



## Medicine Hat College Policy Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Policy #:	AC-09
Policy Authority:	Registrar
Executive Sponsor:	Vice-President, Academic
Approved by:	President
Effective Date:	February 28, 2019
Next Mandatory Review Date:	February 28, 2024
Frequency of Review:	Every 5 years

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### 1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy identifies the criteria that governs eligibility for assessing and granting credit and/or advanced placement for prior learning (formal, informal and non-formal).

### 2. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all students who have been admitted to a credit program at Medicine Hat College (MHC).

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- **Challenge Exam:** a comprehensive written exam used to demonstrate knowledge and competencies specific to a course.
- **Formal Learning:** knowledge and competencies acquired through credit courses and programs offered at post-secondary institutions; normally appears on transcripts.
- **Informal Learning:** knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired through life and work experience.
- **Non-formal Learning:** learning acquired through non-credit courses, on-the-job training and professional workshops.
- **PLAR Assessor:** a faculty member whose content/subject matter expertise deems them an appropriate evaluator of acquired knowledge, skills and competencies.
- **Prior Learning:** learning acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning experiences.
- **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR):** a process of identifying, assessing, and recognizing skills, competencies, and knowledge of individuals learned through informal, non-formal, experiential or formal means.

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 MHC adheres to the principles as outlined by the Alberta Council on Admission and Transfer (ACAT) with regards to Prior Learning Assessment. MHC is committed to reducing barriers to student mobility.
- 4.2 MHC is committed to the Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment's (CAPLA) nine guiding principles for quality recognition of prior learning practices.
- 4.3 The PLAR process will be conducted in a student-centered manner, adhering to PLAR practices that demonstrate quality and excellence.
- 4.4 The PLAR process will promote access and flexibility while maintaining academic integrity specific to disciplines and the assessment process will be appropriate to the skills, competencies and knowledge required within that discipline.
- 4.5 The process will be conducted in as timely a manner as is required in order to appropriately assess skills, competencies and knowledge. This process may require significant timelines as well as significant effort/resources on the part of both the student and MHC.
- 4.6 PLAR is based on demonstrated learning that is appropriate to the course and program to which the student has been admitted.
- 4.7 PLAR assessment at MHC is completed by content/subject matter specialists, seeking external advice as necessary. Examples of acceptable assessment methods includes but is not limited to
  - (a) challenge exams,
  - (b) portfolios,
  - (c) practical demonstrations,
  - (d) essays or projects, or
  - (e) interviews.
- 4.8 MHC supports the principle that students should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which competence has been demonstrated.
- 4.9 Each division/program is responsible for outlining any restrictions in student access to PLAR and for obtaining approval for said restrictions by General Academic Council for publication in the Academic Calendar.
- 4.10 Fees for PLAR are billed at 50 percent of the regular tuition rate.
- 4.11 Approved PLAR course work will receive a grade.
- 4.12 The maximum number of credits awarded through PLAR must not exceed 50 percent of the credential for which credit is sought (certificate, diploma, or applied degree). Students must meet all residency requirements for the program within which they are registered.
- 4.13 Students are not permitted to apply for PLAR in courses for which they have received a failing grade.
- 4.14 Students will only be permitted one attempt at PLAR for a specific course.
- 4.15 PLAR timelines will normally follow the deadlines as outlined in the Academic Schedule, however there may be program specific deadlines or exemptions.

**5. RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1 **Students** are responsible for initiating the PLAR process.

5.2 **Articulation and PLAR Coordinator** is responsible for

- (a) facilitating the PLAR process, and
- (b) supporting the assessor and the student by facilitating communication efforts between both parties.

5.3 **PLAR Assessor** is responsible for

- (a) assessing potential for PLAR, and
- (b) determining the appropriate assessment.

5.4 **Dean/Associate Dean/Program Chair** is responsible for

- (a) ensuring quality standards,
- (b) remaining informed of assessment methods in order to assist in mentoring faculty through the PLAR process, and
- (c) providing final approval.

**6. RELATED POLICIES**

- AC-01: Credentials and Parchments
- AC-08: Evaluation of Student Learning
- AC-10: Transfer Credit Policy

**7. RELATED PROCEDURES**

- PR-AC-09-01: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
- PR-AC-10-01: Transfer Credit

**8. RELATED INFORMATION**

- Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment
- Alberta Council on Admission and Transfer

**ORIGINAL COPY SIGNED**

Wayne Resch  
Acting President and CEO

Date: February 28, 2019

**ORIGINAL COPY SIGNED**

Terry Chapman  
Interim Vice-President, Academic

Date: February 28, 2019

**DOCUMENT HISTORY**

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