

# Delaware Credit for Prior Learning Policy Framework

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2022

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## ACRONYM LIST

AACRAO .....	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
ACE .....	American Council on Education
AP .....	Advanced Placement
CLEP .....	College Level Examination Program
CPL .....	Credit for Prior Learning
DANTES .....	Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support
DDOE .....	Delaware Department of Education
DDOL .....	Delaware Department of Labor
DSST .....	DANTES Subject Standardized Tests
IB .....	International Baccalaureate
JST .....	Joint Services Transcript
MSCHE .....	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
NCCRS .....	National College Credit Recommendation Service
TECEP .....	Thomas Edison Credit-by-Exam Program

## Section I

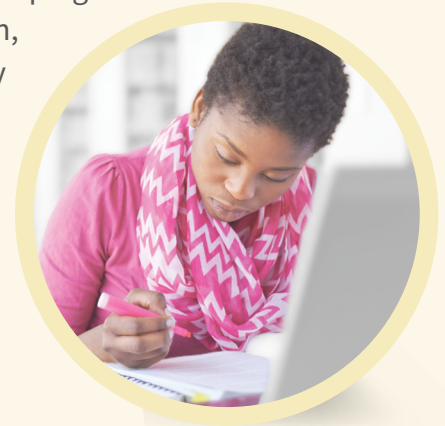
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# Value Statement

Each student in Delaware is unique, and they arrive on our campuses having learned from their own distinct and valuable experiences. We know that college-level learning occurs both within formal educational settings and outside of the college classroom, much of which can be workforce-relevant. We recognize that credit is awarded for this learning through validated assessment methods and not solely for experience.

We, the colleges, universities, and postsecondary career-preparation institutions of this state, as well as our workforce partners, value the diversity of students, their identities, their backgrounds, and their learning experiences. We are committed to helping them succeed regardless of how they enter postsecondary education, with a particular focus on addressing equity issues from opportunity populations and their access to resources and tools. Credit for Prior Learning is one such tool that we believe provides real value to our students and our institutions.

CPL (sometimes called Prior Learning Assessment) is credit awarded for the demonstration of validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom and is a potential tool for current and prospective students, especially returning students with non-traditional backgrounds. CPL is a well-researched, long-practiced, and academically rigorous method of capturing the knowledge students obtain outside of the classroom and can include commonly used assessments, such as Advanced Placement (AP) and the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), credit for military service recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE), validated workforce learning, industry-valued credentials, institutionally conducted challenge exams, portfolio assessments, and others.<sup>1</sup> CPL is also a practice that aligns with the missions of each of our institutions and supports goals for expanding access while addressing the needs of students who have learned in non-traditional formats or have changed institutions or disciplines. This document is primarily intended to provide guidance to degree-awarding higher education institutions within Delaware. It is recognized this structure may require different interpretations for non-degree-awarding postsecondary institutions, while maintaining the spirit of this document.



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<sup>1</sup>[www.wiche.edu/resources/pla-boost-report-updated-12-2020/](http://www.wiche.edu/resources/pla-boost-report-updated-12-2020/)

We endeavor to build and promote CPL programs based on this document and institutional decisions and standards that are student-centered, striving for an appropriate balance among fairness, consistency, flexibility, good educational practice, transparency, and academic program integrity. To support this goal, we have created this policy framework and are committed to developing and implementing our CPL policies, practices, and programs in alignment with this statement and this policy framework. We will endeavor to evaluate, transcript, and apply credits earned through CPL on the basis of this document and consistent with best practices.

While the use or non-use of CPL is an institutional decision, institutions will strive to deliver CPL in accordance with this framework, with documented variances occurring based on an institution's mission, specialized program accreditation, licensure, or degree requirements. The use or non-use of CPL overall, or of different assessment methods or sources by an institution or department should be consistent with this value statement and, in accordance with the Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and adhere to principles of good educational practice.



We recognize this CPL effort as an ongoing process of continuous improvement and that each institution will accomplish this work with respect to its distinct mission and internal processes. We also recognize that this policy framework will need to be updated as a result of this continuous improvement effort and changes in the CPL landscape. However, as this document demonstrates, Delaware students are best served when we work together to promote these standards of equity, transparency, and access with the support of our partners in the workforce, our communities, and the State.

## Section II

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# Transcription, Transferability, and Data

### TRANSCRIPTION

1. Transcript evaluation is a transparent and explanatory process for the student.
2. A student may pursue CPL at any time, but credits are not applied until the student is matriculated. CPL should be evaluated for the student's identified program of study, including when a student changes majors or has identified a program of study to which the CPL will apply.
3. "The institution will conduct evaluations of transcripts and prior learning in a timely manner and institutional decision-making regarding individual students will be as swift and definitive as possible" ("General Principles" of MSCHE's 2011 *Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*).
4. CPL awarded will be reflected on the student's official transcript in a way that is informed by AACRAO-recognized best practices. Such credit shall be identified by specific course, number of semester credit hours, and (optimally) source of CPL (e.g., CLEP, AP, portfolio, military, IB, Delaware Pathways, apprenticeships, etc.). Institutions may or may not assign letter grades for CPL; however, if no grade is assigned beyond a pass or equivalent, the institution should endeavor through published policies or on the transcript to indicate the minimum grade equivalent for a pass, and when receiving a transcript should endeavor to verify whether the transmitting institution's policy for pass/fail meets its requirements. The institution will maintain all documentation used as a basis for CPL awarded consistent with institutional policies on record retention.
5. After credits have been applied to transcripts, advisors or other staff should have conversations with students about what credits were and were not applied, why those determinations were made, and how it affects their program of study. Changing majors may result in a reassessment of the applicability of CPL.
6. Institutions will provide clearly articulated, consistent, and transparent statements to students about their transfer policies for CPL, including how CPL will be recorded on transcripts.

## TRANSFER

1. We will work towards transcription and transfer standardization, including examining the following for transferring CPL:
  - a. If the CPL is validated by a third party (e.g., College Board, IB, JST, etc.) recognized by the receiving institution, where possible those credits shall transfer without the need to reevaluate those credits by the receiving institution. Institutions should endeavor to minimize additional resubmission of scores and transcripts for students when equivalencies are aligned.
  - b. If the CPL is not validated by a third party, those credits will need to be evaluated for transfer. However, we recommend institutions develop agreements to cover these on a discipline-by-discipline basis, particularly for those found within an existing transfer matrix.
    - i. Transfer matrices should be clarified for what CPL can and cannot transfer, including development of more detailed reciprocity and transfer agreements to avoid duplicative verification of CPL sources.
    - ii. In coordination with DDOE, institutions will consider a common repository of transcripts and/or institutional passing scores.
2. Students are advised when the transferability of prior learning credits to other institutions may present difficulties. Collaborative efforts should be made between institutions toward increasing awareness of such transfer difficulties by sharing information on CPL transfer policies and procedures.
  - a. We encourage current and future articulation agreements to consider including CPL. Such articulation agreements may include, but are not limited to, inter-institutional, employer and workforce, and Delaware Pathway agreements.

3. Per “General Principles” of MSCHE’s 2011 *Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*, “The institution will establish written criteria regarding transfer of credit that does not discriminate against particular institutional settings or modes of delivery and addresses considerations of the educational quality of the learning experience which the student seeks to transfer; the equivalency of course content, expected learning outcomes, curriculum, and/or other standards; the comparability of the nature, content and level of the learning experience to that offered by the receiving institution; and the appropriateness and applicability of the learning experience to the programs offered by the receiving institution, in light of the student’s educational goals.” Any requirements set by law should be taken into consideration.
4. Articulated credit is recognized as college-level credit within the state and is not the same as dual enrollment.<sup>2</sup> It will be transcribed on a transcript as transfer credit per articulation agreements. It is important for institutions and participating secondary institutions to advise students that credits may not transfer out, especially to out-of-state institutions without articulation agreements. Students, advisors, and high school counselors should refer to the receiving institution’s transfer policies for CPL.
5. The institution’s policies and procedures shall address the decision-making process on the acceptance or denial of credit for learning experiences and shall seek to minimize the loss of credit for students wherever possible.
6. “The institution’s transfer of credit policy and/or procedures provide a clear rationale for why credits are accepted or not accepted. The circumstances under which credits and or grades are accepted and not accepted should be clear and publicly stated in accessible, specific, and easy to understand terms” (MSCHE).
7. “The institution will inform students in writing,” such as on the institutional website, “when their expectations for the transferability of learning credits to other institutions may not be fully realized. The institution should notify students as early as possible in order to be informative and helpful to students for decision-making” (MSCHE).

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<sup>2</sup>[education.delaware.gov/community/data/reports/dual-enrollment-course-transfer-information/](http://education.delaware.gov/community/data/reports/dual-enrollment-course-transfer-information/) and [education.delaware.gov/educators/academic-support/career\\_and\\_technical\\_education/articulation-agreements/](http://education.delaware.gov/educators/academic-support/career_and_technical_education/articulation-agreements/)

## DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW

1. The institution has provisions for periodic re-evaluation of transfer of credit, prior learning, and articulation policies and procedures, in order to allow for participating institutions to conduct periodic research about the efficacy of its CPL policy and related equitable student outcomes. “The institution will regularly review its transfer of credit, experiential and prior learning, and articulation policies, procedures, and/or methodologies and utilize outcomes assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of transfer of credit policies and procedures” (MSCHE).
2. Delaware institutions should collaborate in common measures for CPL programs, such as numbers of students earning CPL, number of credits awarded, credits awarded by CPL source, etc.



## Section III

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# Program and Service Design

### PROGRAM DESIGN

1. CPL decisions are student-centered, striving for appropriate balance among fairness, consistency, flexibility, good educational practice, and academic program integrity. They address the needs of a student who has changed institutions or objectives, or has learned in non-traditional formats.
2. For departments within participating institutions who opt to offer CPL: Credits may be used in a student's academic program. Credits may apply toward majors, minors, concentrations, general education requirements, and/or electives that count toward the degree or certificate being sought in the same manner as traditional courses. CPL shall not be treated differently in its application and use including satisfying prerequisite requirements in the same manner that their course equivalencies do at that institution.
3. For any assessment method offered, the institution should provide students with a reasonable explanation about why prior learning is or is not comparable with curricula and standards to meet degree requirements.

### SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Appropriate academic advising will be provided by well-informed faculty and academic advisors. Academic advisors should proactively share CPL information with students.
2. As part of the advisement process, institutions will commit to providing and connecting students with holistic support services as appropriate to ensure CPL candidates can be successful. This should include referrals to those who can counsel on any impacts on financial aid eligibility.
3. Academic advisors or relevant institutional faculty and staff will ensure that students have realistic expectations about the process and the necessary skills to successfully complete the process, including establishing reasonable expectations and limitations of CPL.

## AWARENESS AND TRANSPARENCY

1. Institutional CPL policies, expectations, and related materials will be clearly published and communicated to current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and industry and community stakeholders in a variety of places, such as the course catalog and the institution's website, and this information must be regularly evaluated for accuracy. The following information will be included:
  - a. Institutional CPL contacts
  - b. Available CPL opportunities and preparation requirements
  - c. Fee structure(s)
  - d. Risks to students and the financial consequences of assessment where credit may not be awarded
  - e. Information about financial aid
  - f. Information regarding the applicability of CPL towards certificate or degree programs including the number of CPL that can be used for a certificate or degree and the number of required residency credits
  - g. Transparency of how award or denial for CPL decisions are made
  - h. Institutions will examine the development of an appeal process for CPL and will include it once developed
2. For any assessment method offered, the institution should provide students with a reasonable explanation about why prior learning is or is not comparable with curricula and standards to meet degree requirements.

## TUITION AND FEE STRUCTURE

1. Each institution shall develop and consistently apply a fee structure for CPL that is transparent and accessible to all students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders.
2. No student should be denied access to CPL because of the student's or family's inability to pay. To avoid creating a disadvantage for students who may not use federal financial aid or other resources to cover assessment fees, institutions will consider developing fee waivers (e.g., based on Pell-eligibility status) for CPL.

Institutions will endeavor to charge fees for CPL assessments that are based on the services performed in the process rather than the credit awarded, if charged at all.

## Section IV

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# Standards for Assessing Credit for Prior Learning and Quality Assurance

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FOR ASSESSING CPL

1. Credit is not awarded for experience, but rather for college-level learning, which entails knowledge, skills, and competencies that students have obtained as a result of their prior learning. CPL is rooted in the notion that legitimate, college-level learning can be achieved outside the traditional classroom setting, such that the learning is equivalent to college-level courses.
2. Institutions will make a statement of their policies and procedures readily available to prospective and current students, which will include, at a minimum: Written criteria used to evaluate and award CPL including, but not limited to, service in the armed forces, paid or unpaid employment, or other demonstrated competency or learning. Institutions must be able to provide to MSCHE their policies and procedures on the decision-making process on credits awarded through the assessment of prior learning.
3. Assessment should be based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning. The institution should consult its appropriate stakeholders in determining such standards and criteria. Course learning objectives are central to CPL assessments. Courses, programs, and other learning experiences will be judged on their learning outcomes, using valid evaluation measures, including third-party review by appropriately qualified reviewers and recommendations from organizations experienced with such evaluations (e.g., ACE, CAEL).
4. CPL should optimally be applicable to the student's degree requirements. CPL assessments and services should be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, and revised as needed to ensure academic integrity.
5. Institutions will make clear what degree requirements may or may not be met by CPL, including the possibility of earning credit for specific general education or core course requirements.

6. Any credits awarded for CPL, must be in accordance with the Standards of MSCHE and other accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. If a program or specialized accrediting agency imposes a specific maximum for CPL credit, that maximum will be honored for that program. Institutions should have policies regarding the applicability of CPL towards residency requirements.
7. No limitations for CPL will be placed on student eligibility, such as minimum age or work experience, or based on the student's background such as for race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

### QUALITY ASSURANCE AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF FACULTY SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

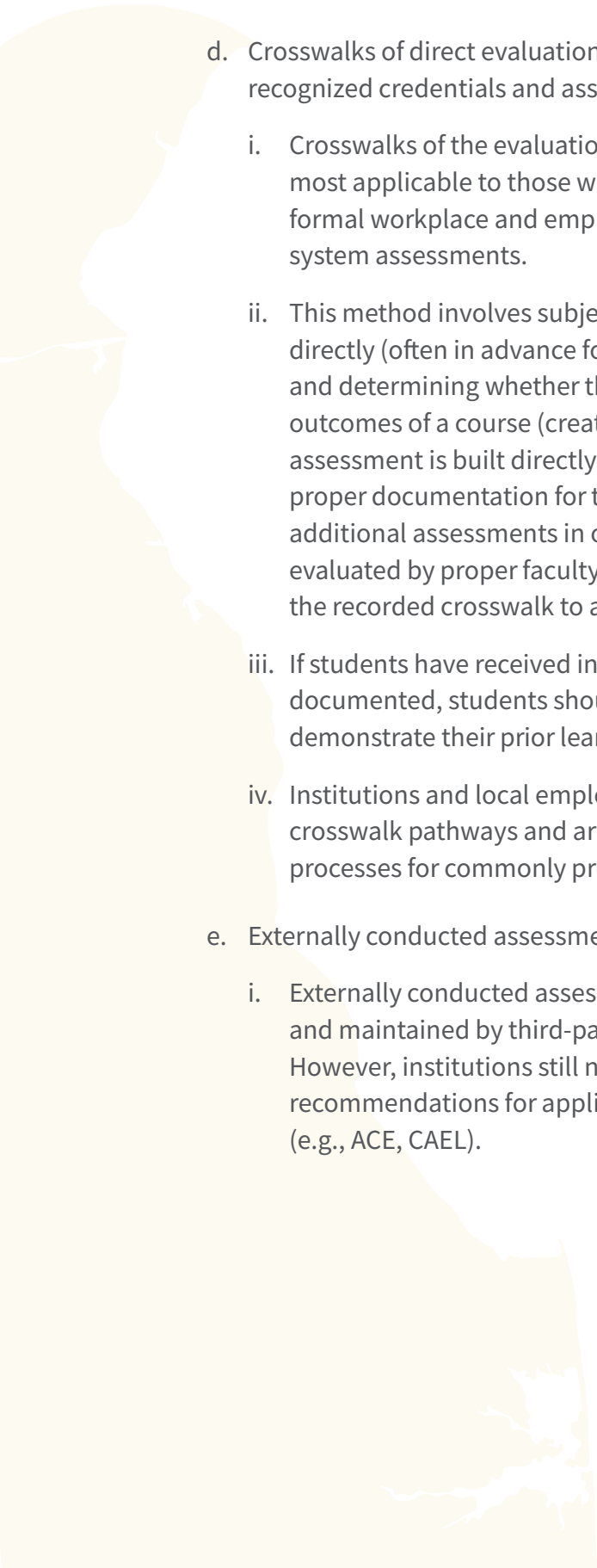
1. The institution will involve faculty and other appropriate professionals in the creation, review, and implementation of prior learning policies and/or procedures. The determination of credit awards and competency levels must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic or credentialing experts.
2. All CPL must be based on sufficient evidence provided by the student, the institution, and/or an outside entity such as CLEP, ACE, etc. Evidence required by the institution must be based on academically sound CPL assessment methods and relevant disciplinary knowledge, including, but not limited to, institutionally developed tests, final examinations, performance-based assessments, demonstrations, presentations, portfolios, or industry certifications.
3. CPL assessment requires institutional human capital and resources, as well as faculty time in development, updating, and evaluation. Institutions will strive to provide adequate and appropriate allocation of resources, including adequate training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.

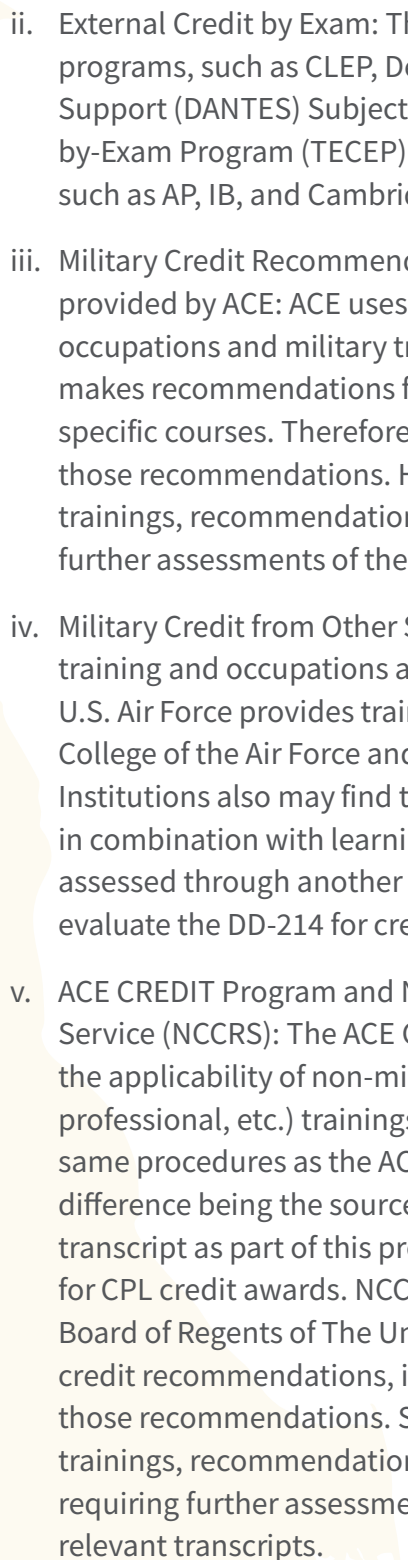
## ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES AND METHODS

1. Assessments of this learning can be conducted either by the institution directly or through recognized, appropriately qualified third-party entities and recommendations from organizations experienced with such evaluations.
2. This framework for awarding CPL summarizes terms and conditions through which opportunities will be provided for students to receive credit toward their programs. An institution can opt out of granting credit based on a particular type of CPL assessment. However, every institution which offers a particular type of CPL credit should follow these recommendations.
3. The assessments noted in this document are not exhaustive and institutions may want to add to them as new assessments are developed or as needs change.
4. “Equivalent” means 70% of course learning outcomes match between CPL source and college-level course or its equivalent.
5. Institutionally conducted assessments:
  - a. The portfolios and institutional exams should be evaluated as passing based on individual course or program requirements and contain evidence of proficiency in the learning outcomes in the course(s), in order to award academic credit. Similarly, equivalencies (such as for industry certifications or military credit), must also be evaluated on the same course and programmatic standards. In accordance with applicable institutional policy, if a student appeals the evaluation decision, the CPL evaluation should be supported with rationale.
  - b. Portfolio Assessment:
    - i. Portfolio assessments are typically written submissions prepared by the student to demonstrate and validate credit for learning acquired outside of the classroom. The written narrative allows the student to demonstrate their proficiency in the challenged subject’s learning outcomes, but this narrative should be supported by collected evidence. Evidence can include, but is not limited to, documentation such as certificates of training, work samples, demonstrations of skill, awards and honors, job descriptions, performance

evaluations, samples of artwork, evidence of self-directed learning, and resumes. Portfolio assessments often take significant time for students to assemble and for assessors to evaluate; however, they also provide the most flexibility in assessing a student's prior knowledge in a wide variety of scenarios and disciplines.

- ii. Portfolio development and assessment should adhere to established and approved processes at the participating institution.
  - iii. Portfolio assessment should include opportunities for feedback from the assessor to the student
  - iv. For course-specific assessment, the portfolio should document the achievement of commonly recognized student learning outcomes for that course(s).
  - v. The resulting portfolio, and subsequent assessment measures, should incorporate the following: identification of critical learning events experienced by the student, breadth and depth of new knowledge and skill(s) acquired, the relationship of new knowledge and skill(s) with appropriate theory/concepts associated with academic discipline and degree program, and, the application of new knowledge and skill(s). The learning content must have both theoretical and applied components.
- c. Challenge Exams:
- i. Challenge exams are a CPL assessment that involves discipline faculty administering locally developed exams to determine whether a student can illustrate the learning outcomes of that class. It is often referred to by different terms, such as institutional exams, credit by exam, challenge exams, departmental exams, or proficiency exams.

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- d. Crosswalks of direct evaluation of registered apprenticeship programs, industry-recognized credentials and assessments, and non-military trainings:
    - i. Crosswalks of the evaluation of non-military training is the CPL method most applicable to those who come to institutions with industry credentials, formal workplace and employer training, or who have completed workforce system assessments.
    - ii. This method involves subject matter experts examining the training directly (often in advance for commonly used trainings and credentials) and determining whether the outcomes of the training itself match the outcomes of a course (creating a “crosswalk” or “mapping”). Because assessment is built directly into the training itself, students who submit the proper documentation for the recognized training do not need to complete additional assessments in order to receive credit. Once trainings are evaluated by proper faculty members for inclusion in crosswalks, staff can use the recorded crosswalk to apply credit to transcripts per institutional policy.
    - iii. If students have received informal training or training that is not sufficiently documented, students should be referred to other CPL methods in order to demonstrate their prior learning.
    - iv. Institutions and local employers are encouraged to work together to develop crosswalk pathways and articulation agreements in order to create evaluation processes for commonly provided training.
  - e. Externally conducted assessments:
    - i. Externally conducted assessments are those created, administered, and maintained by third-party entities beyond the institution. However, institutions still need to evaluate these assessments or credit recommendations for applicability to their specific program offerings (e.g., ACE, CAEL).

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- ii. External Credit by Exam: This includes, but is not limited to, examination programs, such as CLEP, Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES) Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs), Thomas Edison Credit-by-Exam Program (TECEP), as well as high school-based classes and exams, such as AP, IB, and Cambridge Assessment International.
  - iii. Military Credit Recommendations from the Joint Services Transcript (JST) provided by ACE: ACE uses faculty teams to assess the applicability of military occupations and military training as presented on each veteran's JST. ACE makes recommendations for credits in specific disciplines although not specific courses. Therefore, it is up to the institution to decide how to apply those recommendations. However, like crosswalks for directly evaluated trainings, recommendations from ACE can be applied without requiring further assessments of the student or documentation beyond the JST.
  - iv. Military Credit from Other Sources: It is important to note that not all military training and occupations are found with recommendations from ACE. The U.S. Air Force provides training directly through its accredited Community College of the Air Force and thus should be treated like transfer credit. Institutions also may find that other knowledge gained by veterans, especially in combination with learning obtained outside of the military, may be best assessed through another mechanism. Lastly, some institutions directly evaluate the DD-214 for credit.
  - v. ACE CREDIT Program and National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS): The ACE CREDIT program uses faculty teams to assess the applicability of non-military (e.g., corporate, governmental, non-profit, professional, etc.) trainings. It is conducted in the same manner and using the same procedures as the ACE military credit recommendations with the only difference being the source of the knowledge. Students also receive an ACE transcript as part of this process which can be used as documentation for CPL credit awards. NCCRS follows a similar process conducted by the Board of Regents of The University of the State of New York. As with military credit recommendations, it is up to the institution to decide how to apply those recommendations. Similar to crosswalks for directly evaluated trainings, recommendations from ACE and NCCRS can be applied without requiring further assessments of the student or documentation beyond the relevant transcripts.



## Section V

# Community, Workforce, and Employer Partnerships

1. Delaware postsecondary institutions will provide information about CPL opportunities to the business community, the workforce system, the prison education system, and the Delaware Department of Labor (DDOL). DDOE will provide support in coordinating these connections.
  - a. Examples include dissemination of CPL details, pathways, and admissions process through DDOL one-stop offices and education of employers concerning available CPL opportunities through the DDOL Business Services Representatives and Office of Apprenticeship.
2. Institutions are encouraged to form partnerships with the prison system to coordinate the evaluation of training and education provided to justice-involved individuals.
3. A recommended best practice is that each institution, as well as the DDOL consider designating a central point of contact for engagement with employers and the workforce system.



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**Assessment:** Review of student learning based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning, using valid evaluation measures, including third-party review by appropriately qualified reviewers and recommendations from organizations experienced with such evaluations (e.g., ACE, CAEL).

**Challenge Exams:** CPL assessment that involves discipline faculty administering locally developed exams to determine whether a student can illustrate the learning outcomes of that class.

**Credit for prior learning:** Credit awarded for the demonstration of validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom and is a potential tool for current and prospective students, especially returning students with non-traditional backgrounds.

**Crosswalks:** Direct evaluation of registered apprenticeship programs, industry-recognized credentials and assessments, and non-military trainings.

**Externally Conducted Assessment:** Those created, administered, and maintained by third-party entities beyond the institution.

**Equivalency:** When 70% of course learning outcomes match between CPL source and college-level course.

**Portfolio Assessment:** Typically written submissions prepared by the student to demonstrate and validate credit for learning acquired outside of the classroom.

**Transparent:** Documentation that is clearly articulated, consistent, and accessible.

## Appendix C

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# Extracts from Statements from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

*Note: These statements are extracted from both recent and previous publications by MSCHE on topics relevant to credit for prior learning. As MSCHE was in the midst of policy changes during this period (2022), it includes both previous and new statements. These statements have been reorganized by topic and do not include the entirety of the cited documents. The drafts of the Delaware framework predominately draws from the 2022 versions. These statements are from the following documents:*

1. [“General Principles,” Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation](#) (2011)
2. [Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Policy](#) (2022)
3. [Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedure](#) (2022)
4. [Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Guidelines](#) (2022)

## TRANSCRIPTION

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1. “General Principles” of MSCHE’s 2011 *Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*: evaluations of transcripts and experiential learning are conducted in a timely manner in order to be informative in academic advising and decision-making.
2. MSCHE’s *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*:
  - a. In accordance with the Commission’s Public Disclosures Policy and Procedures and federal regulations 34 CFR § 668.43(a)(11), the institution will make a statement of its transfer of credit policies and procedures readily available to prospective and current students, which will include, at a minimum: The institution will clearly communicate how credit for prior learning and transfer will be recorded on transcripts and how credit hour will be assessed for coursework, experiential learning, prior non-academic learning (including military service), competency-based education, direct assessment, and other alternative learning approaches.
  - b. The institution will conduct evaluations of transcripts and prior learning in a timely manner and institutional decision-making regarding individual students will be swift and definitive.

## TRANSFER

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1. “General Principles” of MSCHE’s 2011 *Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*: the acceptance or denial of transfer credit is not determined exclusively on the basis of the accreditation of the sending institution or the mode of delivery, but, rather, will consider course equivalencies, including expected learning outcomes, with those of the receiving institution’s curricula and standards. (Characteristics of Excellence, Standard 11).
2. Per MSCHE’s *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Policy*: the institution’s policies and procedures shall address the decision-making process on the acceptance or denial of credit for learning experiences and shall seek to minimize the loss of credit for students wherever possible. Institutions shall develop transfer of credit policies and/or procedures that are clearly articulated, consistent, and transparent.
3. Per MSCHE’s *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*:
  - a. The institution will establish written criteria regarding transfer of credit that does not discriminate against particular institutional settings or modes of delivery and addresses considerations of the educational quality of the learning experience which the student seeks to transfer; the equivalency of course content, expected learning outcomes, curriculum, and/or other standards; the comparability of the nature, content and level of the learning experience to that offered by the receiving institution; and the appropriateness and applicability of the learning experience to the programs offered by the receiving institution, in light of the student’s educational goals.
  - b. The institution’s transfer of credit policy and/or procedures are transparent and provide a clear rationale for why credits are accepted or not accepted. The circumstances under which credits and or grades are accepted and not accepted should be clear and publicly stated in accessible, specific, and easy to understand terms. While accreditation is an important factor in determining the educational quality of the learning experience which the student seeks to transfer, it should not be the sole determinant or criterion for the acceptance of credit.
  - c. If an institution has programmatic or specialized accreditation, it may establish criteria based on the curricular, licensure, or other specific requirements of those accreditors so long as the institution is transparent and explains the rationale for those requirements.
  - d. The institution will provide training to faculty and other appropriate professionals to properly advise both incoming and outgoing transfer students, offer counseling (including any impact on financial aid eligibility), and refer students to other support services that are available.
  - e. The institution will inform students in writing when their expectations for the transferability of learning credits to other institutions may not be fully realized. The institution should notify students as early as possible in order to be informative and helpful to students for decision-making.



## DATA COLLECTION AND PROGRAM REVIEW

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1. “General Principles” of Middle States Commission on Higher Education’s *Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation*: outcomes assessment measures are directed towards evaluating institutional effectiveness and strengthening the public policy and educational environment for transfer students. Good outcomes data on the success of transfer students or students receiving credit for experiential learning is used, and multiple measures are used to assess the overall student experiences at the receiving institution.
2. MSCHE’s *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*: The institution will regularly review its transfer of credit, experiential and prior learning, and articulation policies, procedures, and/or methodologies and utilize outcomes assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of transfer of credit policies and procedures.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE, AWARD DECISIONS, AND CRITERIA

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1. Per “General Principles” of Middle States Commission on Higher Education’s *Policy: Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation*: The institution’s policies and procedures shall address the decision-making process on the acceptance or denial of credit for learning experiences and shall seek to minimize the loss of credit for students wherever possible.
2. MSCHE’s *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*:
  - a. The institution will involve faculty and other appropriate professionals in the creation, review, and implementation of transfer and prior learning policies and/or procedures.
  - b. In accordance with the Commission’s Public Disclosures Policy and Procedures and federal regulations 34 CFR § 668.43(a)(11), the institution will make a statement of its transfer of credit policies and procedures readily available to prospective and current students, which will include, at a minimum: Written criteria used to evaluate and award credit for prior learning experience including, but not limited to, service in the armed forces, paid or unpaid employment, or other demonstrated competency or learning.
  - c. The institution will provide, at a minimum, the following information to the Commission as evidence of compliance at the time of application, grant of candidacy, grant of accreditation, self-study evaluation, and at any other time deemed relevant by the Commission: Policies and procedures on the decision-making process on credits awarded through the assessment of experiential learning, prior non-academic learning (including military service), competency-based education, direct assessment, and other alternative learning approaches.

- d. Per MSCHE's *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Guidelines*:
- i. The institution makes transfer of credit and experiential or prior learning decisions that provide maximum consideration for the student who has changed institutions or objectives or has demonstrated learning in non-traditional formats.
  - ii. The institution's student learning outcomes, academic goals, and strategic priorities guide the formulation of policies and procedures for transfer of credit and prior learning experiences.
  - iii. The institution's student learning outcomes, academic goals, and strategic priorities guide the formulation of policies and procedures for transfer of credit and prior learning experiences.
  - iv. The institution evaluates courses, programs, and other learning experiences on their learning outcomes and the existence of valid evaluation measures.
  - v. The institution utilizes third-party review by appropriately qualified reviewers and recommendations from organizations experienced with such evaluations (e.g., ACE, CAEL).
  - vi. The institution provides students with a reasonable explanation about how work for which students seek credit is or is not comparable with curricula and standards to meet degree requirements.

## **AWARENESS AND TRANSPARENCY**

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1. MSCHE's *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Policy*: The Commission shall require that member institutions develop transfer of credit policies and/or procedures that are clearly articulated, consistent, and transparent.
2. MSCHE's *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*: The institution will provide, at a minimum, the following information to the Commission as evidence of compliance at the time of application, grant of candidacy, grant of accreditation, self-study evaluation, and at any other time deemed relevant by the Commission: The URL and any other source of information where students and the public can access the policy and procedures with evidence that such information is regularly evaluated to ensure accuracy.
3. MSCHE's *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Guidelines*: The institution is clear about what degree requirements may or may not be met by prior or experiential learning, including major requirements, general education, core course requirements, and electives.

## TUITION AND FEE STRUCTURE

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MSCHE's *Transfer of Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation Agreements Procedures*: The institution will minimize additional fees or finance charges related to the evaluation of transfer of credit for prospective students and will be transparent about any additional financial charges or fees, if any.