

The Truth About Channel

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Can you really get a degree for life experience?

Many people feel they learn more in life than at a university. But is that knowledge equivalent to an accredited degree?

New York, NY - In this month's Truth About Series, Degree.com, the premier online Degree portal, looks at college degrees and asks the question "Can you really get a degree for life experience?"

Unlike most "Truth About" questions this one has a simple one word answer. NO. Anyone who tells you that you can get a degree because for life experience has a worthless piece of paper in his pocket that he is going to try to sell you.

However, you can get college credit and even a full degree based on what you have LEARNED at work, through independent study or readings, travel, life events, in your hobbies, volunteer works, etc. through exams such as CLEP and DANTES as well as through an assessment of prior learning (APL). Because adults are always learning college level knowledge outside the classroom, numerous accredited US Universities give credit when a student can show that what they have learned is equivalent to a course. Generally in the US the prior learning is assessed with what is called a "portfolio". As a rule portfolios are expected to provide a college level course description from any college in the US. This presents the

knowledge that is that is required to complete and pass that course and your knowledge is measured against that standard. This is followed by a narrative in which the student explains what was done in their life, what they learned including evidence to support what they learned, showing that they have learned what is normally taught in that class. A search for Portfolio assessment of prior learning and similar search terms should turn up many many fully accredited US programs. The portfolio process is time consuming and many students are looking for alternatives to prove their knowledge is equivalent to university level education.

Fully accredited Universities outside the US are also giving credit via APL with and without portfolio work for both undergraduate and graduate work. Often an administrator can make the assessment based on achievements, exams, certifications etc. without the portfolio work. While this saves the student a great deal of time the end result is essentially the same. The student receives credit for outside the classroom learning.

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