

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) by Portfolio Procedures

Idaho State University

The procedures listed below describe the steps necessary for students to have their prior learning reviewed for academic credit at Idaho State University.

1. Preparation

- The student reviews [PLA information on the Academic Affairs website](#) to understand policies, procedures, and deadlines.
- The student contacts the relevant academic department to obtain the Learning Outcomes for the course(s) they hope to address, and to understand the priorities of faculty reviewer(s).
- The student contacts the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (DTLA) with questions and to begin the process.
- Students must submit Petitions and Portfolios by the deadlines published on the [PLA website](#).

2. Petition

- The student works directly with the DTLA and/or their advisor and the Chair of the petitioned academic department or program to prepare and submit a PLA Petition requesting permission to submit a PLA Portfolio for evaluation.
- Only courses that are determined appropriate for prior learning credit by department faculty will be accepted for review.
- Department and college approval of this Petition does not guarantee approval of the Portfolio.

3. Portfolio

- Upon approval of the Petition, the student works with the Chair and faculty in the petitioned department or program to prepare a Portfolio containing all items on the [PLA Checklist](#).
- The student pays the non-refundable Portfolio Assessment Fee (\$75 per course) to the University Cashier and obtains a receipt to include with the portfolio submission.
- The University Cashier arranges to have the Portfolio Assessment Fee credited to the appropriate departmental account.
- For each course petitioned, the student submits a complete Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio, including a Portfolio Cover Form, as a single PDF file to the petitioned department or program. When a single Portfolio is used to demonstrate mastery of learning outcomes for multiple courses, a separate Portfolio Cover Form must be included for each course petitioned within the same consolidated PDF.

4. Review

- The petitioned department or program verifies that the student has paid the Portfolio Assessment Fee (receipt should be the final page of the submission) and is complying with PLA policies and procedures.
- Faculty may arrange for any additional department requirements, such as interviewing the student.
- Faculty evaluate the Portfolio to ascertain how the student's experience meets course learning outcomes and to ensure that the experience could be considered college-level learning appropriate for ISU credit, and makes a recommendation to approve or deny

(providing rationale) PLA credits. Faculty document this on the Portfolio Cover Form, which they then send to the Dean (or designee) of their college.

- The Dean (or designee) reviews the Portfolio and faculty recommendation and determines if credit will be awarded, documenting their decision on the Portfolio Cover Form.
- The Dean (or designee) notifies the DTLA of her/his decision and departmental recommendation (with rationale, if denied) and submits the Portfolio Cover Form with all required signatures and all supporting Portfolio documentation to the DTLA.
- The DTLA and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs review the recommendation and may approve, deny (with rationale), or request additional information.

5. If Approved

- The DTLA notifies the student of the Portfolio status and forwards the Portfolio Cover Form and portfolio with all necessary signatures to the Office of the Registrar to add the PLA credits to the student's transcripts.
- Once PLA credits have been added to the student's transcripts, they cannot be removed.
- With student's permission, the DTLA and/or petitioned department or program will keep a PDF copy of the Portfolio to use as an example for future students.

6. If Not Approved

- The student decides, in consultation with the DTLA, if it is appropriate to revise and re-submit. This option is available only one time.
- If re-submitting, the student works with the DTLA to revise the Portfolio to address the reasons for denial detailed by faculty and/or Dean, or the DTLA and/or Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs in the initial evaluation.
- The Portfolio must be re-submitted within 45 business days of the initial denial.

Approved by Academic Standards Committee: December 19, 2025

Approved by Faculty Senate: January 12, 2026

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