

### **Overview**

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the process you can use to gain college credits for learning and skills acquired through previous experiences. This may include workplace training, life experiences, self-directed study, community work, travel, hobbies and military service.

PLAR helps you focus on your accomplishments and plan towards personal and professional goals. PLAR is intended for students who are resuming their education rather than those continuing directly from secondary school. By using the PLAR process, you may be able to complete a college certificate or diploma program in less time. Candidates who successfully meet the learning outcomes of a specific course may be granted credit based on the assessment of their prior learning. Candidates must be at least 19 years of age or have earned a secondary school diploma.

### **How do I gain credit?**

In order to gain credit through PLAR, you must:

- review the program of study and identify which course(s) you would like to challenge
- review the learning outcomes which can be found in the Program Guide and/or course outline
- register for PLAR and pay the fee
- successfully demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been met

### **Where do I start?**

Call 905.721.3053 or 905.721.2000, ext. 2500 or 1.888.627.1191 or email [lynn.oliver@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:lynn.oliver@durhamcollege.ca) or visit the Continuing Education office at 2000 Simcoe Street North, Oshawa to speak with a staff member to establish eligibility for PLAR and be provided with a detailed course outline.

### **How do I apply?**

Candidates must complete a PLAR Registration form, PLAR Policies and Procedures form and pay the **non-refundable** fee of \$121.22, per course challenge, before the process begins.

### **How many credits can I receive?**

The PLAR process can be used to earn up to 75% of the subject credits required in a given certificate or diploma program. The remaining subject credits must be taken under the direct supervision of College faculty.

### **How are grades assigned?**

Credits gained through PLAR will be assigned a grade and are transcribed in the same manner as credits earned through coursework at the College. The assigned grades from PLAR assessments **impact** a student's Grade Point Average (GPA).

### **What will I have to do?**

You will have to demonstrate your knowledge of the learning outcomes. The assessment method may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- written test/examination
- observation/demonstration of skill
- presentation board
- assignment or essay
- submission of a portfolio
- oral/videotaped presentation

The assessment format will be determined by the subject matter expert.

### **Are all subjects PLAR challengeable?**

No, not all subjects are eligible for PLAR. Subject eligibility for PLAR is noted on the course outline.

### **Is there a possibility that a challenge may be unsuccessful?**

Yes. If there is not sufficient evidence that the learning outcomes have been met, a challenge can be deemed unsuccessful.

### **Can I do a challenge over again?**

No. The PLAR process can be initiated once per subject.

### **Important information for current post-secondary students:**

- Applications for PLAR should be completed prior to subject commencement. In any case, if you are enrolled in the subject, you **must apply and make payment for PLAR within the first two weeks of subject commencement**. Registrations will not be accepted after the deadline date.
- If you are currently enrolled in the subject you have applied to challenge, it is strongly recommended that you remain in the course until the PLAR process is complete, in case the result is not successful, however you may choose to withdraw from the course. In either case, please discuss your intentions with your professor.
- There is no reimbursement of PLAR fees toward full-time tuition fees.

For further information, please contact:

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## PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### POLICIES:

1. Fees for PLAR challenges are set by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, as a non-refundable per subject fee. Please note that some subjects may have a supply fee in addition to the PLAR registration/challenge fee.
2. To be eligible, a candidate must be at least 19 years of age or a secondary school graduate.
3. A candidate will not be able to initiate the PLAR process if s/he:
  - a. registered in the said subject within the last 10 months; or
  - b. audited the subject within the last ten (10) months; or
  - c. previously failed the subject (*within the last 2 academic years*); or
  - d. misrepresented his/her performance in a College subject for the purpose of obtaining marks or recognition
4. Applications for PLAR should be completed prior to subject commencement. In any case, students enrolled in the subject **must apply and make payment for PLAR within the first two weeks of subject commencement.**
5. The PLAR process is not available for all Durham College subject offerings. It is the candidate's responsibility to review the subject outline for the current academic year to confirm course eligibility for the PLAR process.
6. The PLAR process can be initiated once per subject.
7. Credit for subjects earned through the PLAR process does **not** automatically provide direct entry into a program of study. PLAR candidates must meet all admission requirements for a program.
8. The PLAR process can be used to earn up to 75% of the subject credits required in a given certificate or diploma program. The remaining subject credits must be taken under the direct supervision of college faculty.
9. Credits gained through PLAR will be assigned a grade and are transcribed in the same manner as credits earned through coursework at the College. The assigned grades from PLAR assessments **impact** a student's Grade Point Average.
10. Academic dishonesty is considered to be a very serious offence at Durham College. The integrity and reputation of our graduates are threatened by acts of cheating and academic dishonesty; therefore, the penalties are accordingly severe. The penalties for academic dishonesty also apply to all PLAR assessments. Specific details on Academic Dishonesty can be found in Durham College's *Student Rights and Responsibilities Policies and Procedures*.
11. An avenue of review and appeal is available to a PLAR candidate who believes that there has been unfair evaluation of an assessment. This procedure is outlined in the Durham College's *Student Rights and Responsibilities Policies and Procedures* under *Grade Appeal*.

## PROCEDURES:

1. Applications for PLAR are available in the School offices from the Student Liaison or Continuing Education staff.
2. Applications for PLAR should be completed prior to subject commencement. In any case, students enrolled in the subject **must apply and make payment for PLAR within the first two weeks of subject commencement.**
3. Once the candidate has reviewed the subject outline, registered for the challenge, and receives the exam and/or other assessment documents, the candidate is bound to complete the challenge. Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero.
4. All assessment materials, i.e.— research assignments, artwork, portfolios, etc. must be handed into the PLAR Office (A165) where it will be forwarded to the subject matter expert for assessment.
5. Subject Matter Experts with the necessary skills and experience evaluate the PLAR challenge.
6. Documents, records, and all other assessment materials will be kept confidential. In some cases, completed documents and evaluations will remain within the College for one year. Personal portfolios that include original documents will be returned to the student.

## TIMELINES:

### Candidate Registers:

*College has 20 (twenty) college days to develop the challenge process.*



### Candidate Completes Challenge:

*Candidate has 10 (ten) college days from notification of the PLAR office to complete the challenge.*



### Assessment by Subject Matter Expert:

*College has 10 (ten) college days to have the challenge assessed.*



### Graded Assessment:

*PLAR office notifies candidate and Registrar's Office of results within 5 (five) college days of receiving the graded assessment.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***The college reserves the right to alter the timelines as deemed necessary pending the availability of an appropriate subject matter expert.***

## Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Registration Form

**Candidate Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone - Home:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work/Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject Code:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- Post-Secondary  
(PLA 1000)
- General Interest  
(PLA 1900)
- Portfolio Assessment
- Challenge

*For Office Use Only:*

**Student #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rec'd by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Academic History Check** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLAR Timelines:**

Upon Registration:

- College has 20 (twenty) college days to develop the challenge process.
- Candidate has 10 (ten) college days from notification of the PLAR office to complete the challenge.
- College has 10 (ten) college days to have the challenged assessed.
- PLAR office notifies candidate and Registrar's office of results within 5 (five) college days of receiving the graded assessment.  
*The College reserves the right to alter the timelines as deemed necessary pending the availability of an appropriate subject matter expert.*

**PLAR Grade Appeal Procedure**

1. An avenue of appeal is available to a PLAR candidate who believes that there has been unfair evaluation of an assessment. This procedure is outlined in Durham College's *Policy and Procedures under Student Rights and Responsibilities, Section 3, Academic/Grade Appeals.*
2. Candidates are responsible to become familiar with the Grade Appeal Procedure as outlined in the student handbook or online at [www.durhamcollege.ca](http://www.durhamcollege.ca).

***I declare that I have read and fully understand the above PLAR procedures. I also declare that I have not been enrolled in, nor audited (within the last 10 months) or unsuccessfully challenged (within the last 2 academic years), the above course.***

\_\_\_\_\_ **Candidate's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

**Faculty Subject Expert:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Challenge:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mark:** \_\_\_\_\_  Successful  Unsuccessful

\_\_\_\_\_ *Prior Learning Assessment Counsellor*