

TRANSFER CREDIT AND PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)



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Recognition for previous learning is awarded through transfer credit and prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR). Transfer credit recognizes learning obtained through formal coursework and enables transfer of course credit into your current program at Medicine Hat College. PLAR recognizes learning acquired through informal and non-formal learning experiences, such as non-credit coursework, workshops, and work or other experiential learning. In order to be considered for transfer credit or PLAR, a student must be admitted to the College.

Obtaining Transfer Credit

Transfer credit may be granted for courses completed at accredited universities, colleges, and technical institutes. Course work that is more than ten years old will not normally be considered for transfer credit. Credit may also be assessed for advanced placement or international baccalaureate courses.

Transfer Credit is automatically assessed when a student is admitted to the college and upon receipt of official transcripts from prior post-secondary institutions. Alternatively, if a student feels that transfer credit has not been assessed, this process can be initiated by the student, who can obtain a Transfer Credit Evaluation form from the Registrar's Office or by downloading one from the Medicine Hat College website and submitting the request to the Registrar's Office. Official transcripts must either be on file or accompany the request. A grade of C- or higher in the courses for which transfer credit is sought is required.

Assessment of transfer credit is completed on an individual basis and will depend on the accreditation of the sending institution and whether the course for which transfer is sought fits within the student's program requirements. For courses completed in Alberta, the Alberta Transfer Guide is the basis for assessment. For courses not housed within the Alberta Transfer Guide, students may be required to provide detailed course outlines for evaluation. Course outlines must be from the year and term in which they were completed. Any transfer credits awarded are recorded on the student's Medicine Hat College transcript.

Transfer Alberta

Students who are transferring to Medicine Hat College and students who wish to transfer to another institution should refer to the Alberta Transfer Guide. The Transfer Guide lists all the course and program transfer agreements in effect between post-secondary institutions in Alberta, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. The Transfer Guide, and other transfer information, is available online at www.transferalberta.ca.

Obtaining a Letter of Permission

If you intend to complete a course through another post-secondary institution while enrolled at Medicine Hat College that you want to use for credit towards your program, you will need to obtain approval from your Program Coordinator or Divisional Dean and the Registrar. A Letter of Permission form is available from Student Services and on the website. After you have completed the course, it is your responsibility to ensure that your transcripts are sent to Medicine Hat College and that you initiate the process for obtaining transfer credit through the Registrar's Office.

Obtaining Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Prior learning can be gained through experiences other than formal post-secondary courses such as through work, self-directed study, community work, non-credit courses, on-the-job training, corporate training programs, or other life experiences.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a process used to assess whether that learning equals or exceeds the knowledge, skills, and competencies defined in the learning outcomes of courses at Medicine Hat College. Prior learning assessments may take the form of, but are not limited to, any of the following, as required:

- **Evidence Files:** written summary of learning gained from informal and/or non-formal learning experiences.
- **Challenge exams:** Tests that may be used to assess theoretical or applied knowledge relevant to the Medicine Hat College curricula being reviewed for credit.
- **Performance Tests/Practical Demonstrations:** A demonstration of skills within a prescribed environment. For example, assessment done in a laboratory or practicum setting for the expressed purpose of assessing an individual's ability to meet learning outcome skills of a Medicine Hat College course or program.
- **Structured Oral Test or Interview:** Candidates respond to predetermined questions in order to directly assess specific knowledge or skills.
- **Essay or Project:** A written assignment completed according to criteria determined by the PLAR assessor. The assessment may require substantial time, energy, and effort on both the part of the student and the PLAR Assessor.
- **Portfolio:** A collection of documents and/or writing samples assembled to demonstrate that a learner has the appropriate and experiential learning to earn post-secondary credit.

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The Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Process

- If a student is interested in pursuing PLAR, the first step in the process is to contact the Articulation and PLAR Coordinator at 403.525.2337. Together the student and Articulation and PLAR Coordinator will discuss the student's prior informal and non-formal learning experiences in order to determine if PLAR is an option as well as discuss the timelines, requirements, and expectations involved in the PLAR process.
- If it is determined that PLAR may be a possibility for the student, the Articulation and PLAR Coordinator will contact the appropriate Program Coordinator to identify the appropriate PLAR Assessor. Once the appropriate PLAR Assessor is identified, the Articulation and PLAR Coordinator will discuss the PLAR with the Assessor in order to ensure that, at the initial meeting, adequate rationale to support and inform the PLAR was collected. This may include an initial screening form provided for student use and submission to the college.
- The Articulation and PLAR Coordinator will arrange a meeting (either in-person, on the telephone, or virtually) between the PLAR Assessor and student where they will discuss the assessment process, determine the timelines for all assessments, as well as further steps required in order for the assessment to be completed. It is also at this time that the PLAR application is completed by both the student and the Assessor and then submitted to the Articulation and PLAR Coordinator.
- The Articulation and PLAR Coordinator then ensures the appropriate signatures are obtained, the registration process completed, and the appropriate fees assessed. Both the PLAR Assessor and the student will be notified once this is completed; the student will be required to pay the PLAR fees by the deadline outlined in the Academic Schedule.
- Upon completion of the PLAR, the Assessor will assign a grade.
- Students are only permitted one attempt at PLAR for a specific course.
- For further details regarding PLAR, please refer to the Policy and Procedures section of the Medicine Hat College website.

Transferring to Other Institutions

Medicine Hat College makes every effort to ensure your smooth transfer to Alberta universities. This is facilitated through the activities of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, which facilitates transfer agreements between colleges and universities and as well as publishes the Alberta Transfer Guide each year available at www.transferralberta.ca. If you have questions about the transfer of courses, please consult an Academic Advisor on either the Medicine Hat or Brooks campuses. If you have questions about the suitability of courses for the program and the institution to which you are intending to transfer, you should contact an Academic Advisor at that institution to discuss your course selections. It is important to note that transfer of courses may be affected if you achieve less than the overall GPA or course grade required for transfer.

Further, if you change majors or programs or institutions to which you intend to transfer, these types of changes may affect the number of courses for which you receive transfer credit.

Grades Required for Transfer of Courses

Receiving colleges and universities may accept transfer credit for only those courses in which you have achieved an acceptable grade; at many institutions the grade required is a C- or higher. Please check with the specific institution regarding their transfer credit policy.

Admission as a Transfer Student to Other Institutions

Be sure to consult with the institution to which you are seeking transfer admission regarding transfer eligibility, required number of university transfer courses/credits, minimum GPA and other transfer requirements.

As a Medicine Hat College student, you do not have a guaranteed place in quota programs or high demand programs at Alberta universities. Selection for quota and high demand programs is based on academic performance regardless of institutional origin. The most academically qualified students are selected for limited enrolment and high demand programs and therefore, the minimum GPA required for admission may not be sufficient for admission. For further information, please consult with a Medicine Hat College Academic Advisor and an Academic Advisor at the institution to which you are seeking admission.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that their courses meet any prerequisite, scheduling or other requirements for programs at Medicine Hat College. Information regarding transfer and transfer credit for enrolment at other institutions is subject to change without notification and is also the responsibility of the student. Please refer to the latest edition of the Alberta Transfer Guide for the most current information at www.transferralberta.ca.

After You Have Transferred

Medicine Hat College is available to support your transfer even after you are no longer attending classes. Course outlines, transcripts and information (in support of transfer issues) are available in Student Services. Please consult the Articulation and PLAR Coordinator at 403.525.2337 for additional information.