



PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT MANUAL

Academic Affairs

Spring 2014

INTRODUCTION	4
Responsibilities.....	4
Student Services.....	4
Instructional Staff.....	4
Student Records.....	5
Students	5
PLA CRITERIA	6
PLA GUIDELINES.....	7
PLA OPTIONS	7
Challenge Examinations	8
External Challenge Examinations.....	8
Exam Options.....	8
Achievement Test (ACT)	8
Advanced Placement (AP) by the College Board	8
International Baccalaureate (IB)	8
College Level Examination Program (CLEP)	8
CAPE Assessment.....	9
Spanish Heritage Learner Exam	9
Processing	9
Internal (Departmental) Challenge Examinations.....	9
Assessing Eligibility	10
Processing	10
PLA BY HIGH SCHOOL ARTICULATION	11
Assessing Eligibility.....	11
Processing	11
PLA by ARTICULATED CREDIT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) COURSES.....	12
Articulated ESOL Courses.....	12
Assessing Eligibility.....	12
iStar: Articulated CE to Credit Search, Fall 2010 to present	12
Processing	13

PLA by PORTFOLIO: WORKPLACE EDUCATION OR TRAINING ASSESSMENT	14
Assessing Eligibility.....	14
Processing	14
PLA by LICENSURE OR PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION	15
Assessing Eligibility.....	15
Processing	15
PLA by ACE.....	16
Corporate Training	16
Assessing Eligibility	16
Processing	16
Military Training	16
Assessing Eligibility	17
ACE Resources	17
Processing	17
PLA by NON-REGIONALLY ACCREDITED TEXAS COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	18
STEP 1:	18
STEP 2:	19
STEP 3:	19
STEP 4:	20
FEES	21
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	22

INTRODUCTION

Community colleges offer quality-learning environments and a wide array of courses and services for diverse communities. This versatility and comprehensiveness attracts individuals who differ in life experiences, educational backgrounds, work experiences, and educational goals. In order to maximize the community college experience, it is important to use time efficiently through correct placement in a chosen degree program. Prior learning assessment (PLA) allows students, who have mastered academic or technical competencies in non-traditional educational environments, to demonstrate their knowledge in a number of content areas for credit. This arrangement offers students an opportunity to lower costs and prevent repetition of material mastered outside the traditional college experience.

This manual provides an overview of PLA responsibilities and processes for student services, instructional staff, and students. Also described are eligibility requirements for each type of prior learning assessment option available at LSCS: challenge exams (both external and internal), portfolios, licensure/certifications, military experience, high school articulation, continuing education, and articulated credit from non-regionally accredited colleges or universities. Eligibility requirements for specific PLA types are in addition to general prior learning assessment criteria. For definitions of terms used in this document, see the glossary at the end of the manual.

Please check for updates and revisions to this manual at LoneStar.edu/PLA

Responsibilities

Student Services

Advisors play a key role in working with students to determine PLA opportunities, eligibility, applicable fees, and benefits of each PLA option. The advisor's signature on each PLA form is acknowledgement that the student meets the criteria required for the PLA option. The PLA liaison at each college is responsible for copying and forwarding PLA forms to System Office - Student Records and for confirming that test scores associated with PLA credit are posted in iStar.

The Service indicator code 21 (SI-21) in iStar is designated for PLA Tracking and other comments related to a student's PLA application may be entered here. Advisors or PLA liaisons post this indicator stating that the PLA form has been sent to System Office - Student Records for processing. Denied PLA applications do not go to System Office. Place a Service Indicator (SI) in iStar explaining why application was denied and return documents to the student, file, or shred.

Instructional Staff

Instructional staff play a variety of roles with regard to prior learning assessment, from determining challenge exam equivalency scores to reviewing certain prior learning experiences for course credit. Many of the decisions to identify course equivalency for experience are made through the curriculum teams in conjunction with campus administration. Curriculum teams interested in adding or modifying PLA opportunities should use the CurricUNET system to submit course change.

Student Records

System Office -Student Records applies approved credit to the student's record per completed PLA application and notifies students via email.

Students

Students interested in being awarded credit for prior learning experiences are responsible for researching eligibility requirements, completing the necessary application and providing the required documentation.

PLA CRITERIA

<p>Student must not request prior learning assessment (PLA) credit for previously taken or attempted courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previously Taken – Record of the course appears on LSCS or transferring institution transcript• Attempted – Course dropped after official day, resulting in a “W” on the transcript
<p>Student must meet all LSCS admissions and TSI requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students must submit any required transcripts (i.e. high school or military) or other documentation as required.• Students must be enrolled or registered for the next LSCS semester to receive credit.
<p>Student must be enrolled in current semester</p>
<p>Students must meet eligibility requirements specific to the PLA option. Details on each type of PLA are provided in this manual.</p>
<p>Student must provide official documentation supporting the request for PLA credit (transcripts, licensure/certification, etc.)</p>

PLA GUIDELINES

PLA applications must be processed with an advisor or counselor
PLA credit is awarded after official day of every semester
PLA credit through portfolio, military transcripts, non-regionally accredited college or university and licensure/certification will not be awarded for core curriculum courses except for KINE 1111. Core credit may be earned through challenge examinations and articulated continuing education courses for only the core courses specified in the current LSCS catalog or on the website.
PLA credit is only awarded when it applies to an available LSCS course and program of study. Students pursuing any prior learning assessment option may receive credit for up to 50% of certificate or associate degree coursework.
Semester credit hours earned through PLA are designated as "CR" on the transcript; this credit is not computed for GPA purposes and no letter grade will be given. Semester hours generated by PLA are counted towards fulfillment of graduation requirements. Once credit is awarded, the credit cannot be removed from the student's record or transcript.
Other academic institutions may not accept PLA credit awarded through LSCS, and it is the student's responsibility to check with the receiving institution before deciding to pursue PLA credit.
If the student is a veteran applying for or receiving benefits, the student must comply with VA rules and regulations. To avoid overpayment, all transcripts must be evaluated and credit applied to the approved program prior to certification of courses for benefits. However, it is to the student's advantage to have his or her transcript evaluated prior to enrolling in classes.
Forms are submitted for appropriate signatures as outlined in the section on PLA options.
In exceptional circumstances, the Vice President of Instruction may choose to approve a PLA application that does not meet all eligibility requirements when he/she has been presented sufficient documentation showing that a student's prior learning matches the LSCS course's outcomes. The VPI will sign the PLA form and note the justification for the exception on that form to indicate approval in these rare occasions.
PLA credits do not count toward the 30 hour limit above a bachelor's degree whereby students may incur additional fees.
Fees associated with PLA are outlined in this manual and can be reviewed online LoneStar.edu/pla . Students must pay required fees at the college business office.

PLA OPTIONS

Challenge Examinations

External Challenge Examinations

LSCS has established equivalent course credit for several external challenge examination programs, including ACT, CLEP, CAPE, AP, and IB. Listing of the external challenge examinations, required minimum passing scores, and the corresponding course students may earn college credit toward is available in the LSCS catalog under the Policies and Procedures section and at LoneStar.edu/exam-credit. Students should make arrangements with testing sites to sit for the exams. Official score reports should either be sent directly from the testing site or hand delivered in a sealed envelope to a LSCS campus advising office.

Exam Options

Achievement Test (ACT)

- Visit <http://www.act.org/> for information on testing opportunities. Visit the LSCS Catalog for course equivalences and required test scores.

Advanced Placement (AP) by the College Board

- Advanced Placement exams are offered at area high schools. For specific information on high schools offering this exam, call 888-225-5427 or 609-771-7300, or send an email to apexams@info.collegeboard.org. For more information go to <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html>

International Baccalaureate (IB)

- Diploma exams are given at specific high schools. For more information on IB Diplomas go to <http://www.ibo.org/>
- For a list of courses that can be awarded by IB credit go to lonestar.edu/exam-credit. The policy for ordering IB transcripts in North America is available at <http://www.ibo.org/graduates/transcripts/index.cfm>

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

CLEP exams may be taken at LSC-Tomball, LSC-North Harris, LSC-University Park or area universities. Lone Star College testing centers charge a \$15 administration fee, in addition to the CLEP exam fee charged by College Board. Please contact the specific LSCS campus testing center or visit LoneStar.edu/testing-centers for more information. It is highly advised that CLEP scores earned be submitted to the advising office four weeks prior to enrollment. Go to <http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam> for more information about the CLEP exams.

Lone Star College System no longer requires an interview or essay for foreign language credit based on CLEP. Foreign language credit will be awarded based on CLEP score alone. Eight hours of credit (1411 & 1412) will be awarded with a CLEP score of 50 on a foreign language exam that corresponds with a foreign language taught at LSCS. No credit will be awarded through CLEP for 2311, 2312, & 2306. Students may resubmit new CLEP foreign language scores for PLA every 6 months.

CLEP credit for PSYC 2317 and PSYC 2301 and AP credit for ARTS 1311 and ARTS 1316 requires additional review by faculty. See the current catalog (Academic Policies, Procedures and Services Section: External Examination) for minimum score requirements and further information about additional faculty review.

CAPE Assessment

CAPE is a foreign language placement exam with an opportunity for students to apply for PLA credits after test and respective placement courses are complete. Students may take the CAPE exam one time per semester. If a student is currently enrolled in the course, he/she cannot take the exam after official day. CAPE assessment no longer requires interview or essay.

Students will pay \$25 for administration of the CAPE exam and not for PLA credit determination. The test fee of \$25 will be collected regardless of the number of courses credited through PLA later. The test fee will be waived for dual credit students for the initial assessment. Students will be charged \$25 for each subsequent test.

Students will be placed in the appropriate course based on the CAPE score. If a “C” or higher is earned in the course, the student may apply for PLA credit for the lower level courses. Visit LoneStar.edu/exam-credit for more information on lower level courses and additional foreign language options.

Spanish Heritage Learner Exam

Spanish Heritage Learner is a native speaker of Spanish or someone competent through some other life experience. The purpose of the Spanish Heritage Learner Exam is to place these students in the appropriate course based on native language speaking skills. This assessment is a written exam with a \$25 test fee payable to the campus business office. Test fees must be paid prior to testing and regardless of whether PLA credit is granted later.

Students will be placed in the appropriate course based on the Heritage Learner exam score. If a “C” or higher is earned in the course in which the test score placed the student, then the student may apply for PLA credit for certain lower level courses. See LoneStar.edu/exam-credit for more information on lower level courses.

Processing

Advising or admissions staff should enter the exam test scores in iStar for all students who apply for PLA credit, regardless of whether or not the student has the minimum passing score. Complete PLA by External Exam applications are forwarded by the advisor to System Office - Student Records for posting of “CR” to the student’s transcript.

PLA forms for students requesting CLEP credit for PSYC 2317 and PSYC 2301 and AP credit for ARTS 1311 and ARTS 1316 are forwarded by the advisor to the instructional dean who signs the form and forwards to the System Office - Student Records for posting of “CR” to the student’s transcript.

Internal (Departmental) Challenge Examinations

Internal challenge exams are developed and approved by LSCS curriculum teams and administered by the campus testing centers or academic departments. Curriculum teams determine which courses can be challenged, the minimum passing score, and the competencies assessed based on the learning outcomes for the course. The same challenge exam is used at all LSCS campuses.

Internal (departmental) challenge exams can only be attempted once. If the student attempts an exam, information should be recorded in iStar so other advisors can determine if the student is eligible. PLA liaisons at each campus confirm that the scores are being entered.

Assessing Eligibility

Students should consult with a faculty advisor to discuss course content and outcomes and to determine the feasibility of taking a course challenge exam. A faculty advisor or counselor can identify if the course complements the student's degree plan. Visit LoneStar.edu/challenge-courses for a current list of available internal departmental challenge exams.

Processing

After completing the form and paying a \$25 testing fee in the business office, student take the PLA by Examination application and paid receipt to the division office or testing center to schedule administration of the exam. After the student completes the assessment, the testing site notes the student's scores and returns the application to the PLA Liaison. All internal exam scores (passing and failing) should be entered in iStar. Signed applications are then forwarded to System Office - Student Records.

PLA BY HIGH SCHOOL ARTICULATION

High School articulation is an agreement between Lone Star College System and an ISD to award FREE college credit toward workforce courses in an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree. At the request of school districts, agreements are developed when qualified high school instructors and course curriculum matches that of LSCS credit workforce courses. Agreements are honored and students may apply for course credits under the condition that students meet all eligibility requirements.

The student's *official* high school transcript is critical to the PLA credit awarding process. This is the official document college personnel review to determine student eligibility for credit. Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Advanced Technical Credit require independent school districts to include the course type code "A" to indicate the student completed an articulated course. We cannot award credit without the "A". Letters from the school district and certificates of achievement do not prove eligibility for high school articulated credit. LSCS does not provide certificates.

Articulated credit is awarded for credit workforce (WECM) courses only. For example, the high school course Accounting I articulates to ACNT 1303, not ACCT 2401. Students who intend to transfer to a 4 year institution are responsible for verifying transferability of articulated course credits with that institution. Visit LoneStar.edu/hsa for course articulation crosswalks by independent school district.

Assessing Eligibility

Advisors will only review official high school transcripts sent directly to the advising office or delivered by hand in a sealed envelope. Students must meet specific eligibility criteria in addition to general PLA criteria aforementioned.

- High school course marked with an "A" in the course type column on the high school transcript
- Student submits their PLA by High School Articulation application within 15 months of their graduation date (36 months for nursing students)
- Student completed the articulating course(s) with a grade of 80 or above
- Student completed an articulation course Junior or Senior year in high school. Credit may be awarded for Freshman and Sophomore level articulating courses as long as the student requests articulated credit for a Junior or Senior level course
- The course(s) sought must be a part of or related to the student's degree plan, including electives

Processing

Advisors verify eligibility and course matches then forwards the application and official high school transcript to System Office – Student Records.

PLA by ARTICULATED CREDIT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) COURSES

Lone Star College System continuing education (CE) students have an opportunity to earn semester credit hours (sch) for completing certain non-credit courses. Students completing CE articulated courses are held to the same standards on course prerequisites, projects, class activities, exams, and all other aspects of learning as credit students (see note below for exceptions). If a CE to Credit articulation agreement exists during the semester the CE course is taken, students who have earned continuing education units (CEU) with a grade of "S" may apply for articulated credit.

Students must meet the prerequisites to be eligible for CE to Credit Articulation. In most cases, CE students who register for articulated courses will be required to meet the same prerequisites as credit students (this includes reading, writing, and math prerequisites). Articulated courses that are the exception can be found at LoneStar.edu/ce-articulation. If a student decides to apply for CE to Credit Articulation for an exception course, prerequisites must be met by the time the student submits the PLA application.

Articulated ESOL Courses

Students who successfully complete articulated CE ESOL courses do not have to apply for PLA credit before moving on to college level courses. State law and LSCS Student Success Initiative (SSI) require that all students be assessed in reading, writing, and math before enrolling in credit courses. Advisors should determine if the ESOL student has completed the appropriate testing before registering for college level courses.

Assessing Eligibility

- Verify that the student passed the CE course satisfactorily
- Verify that the student met all credit course prerequisites at the time he/she took the CE course (including developmental prerequisites)

If the CE course was articulated prior to 2005 or linked from 2005 to present, continue. If not, the student is not eligible for articulated credit.

- Verify that the CE course completed is linked to a credit course:
 - If CE course was taken prior to 2005- use the CE to credit crosswalk at LoneStar.edu/ce-articulation
 - If CE course was taken 2005 to summer 2010 - Courses must have been linked. This information for courses taken during this time frame was not loaded in iStar during the conversion. Contact Lisa Camacho in System Office – Student Records to determine if courses were linked.
 - If CE course was taken fall 2010 to current – Use iStar to verify that the CE course was linked when the student took it.

iStar: Articulated CE to Credit Search, Fall 2010 to present

If you know the subject, course number and section, search for the course in the schedule of classes (CE or CR)

- Add the information for LSC01, Term, Subject, Course Number, Section (or Campus if you want to search for more than one)

- When you pull up the class, you will see if there is a link (like the one below) that says, “Combined Section”.

See the image below for an example.

[Favorites](#) | [Main Menu](#) > [Curriculum Management](#) > [Schedule of Classes](#) > [Schedule Class Meetings](#)
[New Win](#)

[Meetings](#) | [Enrollment Cntrl](#) | [Exam](#)

Course ID: 018594 **Course Offering Nbr:** 9
Academic Institution: Lone Star College System
Term: 2011 Spring CR
Subject Area: COSC Computer Info Technology
Catalog Nbr: 1401 Intro to Computers

Class Sections

Session: 1 Regular Academic Session **Class Nbr:** 15443
Class Section: 4007 **Component:** Lecture **Event ID:** 000027926

Meeting Pattern Find | View All | First 1 of 1 | Last

Facility ID **Capacity** 24 **Pat** **Mtg Start** 2:30PM **Mtg End** 4:50PM **M T W T F S S** ***Start/End Date**

MC-F F316 **Topic ID:** **Free Format**

Print Topic On Transcript [Contact Hours](#) [Combined Section](#)

Instructors For Meeting Pattern Customize | Find | View All | First 1 of 1 | Last

[Assignment](#) | [Workload](#)

ID	Name	*Instructor Role	Print	Access	Contact	Empl Rcd#	Job Code
0127582	Fernandez,Teresa S	Prim In:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Approve	<input type="text"/>	0	<input type="button" value="Q"/>

Processing

PLA by CE to Credit Articulation forms are forwarded by the advisor or PLA Liaison to System Office – Student Records for posting of "CR" to the student's transcript.

PLA by PORTFOLIO: WORKPLACE EDUCATION OR TRAINING ASSESSMENT

LSCS will award credit to students demonstrating knowledge acquired through verifiable workplace learning. Credit will not be awarded simply on the basis of years of experience. Students must document and/or demonstrate the skills and knowledge gained from their work experience to confirm achievement of the learning outcomes for course credit being requested. The student may be interviewed by faculty as part of the portfolio process. A resume and a reflection piece that describes student learning may also be required along with any other evidence or documentation required by the faculty or department chair.

PLA credit is generally awarded only for introductory level courses. Students are encouraged to review course credit currently available through portfolio at LoneStar.edu/pla-portfolio. Course credit beyond the list must be discussed with a program contact (faculty, department chair or dean) in the instructional department.

An advisor's role in this type of PLA is to refer students to the appropriate program contact to determine eligibility for credit through portfolio. If it is determined portfolio is possible, the PLA application is completed by the program contact. Students should request portfolio credit for courses in the degree or certificate program that he/she is enrolled.

Assessing Eligibility

Credit through portfolio is awarded when a student can demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes belonging to the requested course(s). Learning outcomes are identified by the curriculum team for each program/discipline area and are available on the LSCS course listings website: LoneStar.edu/class-search. Students should be familiar with learning outcomes for the requested course(s) before creating a portfolio.

- Verify program contact approves developing a portfolio as an appropriate avenue to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes
- Verify with program contact official documentation accepted as proof of learning outcome achievement
- Pay associated fees, non-refundable \$60, to the business office before submitting portfolio for faculty review

Processing

PLA applications requesting portfolio assessment are reviewed by the advisor for general eligibility criteria. Following approval from the program contact, student pays the \$60 assessment fee to the business office and attaches the receipt to the PLA application. If the portfolio review results in awarding credit, the form is signed by the instructional dean who forwards to the vice president of instruction for final signature. The vice president of instruction office sends the completed application to System Office – Student Records for posting of "CR" to the student's transcript.

PLA by LICENSURE OR PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

Professional certification or state licensure may equate to college credit based upon competencies demonstrated by successfully completing the professional certification or licensure examination. In order to be eligible for this type of credit, the license or certification must be official and current. Only the licensures and certifications that have been evaluated by the curriculum team and approved through the LSCS curriculum approval process are eligible for credit. These can be found on the LSCS website LoneStar.edu/pla-licensure

Assessing Eligibility

- Provide evidence of successfully passing the professional certification exam and proof of current or active state of Texas licensure
- Verify licensure or certificate provided has been approved for credit by the LSCS curriculum team
- Official copy of licensure or certification provided with application

Processing

Completed forms for licensure or professional certification are forwarded by the advisor to System Office – Student Records for posting of "CR" to the student's transcript.

PLA by ACE

The American Council on Education (ACE) evaluates educational and training programs offered at the workplace and makes recommendations for college credit awards. ACE's expert evaluators review workplace training, specialized military training programs and national exams and make recommendations for college credit. The recommendations are used by colleges to help compare the applicability of previous learning to specific educational programs.

Lone Star College System is one of 1,800 members of the [American Council on Education \(ACE\)](#). The use of ACE recommendations and acceptance of credit is the prerogative of the college. LSCS may accept, deny or modify ACE recommendations in accordance with current institutional policies and procedures. For example, LSCS does not award PLA by ACE for core general education courses with the exception of credit for KINE 1111-Fitness for Life. DANTES, external challenge exams offered to persons in the military, is not currently accepted for PLA credit.

Corporate Training

If a student has completed ACE reviewed corporate training with an organization that is a participant in the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service, he/she is advised by ACE to join the Registry of Credit Recommendations. The student can then request that an ACE transcript be sent to the college admissions office, fees may apply. For transcripts, students must contact the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service Office at (202) 939-9434 or at credit@ace.nche.edu. For more information on ACE College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT), visit www.acenet.edu/credit.

Assessing Eligibility

- Verify the training has been reviewed by ACE and listed in the [National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training](#) on the ACE website
- Student provides official ACE transcript

Processing

Advisors send the PLA application and official ACE transcript to the instructional dean of the applicable content area. The dean will have a faculty expert determine if credit. If credit is determined, the faculty returns the application and supporting documents to the dean for signature and forwarding to the vice president of instruction office. The VPI provides the final signature and forwards to System Office – Student Records.

Military Training

Students must complete the [PLA by ACE](#) form and submit it to the advising office along with official documentation, such as military transcripts and/or service record. PLA by ACE Military Experience requests for KINE 1111 credit with a DD214 form showing at least six weeks of service (regardless of discharge status) can be sent directly to System Office – Student Records without administrators' signatures. A DD214 may be accepted instead of a military transcript for KINE 1111 credit only.

Requests for transfer of credit from the Community College of the Air Force follow the process for transfer of university credit. The transcript should be sent to the transcript evaluator at the respective LSC campus.

Assessing Eligibility

- Advisors, PLA Liaisons or VA Advisors review the military transcript with the [LSCS Course Crosswalk of Military Experience](#) for current matches
- Official military transcript provided
- Verify the student has not completed, attempted or is currently enrolled in the course(s) faculty recommend for credit
- No credit for core courses can be awarded
- If course credit is determined, verify signature from faculty reviewer(s) is on the application

ACE Resources

- [The ACE Military Guide Online](#) includes recommendations made by ACE's evaluators for formal service courses and military occupations.
- The [Transfer Guide: Understanding your Military Transcript and ACE Credit Recommendations](#) provides basic information about transferring to an academic institution.
- [Army American Council on Education Registry Transcript System \(AARTS\) transcript](#) (training experiences in the Army, Army National Guard or Army Reserves)
- [Sailor/Marine American Council On Education Registry Transcript \(SMART\)](#)(training experiences in the Navy, Naval Reserves, Marines or USMC Reserves)
- [Official CLEP score report](#) (CLEP scores on military transcripts are not sufficient by themselves. See [Credit by Exam: External Challenge Examinations](#) for CLEP exams minimum passing scores accepted by LSCS.)
- Students seeking credit for Air Force training must contact the Community College of the Air Force to request an official transcript. No PLA by ACE form is needed. The transcript will be evaluated as outlined in the "Transfer of Credit from Other Institutions" section in the Records, Policies, and Procedures chapter of the [catalog](#).

Processing

PLA by ACE applications for military experience are forwarded to the vice president of instruction office where applications are distributed to departments for faculty review/approval. After content experts assess the transcript, results are returned to the VPI for signature then forwarded to the originating VA advisor. The advisor will verify faculty recommendations do not duplicate coursework completed or in progress, and document final credits awarded. Applications are sent to System Office – Student Records for posting of "CR" to the student's transcript.

PLA by NON-REGIONALLY ACCREDITED TEXAS COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

PLA forms for articulated credit from a non-regionally accredited college or university should be sent by the PLA advisor to System Office – Student Records for processing.

STEP 1:

The student services staff member working with the student should verify that the student's application and transcript qualifies for accreditation, degree and student eligibility sections below.

I. Accreditation of the Source Institution

A. The source institution is authorized by the THECB to offer an AAS. Verify this by checking

http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/AAR/PrivateInstitutions/career_schools.cfm

B. The source institution is from outside Texas but is approved to operate in Texas. Verify this by checking

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectId=64BDCE51-D636-526E-DA30D84E3D623495>

C. The source institution is outside Texas but is nationally accredited by one of the agencies that the THECB recognizes. These agencies are listed below and need to be verified at

<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx> or by checking the Higher Education Directory.

- Association of Theological Schools
- Association of Biblical Higher Education
- Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools
- Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology
- Accrediting Council of Independent Colleges and Schools
- Council on Occupational Education
- Distance Education and Training Council
- American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)
- National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST)

D. The source institution is a bible college, seminary, or other special purpose institution offering degrees with majors in religion or theology authorized to operate in Texas. Verify this by checking the website below, which lists the special purpose schools legally offering degrees with majors in religion or theology in Texas.

Most are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, one of the other regional accreditors, the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), or the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Many are accredited by both the Southern Association and either AABC or ATS.

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectId=64D3DAF8-0718-ACC5-398BF5031FDDB83A>

- ✓ If any of the above applies, the student proceeds to the next section. If none of the options in this section applies, then the student is not eligible for this type of PLA.

II. The Degree

Students must have been pursuing an AAS or AAA award at the source institution. Using the official transcript (do not accept any unofficial transcripts), does one of the following apply?

- A. For those authorized in IA above, the degree noted on the official transcript is listed on the website given in IA.
 - B. For those authorized in IB above, the degree noted on the official transcript is listed on the website given in IB.
 - C. For those authorized in IC or ID above, the degree is noted on the student's transcript.
- ✓ If any of the above applies, proceed to the next section. If the student's degree is not noted on the official transcript, he/she must get a letter from the unaccredited college or university stating this information. Students who were certificate majors do not qualify to apply for this credit. If none of the options in this section applies, then the student is not eligible for this PLA.

III. Student eligibility

- A. Student has completed 6 credits or will complete 6 credits of non-developmental coursework within the Lone Star College System within one year of PLA application date.
- B. The student must complete the new PLA form for Articulated Credit from a Non-Regionally Accredited Texas college or university. A copy of the transcript and a course syllabus must be attached to the PLA form. An official copy of the transcript should be on file at the college the student is attending within the Lone Star College system.
- C. The student must pay a \$25 fee for each transcript submitted for evaluation of this PLA option.

Note: If a student is not eligible due to any of the reasons listed in Step 1, then the student should not be asked to pay for the eligibility assessment.

STEP 2:

Once the above have been verified by the student services staff member working with the student, PLA application with transcript, course syllabus/syllabi, and business office receipt should be submitted to the System Office – Student Records.

STEP 3:

The System Office – Student Records will review the transcript and course syllabus/syllabi for course equivalency and rigor. In addition to course equivalency and rigor, general guidelines on course acceptance are:

- Courses in the core curriculum will not be accepted in transfer for credit.
- Student earned a grade of C or above.
- Student meets SSI requirements for the articulated course(s) and all admissions requirements.
- The articulating college course is part of the student's degree plan (may be an elective).

- All prerequisites for college course(s) have been met.

Quarter hour courses will be converted to semester hour credit and if the course is equivalent it will not be denied if the credit hours are close. The student will still be expected to meet the total required credit hours for graduation. See the Quarter Hour Conversion Chart below.

Quarter Conversion Chart	
Quarter Hours	Credit Hours
1	0.67
2	1.34
3	2.01
4	2.68
5	3.35
6	4.02
7	4.69
8	5.36

STEP 4:

Decisions will be entered into iStar and added to articulated course list. Students will be notified of award of credits via email.

FEES

Note: Fees are non-refundable and must be paid in the business office prior to taking exam, submitting portfolio, or submitting a transcript for evaluation of credit.

Internal challenge exam	\$25 each
External challenge exam (CLEP, AP, etc.)	No fee for processing but there is a \$25 administrative fee <i>if</i> assessment or additional review is needed (i.e. credit for studio art). This administrative fee also applies to the CAPE exams and the Spanish Heritage Learn exam. The fee is charged per assessment and not per course.
Portfolio credit	\$60 per assessment
American Council on Education (ACE)	No fee
High school articulated credit	No fee
Continuing education articulation	No fee
Articulated credit from a non-regionally accredited college or university	\$25 per college transcript

DEFINITION OF TERMS

AA Associate of Arts Degree

AS Associate of Science Degree

AAS DEGREE PROGRAM Associate of Applied Science Degree

AAT DEGREE PROGRAM Associate of Arts in Teaching Degree

ACE (American Council on Education)

ACE provides many services including opportunity for earning academic credit through military service, workplace training, and other education acquired outside the formal classroom.

ADVANCED TECHNICAL CREDIT (ATC)

A state-level process that identifies commonly articulated secondary career and technical courses, requires enhancement of curriculum to align with postsecondary courses, and sets common standards for the award of college credit for these courses statewide. State-approved professional development provides training to teachers on articulated course methodology and expectations of college Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM) courses.

The statewide articulation process allows students who successfully complete these career and technical courses, graduate from any secondary school in the state, and meet the requirements outlined for ATC, to receive articulated credit from any participating public postsecondary two-year degree granting institution in the state that offers the corresponding college course(s).

ARTICULATION

Term for the process of linking work experience, prior knowledge, skills, training or educational work from one institution to course credit at another without experiencing delays or duplication in learning.

CERTIFICATE

A formal award associated with the completion of a program of study of less than two years, indicating mastery of a prescribed series of academic and technical competencies with defined employment outcomes. This award is approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, appears on the Technical Program Clearinghouse Inventory, and is subject to the Coordinating Board program evaluation process.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Postsecondary institutions, which offer academic and workforce programs of study leading to awards at the associate's degree or certificate level.

CREDIT BY EXAM

A method to provide college credit for work experience, prior knowledge, skills, training or educational work without transcript credit. This allows a student to complete undergraduate requirements in less time (through advanced placement) and at lower cost and to enrich educational experience by taking courses other than those that merely repeat previously learned material. Examples include Achievement Test (ACT), College Level Examination Program (CLEP) in specific subject areas only, Lone Star College Departmental Examinations, Advanced Placement Program by the College Board, and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program. Contact the Counseling or Advising Office for more information.

DUAL CREDIT

Simultaneously completing a high school and college course for credit at both levels. The courses can be taught at the high school or the post-secondary location. Students receive both high school and post-secondary credit upon satisfactory completion of a dual credit course.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is a challenging two-year high school program for students aged 16 to 19. It leads to a qualification that is widely recognized by the world's leading universities and colleges. Student may elect to take the whole Diploma (all six component areas) or may choose to aim for a certificate of Merit in a particular subject area.

LOCAL COURSE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT

The official document prepared by Lone Star College System and the participating independent school district (ISD) that specifies the competencies of courses to be articulated so that students can earn appropriate college credit.

LSCS

Lone Star College System that includes all campuses and satellite centers.

TRANSFER

A student who subsequently enrolls in a different postsecondary institution, usually a university or four-year college.