Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

King University values the diversity of its students. This diversity includes the unique experiences, interests, and intellectual pursuits that lead to the acquisition of knowledge that may be at the college level. College-level learning is the same, whether acquired in the traditional college classroom or through non-collegiate sources. This equivalency is validated by academically sound and rigorous prior learning assessment methods.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a term used to describe the assessment of college level learning for college credit that is gained outside a traditional academic environment. There are many different forms that PLA can take, but college credit for PLA is only awarded for an individual’s demonstrated learning and knowledge at the college level. King University employs prior learning assessment aligned with institutional mission, academic integrity, and student educational attainment and success. PLA credits awarded by King University are equivalent to the same credits for traditional classroom-based college-level learning.

**Requirements for PLA Credit to be Awarded**

Academic credit will be awarded only:

a. For students who have been admitted to the institution.
b. For a student who has consulted with an advisor about the possibility and advisability of seeking credit for PLA.
c. For students who have declared an academic program.
d. For courses directly applicable to curriculum requirements of the declared program. Changing majors will result in a reassessment of the applicability of the PLA credit.

How PLA credits may be used in a student’s academic program: PLA credits apply toward majors, minors, concentrations, general education requirements, and electives that count toward the degree or certificate being sought in the same manner as traditional courses. PLA credits shall not be treated differently in their application and use than their course equivalencies or appropriate block credit. PLA credits also satisfy prerequisite requirements in the same manner that their course equivalencies do at that institution. PLA may be accepted up to 60 total credits of a bachelor degree, and up to 30 total credits of an associate degree. These total credits may be comprised of multiple types of PLA.
Types of Prior Learning Assessment

1. Credit by Examination

   a. **College Level Exam Program (CLEP)** – Students may earn college credit for certain examinations administered by the College Level Exam Program. To receive credit for a CLEP test, a minimum score must be earned (see Catalog for details). CLEP credit will be transcripted as course specific credit with a grade of “P.” Because no grade is assigned other than “P,” no Quality Points will be awarded to count toward GPA. CLEP credit will be identified as transfer credit from the College Level Exam Program.

   b. **Advanced Placement** – Course credit for successful completion of Advanced Placement examinations administered by the College Entrance Examination Board to high school students will be granted to students presenting Advanced Placement examination grades of four (4) or higher. A letter grade of “P” will be assigned for credit granted. Because no grade is assigned other than “P,” no Quality Points will be awarded to count toward GPA. A grade of three (3) will exempt a student from the course.

   c. **DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST)** – Students may earn college credit for acceptable scores on the DANTES Subject Standardized Test based on the credit recommendations and minimum scores recommended by the American Council on Education. Students should submit an official DANTES transcript for review. A letter grade of “P” will be assigned for credit granted. Because no grade is assigned other than “P,” no Quality Points will be awarded to count toward GPA.

2. Credit Recommendation for Past Training (Credit Recommendation Service)

   a. **Prior Military Training Credit** – College credit for military training may be awarded through the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service or through direct evaluation of the student’s service school transcripts. For ACE evaluated credit, students must request and submit to the institution an official transcript from ACE in order to receive PLA credit, and the training must be evaluated by ACE and included in the ACE Guide.

   b. **Occupational and Workplace Training** – Credit awarded for completion of workplace (corporate, government, etc.) training may be awarded based on recommendations by nationally recognized college credit recommendation services such as the American Council on Education (ACE). A letter grade of “P” will be assigned for credit granted. Because no grade is assigned other than “P,” no Quality Points will be awarded to count toward GPA.
3. Portfolio Assessment

Prior Learning Portfolio – Students may demonstrate college-level knowledge of a subject that they have acquired outside a traditional college classroom (work, community service, or other experiences) through the development of a portfolio. Students interested in portfolio assessment are referred to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Through its LearningCounts program, CAEL provides prior learning portfolio development courses for students. Upon completion of the course and submission of a portfolio, credit recommendations based on portfolio assessment by CAEL-trained faculty assessors are provided to King for evaluation. Two types of PLA credit may be awarded through the portfolio assessments:

i. **Course Equivalency Credit**: Prior learning which is assessed based on the documented achievement of course specific learning outcomes will be transcripted as that course. Prior learning will be assessed based on a pass/fail evaluation and will be assigned a “P.” Because no grade is assigned other than “P,” no Quality Points will be awarded to count toward GPA.

ii. **Block Credit**: In instances where prior learning is assessed as block credit, that assessed credit will be identified by subject (ex.: elective, accounting, health, etc.); by course as lower division (LD) or upper division (UD); with a grade of “P.” Because no grade is assigned other than “P,” no Quality Points will be awarded to count toward GPA.

*Contact the King University Registrar for more information about the portfolio assessment process.*

4. NLN ACE II (American Council on Education) Challenge Exams

**RN-BSN Advanced Placement** -- In an attempt to minimize barriers to entry into the baccalaureate level of education for registered nurses, and with the intent to encourage educational mobility for the diploma or associate degree nurse, the King School of Nursing offers an opportunity to validate demonstrated competence beyond that which has been verified through previous academic achievement.

Awarding academic credit is accomplished through successful completion of a validation process which will be completed during the first semester of enrollment. To be eligible for the advanced placement credit, the student’s file must show evidence of:

i. Graduation from an NLNAC accredited diploma or associate degree program,

ii. Completed nursing courses with a “C” grade or higher,

iii. Current and valid registered nurse license,

iv. Current work experience as a registered nurse (resume),
v. Validation of clinical competency (current employer performance evaluation), and
vi. Two letters of reference documenting the potential to succeed in the RN-BSN track. One must be from a professor who has taught the applicant.

Validation consists of successfully passing a series of tests using the National League of Nursing NLN ACE II tests. The ACE II series consist of three (3) standardized exams that validate thirty-seven hours of general nursing knowledge in the care of the adult client, the childbearing client and the child, and the client with mental disorders. They are offered twice annually. Advanced notification of exam details will be posted. Students should contact their Student Support Specialists for further information.

RN students who do not choose to earn credit through the ACE II exams are encouraged to take courses through the Pathway program at King, particularly Statistics, Writing for Nurses, and Pathophysiology.