# Credit Through a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Portfolio

Students may earn credit through a formal portfolio assessment of the knowledge, skills, and experience gained through work, life experiences, and lifelong learning. The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Portfolio is a formal academic framework for students to demonstrate direct alignment between their prior learning and the learning outcomes of a WMCC course in their degree or certificate program. The PLA Portfolio framework requires students to demonstrate their prior acquisition of each of the learning outcomes for a course with a detailed narrative and supporting documentation. The completed PLA Portfolio is then evaluated by the course program area department chair and the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee(s). It is important to note that credit is not awarded for experience; it is awarded for clearly aligned demonstration of prior learning gained through career and life experiences. No portfolios will be accepted for courses that have a Credit by Examination (CBE) equivalency.

**Guide for Determining PLA Portfolio Feasibility**

1. Utilizing the courses outlined in your certificate or degree plan in Navigate, identify the courses you believe align with the knowledge, skills, and experience you have acquired through prior learning.
2. Examine the WMCC CBE Direct Equivalencies to determine if there are credit by exam equivalencies for the courses you have identified.
    1. If there ARE exams that align with the courses you have selected, follow the guidance in the Credit By Examination section of this guide to register for and to take the exams. If you meet the score requirements for credit, follow the instructions in the Credit By Examination section to order your score reports and have them sent directly to the Admissions Office. It is important to note that if an exam exists for the course you are requesting credit, you must pass the exam to be granted credit. **No portfolio assessments will be completed for courses that have a Credit By Examination direct equivalency.**
3. If the courses you have identified as a potential match for your knowledge, skills, and experience are NOT listed on the WMCC CBE Direct Equivalencies list, then you may choose to request a Challenge Exam (described in the Credit By Examination section), or you may choose to develop a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) portfolio.

**Quick Guide for Developing a PLA Portfolio**

1. Review the PLA Framework outline of required contents for the PLA Portfolio.
2. Complete the CPL Request Form and meet with your faculty advisor to discuss your desire to submit a Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio.
3. When the start date of your portfolio compilation has been set with your faculty advisor, you will be added to the Credit for Prior Learning course in Canvas and must complete every module of the PLA Portfolio course, the contents of which are considered your Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Portfolio.
4. When your Canvas course is complete, the contents of your portfolio will be made available to Academic Affairs for evaluation.

**Submission and Assessment of the PLA Portfolio**
All completed PLA Portfolios submitted via the PLA Portfolio Canvas course are routed to the Academic Affairs Office. The program area department chair and the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee(s) will assess the portfolio and evaluate the number of credits that may be awarded. If the evaluation process results in credit for prior learning, the student's transcript will note TR (Course Transfer) for the credits awarded. Students may be awarded a maximum of 24 credits for the sum total of all portfolio submissions, and fees may apply.