

 Policies and Procedures		Number: 8614	Title: Advanced Standing: Course Challenge, Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and Transfer Credit		
		Replaces	8610 Admissions and Standards		
		Effective	2015-08-01	Next review :	2020-08-01
Executive Responsibility	Administrative Responsibility	Recommended by Policy Review Committee	2015-06-17		
Vice President Education and Students	Registrar	Recommended/Approved by Education Council	2015-06-23		
		Approved by President			

1 Purpose

This policy fulfills the following purposes:

- (1) Provides guidelines for determining equivalencies between student prior learning experiences and formal College credits, including course challenges and other forms of prior learning assessment.
- (2) Provides guidelines for assessing official post-secondary transcripts from other institutions to determine academic course equivalency towards Selkirk College programs.

2 Scope / Limits

This policy applies to all current or prospective Selkirk College students requesting formal assessment of previous academic course work (internal or external transfer credit), course challenge, or prior learning assessment (PLA) for college credit.

Where course challenge or prior learning assessment is permitted, it is subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) Students who have attempted the course and been assigned a failing grade or have failed in a previous challenge or PLA must be able to show that they have completed remedial work before being able to challenge the course or be offered a PLA. For this reason, course challenges and PLAs would normally not be available in the same semester as a prior attempt.
- (2) Course challenges and PLAs would normally be counted as attempts of a course and would be subject to the restrictions under Policy 8615: Standards of Academic Progress, section 3.7
- (3) Once the examination or assessment has been administered, the result will be entered on the student's academic record. The Registrar's Office will record the grade.

3 Principles

Selkirk College recognizes that learners acquire knowledge and skills through both formal and informal learning, and through work experiences. As such, students may be offered opportunities to acquire credit in a course or program through previous academic work at another institution or through course challenge or other form of prior learning assessment.

- (1) To be awarded a Selkirk College credential, a student must have completed at least 25% of the required program credits through Selkirk College.

- (2) The College does not guarantee that receiving institutions will recognize credits earned through transfer credit, course challenge, or prior learning assessment. Students who transfer from Selkirk College to another post-secondary institution should expect to have credits granted *through this policy* by Selkirk College re-evaluated by the receiving institution.

4 Definitions

See Glossary of Education Terms.

5 Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and Course Challenge

Prior learning assessment (PLA) is defined as the process of identifying, assessing and recognizing skills, knowledge or competencies that have been acquired through work experience, unrecognized training, independent study, volunteer activities and hobbies. PLA may be applied towards academic credit, towards requirement of a training program or for occupational certification. PLA may include portfolio assessment, project work, interviews, demonstrations, or testimonials,

Course challenge is one method of PLA. It is intended to allow a student to seek credit in a given course on the basis of knowledge or experience acquired outside the College or subsequent to a failed course attempt. It involves undertaking a special examination or other form of assessment administered by the relevant department, division, or school at a time determined in consultation with the student.

5.1 Eligibility

- (1) Students must meet program entrance requirements to be eligible for PLA.
- (2) Credit may only be given for those courses that have been designated by the School as being eligible for course challenge or PLA.

5.2 Assessors

- (1) Prior learning will be assessed only by those who have expertise in the area to be assessed, normally the faculty member who instructs the course (hereafter known as “the Assessor”).
- (2) The Assessor will be responsible for ensuring that the documentation provided by the applicant supports the claim for credit and, based on the evidence presented, will recommend to the Registrar the awarding of appropriate credits.

5.3 Assessment Process

- (1) Applicants, with guidance from the Assessor, have the primary responsibility for preparing the evidence that college-creditable learning has taken place. Each assessment will be addressed individually to recognize the unique set of experiences that each student brings.
- (2) A PLA will utilize a variety of strategies appropriate to the content being assessed, and may include demonstrations, testimonials, interviews, portfolios, completed project work or other means of assessment.
- (3) Course challenge exams and or assignments will be prepared and graded by the Instructor.
- (4) Applicants will receive recognition and credit for knowledge, not for experience alone. The knowledge, skills, attributes, and values will be appropriate to the subject, course or program. Assessment will be:
 - linked to established learning outcomes or other criteria consistent with institutional standards for a given course; it should not be linked to time spent;
 - transferable to contexts other than the one in which it was learned;
 - current and relevant;

- at a level of achievement equivalent to that of other learners engaged in studies at that level in that program or subject area; and
- using a range of strategies consistent with institutional standards for a given course.

5.4 PLA Credits, Grades, and Fees

- (1) Transcript Credits may be granted when the course is assigned a grade by the Instructor in accordance with the program grading scheme (Policy 8612: Grading), and will be based on the course learning outcomes.
- (2) The maximum number of credits that can be awarded through PLA will be the same as the maximum number of credits that may be formally transferred from another institution.
- (3) If the grade assigned to a course through PLA is a letter grade, it will be used in calculation of the student's grade point average.
- (4) The maximum letter grade that can be achieved with PLA will be a "B".
- (5) Regular college course tuition fees will be assessed to the student. These fees are non-refundable.
- (6) In situations where the PLA process is used under 6.10, the course fee will be waived.

6 Transfer Credit

When applicants are admitted to Selkirk College, they may request that their official post-secondary transcripts from other institutions be evaluated to determine academic course equivalency towards Selkirk College courses.

- (1) Students who wish to apply for transfer credit must do so at the time of application to the College by submitting their transcripts and other relevant documentation.
- (2) The BC Transfer Guide (www.bctransferguide.ca) will be utilized to award assigned and unassigned transfer credit. Normally, transfer credit is awarded when transfer requests document at least 80% of Selkirk College course outcomes.
- (3) Assigned transfer credit will be granted upon acknowledgment of course-to-course equivalency.
- (4) Where courses identified in the BC Transfer Guide, or other equivalent articulation database, are not offered by Selkirk College and/or the granting of specific course-to-course equivalence is not appropriate, Selkirk College may award and record on transcripts, unassigned transfer credit. Unassigned transfer credit will be recorded using the format discipline, year level-XX and number of credits awarded (i.e. ENGL 1XX (3)).
- (5) Where possible and in an annotation format, the Registrar will record as much information as possible about the transfer credit on the Selkirk College transcript. This would include transferring course, institution and original grade.
- (6) Students are required to carry a full time-equivalent course load to qualify for British Columbia Assistance or other student loan programs. Credits granted through the transfer credit process are not considered in calculating course load.
- (7) Students transferring to another institution to complete their credential are advised to consult their credential-granting institution to determine how assigned and /or unassigned transfer credit can be applied to their program requirements.
- (8) While Transfer Credits may not be considered in calculating grade point average (GPA) on the official College transcript they may be utilized in determining GPA for the purpose of determining program

completion.

- (9) Transfer of internal Selkirk College credits will be determined using the process outlined in this policy.
- (10) Where course(s)-to-course transfer does not meet Selkirk requirements, but where program outcomes at the sending institution match the outcomes of the Selkirk College course(s), PLA may be used to award Selkirk course credit.

6.1 Assessors

- (1) Transfer credit will be assessed only by the School Chair of the receiving program in consultation with a faculty member who instructs in the area to be assessed (hereafter known as “the Assessor”).
- (2) The Assessor will be responsible for ensuring that the documentation provided by the applicant supports the claim for credit and, based on the evidence presented, will recommend to the Registrar the awarding of appropriate assigned or unassigned transfer credit(s).

6.2 Transfer Credit Grades and Fees

- (1) The grade will be identified as “TRF”
- (2) There is no fee attached to the assessment of transfer credit(s).

7 Procedure

For more detail see Course Challenge and Prior Learning Assessment Procedure and Transfer Credit Procedure.

8 Links to Supporting Forms

- Application for Prior Learning Assessment
- Application for Transfer Credit
- Prior Learning Assessment Report
- Application for Course Challenge

9 Other Relevant Documents and Policies

- Glossary of Education Terms
- Prior Learning Assessment Procedure
- Transfer Credit Procedure
- 8611 Admission Policy
- 8612 Grading Policy
- 8613 Student Evaluation Policy
- 8615 Academic Progress Policy
- 8616 Withdrawal Policy
- 8617 Graduation Policy