirements for the Content of the Portfolio

The following documents should be included in a logical order in the portfolio before it is considered for evaluation or assessment:

Cover Page and Table of Contents: Each portfolio should have a cover page identifying the portfolio and the student who prepared it for credit. A table of contents listing the separate parts of the portfolio should also be included.

Degree or Certificate Program Plan: The plan should include required and elective courses for the declared program of study.

Request for Portfolio Credit: A short letter or locally developed form on which the student will indicate the course(s) the portfolio addresses.

Narrative of Intent: This narrative should introduce the student to the evaluator. It is a relevant but brief autobiographical presentation that ties together why the portfolio is being submitted and why the credit should be awarded. It is a general overview of what will be discussed in detail later.

Relevance: If general education courses are being requested for award, the student must show how his or her life learning relates to the request. If occupational courses are being requested for award, the narrative will include the student's relevant work experiences and may include those life experiences relating to the request.

Resume: Students should submit a resume when Applied Skills are being evaluated for course credit. The resume can be optional when only Major or GE courses are being requested.

Course Request: This portion of the portfolio should have a separate section for each course for which credit is being requested. Course competency statements and/or learning outcomes supplied by faculty or found on the CCNS site should be the starting point for this section. (CCNS: https://erpdnssb.cccs.edu/PRODCCCS/ccns_pub_controller.p_command_processor)

Students will then describe how their learning relates to this specific course and how they have accomplished the competencies/learning outcomes expected of students who successfully completed the course.

Documentation: Verifiable documentation will be presented in the portfolio to support student requests for awarding credit. The supporting documents will be of sufficient breadth and depth to validate the stated learning and provide the evaluator with qualitative evidence for evaluation.

Types of documentation:
Evidence of Training: Students who have received training through non-traditional methods should provide documentation that certifies the completion of training, a lesson plan or training content (if available), dates of attendance, and/or other information showing what was taught. Evidence of evaluation may also be required (e.g., proficiency exam scores).

Portfolio of Works: Students requesting awarded credit in some fields may be required to have a portfolio of their work to support their request.

Demonstration of Competency: Some students may request credit in courses that can only be evaluated after a performance of their skills. The department associated with the course will determine what skills must be demonstrated and will inform the student of the accepted venues and methods, i.e. via video, on site, or through a third party evaluator.

Oral Interview: The evaluator may contact the student for a verbal discussion of his/her portfolio as a supplement to the written information provided.

The Portfolio Assessor
The Portfolio Assessor will:

Develop and/or use a scoring rubric related to the course competencies from the CCNS.

Assess the written and/or demonstrated learning claim against the required competencies.

Review the submitted documentation for sufficiency and legitimacy in supporting the learning claims in the portfolio.

Create a report with the Assessors conclusions to be copied to the student and kept for documentation purposes. The report should include a copy of the rubric, information about the student's performance in meeting learning expectations, areas where the evidence was not sufficient to support the request, and suggestions for further learning or demonstration to improve if credit is not awarded. The determination of credit to be awarded should be included in the report and noted, with signatures, on the PLA Credit Application as appropriate.

Resources related to Portfolio Assessment practices are listed in Appendix D: Resources.

Selecting a Faculty Subject Matter Expert to Assess the Portfolio
Faculty subject matter Assessors should only evaluate portfolios for which they have subject matter expertise, have taught at least one course in the discipline area, and are current in their field.

Assessors should have expert level knowledge of the established departmental and CCNS course competencies and curriculum outcomes, should use a rubric for grading that has been approved by the department, and should be prepared to offer written feedback to the student to assure continuity of learning.

If a faculty Assessor is not available at the student's home institution, the college may hire an Assessor from another CCCS college.

Best practice suggests that all Assessors should have successfully completed Portfolio Assessment professional development and training. During training, Assessors should learn principles of reliable scoring and complete activities to help minimize bias. This professional development could help to ensure quality as well as achieving the following validations:

Ensure Assessor and facilitator confidence

Ensure that different Assessors interpret the same evidence similarly

Ensure that assessment decisions reflect the rules of evidence

It is recommended, at the least, that all faculty Assessors receive professional development in assessing portfolios prior to assessing one. If a trained Assessor is not available, the faculty member should be briefed on the portfolio and how to use the department rubric to make the assessment.

Portfolio Assessment Outcome Options
PLA Credit Assessments determine whether a student has met the requirements for a course at a "C" level or better. Passing assessments do not receive a traditional grade. Assessments that do not demonstrate "C" level competencies are not entered into the student's record.

The outcomes of PLA Credit Assessment can be described in reports as Pass, Deny, or Provisional. For transcription purposes, successful course challenges earn a "PLA" grade which indicates that the student has met mastery requirements at a C or better level.

PASS - The Assessor awards credit for the portfolio and includes a credit determination in the Portfolio Assessment Report and on the PLA Credit Application Form. The form is then submitted to the Registrar and the credit is entered on the students' record.

DENY – The Assessor determines that credit cannot be awarded for the portfolio and includes this evaluation information and an explanation in the Portfolio Assessment Report and on the PLA Credit Application Form.

There are no Denied grades transcripted at any time; only completed passing assessments are put into the student record.

PROVISIONAL – Faculty members can decide if they want to offer an opportunity for students to further enhance their portfolio prior to final determinations. In this case, the Assessor determines that the portfolio is nearly good enough and contacts the student to discuss ways to satisfy the missing competencies. The student is given a limited timeline for submitting documentation and completing the additional requests at no additional cost. By the agreed upon deadline, the Assessor will re-evaluate the portfolio and credit will be granted or denied. Students who fail to complete submissions within the allotted time frame are required to resubmit the Portfolio and pay standard fees if they wish to have it re-assessed.

There are no Provisional grades transcripted at any time; only completed passing assessments are put into the student record.

Steps for Using an Outside Vendor for Portfolio Assessment Services:

Students should meet with an advisor to determine which requirement(s) of their programs might be satisfied by portfolio assessment and to ensure that the third party vendor recommendations will be accepted by the institution.

Students must complete training on Portfolio development. Portfolio development training can be accomplished by either completing a course presented through the vendor or by completing training within the CCCS system.

Students will develop their portfolios and submit to the vendor.

The vendor will assess the portfolio and return a transcript to the students and college for transcription.

Institutions may decide to outsource Portfolio development to a third party vendor but require the Portfolio to be assessed by local faculty. Guidelines for the institutions practices should be clearly outlined for students and include information about Portfolio Assessment fees.

Students are responsible for payments to third party vendors unless the college has made other arrangements with the vendor. Students, who are charged through the college for third party services, must be charged at the rates established on the PLA Credit Cost matrix.

Prior to referring students to third party vendors, institutions should have MOU's in place that acknowledge that they will accept the recommendations of the vendor and transcript credit for portfolios that meet course competency requirements.

Colleges will not charge an additional fee for transcription of third party credit recommendations.

Portfolio Assessment Benefits for Students:

It is important for students to have a clear understanding of the benefits and risks involved when using the portfolio assessment method.

Developing a portfolio can be a rewarding and personally fulfilling experience. It helps students to articulate what they have learned, often resulting in a sense of pride and accomplishment.

For students who have deep knowledge within a single discipline, there is potential to earn credits for more than one course. This opportunity can reduce time to completion and tuition fees.

The advising conversation with a faculty subject matter expert or faculty advisor is always beneficial for the student, even if s/he decides not to pursue a portfolio. Students are often confused between experience (I did this) and learning (I learned this from my experience).

Students can be successful if they are properly prepared to write a portfolio or demonstrate a skill, knowing the standards for which they will be assessed.

Portfolio Assessment Risks for Students

Earning credit via portfolio is not assured. Students must pay for the assessment fees even if credit is not awarded. There are no refunds awarded for PLA Credit assessments.

Students who are surprised by the rigor of preparing a portfolio may not complete the process.

When they get off track in their writing, they may not articulate the learning. Credit is not awarded for experience but for the *learning* gained from experience.

Financial aid does not cover assessment fees associated with portfolio assessment.

The PLA Credit Dashboard Tool

The PLA Credit Dashboard tool is designed to help students gather the information and artifacts they will need to apply for PLA Credit evaluation at a CCCS college. Students are asked a series of questions designed to surface their prior learning opportunities or actions and to encourage them to connect to a college advisor to discuss PLA Credit in their program of study.

Advisors who have been identified as the "lead" for PLA at their institution will receive the student reports generated by the PLA Credit tool and will be able to use these to contact students to make appointments. Advisors will have access to the tool to review reports, track student contacts, and identify courses available on the PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix.

The tool can be found here: www.PLACredit.com

To learn more about the tool, go to www.cccs.edu/PLA and click on the Dashboard toggle.

Faculty Compensation:

All CCCS colleges will charge students for PLA Credit services based on the PLA Credit Cost Matrix and in accordance with SP 4-92 (see Appendix B: Matrices) to create a funding source to support PLA Credit activities. Colleges are at liberty to allocate PLA Credit resources at their discretion.

Best practice: Suggests that faculty should be compensated for Portfolio and Challenge Exam evaluations based on the method of assessment and the number of credits. Guidelines for PLA Credit compensation should be published for faculty and staff information.

Colleges may choose to include the cost of one assessment in the Portfolio Development course but are not required to do so.

Recommendation: Colleges can determine a percentage of the total Portfolio Assessment fee that will be paid to the Faculty Evaluator and a percentage that will be retained for administration. The work of the faculty member can be compensated via the FLAC process as an "Other Service Assignment" contract. Assessors would be responsible for taking a copy of the student's PLA form to their FLAC administrator after completion of the Portfolio evaluation. FLAC administrators then could document this work using the PLA Credit Application form.

PLA CREDIT Transcripting Procedures

Colleges are responsible for designating which employees are responsible for entering PLA Credit information into the student transcript. For the purposes of this section we will call that person "the Registrar" with the understanding that it may indeed be someone other than the college Registrar who is responsible.

When students submit completed PLA Credit Application forms to the designated authority, they should include all of the information needed to both record the credit and to archive the relevant documents in accordance with institutional records retention practices.

This section of the PLA Credit manual describes how PLA Credit should be entered into Banner to be posted on the student transcript. It contains a Glossary of PLA Credit codes and their definitions which are required to be used in this process. With the implementation of the PLA Credit system and the new PLA Credit codes, CCCS will also conduct periodic reviews to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the data being gathered.

Transfer PLA credit from other CCCS colleges

In accordance with SP 9-42 Section IV A, "Within the system: PLA Credit must be accepted for transfer amongst colleges provided that the credits apply to a degree or certificate program at the institution the student is entering." Colleges should transcript this credit as they would any other Transfer credit from System colleges.

Effective Dates

The codes and instructions in this manual are in effect for all CCCS colleges on publication of this manual (June 2016).

Governance

The Director of Enrollment Services, Education Services, is responsible for any changes to this practice including retiring or updating codes and distributing instructions to the field. Questions about transcripting credit should be directed to the Enrollment Services Department.

Elective Credit

If a subject matter expert determines that a student has demonstrated significant learning that does not align with a CCNS course, the credit can be awarded to fill elective requirements as appropriate. This practice should be used sparingly; excessive elective credit can cause future problems with Financial Aid or transfer or if the student changes their chosen course of study.

PLA Elective credits should always be transcribed in the following manner:
Discipline Code - Course Number 999 - and the title of the course(s) as entered on the transcript

EX: SCI 999 Medic Theory I - For a course from the JST called "Medic Theory I" that best aligns with the "SCI" discipline and which is called "Medic Theory I" on the JST.

TRANSCRIPTING INSTRUCTIONS WITH EXAMPLES

Enter PLA Credit data on the SHATRNS screen as described below:
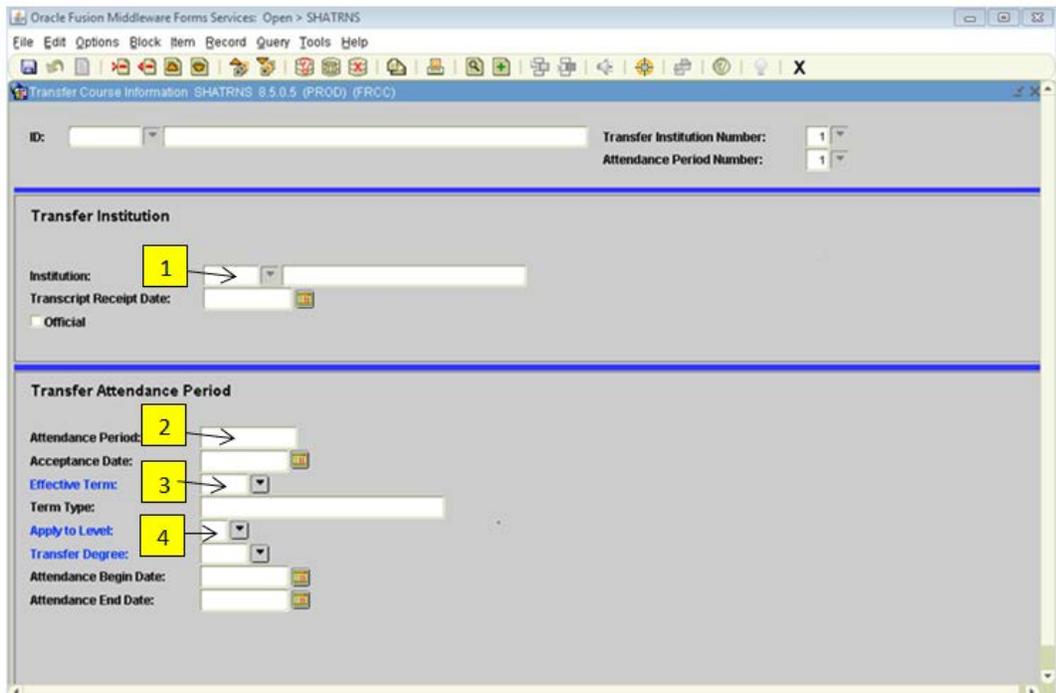
1. **Institution:** Enter the Institution Code (see **Institution Code Glossary** below for code list).

The code description/name will automatically populate in the Institution field.

2. Attendance Period (By semester)

This field should reflect the time frame in which the credential was earned.

This field may be expressed as a single date or range, enter as described on the credential.

In the case of a range: EX FA12-SP16.

In the case of a single date: EX SP 15.

3. Effective Term

Enter the term in which the credit will be transcripted.

4. **Apply to Level:** This field is always "UG" for Undergraduate.

The information to be entered in the SHATAEQ fields will be dependent on the method of evaluation. See specific examples below.

PSTAN and PCHAL: Standardized Testing and Challenge Tests

5. Subject: PSTAN: Enter the abbreviation for the Test Name: AP, IB, CLEP, DSST, DLPT and UExel.   Do not enter the subject description here. PCHAL: enter the CCNS Subject and Course Number that was challenged. EX: ENG 121

6. Course Number: PSTAN: Enter the Test Score. PCHAL: Enter the test grade if available.

7. Hours: Leave this field blank.

8. Grade: Always enter "PLA".

9. Title: PSTAN: Enter the full Subject name of the test. EX: English Language and Composition.
         PCHAL: Enter the title of the CCNS course. EX: English Composition I

10. Equivalent Course Detail: All of the information in this section is for the CCNS credit to be awarded.

Level: Self-populating (UG)

Term: Self-populating from "Effective Term"

Subject: Enter the three letter subject code EX. ENG

Course: Enter the course number EX. 121

Grade: This field is always "PLA"

Title: Self-populating (EX. English Composition I)

You should only enter the equivalent CCNS courses for the specific test in the Subject and Course Number Fields.   If there are more eligible tests to be entered, save the record and then choose "Next Block" to repeat the process.

PJST: Joint Services Transcript

5. Subject: Enter the military occupation title or the military course name as appropriate. EX: Personnel Records Specialist or Basic Combat Training.

6. Course Number: Enter the ACE Identifier (occupation and/or course as appropriate) EX: MOS-75D-004 and/or AR-2201-0399. Always include the same numbers, letters, and hyphens in the same format as on the JST.

NOTE: You may need to enter multiple ACE credit recommendations from a transcript to equal one course in the CCNS. Always enter ALL of the ACE course identifiers/numbers that equate to the CCNS course(s), separated by semicolons (EX: Course A; Course B; Course C).

7. Hours: Enter the total number of credits ACE recommends for this course or occupation. These are labeled "SH" for Semester Hours on the transcript.

8. Grade: Always enter "PLA".

9. Title: Joint Services Transcript

10. Equivalent Course Detail: All of the information in this section is for the CCNS credit to be awarded.

Level: Self-populating (UG)

Term: Self-populating from "Effective Term"

Subject: Enter the three letter subject code EX. BTE   (This code is for CCNS or Elective courses)

Course: Enter the course number EX. 125 or for Electives, 999

Grade: This field is always "PLA"

Title: CCNS courses are self-populating (Records Management)

For Elective credit, always enter the information from the Subject field (#5)

You should only enter the equivalent CCNS courses for the specific course(s) or occupation(s) in the Subject and Course Number Fields. If there are more eligible courses or occupations to be entered, save the record and then choose "Next Block" to repeat the process.

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PACE and PNCC: Published Guides

5. **Subject:** Enter the training or occupation title or certification name from the transcript. EX: Electrical Training ALLIANCE or American Educational Institute.

6. Course Number: Enter the ACE or NCCRS Course Number(s). EX: NJAT-0053; NJAT-0056 or AEI 313

NOTE: You may need to enter multiple credit recommendations from a transcript to equal one course in the CCNS. Always enter ALL of the ACE or NCCRS course identifiers/numbers that equate to the CCNS course(s) separated by semicolons (EX: NJAT-0056; NJAT-0056).

7. Hours: Enter the total ACE or NCCRS Credit Recommendation for this training, occupation, or certification.

8. Grade: Always enter "PLA".

9. Title: Enter the name of the course(s) as listed on the transcript. EX: AC Theory 3; DC Theory 2; Arson and Fraud.

10. Equivalent Course Detail: All of the information in this section is for the CCNS credit to be awarded.

Level: Self-populating (UG)

Term: Self-populating from "Effective Term"

Subject: Enter the three letter subject code EX. EIC
 This code is the same whether a course is in the CCNS or Elective

Course: Enter the course number EX. 105 or for Electives, 999

Grade: This field is always "PLA"

Title: CCNS courses are self-populating (Basics of AC & DC Electricity)
 For Elective credit, enter the information from the Subject (#5) and Course Number (#6)

You should only enter the equivalent CCNS courses for the specific course(s) or occupation(s) in the Subject and Course Number Fields. If there are more eligible courses or occupations to be entered, save the record and then choose "Next Block" to repeat the process.

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PACE: ACE ACP Project Credit

5. Subject: ACPE

6. Course Number: 0086

7. Hours: Enter the total ACE credit recommendation for the ACE ACP courses.

8. Grade: Always enter "PLA".

9. Title: Accounting I (Straighterline)

10. Equivalent Course Detail: All of the information in this section is for the CCNS credit to be awarded.

Level: Self-populating (UG)

Term: Self-populating from "Effective Term".

Subject: Enter the three letter subject code EX. ACC

 This code is the same whether a course is in the CCNS or Elective

Course: Enter the course number EX. 121 or for Electives, 999

Grade: This field is always "PLA"

Title: CCCNS courses are self-populating (Accounting Principles I)

 For Elective credit, enter the information from the Title field (#9)

You should only enter the equivalent CCNS courses for the specific course(s) in the Subject and Course Number Fields. If there are more eligible courses to be entered, save the record and then choose "Next Block" to repeat the process.

PLOC and POTHR: Industry, Workplace, Faculty Evaluation

5. Subject: Enter the name of the business and include location EX: Aqua Hot, Fort Collins, CO.

6. Course Number: Enter the training/occupation title that has been evaluated EX: Line Supervisor

7. Hours: Leave this field blank

8. Grade: Always enter "PLA".

9. Title: Enter the name/description of the training. EX: Master Line Supervisor Training

10. Equivalent Course Detail: All of the information in this section is for the CCNS credit to be awarded.

Level: Self-populating (UG)

Term: Self-populating from "Effective Term".

Subject: Enter the three letter subject code EX. MAN

 This code is the same whether a course is in the CCNS or Elective

Course: Enter the course number EX. 116 or for Electives, 999

Grade: This field is always "PLA"

Title: Self-populating (Principles of Supervision)

For Elective credit, enter the information from the Title field (#9)

You should only enter the equivalent CCNS courses for the specific course(s) or occupation(s) in the Subject and Course Number Fields. If there are more eligible courses or occupations to be entered, save the record and then choose "Next Block" to repeat the process.

PORT: Portfolio

5. **Subject:** Enter the CCNS Subject(s) and Course Number(s) that were challenged by the Portfolio. EX: ENG 121; LIT 115.

6. **Course Number:** Leave this field blank.

7. **Hours:** Enter the total number of recommended credits.

8. **Grade:** Always enter "PLA".

9. **Title:**   Leave this field blank

10. Equivalent Course Detail: All of the information in this section is for the CCNS credit to be awarded.

Level: Self-populating (UG)

Term: Self-populating from "Effective Term".

Subject: Enter the three letter subject code EX. ENG

This code is the same whether a course is in the CCNS or Elective

Course: Enter the course number EX. 121 or for Electives 999

Grade: This field is always "PLA"

Title: Self populating (English Composition I)

For Elective credit, enter all of the information from the Subject field (#5)

You should only enter the equivalent CCNS courses for the specific course(s) in the Subject Field. If there are additional Portfolios from the same student, save the record and then choose "Next Block" to repeat the process.

PARTH and PCCEC

Guidance for these designations is provided in the Transcript Processing & Articulation handbook. Continue to follow your standard practices for these transcript designations.

PLA Institution Code Glossary

NOTE: The credit crosswalks referenced below are established through faculty evaluation of PLA credit credentials as required in policy, are tracked through the PLA Credit Matrix, and are entered into SHATATR for your convenience.

PSTAN: Standardized Tests
This code should be used to transcript credit earned through: CLEP, IB, AP, DSST, DLPT or UEXCEL standardized tests.

PCHAL: Challenge Exam
This code should be used to transcript credit earned through passing a faculty developed examination for a specific CCNS course.

PJST: Joint Services Transcript
This code should be used to transcript Joint Services Transcript credit which is equivalent to a CCNS course or for CCNS Elective credit. All credit from the JST that is crosswalked to a CCNS course, regardless of origin (i.e. service branch*) should be entered under this code.
* All service branches (except the Air Force) use the JST so separate branch codes are not necessary.   **NOTE:** Military schools such as Community College of the Air Force which are regionally accredited and have their own institution codes, should have their credit posted as it would be posted for any other regionally accredited institution, i e. not using PLA Credit codes.

PACE: PLA ACE Credit
This code should be used for any course supported by an American Council on Education (ACE) transcript that is not also on a JST. Ex: ACE transcripts, ACE ACP.

PNCC: National College Credit Recommendation Service
This code should be used when transferring credit endorsed by the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS)

PLOC: Industry, Workplace, Faculty Evaluation
This code is for credit transferred from Industry training previously evaluated and crosswalked to courses by faculty but not previously evaluated by ACE. Ex: Local industry training programs

POTHR: PLA Other
This code may be used to transfer credit that has been appropriately evaluated by faculty subject matter experts but does not fit any of the other designations. For example, a student might present a certificate from a source that has not been previously evaluated by ACE, such as the NIMS certificate.

PPORT: Portfolio
This code should be used to transcript credit earned through a faculty evaluated Portfolio.

PARTH: High School Articulated Credit

This code should be used to transcript credit awarded based on faculty-assessed articulation agreements between individual CCCS colleges and high schools in their respective service areas.

PCCEC: PLA Colorado Education Center

This code should be used to transcript approved course credit from Colorado Department of Corrections facilities.

Colorado Department of Corrections

A student who completes coursework at a Colorado Department of Corrections facility may transfer any career and technical postsecondary course credits with a grade of "C" or better earned while enrolled in the approved program. These eligible career/technical credits may be applied to the requirements of a program leading to a certificate or to an Associate of Applied Science or an Associate of General Studies degree at a Colorado Community College System college. Transfer is limited to Career and Technical (CTE) coursework.

1. Post-Secondary credits accepted in transfer from the Colorado Department of Corrections must come from a State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE)/CCCS approved CTE certificate program and be instructed by SBCCOE/CCCS credentialed faculty.

2. An annual review of Department of Correction programs will be completed by the CCCS Chief Academic Officer or his/her designee.

3. An official transcript must be received by the college directly from the Colorado Education Center in order for credit to be awarded.

PLA Credit Appeals Process

Students should be notified of the outcomes of their completed PLA Credit application within 30 days of submission, as appropriate. Information about how and when the student will be notified should be included in the PLA Credit Application Form.

Institutions are required to establish and communicate a process for appealing a PLA Credit decision. This process should be outlined in the PLA Credit Application Form, college catalog, and any other related PLA Credit materials.

Recommendations and scoring by ACE, CLEP, and other external bodies are under the auspices of the evaluation body and cannot be appealed at the college-level. Students should be directed to the appeals procedures for each testing agency or credit recommendation service.

Students are not eligible for a reimbursement of the cost of a PLA Credit assessment under any circumstances and will need to reapply and submit payment if requesting subsequent evaluations, regardless of which course they challenge.

Students cannot appeal for PLA Credit to be removed from their academic transcript.

Students cannot appeal to the institution if a transfer institution (outside of CCCS) does not accept the credit.

Best Practice: The following guidelines are suggested, not required:
In the case of Challenge Exams and Portfolio Assessments, the student may submit a written request for a meeting with the PLA Credit Evaluator who denied the issuance of credit. The meeting should take place within 14 days of the student's denial and be documented for their records. It is reasonable to establish a timeline for these appeals.

Portfolio evaluators may advise students to submit additional documentation, if appropriate, to further demonstrate required competencies. The Evaluator should set a specific time frame and list of requirements for the student to submit under the same evaluation. Consequences of not meeting this timeline should be clearly communicated.

Recommendations subsequent to appeal will stand. Students will be required to re-submit Portfolios or retest Challenge exams (according to testing policy) if they wish to be reevaluated after appeal.

The process of appeal should be designed to ensure that students have every opportunity to demonstrate their learning for PLA Credit evaluation.

Appendix A: Policy and Procedures

BP 9-42
https://www.cccs.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/BP9-42.pdf

SP 9-42
https://www.cccs.edu/2016/04/sp-9-42-prior-learning-assessment-credit/

Appendix B: Matrices

The PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix
The PLA Credit Crosswalk Matrix is updated through the PLA Credit.com dashboard. The contents of the Matrix can be downloaded in a .csv file by clicking this link:

https://pcm.placredit.com
NOTE: To format the .csv file for easy reading:
1. Select the entire document (CTRL A)
2. Click the *Format* button in the *Cells* box of the toolbar
3. Choose *Auto Fit Column Width* from the dropdown menu.

The Matrix is a dynamic document that will be updated as new crosswalks are approved and without notice. The best way to use this tool is to bookmark it on your computer and access the most current version whenever you are researching a crosswalk.

If you choose to print a copy of the Matrix (not recommended), make sure that you check to see if anything is changed in the current document at the link above before you advise students.

PLA Credit Cost Matrix
THE COST MATRIX is currently under review by the CCCS leadership and will be included in the manual on approval. In the interim, colleges should continue with their current practices in regard to assessing fees for PLA Credit evaluations.

Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

ACE ACP

The American Council on Education Alternative Credit Project is designed to evaluate general education courses delivered by nontraditional education providers and to make recommendations, as appropriate, for college credit for students successfully completing them. http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Alternative-Credit-Project.aspx

ACE Identifier/ACE ID

A unique number assigned to ACE evaluations of training and/or occupations. The ACE ID can be found on the JST or the ACE Transcript. ACE ID's are used to identify and document learning crosswalks to the CCNS.

ACE Military Guide

The Military Guide is a compilation of ACE credit recommendations for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the military. The guide includes all evaluated courses and occupations from 1954 to the present. http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Guide-Online.aspx

ACE National Guide

The ACE National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training contains ACE recommendations for formal courses or examinations offered by various organizations including businesses, unions and government entities. http://www2.acenet.edu/credit/?fuseaction=browse.main

ACE Recommendation

American Council on Education Credit Recommendation Service uses faculty subject matter teams to review workplace learning and connect the competencies to college level learning. http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/College-Credit-Recommendation-Service-CREDIT.aspx

AP

College level studies are offered in courses at the high school level. Students who test and successfully meet cut scores are awarded credit in the appropriate subject area. https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/home

CAEL

The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning - a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works with public and private sector partners to enhance learning opportunities for adults around the world.

Mission Statement: As a national leader, we strive to lead the evolving national discussion on unique challenges and opportunities linking adult learners and work. We advocate and innovate on behalf of all adult learners, regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, to increase access to education and economic security and to develop and provide effective services and

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tools. We work to enhance our thought leadership role through our research and work with adult learners, postsecondary education institutions, employers and government.

CCAF
Community College of the Air Force

CCNS
The Colorado Common Course Numbering System https://www.cccs.edu/education-services/common-course-numbering-system/
The CCNS was developed to facilitate ease of transfer for CCCS community college students from one community college to the other and from the community college to the four-year educational institutions, to improve program planning, to increase communication among all of the colleges, and to facilitate articulation arrangements from high schools to the community colleges. Courses with common content carry the same prefix, number, title, credits, description, competencies and outline. These commonly described courses facilitate transfer and articulation arrangements for Colorado's secondary and community college students and ensure curriculum quality across the colleges.

Challenge Exam
Institutional Challenge Exams are faculty-developed tests. They assess a student's mastery of the competencies required for the CCNS course being challenged and are the equivalent of a comprehensive final exam and may include a skills demonstration.

CLEP College Level Exam Program
CLEP is a credit by examination program that is widely accepted by colleges and universities across the country. CLEP exams test mastery of college level material in five subject areas with 33 tests covering general education courses.

Course Challenge
By state statute, students are allowed to challenge any core (gtPathways) course if they feel they already have the requisite knowledge and skills. CCCS policy expands this opportunity to all courses in the Common Course Numbering System (CCNS).

Credential
A credential is a document, certification or license that proves a person's qualifications and mastery.

Credit Crosswalk
Faculty subject matter experts evaluate a credential such as an ACE recommendation and decide if there is an equivalency between the skills mastered for the credential and the competencies of a CCNS course.

DLPT

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The Defense Language Proficiency Test is a battery of foreign language tests produced by the Defense Language Institute and used by the US Department of Defense. They are intended to assess the general language proficiency of native English speakers in specific foreign languages, in the skills of reading and listening. http://www.dliflc.edu/resources/dlpt-guides/

DSST
This test is most often taken by military members and their families. The DSST program offers 30+ exams in college subject areas such as Social Sciences, Math, Applied Technology, Business, Physical Sciences and Humanities. The tests have been evaluated for college credit by ACE. http://getcollegecredit.com/

Faculty Evaluated Local Industry and Workplace Credit
Faculty members evaluate non-collegiate training programs that result in industry certifications, professional licensure, apprenticeship completion, and other workplace skills development.

Faculty evaluator
A faculty subject matter expert who is responsible for evaluating student Portfolio's for PLA Credit.

IB
The International Baccalaureate is a "non-profit educational foundation offering four programs of international education that develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills needed to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world." www.ibo.org/

JST
The Joint Services Transcript is a synchronized transcript presenting data for the United States Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Coast Guard. The JST contains: military course completions, military occupations, College level test scores, and other learning experiences. http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Joint-Services-Transcript-Brochure.pdf

Learning Counts
Learning Counts (CAEL) offers Portfolio Assessment courses and evaluations to students ready to seek PLA Credit. www.learningcounts.org

NCCRS
The National College Credit Recommendation service (the University of the State of New York). Evaluates training and education programs offered outside of the traditional college classroom setting and recommends college credit equivalencies. www.nationalccrs.org

Portfolio Assessment
The process of reviewing a compilation of artifacts, narratives and demonstrations and comparing them against the competencies of a CCNS course(s) for the purpose of awarding PLA Credit as appropriate.

Prior Learning Assessment

Prior learning assessment is a set of well-established, researched, and validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit. It is a process that allows learners to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular field or fields and have that learning evaluated for college credit (CAEL)

Prior Learning Assessment Credit

The learning addressed in this manual is defined as college level knowledge or skills that have been attained outside of a traditional academic environment and that have not been previously evaluated for or awarded college credit.

Published Guide

The common term used to describe the compilation of credit recommendations from ACE and NCCRS.

Residency

The courses that a student registers for, attends and completes while enrolled at the college that will confer their degree or certificate. This includes all forms of instruction including distance education. Policy requires that at least 25% of the credit required for degrees or certificates must be earned in residency at the conferring institution.

Standardized Test

Any form of a test which gives all test takers the same test under the same conditions. CCCS routinely accepts the following tests: CLEP, AP, IB, DSST, DLPT, UExcel.

Third Party Evaluator/Outside Vendor

Businesses that offer portfolio development courses to students and/or evaluate portfolios for college credit.

UExcel

The Excelsior College Examination Program offers credit by examination in select subject areas.

Appendix D: Resources

The CAEL Quality Standards

1. Credit or its equivalent should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience.
2. Assessment should be based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning that are both agreed upon and made public.
3. Assessment should be treated as an integral part of learning, not separate from it, and should be based on an understanding of learning processes.
4. The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic or credentialing experts.
5. Credit or other credentialing should be appropriate to the context in which it is awarded and accepted.
6. If awards are for credit, transcript entries should clearly describe what learning is being recognized and should be monitored to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning.
7. Policies, procedures, and criteria applied to assessment, including provision for appeal, should be fully disclosed and prominently available to all parties involved in the assessment process.
8. Fees charged for assessment should be based on the services performed in the process and not determined by the amount of credit awarded.
9. All personnel involved in the assessment of learning should pursue and receive adequate training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.
10. Assessment programs should be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, and revised as needed to reflect changes in the needs being served, the purposes being met, and the state of the assessment arts.

Council on Adult and Experiential Learning: www.cael.org

The American Council on Education: www.acenet.edu

The ACE ACP Project Micro site: http://www.alternativecreditproject.com/.

Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success:
http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/PLA_Fueling-the-Race.pdf

SUNY Empire State – SUNY REAL – excellent resource for faculty and students
www.esc.edu/suny-real

Thomas Edison State University http://www.tesu.edu/degree-completion/earning-credit.cfm

Appendix E: Sample Forms

ACE ACP Transcript

CCCS Advanced Manufacturing PLA Template MAC 101

CCCS Advanced Manufacturing PLA Template MAC 110

CCCS Advanced Manufacturing PLA Template

CCCS PLA Template Faculty Worksheet MAC 101

HPR Attestation for Practical Clinical Experience

HPR Five Structured Interview Questions

HPR PLA for Healthful Aging

PLA Intake and Port FRCC

PCC Sample PLA Credit Form

Portfolio Template/Request for Assessment Form

PPCC Student Process for Completing Portfolio Assessment

Sample ACE CREDIT Transcript