



Title	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
Procedures No.	D.3.5
Approval Body	Education Council
Policy Sponsor	Vice President, Academic & Research
Next Scheduled Review	May 2028
Effective Date	May 9, 2023

1. PLAR availability will be identified in the PCG and/or individual course outlines.
2. Each program or course, whether part of a program or otherwise, will determine if PLAR is an acceptable route to acquire formal College credit.
3. Each program will determine the amount of PLAR that will be acceptable for that program, in consideration of factors including, but not limited to, regulatory body requirements, within the allowance in policy C.1.3 Granting of Credentials. This maximum may be impacted by credit(s) received through policy D.3.11 Transfer Credit.

Requesting PLAR

4. To initiate the PLAR process, students must submit the PLAR Request form to the Registrar's Office and pay a non-refundable PLAR assessment fee.
5. Students may consult with the Department Leader to determine suitability and timelines for PLAR.
6. Students must apply and meet all the admission requirements of a program or be accepted into a program prior to requesting PLAR.

Assessment Process

7. The chosen assessment methods must be:
 - a. appropriate for the subject or skill area,
 - b. targeted to the learning outcomes or objectives,
 - c. related to competencies and skills required of the course, and
 - d. reflective of the level of achievement expected of any student in that course.
8. Students will be assessed by one or more of the following methods as selected by the program:
 - a. **Challenge Exam:** A test or exam (written or oral) that is designed to validate the knowledge of the candidate as it relates to the learning objectives/outcomes of the course.

- b. **Standardized Test:** Although similar to a Challenge Exam this test is usually developed by someone other than the assessor. It is focused on widely recognized standards that are equivalent to the course objectives.
- c. **Products/Portfolio:** Documents or objects that have been produced by the candidate and demonstrate tangible proof of accomplishment. These may include, but are not limited to, reports, computer printouts, videos, illustrations, prototype models, or an artist's portfolio. Students may be asked to demonstrate abilities or answer questions about the portfolio by the assessor.
- d. **Demonstration/Simulation/Performance Assessment:** Simulation or actual presentation of a candidate's abilities, which may be live, recorded, or videotaped. The demonstration may include but is not limited to such activities as presenting a speech, role-playing a situation, creating a document on a computer, giving a musical performance, performing a lab experiment, interviewing a client, operating equipment, or completing a procedure.
- e. **Interview:** Oral questioning. The PLAR interview is focused on course objectives and may include techniques such as open-ended questions, case studies, and prepared analyses. The interview is used to clarify areas of learning, and may be used in parallel with other methods, as a sole method of assessment, and/or as a means to ensure authenticity of products.
- f. **Worksite Assessment:** Similar to a demonstration. The candidate is observed performing tasks as a part of normal work routine, or as specifically assigned, in the place of work. Assessment is normally made by faculty assigned to a candidate but may also be made by a work supervisor or field expert. If performed by an external assessor, it may be followed up by a self-assessment and/or interview with a faculty assessor. The tasks may be part of paid, unpaid, or volunteer work.
- g. **Self-assessment:** Assessment performed by the candidate, usually with the aid of an established form or questionnaire. Normally requires a parallel assessment by a field expert and/or faculty assessor.
- h. **External Evaluation:** Assessment provided by an expert other than VCC faculty. Assessment method may include, but is not limited to, performance evaluation, letter of validation, or worksite assessment, and may require follow-up by a faculty assessor.
- i. **Indigenous Knowledge and Ways of Being:** Assessment of traditional knowledge in collaboration with the Indigenous Education and Community Engagement department.

Credit Bank

- 9. The Registrar's office manages and maintains a VCC PLAR Credit Bank.
- 10. Academic areas can request PLAR assessment for entries to the Credit Bank. These requests are assessed and approved collaboratively by the relevant department leader (or delegate), Registrar (or delegate) and the relevant Dean (or delegate), and are processed by the Registrar's Office.

PLAR OUTCOME

11. If a request for prior learning is approved:
 - a. Students will be advised by the department
 - b. Credits awarded for a VCC course will be added to the student's academic record, labelled as the appropriate subject, code and course name on a student's transcript under the header of "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition"
 - c. Credits granted through PLAR are not used in the calculation of the student's GPA
12. Where prior learning can be equated to the learning outcomes or objectives or competencies of a course at VCC, credit will be granted and noted on a student's transcript as "S" (successful).
13. If PLAR is unsuccessful, there will be no listing on the transcript and students will be advised by the department.
14. Students may appeal the outcome of a PLAR assessment under Policy C.1.2 Appeal of Final Grade.

RELATED POLICY

D.3.5 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Policy