

*Ontario College of Art & Design
Policies, Procedures & Regulations*

Academic Council Policy

Prior Learning Assessment

1006

Description:

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Signature: Archie Graham, Chair

Policy (formerly Transfer of Credit)

Prior Learning Assessment is a method by which a student may, with appropriate evidence and documentation, be able to obtain credit for learning acquired outside of and prior to admission to the university.

At OCAD, Prior Learning Assessment describes three broad categories:

- 1) Advanced Standing: admission into second year or the beginning of third year through the awarding of block studio credit based on a portfolio interview and/or evidence of work completed in an art or design program at another post-secondary institution. In cases where OCAD has negotiated an articulation agreement with another post-secondary institution, block transfer credit for work in a specified program may be possible without a portfolio interview.
- 2) Transfer Credit: the awarding of credit, usually on a course by course basis, for work done at another post-secondary institution.
- 3) Course Challenge: the awarding of credit for knowledge acquired outside of formally accredited educational programs that coincides with a specific credit course or courses offered at OCAD.

General Principles for all Categories

- The combined credit recognized by any one or all of the above methods may not exceed 50% of the total credit required to complete an OCAD bachelor's degree program. (see Residency Requirements).
- Additional transfer of credit will not be granted towards a minor.
- Only coursework completed at an accredited post-secondary institution may be considered for credit in categories #1 and #2.

- Eligibility for Prior Learning Assessment does not constitute entitlement to credit.
- All decisions on Prior Learning Assessment are final.

Advanced Standing

Students who have attended an accredited post-secondary art or design program for a minimum of one full year may apply for Admission with Advanced Standing. Applicants without previous Design or Art education may apply to first year only. The first-year portfolio interview will determine whether the applicant should be granted Advanced Standing.

- Advanced Standing entails block credit for studio and studio/seminar courses only. (For liberal studies courses, please see Transfer of Credit or Course Challenge.)
- Students awarded Advanced Standing are admitted into second year or the beginning of third year of a specific studio program.
- Students may be required to take specified studio or liberal studies courses at a lower year level in addition to their second or third year program requirements.

Transfer Credit

Students who have attended an accredited post-secondary institution may apply for Transfer Credit:

- All post-secondary transcripts/documentation must be presented to Admissions & Recruitment at the time of admission for possible transfer consideration. Decisions are made in consultation with the appropriate Dean or designate.
- All transfer credit should be processed and awarded at the time of admission
- Normally, a maximum of 1.5 studio credits will be awarded to newly admitted first-year students who have not been granted Advanced Standing based on a portfolio interview.
- A maximum of 1.5 History and Theory of Visual Culture (VISC) credits, including LBST 1B03 and LBST 1B06, may be approved for transfer.
- Only those credits with a final mark of 65% or higher will be eligible for consideration for Transfer Credit.
- Contact hours must total a minimum of 36 hours for 0.5 credit of OCAD courses, with a minimum of three weeks' instruction.
- The minimum credit granted for transfer is equivalent to 0.5 credit. By exception, 0.25 transfer credit may be awarded where 0.25 credit courses are required for a specific OCAD degree program.

Applicants must submit the following documentation:

- Official transcript(s)
- Course descriptions
- Detailed course outlines (syllabi).

Second Degrees, Second Studio Discipline, and the Transfer of Credit

Entering students with a completed undergraduate degree in a discipline other than studio art or design may transfer liberal studies credits toward their OCAD degree, but not more than 50% of Visual Culture (VISC) requirements. Students wishing to pursue a second studio discipline must consult with the appropriate studio Faculty as well as the Faculty of Liberal Studies regarding program requirements.

Course Challenge

Students who can demonstrate that they have acquired – through informal or unconventional means – the knowledge covered by a specific course offered at OCAD may apply for Course Challenge, subject to the following:

- Course Challenge is only available to students who have been admitted to OCAD.
- A request for permission to Challenge a course must be submitted before the end of the second week of classes.
- Students may normally challenge no more than 2.0 credits.
- Not all courses may be challenged. Students must consult with the relevant Faculty Office before submitting a request for permission to Challenge a course.

- Students must present evidence of prior learning and receive permission to challenge a course for credit from the Dean or designate of the Faculty offering the course.
- Credits gained through Course Challenge cannot be used to fulfill the university's residency requirements.
- Students who are successful in challenging a course for credit will receive a grade of P on their transcript. The grade of P has no numerical equivalent and is not included in the calculation of grade point average. The grade of P may not be applied in any way toward application for scholarships, bursaries or loans.
- Credit will only be awarded for work meeting the standard expected of students who successfully complete the course with a grade of 65% or better.
- Students may not challenge a course for credit if they have previously registered in that course or its equivalent at OCAD or another university. Exceptions to this rule will be made for students who have withdrawn within the first two weeks of a course or whose former university no longer possesses the official records required for Transfer Credit (i.e., universities in war zones).

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Procedures for Advanced Standing:

1. Students who have attended a minimum of one full year in an art or design program at an accredited post-secondary institution may apply to OCAD for Admission with Advanced Standing.
2. Students without formal post-secondary art or design education must apply to OCAD for Admission to First Year. It will be determined during the portfolio interview whether the student should be granted Advanced Standing.
3. The Portfolio Assessment occurs in mid-February, normally during OCAD's Study Week:
 - a. The student's entry year-level will be determined in terms of studio work.
 - b. The Assessment will also determine whether any additional studio or studio/seminar courses will be required at a lower year level.
 - c. The student must bring documentation of all previous formal study to the Portfolio Interview if s/he wishes to apply for Transfer of Credit.
4. Each Faculty will provide a list of successful candidates to Admissions & Recruitment. Once received, Admissions & Recruitment will begin processing Transfer of Credit applications.
5. Applicants will be informed of their admission status by late March/early April.
6. Successful applicants who have applied for Transfer of Credit will be informed of the result by mid-April. At that time they will also be advised of summer semester courses (notably in Liberal Studies) they should consider taking.
7. Advising: All Advanced Standing students should book an advising session with their home Faculty and with the Faculty of Liberal Studies as soon as possible following admission and in any event prior to registration (by the end of June).

Procedures for Transfer Credit:

1. Advanced Standing applicants should apply for Transfer Credit at the time of the Portfolio Assessment.
2. All other students wishing to apply for Transfer Credit should do so immediately upon admission to OCAD. Applications for Transfer Credit may be considered up to 12 months after admission. Applications will not be accepted more than 12 months after admission.
3. Any transcript and/or course descriptions or other documents required for transfer of credit assessment must be submitted in either English or French. If not issued in English or French the original document must be accompanied by a notarized translation.
4. The Admissions & Recruitment Office maintains a database of course equivalencies based on previous Transfer Credit assessments and has the authority to award Transfer Credit based on this database but within the limitations of the Transfer Credit Policy.
5. Any new or undocumented Transfer Credit requests are sent to the relevant Faculty Office for assessment. The result of each new or revised assessment will be entered in the Admissions & Recruitment Transfer Credit database.
6. Any questionable or unclear situations will be referred to the relevant Faculty office. The process of determining course equivalencies, particularly in the context of graduation requirements, requires close collaboration between the Admissions & Recruitment representative responsible for Transfer Credit and the Faculty offices.
7. Once per year, Admissions & Recruitment will meet with the Faculty offices to review the data on file and to ensure that it is up-to-date and otherwise still valid.
8. Admissions & Recruitment will notify students of the outcome of their Transfer Credit applications.

9. Students may appeal Transfer Credit decisions by submitting additional information with a formal request for reconsideration to the Admissions & Recruitment Office within 20 business days of the date on their notice of transfer credit.

Procedures for Course Challenge:

1. Request for permission to Challenge a course must be submitted before the end of the second week of classes.
2. If the request is approved, the application for Course Challenge and required fees must be paid within 5 business days.
3. Students apply for Course Challenge through the Office of the Registrar.
4. The student must present evidence of prior learning and receive permission to challenge a course for credit from the Dean or designate of the Faculty offering the course.
5. The student will complete appropriate advising as determined by the university and the Faculty.
6. The Faculty will determine the appropriate mode(s) of assessment for the course(s), e.g., examination, dossier, portfolio, demonstration, interview, and/or presentation.
7. Students with previous teaching experience in the area will be assessed based on:
 - a. a dossier that includes their résumé and course outlines;
 - b. a structured interview;
 - c. an examination (if further evidence is required by the course instructor).
8. Once the student and the Dean or designate agree to proceed with Course Challenge, the student must complete and sign a Course Challenge Agreement Form, and return the form to the Registrar's Office prior to the assessment.
9. The Course Challenge fee (1/2 the regular course fee plus a \$100 assessment fee) must accompany the Agreement Form. In the event the student is unsuccessful, s/he forfeits both fees. The Assessor receives the \$100 assessment fee.
10. If the student does not receive credit after challenging a course, a note to this effect will be placed in the student's file but will not be entered on the official transcript. Students may challenge the same course only once.