



**BLACK RIVER**  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

BLACK RIVER TECHNICAL COLLEGE

# **PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT MANUAL**

2022 - 2023

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# Introduction

Black River Technical College recognizes there are students who can be involved in various aspects of life and have many times already acquired learning of a measurable, college-level dimension beyond a traditional college classroom environment, which can be legitimately assessed and recognized as part of a degree seeking program.

This learning, frequently called **prior learning**, may result from employment/work experience, professional certification attainment, non-credit training, hobbies, volunteer experiences, civic activities, travel related specifically to a degree plan, military and other experiences. While there are commonly recognized avenues of assessing college-level learning at a high school level, the assessment of prior learning is primarily for students who have been out of high school and/or college for several years and who are entering or returning to college to earn an Associate's Degree or Technical Certificate.

BRTC has developed policies and materials to assist in the process of petitioning for credit through prior learning. These processes will also be reviewed and evaluated by BRTC's regional accreditor the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Details of subject areas that may be evaluated for credit by BRTC are contained in this manual and on our website. Should the college not yet offer credit for prior learning in a subject area of your experience, be sure to inquire.

This manual is designed to assist you in the definitions of prior learning, policies, procedures, fees, categories, and assessment methods in order to ensure you thoroughly demonstrate your learning and receive fair college credit. Your careful review and understanding of the contents of this manual will be your greatest asset.

## Definitions

**Advanced Placement (AP)** The college may award credit to students who participate in their high school Advanced Placement (AP) program, and achieve satisfactory scores on appropriate AP examinations administered by the College Board Placement Test Program. Students who wish to obtain Advanced Placement credit must request the College Board to forward their test scores to Black River Technical College after they have been admitted.

**College-level learning** is deemed as learning that is equivalent to subject areas traditionally taught in colleges, commonly recognized amongst colleges, and is acquired after high school and expected for professional acceptance.

**Prior learning assessment (PLA)** is a process by which an individual's experience that is equivalent to college-level classwork is assessed and evaluated for purposes of granting credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training.

**Prior Learning Credit (PLC)** is credit awarded for skills and knowledge gained outside of a traditional classroom. Many students come to BRTC with years of life, work, and military training and

experience. Prior Learning Credit may save students time and money while pursuing their degree.

## PLC Categories

PLC may be awarded through two categories of assessment: credit by examination, credit by Professional Licensure/Certification.

To be eligible to petition for PLC the student must be currently admitted to BRTC.

All PLC must be applied for during the students first semester at Black River Technical College.

### Category I

Credit by examination includes commonly recognized national exams accepted by colleges, as well as the evaluation of some credit completed during high school. These include:

- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Advanced Placement Program (AP credit)
- American Council on Education Military Program (ACE/Military)
- Credit earned through a Memorandum of Understanding or an Articulation Agreement with a public agency, high school, or other education institution.

Details of college credit offered through credit by examination can be found in Section II of this manual.

### Category II

#### A) Credit by Professional Licensure/Certification

The college may consider a professional license or certification offered at the state or national level as evidence for prior learning.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Healthcare related licensures/certification
- IT certifications
- Industry licensures/certification

To be considered all licenses and certifications must be current and valid (not expired).

#### B) Credit by Professional Skills Exam

The college may consider professional skills learned by the student through work related or life experience as evidence for prior learning. This knowledge will be assessed through a unique examination geared toward the skills needed for the class(es) for which Prior Learning Credit is being requested.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Electrical Apprenticeship program
- Firefighter training/skills
- Military training that doesn't fall under category I
- Self-taught/life skills

## PLC Policy

In cooperation with Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) requirements, and review and approval by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), BRTC adheres to the following general policies for awarding Prior Learning Credit:

1. Credit for prior learning can be awarded only after the assessment of prior learning experiences and only for documented learning that demonstrates achievement of all identified learning outcomes for a specific course or courses.
2. The maximum credit hours that may be satisfied through PLC will not exceed 50% of any certificate or degree.
3. Credit may only be awarded for courses applicable to the student's declared degree plan.
4. All Prior Learning Credit will be awarded during the student's last semester of enrollment (before graduation).
5. Prior Learning Credit does not count toward BRTC's required credit hour residency, nor meet eligibility requirements for financial aid or loan deferment.
6. Students who are denied credit through PLA for a specific course may not petition for credit again for that course by any other options defined under PLC.
7. A student may not receive credit twice for a course that has been awarded through PLC.

## Application Procedure

Black River Technical College has set the following request procedures for Prior Learning Credit based on the type of credit being petitioned.

### Category I (credit by examination)

Credit for National Exams, all scores or official transcripts must be sent directly from the institution or testing agency to the BRTC Registrar. There is no application fee for this category, however students will be charged an applicable transcription fee for credit awarded under this category.

### Category II A (credit by Professional Licensure/Certification)

Students seeking credit through certifications and Licenses must:

1. Complete the Prior Learning Assessment Application Form (found in the student handbook or on the college's website).
2. Take the request form to the business office and pay the PLC Application Fee.

3. Submit application, payment receipt and copies of license/certification to the appropriate program's Dean or Director for review.
4. Following formal review, the appropriate Dean or Director will notify the student of award or denial.
5. The Office of the Registrar will award credit as recommended by the Dean or Director.

## Category II B (credit by professional skills exam)

Students seeking credit through professional skills exam must:

1. Complete the Prior Learning Assessment Application Form (found in the student handbook or on the college's website).
2. Take the completed form to the appropriate program's Dean or Director to determine exam availability.
3. Once the appropriate exam has been determined and scheduled, students will take the form to the business office to pay the PLC Application and exam(s) fees.
4. Bring completed form along with the receipt of payment to the exam site.
5. Appropriate faculty will score the exam and submit results to the appropriate program Dean or Director.
6. Dean or Director will notify students of award or denial.
7. The Office of the Registrar will award credit as recommended by the Dean or Director.

## Prior Learning Fees

The following lists all **non-refundable** prior learning assessment and Prior Learning Credit fees by category as define below. (Current fee amounts will be found on the prior learning fees list)

Students should be aware that financial aid does not cover the cost of requesting and obtaining credit through the PLC policy. All fees are an out-of-pocket expense to the student.

### Category I (credit by examination)

- Transcription Fee (per course)

### Category II A (credit by Professional Licensure/Certification)

- PLA Application Fee
- PLC per credit hour Fee
- Transcription Fee (per course)

#### Example:

Student John Doe, currently holds a valid CompTIA A+ certification (professional certification in computer repair). John applies for PLC for BRTC courses CIS1044 – PC Repair I and CIS2044 – PC Repair II with his professional certification. He would complete the application form and pay the application fee, once this is paid John would submit his application, payment receipt, and copies of his certification to



the Dean of Business & Technical Education for review. After the review the Dean would notify the student, as well as, the Office of the Registrar, and the Finance Office of any awarded PLC. Once approved the Student would have to pay the total PLC per credit hour fee and course transcription fee for the credit awarded. Once paid the Registrar's office would award the credit to the student's file to be applied to their transcript during their final semester prior to graduation.

## Category II B (credit by professional skills exam)

- PLA Application Fee
- PLC per credit hour Fee
- Transcription Fee (per course)

### Example:

Student John Doe, has worked as a professional welder for multiple years and is now seeking to get a college degree in his field. John applies for PLC for welding courses based on his work experience/work skills. He would complete the application form then contact the Dean or Director for the area/program that he is seeking PLC in. During this meeting the Dean or Director would determine if there was an appropriate skills-based exam for the course(s) with input from the appropriate faculty member a exam date would be scheduled. John would then take the application to the finance department to pay his application fee. John would bring his application and payment receipt to the schedule exam test date to complete his exam. Once the exam was completed the faculty member will score/grade the exam and report the results to the Dean or Director, who would notify the student, as well as, the Office of the Registrar, and the Finance Office of any awarded PLC. Once approved the Student would have to pay the total PLC per credit hour fee and course transcription fee for the credit awarded. Once paid the Registrar's office would award the credit to the student's file to be applied to their transcript during their final semester prior to graduation.

**PLA - application fee:** the fee required for the processing of the Prior Learning Credit request form and supporting documentation. Fees do not guarantee the awarding of credit. Fees are non-refundable.

**PLC - credit Hour fee:** The fee required for each credit hour of Prior Learning Credit awarded. This fee is only assessed upon approval and must be paid before credit is awarded.

**Transcription fee:** The fee to process any Prior Learning Credit awarded onto the student's transcript.

## Prior Learning Refund and Appeal Policy

Prior Learning fees cover administrative and assessment costs incurred by the college. Students are not paying fees to purchase college credit. Therefore, all fees are nonrefundable regardless of the outcome of the petition for credit.

Once a Prior Learning Application Form has been submitted to the college, and/or a student is notified of a credit award or denial, no refunds will be issued.

*If a student is denied credit, the student can appeal the decision by following the steps below. During the appeal process, no new or additional information, documentation, or evidence of learning will be*

*considered. The timeline and steps of the appeal process will be strictly enforced. Failure to abide by these steps will result in forfeiture of appeal.*

## Step 1

Students must complete and file a **Prior Learning Appeal Form** with appropriate documentation with the Office of Academics within 5 business days of receiving a denial notification. (**Prior Learning Appeal Form** can be found in the student handbook and on the college's website).

**An appeal form will not be accepted unless Step 1 is completed within the designated timeframe.**

## Step 2

The **\*PLA Appeal Committee** will review the request for appeal and all previously submitted documentation to determine if there is sufficient evidence to reverse the original decision. The decision of the PLA Appeal Committee is final.

## Step 3

The Vice President of Academics will notify the student of the **PLA Appeal Committee's** final decision.

- A)** If the **PLA Appeal Committee** reverses the original decision, the Office of the Registrar will award the appropriate credit.
- B)** If the **PLA Appeal Committee** upholds the original decision, the student may not petition for credit again for that course by any other options defined under PLA.

## PLA Appeal Committee

Committee assembled to review student PLC appeal. Committee will be made up of 3 members composed of:

- Faculty member of a related field
- Program Dean or Director (not involved in initial assessment)
- Vice President of Academics

PLA Appeal Committee reserves the right to question all parties involved in the initial review process.

## Categories I and II

### Category I Credit (National Exams)

Category I includes nationally recognized exams commonly accepted among colleges. Also, in this category are military credit evaluation, courses taken as a high school student through articulation agreements with institutions and agencies. These evaluation services are offered at no cost to the student, however a minor transcription fee may apply. The following is a list of exams and evaluation



services accepted by BRTC. For the most up-to-date list of individual exams and courses, along with the accepted scores for credit, please visit our website at [www.blackrivertech.edu/](http://www.blackrivertech.edu/)

- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Advanced Placement (AP) program
- American Council on Education (ACE)
- Memorandum of Understanding or Articulation Agreement with a public agency, high school, or other education institution.

## CLEP

Exam Name	Minimum Score For Credit	Credit Hours Awarded	BRTC Course ID
<b>Business</b>			
Financial Accounting	50	3	ACCT-2003
Introductory Business Law	47	3	LAW-2023
Principles of Marketing	50	3	BUAD-1023
<b>Composition and Literature</b>			
College Composition	62	6	ENG-1003 & ENG-1013
<b>History and Social Sciences</b>			
American Government	51	3	POSC-2103
History of the United States I: Early Colonization to 1877	58	3	HIST-2763
History of the United States II: 1865 to the Present	51	3	HIST-2773
Human Growth and Development	-	-	PSY-2003
Introductory Psychology	53	3	PSY-2513
Introductory Sociology	53	3	SOC-2213
Principles of Macroeconomics	55	3	ECON-2313
Principles of Microeconomics	55	3	ECON-2323
Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648	44	3	HIST-1013
Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present	50	3	HIST-1023
<b>Science and Mathematics</b>			
Biology	50	4	BIOL-1004
Calculus	65	4	MATH-2204
Chemistry	55	4	CHEM-1004
College Algebra	50	3	MATH-1023
College Mathematics	52	3	MATH-1053

## Advanced Placement (AP) program:

### *To Receive AP Credit and No Grade*

If a student took an AP course as part of their high school curricula but did not sign up for concurrent enrollment with a college, the student is only eligible for AP credit and does NOT receive a college grade. The student earns college-level credit when an appropriate score is earned on the AP exam and submitted to BRTC. A grade is not reported to BRTC at semester's end.

AP credit is not awarded for a course the student has already completed at the college/university level. AP credit granted at other institutions is not automatically transferable to Black River Technical College. Students who wish to transfer AP credit must submit official documentation of earned scores.

The table below lists AP exams and Courses that AP credit can be awarded.

AP Exam	Required Score	Credit Awarded
Art History	3	FAV-2503 Fine Arts Theater
Biology	3	BIOL-1004 Biology and Lab
Chemistry	3	CHEM-1004 Chemistry I and Lab
Computer Science A	3	CA-1903 Computer Concepts
Computer Science Principles	3	CA-1903 Computer Concepts
English Language and Composition	3	ENG-1003 Freshman English I
English Language and Composition	4	ENG-1013 Freshman English II
European History	3	HIST-1013 World Civ to 1660
German Language and Culture	3	GERM-2013 German
Environmental Science	3	GEOL-1004 Introduction to Geology
Human Geography	3	GEOG-2613 Introduction to Geography
Macroeconomics	3	ECON-2313 Introduction to Macroeconomics
Microeconomics	3	ECON-2323 Introduction to Microeconomics
Music Theory	3	FAM-2503 Fine Arts Musical
Physics I	3	PHYS-2054 General Physics I
Physics II	3	PHYS-2064 General Physics II
Psychology	3	PSY-2513 Introduction to Psychology
Spanish Language and Culture	3	SPAN-1013 Elementary Spanish I
U.S. Government and Politics	3	POSC-2103 US Government
United States History	3	HIST-2763 The United States to 1876
World History	3	HIST-1013 World Civ to 1660

**Note:** AP European History, AP World History and AP US History will automatically default to the given courses above. For other approved ADHE courses for these tests, please contact the Registrar.

## Category II (A)

Category II (A) includes several opportunities for evaluation of certifications or licenses that are awarded at the national or state level.

BRTC will evaluate the results of these certifications and licenses to award credit for students interested in continuing their education to complete a degree. An official certification or license document must be submitted to appropriate program Dean or Director for review.

The evaluation of these certifications, licenses, and courses incurs a PLC Application Fee and if awarded, a PLC - credit hour fee and a transcription fee per course.

The following divisions have programs or individual courses that are available to have certification or licensing exams evaluated for credit. Non-transferable coursework from a regionally accredited school may be evaluated. However, coursework from a non-regionally accredited school will require additional assessment, whether from a certification or portfolio. For the most current list of programs offering Prior Learning Credit, please check BRTC's website.

Students are welcome to meet with the Office of Academics about opportunities that are not specifically listed.

**Note:** All licenses and certifications must be valid, not expired, and/or unencumbered. For software, certifications and/or licenses must be based on the specific one being taught at BRTC.

Certification Accepted	Course(s)	Hours
<b>Agriculture</b>		
Certified Crop Advisor	PSSC 1301 – Introduction to Plant Science Lab PSSC 1303 – Introduction to Plant Science PSSC 2811 – Introduction to Soils Lab PSSC 2813 – Introduction to Soils	8
<b>Allied Health</b>		
CNA license	NA 1001 – Intro/Ethic/Legal NA 1201 – Clinical Practicum NA 1202 – Nursing Arts NA 1301 – Restorative Care	5
Nationally Registered EMT license	EMS 2009-- Emergency Medical Technician	9
Phlebotomist license	MEDL 1022 – Phlebotomy Practicum MEDL 1073 – Phlebotomy	5
<b>Business Technology</b>		
Microsoft Office Specialist – Basic Word <b>AND</b> Microsoft Office Specialist – Basic Excel <b>AND</b> Microsoft Office Specialist – PowerPoint (based on the BRTC's current version of Microsoft Office)	CA 1903 – Intro to Computer Concepts	3
Microsoft Office Specialist – Basic Word <b>AND</b> Microsoft Office Specialist – Advanced Word	ADMS 2413 – Word/Information Processing	3
Microsoft Office Specialist – Basic Excel <b>AND</b> Microsoft Office Specialist – Advanced Excel	BSYS 2583 – Spreadsheets for Managerial Decisions	3
Microsoft Office Specialist – Advanced Word <b>OR</b> Microsoft Office Specialist – Advanced Excel <b>AND</b> Microsoft Office Specialist – PowerPoint	BSYS 2003 – Business Professional Presentations	3
<b>Information Technology (non-exhaustive list)</b>		
CompTIA A+ Certification	CIS 1044 – PC Repair I CIS 2044 – PC Repair II	8
CompTIA Net+ Certification	CIS 2204 – Networking Concepts	4
CompTIA Project+ Certification	MGMT 2633 – IT Project Management	3
CompTIA Security+ Certification	CIS 1024 - Network Server Technology	4
CompTIA Server+ Certification	CIS 2014 – LAN Administration	4
<b>Criminal Justice</b>		
Upon case-by-case review of students' Professional Training by the Dean of General Studies and the appropriate Criminal Justice Department faculty, students can potentially be awarded Prior Learning Credit for one or more courses that apply toward BRTC's criminal justice degrees.		
<b>Automotive Service Technology</b>		
A1 Engine Repair A2 Automatic Transmission/Transaxle A3 Manual Drivetrain & Axles A4 Suspension & Steering A5 Brakes	Each certification may qualify the student for credit in one or more of the classes listed below: AST 1003 – Auto Heating and Air Conditioning AST 1006 – Auto Transmissions and Transaxles	Varies

Certification Accepted	Course(s)	Hours
A6 Electrical/Electronic Systems A7 Heating & Air Conditioning A8 Engine Performance	AST 1015 – Automotive Manual Drive Trains AST 1026 – Auto Suspension & Steering AST 1043 – Automotive Drive Axles AST 1065 – Automotive Brakes	
<b>Automotive Collision Technology</b>		
B2 Painting and Refinishing B3 Non-Structural Analysis and Damage Repair B4 Structural Analysis and Damage Repair B5 Mechanical and Electrical Components B6 Damage Analysis and Estimating.	Each certification may qualify the student for credit in one or more of the classes listed below: AB 1003 – Welding & Cutting AB 1004 – Non-structural Repair AB 1013 – Mechanical & Electrical Repair AB 1014 – Preparation and Refinishing AB 1024 – Estimation AB 1034 – Complete Auto Refinishing AB 1044 – Design Based Repair AB 1054 – Plastic Repair	Varies
<b>Fire Science</b>		
Arkansas Fire Academy approves multiple certifications based on firefighter related training. In accordance with these standards students holding valid and current AR Fire Academy certificates and who can successfully complete IFSTA performance check-offs related to the course they are seeking Prior Learning Credit.		
<b>Welding</b>		
The following American Welding Society certifications may be eligible for credit in the respective courses: SMAW 3G, 4G, and/or 6G GMAW 3G, 4G, and/or 6G GTAW 3G, 4G, and/or 6G	WLD 1003 – Gas Shield ARC Welding WLD 1013 – ARC Welding WLD 1023 – MIG Welding	Varies

### Important Note

For Automotive Collision Technology, in addition to the listed ASE certifications, a minimum of 2-years field experience will also be required. Students will not be fully awarded the Prior Learning Credit toward the 1-year Technical Certificate Auto Collision Technology – Cosmetic Repair Technology until they have completed the 1-year Technical Certificate Auto Collision Technology – Structural Repair Technology program.

## Category II (B)

Category II (B) experiential learning may be evaluated for requested courses through the use of unique examinations geared toward the skills necessary to meet course learning outcomes. Students should follow the process for requesting prior learning to determine if examination opportunities are available.

Examples include but are not limited to the following:

- Electrical Apprenticeship program
- Welding experience
- Military training that does not fall under Category I
- Self-taught/life skills

The assessment of these necessary skills will incur the following:

- PLC - application Fee
- PLC - credit hour fee
- Transcription fee (per course)

Students are invited to meet with the Office of Academics about opportunities not specifically listed.

## Industrial Electricity/Electronics

Certification Accepted	Course(s)	Hours
Arkansas Electrical Apprenticeship Level 1, Level 2, and completion of an approved electricity/electronics exam with a score of 65% or better	ELT 1004 - Basic Electricity/Electronics	4
Arkansas Electrical Apprenticeship Level 3, Level 4, and completion of an approved electricity/electronics exam with a score of 65% or better	ELT 1504 - Electronic Circuits ELT 1704 - Industrial Electrical Systems	8

## Prior Learning Credit Fee List

The fee list is available in a separate document.

## Prior Learning Credit Application

Applicant should complete this form and follow directions found for the respective category in the *Prior Learning Credit Manual*. ([url here](#))

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SSN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Designate the category of PLC requested and associated application fee (see current Prior Learning Credit Fees list). Follow the instructions given*

- ☐ **Category I** (application fee N/A) – National Exams
- ☐ **Category II - A** – Professional License/Certifications
- ☐ **Category II – B** – Experiential learning (professional/life skills)

*\*If credit is awarded, students will be responsible for additional **credit hour fees** and **transcription fees** listed in the PLC manual.*

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☐ *Application fee paid*    **Amount:** \_\_\_\_\_    **Received by:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Support Documents:

**Document(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Results:** \_\_\_\_\_

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I understand I must submit this completed request, pay any necessary fees, and provide official records of results in order to petition for credit. Paying a fee is not purchasing credit. I understand I am not guaranteed credit and that my request will be evaluated by an expert in the petitioned field of study. Therefore, I understand refunds are not issued once fees are paid. I understand that any credit hours awarded do not count toward the college's residency requirement nor will I be able to receive credit twice for a course awarded by PLC. If denied credit, I understand I cannot petition for credit again by any option defined under the college's PLC policy. I understand that BRTC cannot guarantee the transfer of any credit awarded under PLC to another college or university.

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### College Use Only: This section applies to Category II (B) only

**Assessment type approved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scheduled assessment date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Assessment Results:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evaluator Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Applicant Award/Denial Notification method:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notified by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Office of the Registrar

**Receiver Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_