



San Diego Community College District

City College · Mesa College · Miramar College · College of Continuing Education

Administrative Procedure

Chapter 4 – Instructional Services

AP 4235 – CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

This procedure implements Board of Trustees Policy BP 4235 Credit for Prior Learning. Policies pertaining to credit for prior learning must be published in the catalogs. The District must also review its credit for prior learning policy every three years and report findings specified in Title 5 Section 55050 subdivision to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Credit for Prior Learning Definition

Credit for Prior Learning is defined as college credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a classroom.

Credit for Prior Learning Awards

When credit for prior learning is awarded for individually identified college courses, the courses shall be listed in the college catalog. Credit shall be applied as appropriate to an approved intersegmental lower-division general education pattern used for transfer to the University of California or the California State University, and local community college general education requirements, or requirements for a student's chosen program. When the college is not able to award course credit based on the catalog, credit may be applied to general education requirements, major requirements, or electives needed to meet graduation requirements.

The nature and content of all credit for prior learning assessment listed throughout this Administrative Procedure shall be determined by faculty in the discipline (or designee) for which credit is to be granted. The faculty shall determine that the assessment adequately measures mastery of the course content as set forth in the outline of record.

Credit for Prior Modes of Learning

The non-collegiate learning that serves as the basis for credit for prior learning may be acquired in a variety of modes and settings, including:

1. Military training
2. Industry training and certification
3. High school coursework (via articulation agreements)
4. Noncredit, community education, and contract education coursework
5. Other Learning Modes:

- a. Apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, or other industry-based experiential learning
- b. Non-accredited learning
- c. State and federal government training
- d. Professional development
- e. Volunteer and civic training (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps)
- f. Self-study

Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Types

Students may be eligible for course, general education area, or elective Credit for Prior Learning through the approved alternative methods of awarding college credit, including:

1. Military credit is determined through an evaluation of Joint Services Transcripts (JST) based credit recommendation from American Council on Education (ACE) Military Guide, Mapping Articulated Pathways (MAP), or local college discipline faculty.
2. Industry Certification credit is determined through evaluation of industry-recognized credentials and licenses, based on credit recommendations from agencies such as the ACE National Guide, the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS), MAP, or local college discipline faculty.
3. Credit by Exam based upon:
 - a. Satisfactory completion of a local college examination administered by the college or designee in lieu of completion of an active course listed in the current college catalog.
4. Portfolio Review based upon:
 - a. Evaluation conducted by local discipline faculty.
5. Standardized Assessment based upon a satisfactory score on:
 - a. Advanced Placement (AP) examination;
 - b. High-level International Baccalaureate (IB) examination;
 - c. College Level Examination Program (CLEP);
 - d. Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT);
6. Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES DSST):

- a. Examination administered by other agencies approved by the District;
- b. Other.

Determination of Student Eligibility for Credit for Prior Learning

The course or general education area must be approved for credit for prior learning at the college;

In order to be eligible to receive Credit for Prior Learning, the student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have previous academic history (previously earned credit or noncredit from the District) or be currently enrolled (or admitted) in a college at the San Diego Community College District and in good standing;
2. All student holds must be cleared prior to verification of eligibility;
3. Official transcripts from all prior colleges must be on file if applicable;
4. Official test scores must be submitted for processing AP, IB, CLEP, and/or DANTES if applicable;
5. A student education plan must be on file;
6. The student may not be currently enrolled in the course they are petitioning for credit for prior learning; and
7. The student has not received credit on their academic record(s) for an equivalent course.

Limitations on Credit for Prior Learning

1. Credit awarded by Credit for Prior Learning may not be applicable to meeting load requirements for Selective Service deferment, veterans' benefits, or Social Security benefits;
2. Credit acquired by Credit for Prior Learning shall not be counted in determining residency requirements for any degree or certificate;
3. Credit awarded through credit for prior learning may not be used for grade alleviation;
4. Credit awarded through credit for prior learning may not be used in determining financial aid eligibility as required by law.
5. Any credits awarded through credit for prior learning will be counted toward the maximum unit count under the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy;

6. Credit granted by SDCCD does not necessarily transfer to other institutions. Final determination regarding transfer of credit rests with the receiving institution. Students intending to transfer to a four-year institution should consult a counselor or the individual university regarding their credit for prior learning policy.

All students who may be eligible shall be informed of Credit for Prior Learning opportunities when completing an education plan.

Grading Policy for Credit for Prior Learning

1. Grading shall be according to the regular grading system in accordance with Administrative Procedure AP 4230 Grading and Academic Record Symbols;
2. Students shall be offered a "Pass/No Pass" option, in accordance with Administrative Procedure AP 4230 Pass/No Pass Grading Option, if that option is ordinarily available for the course; and
3. Students shall be given the opportunity to accept or decline credit for prior learning.

Transcription of Credit for Prior Learning

The student's academic record shall be clearly annotated to reflect that credit was earned by credit for prior learning.

Credit for Prior Learning Course Approval Process

1. Course shall be proposed to be offered through credit for prior learning via the curriculum and approval process;
2. Each college approved to offer a designated course via credit for prior learning must be identified in the curriculum documentation;
3. The District Instructional Services will maintain and annually provide the colleges and students a database of courses to be offered via credit for prior learning;
4. Faculty with minimum qualifications in the discipline shall develop and approve each credit for prior learning assessment;
5. To approve credit for prior learning assessment type, the college's discipline faculty members must agree to the following:
 - a. The nature and content of the assessment;
 - b. The measurement method used to score the assessment;
 - c. The scores required on the assessment for each grading level (i.e., A, B, C, D, F or P or NP);

- d. The location and circumstances under which the assessment will be administered;
 - e. Assessment eligibility criteria, such as performance in a non-collegiate preparatory course;
6. Only credit for prior learning assessments approved by faculty with minimum qualifications shall be used for credit by examination.
 7. An archive of discipline faculty approved credit for prior learning assessments shall be maintained by the college;
 8. All credit for prior learning assessments shall be reviewed by the faculty with minimum qualifications in the discipline at least once every two years.

Industry Recognized Credentials

Credit for Prior Learning may be awarded using industry recognized credential(s) that the department chair or faculty designee has determined adequately demonstrates mastery of the course content as set forth in the Course Outline of Record. This may be determined by prior evaluation or via student petition.

Credit by Examination

1. Faculty guidelines for developing Credit by Examination (CBE):
 - a. The nature and content of the examination shall be determined solely by college faculty in the discipline who normally teach the course for which credit is to be granted;
 - b. A separate examination shall be conducted for each course for which credit is to be granted. Credit may be awarded for prior learning only in terms of individually identified courses for which examinations are conducted pursuant to this section;
 - c. Grading shall be according to the regular grading system approved by the Board of Trustees, including pass/fail if that option is available for the regular college course. The student's grade awarded for the course shall be determined by the student's grade on the CBE assessment;
 - d. The CBE assessment shall address the topics and student learning objectives listed in the course outline of record to the same rigor as the standard college course; and
 - e. The college shall provide any student requesting CBE with a copy of the official Course Outline of Record to aid the student in making the decision whether or not to attempt the CBE assessment.
2. Administration of Credit by Exam (CBE) assessments:
 - a. Process identified by the college;

- b. CBE assessments may be administered at locations such as local high schools or the San Diego College of Continuing Education (SDCCE) by designated college or District employees or approved proctors;
- c. In instances where external accreditation or licensure requirements exist administration of CBE exams must be conducted in accordance with those additional requirements;
- d. A faculty member with minimum qualifications in the discipline or a faculty designated proctor must administer the grading of all CBE assessments, regardless of location;
- e. The district career education and workforce development education dean shall:
 - 1) Coordinate the administration of Career Technical Education (CTE) Transitions (CTE) Transitions CBE agreements and assessments at Continuing Education SDCCE and/or high schools, including facilitating the development of agreements. Agreements will stipulate grading, proctoring, student requirements, and process for students to receive college credit;
 - 2) Maintain a list of approved CBE proctors who are not SDCCD employees along with the discipline faculty or department chair's written approval and appointment of such proctors;
 - 3) Coordinate with student services personnel to ensure the proper awarding of credit and grades earned through credit by examination;
 - 4) Ensure that agreements stipulate that assigned grades are based solely on the student's actual performance on the CBE assessment; and
 - 5) Coordinate between the college discipline faculty or department chair and the SDCCE campuses and/or high schools to ensure the enforcement of eligibility criteria and the proctoring and grading expectations.

Portfolio Assessment

Credit for Prior Learning using a student-created portfolio shall receive credit as recommended by the appropriate department chair or faculty designee under the following circumstances:

1. The course is eligible for credit for prior learning for portfolio assessment;
2. The nature and content of the portfolio shall be determined solely by college faculty in the discipline who normally teach the course for which credit is to be granted.
3. A department approved portfolio assessment rubric for the course is on file;
4. Portfolio assessment may be performed by a faculty member with minimum qualifications in the discipline or a faculty designated proctor and who agrees to perform the assessment;
5. A separate portfolio assessment shall be conducted for each course for which credit is to be granted.
6. The student will assemble a portfolio that articulates, documents, and verifies their college level learning, knowledge, or skills acquired through experience;

7. The portfolio assessment shall address the topics and student learning objectives listed in the course outline of record to the same rigor and standard as the college course.

Advanced Placement Credit

See Administrative Procedure 4236 Advanced Placement Credit.

International Baccalaureate

Credit for Prior Learning using International Baccalaureate shall receive credit for completing a satisfactory score on a District approved high-level International Baccalaureate (IB) examination under the following circumstances:

1. Official IB transcripts must be on file in the Records Office; and
2. The student achieved a minimum acceptable score on the IB examination as recommended by the District's IB equivalency guide noted in the college catalogs.

College Level Examination Program

Credit for Prior Learning using the College Level Examination Program shall receive credit for completing a satisfactory score on a District-approved College Level Examination Program (CLEP) under the following circumstances:

1. Official CLEP transcripts must be on file; and
2. The student achieved a minimum acceptable score on the CLEP examination as recommended by the district's CLEP equivalency guide noted in the college catalogs.

DANTES

Credit for Prior Learning using the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) examination program shall receive credit for completing a satisfactory score on a District-approved Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) under the following circumstances:

1. The official DANTES transcripts must be on file; and
2. Credit for DANTES is awarded for the minimum score as published in the college catalog;

Procedure for Awarding Credit for Prior Learning: Online Student Petition Process

SDCCD will use an online petitioning system to process the credit for prior learning petition process. Students must submit a separate request in the online petitioning system for each course they wish to apply for credit for prior learning.

Credit by Examination, Industry Recognized Credentials, Portfolios, and Military Agreements Processed via MAP (Military Articulation Platform)

The following types of Credit for Prior Learning are submitted electronically via the online student petitioning process: Credit by Examination, Industry Recognized Credentials, Portfolios, and Military Agreements Processed via MAP. Students must submit a separate request for each course they wish to apply for.

1. Student submits a Request for Credit for Prior Learning form through the online petitioning system.
2. Instructional Services will determine if the following criteria has been met:
 - a. The student is currently registered or has prior academic history and in good standing at the college.
 - b. Official transcripts from all prior colleges are on file.
 - c. The course is on the approved credit for prior learning list.
 - d. The student is not currently enrolled in the course
 - e. The student has not received a symbol on their academic record for an equivalent course.
 - f. All student holds have been cleared prior to verification of eligibility.
 - g. The Student has not previously audited the course at another institution.
 - h. The student has met the prerequisite(s) for the course.
3. Once eligibility has been established the application is forwarded to Student Services to build the course, assign the course to the appropriate instructor, and enroll the student in credit for prior learning,
4. The assigned instructor will review the supporting documentation or administer the examination (depending on the method of credit for prior learning) and provide a grade.
5. Once the student is provided with the grade, they will be provided with the opportunity to accept or deny the credit.
6. If the credit is accepted by the student, the application is forwarded to the District Records Office to record the course and credit on the student's permanent academic record.

If the student denies the credit or if the instructor denies the Credit for Prior Learning assessment the Student Services Analyst will be notified via the system to remove the student from the course.

If the student does not respond (neither accepting nor denying the credit), no action will be taken and the ticket will remain open.

Career Technical Education (CTE) Transitions Credit by Examination is CPL is offered at the High Schools or SDCCE. CTE Credit by Exams are processed via the office of Career Education and Workforce Development. This information can be found on the district Career Education and Workforce Development website.

Credit for Prior Learning: Advanced Placement, CLEP, Dantes, and International Baccalaureate

1. Student will submit *an online Request for Transcript Evaluation* with their score report attached, or once the official score report is received at SDCCD, via the online petitioning system.
2. College Evaluations staff verifies that the score report is attached to the online petitioning system ticket or scanned in document imaging system, the student is currently enrolled or has enrollment history, and official transcripts from all other institutions are received. If these are not met, the request will be returned to the student. If these are met, the request will be forwarded to District Evaluations.
3. District evaluator will complete the Evaluations Sheet for Advanced Placement, CLEP, DANTES, and International Baccalaureate and forward it to District Office Records.
4. District Office Records will add the “institution” to the *student’s External Education* with the unit total and return the request to the evaluator.
5. District evaluator will enter the course detail in *External Education*, and evaluate the courses in *Course Credits Automated*. The evaluator will mark the request completed in online petitioning system. Student will be notified via an email generated by the online petitioning system.

Credit for Prior Learning, Military

1. All service school transcripts will be sent to the appropriate Prerequisite Evaluator at the District Office Records.
2. The prerequisite evaluator will review the transcripts for credit and enter the credits into *External Education*.
3. “Military Credits” will continue to be awarded automatically upon verification of at least 6 months of continuous active duty. The credits will meet the district requirements for Health Education and Exercise Science and Area E for CSU Breadth for students with catalog rights.

- a. The credits annotated on the transcript will be: Two (2) Physical activity courses at 4 0.50 unit each for a total of 1.0 unit;
 - b. The credits awarded in External Education will be: One (1) Health Education course at 2 3 units.
4. "Service Schools" credits will continue to be awarded automatically for a maximum of 6 elective credits of verified Military Courses completed for the associate degree in *External Education*.

Service Schools credits will be recorded as total units, not individual courses.

5. The prerequisite evaluator will "fetch" the coursework into Course Credits Automated, post the credits and mark the "institutions" as Evaluated in External Education.

Military agreements developed through MAP (Military Articulation Process) will be processed via the online petitioning system in the same way students request credit for prior learning for Credit by Examination, Industry Recognized Credentials, and Portfolios.

Reference: Education Code Sections 66025.71, 66700, 70901, Sections 70901 and 70902;
Section 79500;
Title 5 Sections 55002, 55023, 55021, 55025, 55050, and 55052

Adopted: 11/18/19

Revised: 12/18/20, 04/09/25

Supersedes: AP 5325 – *Renumbered to AP 4235*