



---

## Policy AC034: Transfer Credit

Recommended for Approval by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Engstrom".

---

Daniel Engstrom, Ed.D.  
Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs,  
Pennsylvania Western University

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Lorraine Bernotsky".

---

R. Lorraine Bernotsky, D.Phil., Interim President,  
Pennsylvania Western University

Effective Date: 08/07/2023

---

### A. Intent

To define acceptance, evaluation and articulation of transfer credit toward degree requirements for undergraduate students.

### B. Definition(s)

Regional Accrediting Body: These bodies include the following organizations: Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

Developmental Courses: A course that is remedial in nature and not considered college-level work that can be applied toward meeting graduation requirements.

Articulator: A database summarizing equivalencies among courses offered at Pennsylvania Western University and other institutions.

### C. Policy

Pennsylvania Western University generally accepts transfer credit for college-level work completed at institutions accredited by a Regional Accrediting Body, but will also consider credit for transfer from any higher education institution whose accreditation is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). PennWest does not typically accept transfer work from non-accredited institutions. Evaluations for proprietary institutions will be made on a case-by-case basis, where no articulation agreement exists between that institution and PennWest.

When courses from other institutions are evaluated, only the credit is counted. Transfer GPA is not calculated or applied. Grades of “D” will be transferred to PennWest, but some academic programs may require that such courses are repeated to earn a higher grade, particularly when required in the major.

PennWest also accepts credits for International Baccalaureate (IB) work, military credits outlined on the Joint Services Transcript (JST) as accredited by the American Council on Education (ACE), and work completed through a College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) advanced placement (AP) exam. In the case of AP exams, a student who has received a score of 3 or higher can expect that credit will be granted upon submission of test scores to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions; normally students earning a score of 3 or higher will receive a minimum of three semester hours of credit.

Completed developmental courses must be reported to the Transfer Office as part of the transcript evaluation. University credit will not be accepted for these courses and they will not count toward meeting requirements for graduation; however, completed developmental courses may be used to meet prerequisite requirements for other courses at PennWest, as appropriate.

All coursework taken at previous institutions is evaluated and articulated, as all attempted work is counted in Financial Aid and academic standing calculations. The academic dean over the student’s program reserves the right to require a student to repeat a course if the grade earned in a transferred course does not meet accreditation or program requirements. With regard to evaluation standards, courses that are deemed to be 70% or more similar, considering a combination of learning outcomes, exams, credit hours or deliverables may be considered equivalent to PennWest coursework, based on the evaluation of the relevant academic dean.

### Transfer Credit

Transfer credit is evaluated institutionally and not on an academic program-by-program basis. Although credits will always transfer according to these provisions, regulations that govern the national professional accreditation of certain programs offered at PennWest may not permit some courses taken in programs not similarly accredited at other two- and four-year institutions to be transferred as the equivalents of courses that may be similarly titled or described at PennWest.

Coursework from institutions outside of the United States can be accepted for transfer credit. The PennWest international admissions officer may recommend receipt of an official course-by-course international credit evaluation performed by a third-party organization, such as World Education Services (WES), or require additional documentation to properly assess equivalencies.

All transcripts and records submitted become the property of PennWest and will not be returned to the student or released to third parties.

### Joint Services Transcript (JST)

Students who submit a Joint Services Transcript (JST) will have the document reviewed for credit. Credit will first be awarded to meet the general education requirement related to health and wellness. The total number of college-level credits recommended by the ACE Board, as listed on the JST, will be awarded to the student. The placement of the credits on the student’s degree path is a result of the evaluation process. Credit will be first evaluated to meet the general education requirement related to health and wellness. Students who present a DD 214 in lieu of a JST, with at

least four (4) months of active-duty service and who have been honorably discharged will receive the general education requirement related to health and wellness. A subsequent submission of a JST by a student who has already had the health and wellness credits assessed and credited, will not receive additional health and wellness credit.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, credit by exam, Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DSST/DANTES) exams, and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

Students may also earn credit at PennWest through College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, credit by exam, Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DSST/DANTES) exams, and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). These opportunities for credit are discussed in PennWest's Earning Course Credit by Examination or Evaluation Policy (AC015).

Additional Transfer policy information

PennWest will follow Board of Governors Policy 1999-01-A (The Student Transfer Policy) related to program-to-program agreements and general education.

Transfer decisions defined in articulation agreements will supersede general transfer decisions defined in this policy.

Current students considering the transfer of credits from another institution to PennWest should review the University's Graduation Residency Requirements Policy (AC033) to ensure that sufficient credits are taken at PennWest. This policy defines the number of credits which must be taken from PennWest or another State System (PASSHE) institution, as well as the percentage of credits that must be taken locally within the major; additional information is provided for active-duty service members.

**D. Procedure(s)**

**Appealing a Transfer Evaluation**

1. A student who wishes to appeal the transfer decision of one or more courses must make their appeal to their academic dean. The student should secure course descriptions and syllabi from the other institution and provide those materials to the academic dean.
2. The academic dean will coordinate evaluation of the course materials with the appropriate academic department chairs.
3. The academic dean will communicate decisions to the Transfer Office to be reflected on the student's transcript and updated within the Articulator. The Transfer Office will communicate the decisions to the student.

**PennWest Students Taking Courses at Another Institution**

1. A PennWest student who wishes to take courses at another institution for their program of study must complete the PennWest Transfer Credit Authorization form. The form must be approved by their academic advisor, who will discuss with the student how the transferred course(s) will apply toward meeting program requirements. The form is then submitted to the Transfer Office.
2. The Transfer Office will verify that each transfer course is in the PennWest Articulator for transfer courses. If it is not, the transfer request will be sent to the relevant academic

department chair to assess the transfer equivalency, with this information added to the Articulator.

3. Upon completion of the course(s) at the other institution, the student must provide an official transcript from that institution to the PennWest Transfer Office. All attempted courses will be reviewed and applied to the degree, as appropriate.

#### **E. Related policies**

Class Standing Policy (AC052)

Earning Course Credit by Examination or Evaluation Policy (AC015)

Evaluation of Credits Over Ten Years Old Policy (AC039)

General Education at State System of Higher Education Universities, PASSHE Policy 1993-01-A

Graduation Requirements Policy (AC028)

Graduation Residency Requirements Policy (AC033)

Repeating a Course Policy (AC032)

Reverse Transfer Policy (AC048)

Student Transfer Policy, PASSHE Policy 1999-01-A

Visiting Student Policy (AC037)

#### **F. Contact Information**

For additional information, please contact the Transfer Office.

#### **G. Policy Review Schedule**

All policies will be reviewed every two years or on an as needed basis if a change in BOG, PASSHE or Pennsylvania law would create the need for an immediate change.