

## HOW DOES THE PLA PROCESS WORK?

The UWI Open Campus has developed an online Prior Learning and Portfolio Development/Assessment Course for proactive, forward thinking individuals who wish to have their relevant prior learning assessed for academic credit. The process is as follows.

- You should apply for your programme of choice at <http://apply.open.uwi.edu>
- Your application will be processed; you will be interviewed and once selected you will be registered as a PLA student and pay the requisite fees.
- With the guidance of a Course Co-ordinator you will participate in the online Prior Learning Course in line with targets and goals to build your learning portfolio.
- Your completed portfolio will be assessed by academic faculty and the relevant credit assigned. Your PLA credit may then be applied towards your proposed undergraduate degree programme.

## WHAT IS THE COST OF PLA?

- US\$25 (or equivalent): Application fee (non-refundable).
- US\$360 (or equivalent): Online Prior Learning and Portfolio Development/Assessment Course.
- DFATD/SDEC-UWI Open Campus Scholarships available. Apply at <http://www.open.uwi.edu/pla>



**UWI**  
OPEN CAMPUS



**UWI**  
OPEN CAMPUS



**PLA**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:  
PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA) UNIT**

Email: [pla@open.uwi.edu](mailto:pla@open.uwi.edu)

**IN BARBADOS, Tel: (246) 417-4508/4505**

**OR CONTACT:**

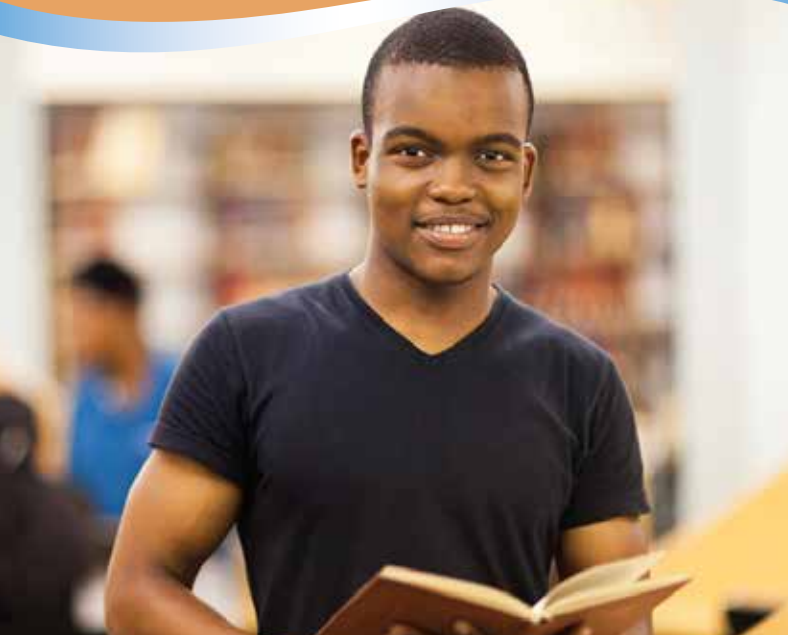
Your local UWI Open Campus Country Site

Or visit: <http://www.open.uwi.edu/pla>

**Prior Learning  
Assessment**

**Canada**

Support for this development is provided by The UWI Open Campus  
by Global Affairs Canada (GAC)  
under the Strengthening Distance Education in the Caribbean (SDEC) Project.



# Prior Learning Assessment

## WHAT IS PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)?

The University of the West Indies Open Campus recognises that learning takes place in a number of settings (formal, non-formal and informal) and is open and committed to the idea of Prior Learning Assessment.

Prior Learning Assessment, or PLA, is a method of assessment used to identify, document and evaluate the college/university level learning outcomes which individuals have achieved from formal, non-formal and informal learning.

PLA is also referred to as experiential learning. Depending on where one is located in the world, it is also known as the Assessment of Prior Learning (APL), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).

The learning might have been obtained, for example, from attending training workshops, short courses, seminars or conferences, engaging in community/volunteer work or on-the-job training.

PLA ensures that once learning has taken place, it can be assessed and the appropriate academic credit granted. This credit can be used for advanced placement into an undergraduate programme of study at The UWI Open Campus.

PLA holds tremendous potential for you to have your learning from experience assessed. Furthermore, the PLA system provides a great opportunity to further your education.



## IN WHAT AREAS WILL PLA BE OFFERED AT THE UWI OPEN CAMPUS?

Beginning in academic year 2014-2015, The UWI Open Campus will offer PLA for the following undergraduate degrees:

- Accounting;
- Banking & Finance;
- Early Childhood Development & Family Studies;
- Management Studies; and
- Youth Development Work.

Detailed information may be obtained on these programmes by visiting <http://www.open.uwi.edu/undergraduate/programmes>

## WHO MAY APPLY FOR PLA CREDITS?

PLA applicants are required to satisfy the relevant University minimum entrance requirements for matriculation and must have:

- been working for 5+ years;
- reached the age of 21;
- undertaken relevant training workshops/seminars, read widely in the area; and
- acquired the relevant experiential learning at the required level.

## HOW MANY CREDITS MAY BE GAINED FROM PLA?

A maximum of 21 credits (i.e. 7 courses) may be earned from PLA.

## HOW CAN PLA BE USED IN THE WORKFORCE?

Employers who wish to assess the experiential learning of employees to verify their level of knowledge, skills and attitude or determine their training needs may use the PLA methodology.

## WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS OF PLA?

If you decide to have your prior learning assessed, you will be able to:

- continue to work and study towards reaching your educational goals;
- complete your degree studies in a shorter time; and
- build your self-awareness and confidence.

