

Title	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
Number	E2004
Category	Admissions/Registrar

1. PURPOSE

Langara recognizes and values the significant learning that can be attained through life and work experiences. The purpose of this policy is to establish principles, standards and criteria for assessment by valid and reliable means, and recognition of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired through previous formal and non-formal education for academic credit.

2. DEFINITIONS

Challenge exam – a test or exam (written or oral) that is designed to validate the knowledge of the candidate as it relates to course requirements.

Demonstration – assessment of hands-on-learning such as competence in operating special equipment or conducting experiments.

Exemption – a waiver of a requirement; exempted course may need to be replaced with an alternative.

External evaluation – assessment provided by an expert other than College faculty; assessment method may include, but is not limited to, performance evaluation, letter of validation, or worksite assessment, and may require follow-up by faculty.

Fee for assessment – the cost associated with the assessment of previous learning, distinct from tuition and number of course credits awarded.

Flexible Assessment – equivalent term for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).

Interview – a personalized oral assessment that clarifies areas of learning.

Non-formal education – acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities through non-accredited, non-recognized studies in jurisdictions where there is no articulation agreement; demonstrated proof of having met professional competencies through non-credit courses or employer sponsored training; completion of professional licenses or certificates outside of the post-secondary education system.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) – student receives credit for learning that has occurred in a non-standard or non-traditional environment, such as self-directed study, non-formal education, paid employment, volunteer work, travel, and non-accredited courses.

Project/Products/Portfolio – documents or objects that have been produced by the candidate and demonstrate tangible proof of accomplishment and achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reflection/Self-assessment – assessment performed by the candidate, with the aid of an established form or questionnaire; may require a parallel assessment by a field expert,

preceptor and/or faculty assessor.

Standardized test – focused around widely recognized standards (as set by a department or professional/sectoral organization) that are equivalent to the course objectives.

Transfer credit – credit granted for the completion of a course or program at another post-secondary institution with which an articulation agreement has been reached; the course may be equivalent (assigned credit) or at an appropriate year level in a subject or program area (unassigned credit); it is distinct from PLAR.

Worksite assessment – student is observed performing tasks as a part of normal work routine, or as specifically assigned, in the place of work; if performed by an external assessor, it may be followed up by a self-assessment and/or interview with a faculty assessor.

3. POLICY

3.1 Through a standardized prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) process, knowledge and skills that a student has attained through previous life and work experiences will be assessed. When that prior learning is determined to be equivalent to the required learning outcomes of a PLAR eligible course or program, credit will be granted.

Awarding of PLAR Credit

3.2 Credit will only be awarded for demonstrated knowledge and skills that are equivalent to achievement of the learning outcomes for specific PLAR eligible course(s).

3.3 Departments/programs/units will determine which courses are available for PLAR and the appropriate means of assessment of students' prior learning.

3.4 Education Council must approve course eligibility for PLAR.

3.5 Eligibility for PLAR is noted on course outlines.

Limitations

3.6 PLAR is only available to students who have been admitted into a Langara regular studies program.

3.7 PLAR is not available to students currently on suspension.

3.8 Students will not receive credit through PLAR for learning that was previously taken for credit or is eligible for transfer credit.

3.9 Credit earned through prior learning and recognition as transfer credit from other Canadian accredited post-secondary institutions will not be accepted. Students must complete the PLAR process at Langara to receive credit.

3.10 Course(s) in which the student did not achieve the minimum academic requirements, at Langara or other post-secondary institutions, are ineligible for PLAR.

3.11 Students will not receive credit through PLAR for learning acquired through Continuing Studies.

- 3.12 Request for PLAR may be denied or delayed if:
- a) the course is not eligible for PLAR
 - b) a qualified faculty assessor is not available to complete a PLAR assessment
 - c) the student's prior experience/learning is not deemed adequate to achieve a reasonable expectation of success in meeting the approved course learning outcomes.

Assessment

- 3.13 Assessment and evaluation of prior learning, and the determination of competency and credit awarded will be done only by faculty who have the appropriate subject matter expertise and received training in the PLAR process.
- 3.14 Methods of assessment evaluate a student's ability to meet approved course and/or program learning outcomes and level of achievement (knowledge, skills and abilities).
- 3.15 Methods of assessment may include, but are not limited to, projects/assignments, portfolios, practicum evaluations, challenge examinations, standardized tests, performances and skills demonstration.
- 3.16 The same rigor of assessment will be applied to prior learning assessment as for regular course offerings.

Grading, Residency and Recognition of Credits

- 3.17 Students applying for PLAR are considered to have already mastered the content and therefore may not appeal a final PLAR grade.
- 3.18 Grades for PLAR will be consistent with the grading mode of the PLAR eligible course.
- 3.19 PLAR credit is subject to the residency requirement as articulated in the Credential Policy F1001.
- 3.20 Credit awarded from assessment of prior learning will be identified as such on the student transcript.
- 3.21 Grades, letter or S/U, earned through PLAR are not included in the student's GPA calculation.
- 3.22 Credits granted for prior learning at Langara may not always be transferable to other institutions. It is the responsibility of the student to determine transferability.

Registration Fees and Student Loan Eligibility

- 3.23 The fees for assessment will be based on the services performed for each course requested. The fees will not be determined by the amount of credit awarded. PLAR fees are non-refundable.
- 3.24 If a student fails to complete a PLAR assessment within the stipulated time, they will be deemed to have abandoned this option.
- 3.25 Credit awarded for PLAR may be used to meet eligibility requirements for scholarships, bursaries and awards, but will not be included in semester credit load.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

For inquiries relating to this policy, contact the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Students.

5. REGULATIONS/PROCEDURES

[Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Procedures](#)

[Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) Process Flow Diagram](#)

History/Revision	
Origination Date	January 1999
Amendment Date	June 23, 2020
Next Review Date	June 23, 2023