



Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) Information Sheet

Faculties of Arts, Business & Economics, Education,
Kinesiology and Applied Health and Science

What is PLAR? (Challenge for Credit)

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) provides learners with welcome opportunities to identify demonstrate and gain recognition for what they already know and can do. It allows learners to obtain undergraduate credit for university-level knowledge and skills gained through informal and non-formal learning and/or through other educational programs ineligible for transfer credit.

Definitions:

Informal learning occurs anywhere, anytime and with anyone. Along with acquiring learning that goes beyond courses taken, from colleagues, networks, committees or boards either at work or in the community or from self-study, it is how individuals manage their everyday lives, such as: dealing with emerging health issues, rearing children, conducting household renovations, volunteering in the community, hobbies and managing tasks at work

Non-formal learning is any educational activity that has clear learning objectives but which takes place outside of an educational institution or does not lead to credentials: non-transferable continuing education courses, vocational or training credentials, conferences, seminars and workshops through the workplace, training for volunteers and community programs.

Formal Learning occurs within an educational institution, in the presence of a knowledge expert with an established curriculum to be completed within a specified time toward a credential, such as: courses completed at universities, colleges and extended and continuing education departments.

Learning and experience are not the same. Experience is a way of learning and people learn through experience. It is possible to have ten years of work experience but not have the equivalent amount of learning. With RPL, credit is not awarded for experience; it is only awarded for learning. It is not what you did that counts; it is what you learned from what you have done.

Process:

Prior Learning Assessment is a process of:

- Identifying:* student selects course(s) to PLAR
- Assessing:* faculty evaluates demonstrated learning
- Recognizing:* university gives credit toward degree

a person's learning gained in a variety of contexts such as:

- Education:** non-traditional post-secondary institutions (i.e., seminars, workshops)
- Work:** learning on-the-job
- Life experiences:** self-study, hobbies
- Community activities:** volunteer work

Examples of methods used to assess prior learning:

(Some methods may be more appropriate than others and there may be one or multiple methods used.)

Challenge examinations:	may be scheduled in the examination period with other students from the course or at a separate time
Skill demonstrations:	for example: a student's ability to edit written work in a Rhetoric course or construct an arrowhead for Anthropology
Presentations:	demonstrates knowledge of the course content by presenting to the course professor or a group of students usually highlighting a specific area
Interviews:	may be a type of an oral examination or further clarification of prior learning
Portfolios:	are detailed documents that describe and verify your skills, knowledge (learning) and achievements that match the course curriculum

PLAR Activity:

(period from Sept 1999 to April 2016)

- 312 PLAR Assessments
- 30 Departments have participated in PLAR
(examples – Applied Computer Science, Biology, Business & Administration, Developmental Studies, Education, Geography, Kinesiology & Applied Health, Math, Philosophy, Physics, Politics, Rhetoric, Writing & Communications, Sociology, Theatre & Film, Urban & Inner City Studies)
- 144 Courses via PLAR Assessment
(examples – Intro to Computers, Dbase Application Development, Forest Ecology Field Skills, Intro to Business I, Fundamentals of Marketing, Retail Management, Observation & Evaluation Techniques, Parents, Families and Professionals, Topics in Leadership in ECCE, Computer Mapping, Advanced Geography Information Systems, Issues in Health, Intro to Calculus, Canadian Politics, Intro to Physics, Professional Style & Editing, Technical & Professional Communication, Police & Law Enforcement, Screen Acting, Directing I)

Who should apply for PLAR?

PLAR is for learners who have significant learning through work and life experiences, which may be equivalent to undergraduate university courses. Learners should be able to apply learning acquired in different situations and places of work. The learning should be current, relevant to the course and of sufficient breadth and depth to ensure university level learning.

Benefits for students to use PLAR!

- encourages learners to pursue education by increasing access
- validates appropriate learning gained through work and life experiences
- may reduce the time and expense to acquire a credential

Three of the most important PLAR policies:

- you must be admitted to the University, Faculty of Arts, Business & Economics, Education, Kinesiology and Applied Health or Science, before you can participate
- [PLAR tuition](#) is ½ the regular arts tuition/registration/student life fees (go to the bottom of the page)
- successful PLAR is graded with an 'S' for Standing (like a Pass)

Other RPL policies and procedures can be found on the University of Winnipeg's adult learner website under [Recognition of Prior Learning](#) and The University of Winnipeg Calendar, Regulations and Policies, 6a. Recognition of Prior Learning, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition - Challenge for Credit.

For more detailed information, please schedule an in-person or telephone appointment with the Academic Advisor, Adult Learners & RPL, Stephanie Rozzi, by calling 786-9257.

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