

College Procedure

PROCEDURE TYPE:	Administrative
PROCEDURE TITLE:	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)
PROCEDURE NO.:	ADMIN-251.1
RESPONSIBILITY:	Executive Director/Registrar
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	June 2017
REVISED DATE(S):	
REVIEW DATE:	June 2020

1. Introduction

Strategic Enrolment Services, in collaboration with the vice-president, Academic and the academic schools will facilitate the processing, assessment, and granting of credits for students seeking recognition for prior work, volunteer, life and/or academic experiences.

Timelines listed in this procedure may vary based on factors including, but not limited to, availability of faculty subject experts and/or access to appropriate testing facilities.

2. Definitions

2.1. Mass challenge

A PLAR exam written by a group of 10 or more students scheduled for one specific date and time.

2.2. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Refers to the granting of course credit based on the formal demonstration of prior learning acquired through study, work, volunteer activities or life experience. Numeric grades received for PLAR shall be included in the calculation of student's grade point average.

3. Procedure

3.1. Applications for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Applications for PLAR should be completed prior to course commencement; however, they shall be accepted up to 10 business days of course commencement. Application forms for PLAR are available in the Strategic Enrolment Services office, school offices, and can be downloaded from the Durham College website, www.durhamcollege.ca/plar.

Courses with the mass challenge option must have a minimum enrolment of 10 post-secondary students by published deadlines.

A student will initiate the PLAR process by registering and making fee payment through Strategic Enrolment Services. Once a PLAR candidate has registered, they have committed to completing the process; failure to do so shall be recorded in the student information system.

3.2. Evaluation Process

3.2.1. Upon receipt of a PLAR registration form, the college has up to 20 business days to develop an assessment process.

3.2.2. In order to demonstrate that they possess the knowledge required to meet the learning outcomes of a course, a PLAR candidate shall be evaluated using one or more assessment methods including, but not limited to:

- Comprehensive written examination;
- Free response assignment;
- Performance test;
- Observation/demonstration;
- Portfolio;
- Product assessment; and
- Oral (interview/presentation).

3.2.3. The PLAR Office (in Strategic Enrolment Services) shall co-ordinate the provision and return of assessment materials between the faculty and the PLAR candidate. The PLAR candidate shall have a prescribed number of business days, not to exceed 30 business days, from the date of written notification by the PLAR Office that the assessment package is prepared, to complete requirements.

3.2.4. Upon receipt, the faculty member evaluating the PLAR submission has up to 10 business days to grade the assessment(s) and return the package to the PLAR Coordinator.

3.3. Outcome

The PLAR Coordinator shall notify a PLAR candidate within five (5) business days of receiving the graded assessment.

Passing grades obtained through the PLAR process shall appear on the student's academic record, and are calculated as part of a student's grade point average. Unsuccessful PLAR submissions will not be recorded on the student's academic record, however, they will be recorded in the comments section of the student information system for reference as the student will not be permitted to PLAR the same course a second time.

Credits earned through the PLAR process do not automatically provide direct entry into a program of study. PLAR candidates must still meet all entry requirements for a program.

3.4. Appeal

Students may appeal the PLAR decision. The appeal process will follow the Grade Appeal Policy ACAD 111 and Procedure ACAD 111.1.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1.** It is the responsibility of the executive director/registrar, Strategic Enrolment Services in collaboration with the vice-president, Academic to ensure that the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) procedure is fully implemented.
- 4.2.** It is the responsibility of the student to apply for PLAR within established timelines.
- 4.3.** It is the responsibility of the professor, program co-ordinator, executive dean or designate from the appropriate academic school to establish the criteria/documentation required, review the submitted material for, and render a decision within the established timelines.
- 4.4.** It is the responsibility of the PLAR Coordinator (in Strategic Enrolment Services) to record the final assessment result in the student information system and to communicate the results to the student.
- 4.5.** It is the responsibility of the executive director/registrar, Strategic Enrolment Services to ensure that this procedure is fully implemented.

5. Related policies, procedures and directives

- Board of Governors Executive Limitations Policy: Programs of Instruction
- Durham College Academic Grading Policy ACAD-112 and Procedure ACAD-112.1
- Durham College Academic Integrity Policy ACAD-101 and Academic Integrity Procedure ACAD-101.1
- Durham College Curriculum Development Policy ACAD-102 and Procedure ACAD-102.1
- Durham College General Education Policy ACAD-103 and Procedure ACAD-103.1
- Durham College Grade Appeals Policy ACAD-111 and Procedure ACAD-111.1
- Durham College Graduation Policy ADMIN-209
- Durham College Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Policy ADMIN-251
- Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development - Minister's Binding Policy Directive on Frameworks for Programs of Instruction