

Non-Traditional Students (Adult Transfers)

Are my credits too old?

- Most institutions do have some restrictions on the age of courses they will accept in transfer toward a degree, especially those that could be applied toward a major. However, many academic institutions do not place a time limitation on the transfer of previous college credit and some have procedures in place to demonstrate currency of the content allowing the acceptance of older credits. It is best to check with the college to which you are applying.
- Typically, courses earned with a grade of “D” or higher will transfer to other colleges.

What do I do when I have too many credits?

- Most colleges and universities make a distinction between credits that are transferable and credits that are applied to specific degree requirements you wish to complete. Although you may have many credits available to transfer (many adults do), it is probable that only a portion of the credits you have would be applied to fulfill specific requirements of your degree.
- It is best to inquire into a few institutions since some may have more flexible options for the acceptance of transfer credit than others. You may find that you are closer to the completion of a degree than you think. In some cases, selecting a more general type of major (e.g., general or liberal studies) at schools that have this availability can increase the possibility of applying more credits in transfer.

What are degree completion programs?

- A completion program is one in which an academic institution will review courses previously taken and prepare an offering of the minimum classes required in order for an individual to complete a bachelor’s degree.
- Degree completion programs designed for adult learners will often have a variety of methods available to its students to earn adult-focused credits (e.g., online education, prior learning assessment, testing, independent study, etc.).
- For more information on degree completion programs, consult online catalogs or contact the admissions office.

How do I learn more about these specialized adult focused degree opportunities?

Online college catalogs can address questions prospective students may have in regard to completion programs.

Since I have been out of school for such a length of time I think of myself as an “Adult” learner and not a “Transfer” learner. What is the difference?

In the education discovery process – adults typically think of themselves as “Adult” learners and not “Transfer” learners - explore all avenues of information. When visiting web sites and college catalogs do look at what institutions outline in their transfer of credit policy.

I've heard at some schools I can receive credit for my college-level learning gained from past experiences (often referred to as Prior Learning Assessment or Life Experience). How does this work?

- Prior learning assessment is a unique way for students to gain academic credit for college-level learning acquired through employment, volunteer activities, political activities, or other non-collegiate experiences. Schools award credit not for “experience” per se but for demonstrated college-level learning attained through that experience. Typically, students will document their previous learning in some type of portfolio. Faculty members then evaluate the documentation for a possible credit award toward the learner’s degree requirements.
- Credit by exam or proficiency is a method of gaining college credit.
- College-level examinations are another method typically used to assess a learner’s understanding of standard college-level course content. CLEP, DANTES (DSST), IB, and Excelsior examinations are some examples of nationally recognized college-level examinations.
- Learning gained from military experience or corporate and agency training that has been evaluated for credit recommendations by the American Council on Education or the National College Credit Recommendation Service can be another source of credit that can be applied toward degree requirements.

I have a job and family responsibilities. How can I possibly fit school into my busy schedule?

Many institutions offer a variety of approaches to access classes needed for a degree. Examples of variety approaches include evening and weekend classes, online-distance education, audio or video-based courses, and even guided independent study allowing you to control the time you spend on your college studies.

With the expense of supporting a family– how can I afford school?

Financial Aid is often available on many different levels and in various forms. Eligibility for financial aid at any school is based upon federal and state regulations. Tuition assistance may be available at work. In addition, many types of scholarship opportunities are targeted toward adults returning to college. For additional information on external scholarship opportunities, [click here!](#)

Am I too old?

The average age of the college student is older than you would probably expect. The average age reported for a number of SOCHE institutions with specialized programs for adults are: Antioch University Midwest—35, years old; Union Institute –39 years old, Sinclair Community College—32 years old, and Clark State is 28 years old. Attending colleges and classes made up of other learners who are peers generally invigorates the learning experience for all since most learners approach the content of each course with a wealth of experiential background. GPA’s for adult learners are nationally reported to be higher.

For my work, I really need to complete a graduate degree however I don’t yet have my bachelor’s degree completed. How can I accelerate my progress toward a bachelor’s degree and get on with my graduate degree?

By attending a college that offers a specific strategy for working with adult learners, you can often find opportunities to accelerate your progress toward degree completion. By

building on your past transfer credit and incorporating flexible scheduling of courses, credit earned by prior learning assessment and testing, and other sources, and distance learning options when classroom-based courses don't suit your needs, most learners can graduate faster than they otherwise would if they completed everything in the classroom.