



Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR)

Board Received: May 25, 2020 Review Date: June 2024

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Students receive credits through PLAR process

Purpose

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby students may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside of secondary school.

PLAR procedure is informed by Ministry policy and guidelines. PPM 129 (2001) outlines the requirements for day school students.; PPM 132 (2003) provides direction to school boards regarding how mature students earn PLAR credits.

1.0 Procedures

- 1.1 In order to ensure consistency in the process and to facilitate delivery, the Grand Erie District School Board will deliver PLAR through a model managed by its system PLAR Committee. The committee shall be comprised of:
 - Principal of Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (Chair);
 - Program Coordinator – Secondary;
 - Teacher Consultant – Secondary;
 - Department Head of Guidance (Guidance Heads' Chair);
 - Adult Education Guidance Counsellor;
 - Superintendent of Education who is responsible for Secondary Program (or designate)
- 1.2 There are two PLAR procedures dependent upon whether the applicant seeking the recognition for previously acquired knowledge and skills is classified as a mature student or a student enrolled in a Grand Erie District School Board secondary school.
- 1.3 PPM 132 (2003) defines a mature student as, "...a student who is at least eighteen years of age (i.e., an adult) on or before December 31 of the school year in which [they] return to school, who was not enrolled in a day school program for a period of at least one year, and who is enrolled in a secondary school program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD."
- 1.4 PLAR information for day school and mature students is included in each Secondary School Course calendar and on the Grand Erie District School Board website.

2.0 PLAR For Day School Students

2.1 PLAR Challenge Procedures for Day School Students:

- a. Grand Erie's PLAR procedure is informed by Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 129 (2001);
- b. Students are eligible to challenge for PLAR when they are enrolled in a regular day school program in a secondary school within the Grand Erie District School Board;
- c. Only courses developed from a provincial curriculum policy document and offered by a Grand Erie secondary school can be challenged;
- d. The challenge process is an evaluation process and shall not be used as a way for students to improve their mark for a course for which they have already earned a credit, nor as a way to obtain credit for any course they have previously failed;
- e. Students may earn no more than four credits through the challenge process, including a maximum of two credits in any one discipline. (Ontario Secondary Schools, 1999) The term discipline refers to the subject area covered by any one curriculum policy document;
- f. Students may challenge for credit only for Grade 10, 11, and 12 courses in provincial curriculum policy documents. (Ontario Secondary Schools, 1999);
- g. Student and parent/guardian (if the student is under the age of 18) will meet with the home school Principal and the PLAR Committee Chair before the first week of October;
- h. Student supplies reasonable evidence and criteria through the application package (See Appendix A) and submits to home school Principal for approval to proceed by the end of October in the school year the PLAR credit will be granted;
- i. Based on the receipt of reasonable evidence that the student is likely to be successful, the Principal recommends that the student proceed to Phase 1 and forwards the application package to the system PLAR Committee Chair. In cases where there is a disagreement with the decision of the Principal about whether or not the student should challenge for credit, the parent/guardian or adult student may ask the Superintendent of Education, who is responsible for their school, to review the matter;
- j. Upon approval, the System PLAR Committee co-ordinates the administration of individual PLAR assessments;
- k. PLAR challenges are delivered in three phases:
 - Phase 1 consists of a knowledge exam based on Ministry of Education guidelines (November/December);
 - Phase 2 is an independent assignment which demonstrates prior learning related to the curriculum (January – March);
 - Phase 3 is a summative performance/demonstration (April).
- l. The System PLAR Committee will communicate results to all students throughout the process;
- m. The System PLAR Committee will report all results to the home school Principal, who will grant the credit if applicant is successful, and will file all documentation in the student's Ontario Student Record (May);
- n. The System PLAR Committee will maintain Board-wide statistics of challenges completed;
- o. Alternate timelines could be considered at the discretion of the Committee.

3.0 PLAR Procedures for Mature Students

- a. Grand Erie's PLAR Procedure for Mature Students is informed by the Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum 132 (2003): 'The PLAR process for mature students involves two components: "equivalency" and "challenge". Requirements concerning the application

of these procedures differ from those for regular day school students because of the broader life experience of mature students' (p. 2-3)

- b. Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (GELA) is the facilitator of this process
- c. To begin the PLAR process, mature students must contact the Principal of GELA (or designate) at 519-753-6079
- d. Mature students will be required to successfully complete an individual assessment in English, mathematics, science, Canadian history, and Canadian geography in order to earn the equivalency credits required to bring their total grade 9 and 10 credits up to a maximum of 16;
- e. Based on prior learning, employment, and experience, mature students may apply for up to 10 credits in Grade 11 and 12 courses. There is no maximum on the number of credits that may be obtained in any one discipline (Ontario Secondary Schools, 1999);
- f. For equivalency and challenge credits to fulfill diploma requirements, mature students must earn a minimum of 4 senior credits, including Grade 12 English (if Grade 12 English was not previously earned) by taking the necessary courses.

4.0 Exceptions to the PLAR Challenge Process for Day School and Mature Students

Students cannot be granted credits through the challenge process for any of the following courses:

- a. a course where a credit has already been granted in that subject in a later grade either as a single credit or as part of a block equivalency;
- b. a course for which credit has already been granted or for which there is a significant overlap with a course for which credit has been granted (e.g., a student cannot challenge for credit an academic course if the student has already earned a credit for the applied course at the same grade level and vice versa);
- c. a transfer course;
- d. a locally developed course;
- e. a co-operative education course;
- f. a course in English as a second language (ESL), English Literacy Development (ELD), or Anglais pour debutantes (APD), if the student has one or more credits in English from the curriculum policy documents for English for Grade 9 to 12 under OSS (e.g., the documents for English language or the documents for French-language schools) or from the curriculum guidelines for English/Anglais for Grades 9 to 12/OACs under OSIS;
- g. a course in French as a second language (FSL), Actualization linguistique en francais (ALF), or Perfectionnement du francais (PDF), if the student has one or more credits in Francais from the curriculum policy document for Francais for Grades 9 to 12 under OSS or the curriculum guidelines for Francais for Grades 9 to 12/OACs under OSIS.

5.0 Literacy Credential

A mature student must also satisfy the diploma requirement with regard to the successful completion of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course if expectations have been met to register in the course.

6.0 Community Involvement

The Principal will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities that a mature student will have to complete to earn their OSSD under OSS diploma requirements.



Appendix A

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) APPLICATION TO CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE

Please complete this application form and submit it to your school Principal/Guidance Counsellor.

Student's First Name	Last Name	Student ID (OEN)	
Address	Apartment/Unit	City	Postal Code
Name of Parent/Guardian			Telephone
Date of Birth (year/month/day)	Gender	School	

Important to Note:

- A student is eligible to challenge courses that have NOT been attempted or completed.
- Only courses developed from a provincial curriculum policy document and offered by the Grand Erie District School Board can be challenged.
- Course codes are available on the Ministry of Education website or at the school guidance office.

Course Title	Course Type	Grade/Level	Course Code

Required Documentation - Submit this documentation to your school:

- Ontario Student Transcript, if applicable
- Individual Education Plan, if applicable

Supporting Documentation - Submit this documentation to your school:

Check a minimum of three of the following that you will be submitting along with the required documentation as evidence that you are qualified to challenge for credit in this course:

- letter(s) or recommendation from teacher(s) familiar with the course expectations
- letter(s) or recommendation from member(s) of the community
- a portfolio of relevant work
- proof of successful relevant experience in a supervised setting
- proof of independent learning in a relevant area
- a videotape, audiotape, or CD-ROM with samples of relevant work
- proof of relevant prior learning from another educational jurisdiction
- proof of successful completion of courses identified as prerequisites for this course
- Other (please specify)

Student Paragraph

Write a paragraph of 100 - 200 words stating why you want to challenge for credit for this course. Be sure to include the following: (you may attach a separate sheet of paper to your application).

- ways in which the course credit will help you to fulfill your educational goals
- your special interests and skills related to this course

Student Declaration:

I certify that the information given on this application form and all supporting documentation submitted is correct, complete, and current. I am aware that passing marks for Grade 10 courses and passing/failing marks for Grades 11 and 12 courses will appear on my Ontario Student Transcript. I am aware that the PLAR challenge process will include formal tests (balanced between written work and demonstration, as appropriate for the subject) worth 70% of the final mark, and other types of assessment worth 30% of the final mark. I am aware that my skills and knowledge will be evaluated against the overall and specific expectations for the course. I am aware that a maximum of four credits may be granted through the challenge process for courses in Grades 10 - 12, with no more than two in any one discipline.

(Complete the information and print two copies of the completed application. Submit a signed copy with your required and supporting documentation to the school Principal/Guidance Counsellor. Keep the second copy as your record).

I have reviewed the curriculum expectations and the descriptions of the levels of achievement for this course with a designated subject teacher.

I understand that a board/school committee will review my application.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Principal/Guidance Counsellor Signature _____ Date _____

Office Use Only

Application Package Reviewed		
Application Received Date	Date Challenge Process Completed	
DOCUMENTATION COMPLETE	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
APPLICATION APPROVED	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>