

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Day School Students	
Adopted: January 19, 2016	Last Reviewed/Revised: January 6, 2025
Next Scheduled Review: 2027-2028	
Associated Policies & Procedures: II-50 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Day School Students II-46 Assessment and Evaluation VI-55 Assessment and Evaluation - Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism VI-56 Assessment and Evaluation - Late and Missed Assignments VI-29 Supervised Alternative Learning VI-43 Home Instruction II-54 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition for Mature Students VI-106 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition for Mature Students	

Purpose

To ensure that all students in the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) achieve their potential and are supported in choosing appropriate pathways that meet their aspirations.

Application and Scope

This procedure applies to regular day school students enrolled in all secondary schools of the HCDSB.

References

[Education Act](#)

[Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2024, section 7.2.4](#)

[PPM 129](#)

Definitions

Challenge for Credit: is the process whereby students' prior learning is assessed for the purpose of granting credit for a Grade 10, 11, or 12 course developed from a provincial curriculum, after they have provided evidence indicating a likelihood of success. A student may not “challenge” a Grade 9 course.

Equivalency: is the process of assessing credentials from other jurisdictions, home schooling, and non-inspected private schools.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): is a formal evaluation and credit granting process. Through the PLAR Equivalency and Challenge for Credit process, students enrolled in publicly funded Ontario secondary schools may have their skills and knowledge evaluated against the overall expectations outlined in provincial curriculum policy documents to earn credits toward the OSSD. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired in both formal and informal ways, outside of secondary school.

Principles

- HCDSB is committed to ensuring that all students achieve their potential and are supported in choosing appropriate pathways that meet their aspirations.
- HCDSB believes in lifelong learning and learning that can and does occur beyond the regular school.
- HCDSB recognizes that students are exposed to a variety of learning experiences outside the Ontario school system and regular day school structure and offers these students the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Equivalency and Challenge for Credit process, as a way to recognize this learning.

Requirements

Roles and Responsibilities

- Regular day school students may obtain credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) for knowledge and skills that they have acquired outside of a regular secondary school. This prior learning is assessed and evaluated to determine if the student has met the provincial course expectations. Students may “challenge” a specific Grade 10, 11, or 12 course for credit if they can provide evidence indicating a likelihood of success.
- The PLAR process involves two components: Equivalency and Challenge for Credit.
- The equivalency process for students who transfer to Ontario secondary schools from non-inspected private schools, home school, or schools outside Ontario is assessed by the school Principal.

- Secondary Principals will carry out the responsibilities as required in PPM 129 and in accordance with *Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2024, section 7.2.4*.
- Secondary Principals will ensure that the school course calendar has a statement notifying students of the PLAR Equivalency and Challenge for Credit process.
- Students wishing to challenge a credit will obtain a Challenge for Credit application form from the Student Services Department at the beginning of the semester and submit the completed forms to the Principal with the required documentation by October 31st or March 31st.
- The Principal (or designate), and appropriate subject department head where applicable, will meet with the student, and parent(s)/guardian(s) if the student is under 18 years of age to review the Challenge for Credit application, ensure it is complete and determine whether it appears that reasonable evidence for success exists and whether the challenge should occur.
- If it is agreed that the Challenge for Credit should occur, the Principal (or designate) will forward the package to the Superintendent of Student Success who will facilitate distribution to the appropriate subject teacher within the HCDSB to assess the Challenge for Credit application.
- Challenge for Credit and Equivalency credits will be recorded in accordance with PPM129.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is Responsible For:

- Reviewing PLAR for Day School Students policy in accordance with the priorities in the HCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan and the approved review cycle; and
- Understanding and communication with members of the community about the PLAR policy, as required.

The Director Of Education Is Responsible For:

- Implementation and operationalizing the PLAR for Day School Students policy as per the requirements of *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2024, section 7.2.4. and PPM 129*.

Superintendents Are Responsible For:

- Supporting the application of the PLAR for Day School Students policy at each school
- Ensuring that PLAR Equivalency and Challenge for Credit opportunities are available to all eligible students.

Secondary School Principals Are Responsible For:

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- Facilitating the application of the PLAR for Day School Students policy; Ensuring that students are aware of the PLAR Equivalency and Challenge for Credit process;
- Ensuring that students who engage in the PLAR Challenge for Credit process meet the eligibility requirements;
- Aligning the PLAR Equivalency process with Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements, 2024 and other courses and programs authorized for credit;
- Referring to *Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy, 2024, section Student Transfers*, as a guide to determine the number of credits and additional graduation requirements a transferring student needs to complete to earn the OSSD.

Parents/Guardians Are Responsible For:

- Supporting student compliance with the PLAR program requirements; and
- Communicating with school staff to promote student success.

Students Are Responsible For:

- Complying with the PLAR program expectations.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Administrative Council

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Challenge Process

What is Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)?

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition is a formal evaluation and accreditation process. Students may obtain credits towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) for knowledge and skills that they have acquired outside of secondary school. This prior learning is assessed and evaluated to determine whether the student has met the provincial course expectations. The student may “challenge” a specific course for credit if they can provide evidence indicating a likelihood of success.

Am I Eligible To Challenge A Course For Credit?

Secondary school students in Grades 10 - 12 who are enrolled in a regular day school program in an Ontario secondary school may challenge a course for credit.

What Courses May I Challenge For Credit?

Students may challenge for credit only Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses taught in the Halton Catholic District School Board, which are developed from a provincial policy document.

How Many Courses May I Challenge For Credit?

Students may earn no more than four (4) credits through the challenge process, including a maximum of two (2) credits in any one (1) discipline (subject area).

What Courses Cannot be Challenged in PLAR?

- A course in any subject if a credit has already/will be granted in a later grade in that subject.
- A course for which credit has already been granted or for which there is significant overlap (e.g., a student cannot challenge for credit for an academic course if he or she has already earned a credit for the applied course at the same grade level, and vice versa).
- A locally developed course.
- A cooperative education course.
- A course in English as a Second Language (ESL), English Literacy Development (ELD), or Anglais pour Debutants (APD); or if the student has one (1) or more credits in English for Grades 9 – 12 in an Ontario School; or for Anglais/English in Grades 9 – 12.
- A course in French as a Second Language (FSU, Actualisation Linguistique en Francais, or Perfectionnement du Francais); or if the student has one (1) or more credits in Francais from the curriculum policy documents; or from the curriculum guideline for Francais for Grades 9 - 12 in an Ontario School.
- A music credit granted by conservatory of music may not be used to meet a compulsory credit in the arts.

What documents/evidence may be required as per ministry curriculum expectations

The required evidence will be communicated to you by the Principal during an intake meeting:

- letter(s) of reference from teacher(s) familiar with the course expectations or instructor
- a portfolio of relevant work
- proof of successful relevant experience in a supervised setting
- proof of relevant prior learning from another educational jurisdiction (certificates, etc.)
- proof of successful completion of courses identified as prerequisites for this course (transcript)

*The PLAR package must be completed and submitted to your Principal before October 31st or March 31st.

You will be required to meet with the Principal/Guidance Counsellor upon submitting your PLAR package.

Is Parental Permission Necessary To Apply For The Challenge Process?

Students under the age of eighteen (18) need parental approval before applying to challenge a course for credit.

What is the Process if I am a Mature Student?

Please contact the Thomas Merton Centre for Adult & Continuing Education:
Call 905-849-7555 and visit merton.hcdsb.org for further information.

Additional Challenge Information

Appeal Procedure

In cases where there is a disagreement with the decision of the Principal about whether a student should challenge for a credit, the parent of a student who is not an adult may ask the Family of Schools Supervisory Officer to review the matter.

Repeating the Challenge

A student may submit an application for challenge for a specific course for a second time if the student can provide reasonable evidence of additional student experience.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and Evaluation strategies will be based on curriculum expectations and achievement charts in the Ontario curriculum policy. They will include formal tests and other assessment strategies.

Withdrawal Policy

A student may withdraw from the challenge process prior to the final formal test without a notation on the student's Ontario Student Transcript (OST). Once students have entered the "final formal test" stage of the challenge process, and choose to withdraw, a mark will be entered on the Ontario Student Transcript (Grade 11 and 12) and on the Cumulative Tracking Form (Grade 10 - 12).

Final Mark

The student's final percentage grade will be recorded on the student's Ontario Student Transcript in the same way as achievement in other courses.

For more information and to download the PLAR application please visit <https://www.hcdsb.org/students/prior-learning-assessment-recognition-plar/>

Equivalency Process

Students who are eligible for equivalency credits are those who transfer to Ontario secondary schools from private schools (that do not offer OSSD credits) or schools outside of Ontario.

The Principal of the receiving school will, in the process of deciding where the student should be placed, determine as equitably as possible the total credit equivalency of the student's previous learning, and the number of compulsory and optional credits still to be earned.

In cases where a student who is an adult or the parent of a student who is not an adult disagrees with the Principal's placement decision for a student transferring to an Ontario secondary school from a school outside of Ontario, the adult student or the parent may ask the appropriate Supervisory Officer to review the matter.

How Do I Get Started?

The first step is to approach your Guidance Counsellor/School Administrator to discuss the PLAR process and obtain an application. You will be given more detailed information on making a formal application to "challenge" for credit.

You will receive information on what documentation is required, how your application will be processed, how your assessment will be conducted, and how your results will be reported. You will be required to meet with the Principal/Guidance Counsellor and other staff upon submission of your package.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) - Challenge for Credit
PACKAGE Information Sheet

The following components of the PLAR Challenge for Credit package must be completed and submitted to your principal before October 31st and March 31st. You will be required to meet with the principal/guidance counsellor upon submitting your PLAR package.

1. PLAR CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT APPLICATION FORM

This form must be completed and signed. All credits granted through the PLAR Challenge for Credit process represent the same expectations and standard of achievement as credits to students who have taken the courses.

2. ONTARIO STUDENT TRANSCRIPT

Your Ontario Student Transcript (OST) may be obtained by contacting your secondary school guidance office. A copy of your most recent OST must be included in the PLAR Challenge for Credit package that you submit.

- The Ontario Student Transcript provides an official record of the Ontario secondary school credit courses successfully completed by the student. The OST includes:
 - All Grade 9 and 10 courses successfully completed by the student, with percentage grades obtained and credits earned;
 - All Grade 11 and 12 courses completed or attempted by the student with percentage grades obtained and credits earned;
 - Identification of compulsory credits, including credits that are substitutions for compulsory courses identified by the Ministry of Education as diploma requirements.

3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS PROFILE

The Knowledge and Skills Profile provides evidence of prior learning. It also provides evidence about the appropriateness of the PLAR Challenge for Credit.

The Profile consists of:

- a) Reference(s) - There may be up to 2 reference letters submitted. These may be from a teacher or instructor who has worked with a student in an area related to the course being challenged. The reference(s) must be submitted on the form titled "Knowledge and Skills Profile: Reference".
- b) Evidence of Relevant Learning - There may be up to 2 descriptions of "programs, courses or experiences" that provide evidence of successful learning that support an application for a **PLAR** Challenge for Credit, submitted. These descriptions must be submitted on the form titled "Knowledge And Skills Profile: Evidence of Relevant Learning".

c) **Samples** - Where appropriate, there may be one or two samples of original work that provides evidence of successful learning that support an application for a PLAR challenge. This may be useful in order to highlight the appropriateness of the challenge in an area not demonstrated in either the Reference(s) or the Evidence of Relevant Learning forms. These samples, where applicable, may be submitted with the completed form titled "Knowledge And Skills Profile: Sample Products".

Information:

- The PLAR Challenge for Credit will include:
 - Formal tests with a balance between written work and practical demonstration that is appropriate for the subject/discipline - 70%
 - Other assessments which may include written assignments, demonstrations/performances, laboratory work, quizzes and observation of the student - 30%
- Assessment is based on the expectations outlined in current Ministry of Education curriculum documents
- Only 4 credits may be granted through the Challenge for Credit process - no more than 2 per discipline
- All information will be recorded in your Ontario Student Record (OSR) if the challenged course is a Grade 11 or 12 course and the final phase of the assessment has begun. This includes passing mark, failing mark and withdrawal from the process. Only passing marks are listed for Grade 10 challenges.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (I.E.P.)

**Where applicable, provide a copy of your most recent I.E.P

An I.E.P. will be available where an individual has been identified by an IPRC as an exceptional pupil. An IEP may also be prepared for students with special needs who are receiving special education programs and/or special education services, but who have not been identified as exceptional by an IPRC.

A copy of the I.E.P. should have been provided to the parent/guardian or to the student if they are over 16 from the special education department within the school.

An IEP is a written plan. It is a working document, which describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional pupil, the special education program and services established to meet that pupil's needs, and how the program and services will be delivered. It also describes the student's progress.

An IEP identifies the student's specific learning expectations and outlines how the school will address these expectations through appropriate special education programs and services. In developing or reviewing the student's IEP, consideration must be given to any recommendations made by the **IPRC** concerning special education programs and services that may be particularly appropriate for meeting the student's needs.

Detailed information on the **I.E.P.** is available at

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/individu.html>

4. PLAR CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT: CUMULATIVE TRACKING RECORD

If you have previously attained a credit through the PLAR process, there will be a copy of the PLAR CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT: CUMULATIVE TRACKING RECORD in your OSR. This document may be obtained by contacting your secondary school guidance office. A copy of your most recent Cumulative Tracking Record must be included in the PLAR package that you submit.

The Cumulative Tracking Record provides an official record of the number of credits earned and the disciplines in which credits have been earned through the challenge process, as well as failures and withdrawals.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Knowledge and Skills Profile: Evidence of Relevant Successful Learning

Please identify programs, courses or experiences that provide evidence of relevant successful learning that supports

Name of Candidate: _____

Course Challenged: _____

Evidence 1 (Please attach to this form)

Title: _____ **Date:** _____
(Course/Program/Experience)

Contact Person: _____
(Instructor/Leader/Reference)

Rationale:

Briefly describe the knowledge or skills highlighted by this sample of work. Briefly explain how this supports your application for a PLAR challenge.

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Evidence 2 (Please attach to this form)

Title: _____ **Date:** _____
(Course/Program/Experience)

Contact Person:
(Instructor/Leader/Reference)

Rationale:

Briefly describe the knowledge or skills highlighted by this sample of work. Briefly explain how this supports your application for a PLAR challenge.

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PLAR CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN INK.

First Name		Last Name		Student ID (OEN #)	
Address		Apartment/Unit	City	Postal Code	
Home Telephone		Grade	School	School Telephone	
School Contact (e.g. Counsellor, Teacher Advisor)			Gender (M/F)	Date of Birth (year / month / day)	

PLAR Challenge Course Code

Course Title	Course Type	Course Grade
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Course codes and curriculum expectations are available through the Ministry of Education Website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/> or by speaking with your school's guidance counsellors

- A student is eligible to challenge courses that have NOT been attempted or completed through previous enrolment.
- Only courses available in HCDSB, developed from a provincial curriculum policy document may be challenged.

Required Documentation -Include the following information as a component of the PLAR Challenge Form.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ontario Student Transcript (most recent) <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge And Skills Profile
Reference(s), Evidence of Relevant and Successful Learning, <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Plan (I.E.P) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Student Paragraph
Written paragraph of 100-200 words. <input type="checkbox"/> PLAR Challenge for Credit: Cumulative Tracking Record. (most recent) , if applicable |
|---|---|

Signature for PLAR Challenge

I certify that the information given on this form and in any documents attached is correct, complete, and fully discloses all prior PLAR challenges. I hereby acknowledge and confirm my application to the PLAR challenge process and understand that submission of this form to Halton Catholic District School Board is a commitment to the completion of the assessment for the course indicated above. I am aware that passing/failing marks for Grades 11 and 12 courses will appear on my Ontario Student Transcript and withdrawals for Grades 10 to 12 will appear in my Ontario Student Record. I am aware that the PLAR challenge process will include formal tests worth 70% and other types of assessments worth 30% of the final mark. I am aware that my skills and knowledge will be evaluated against the expectations outlined in the appropriate provincial curriculum policy document. I am aware that a maximum of four credits may be granted through the challenge process for courses in Grades 10 to 12, with no more than two in any one discipline. I have reviewed the curriculum expectations and the descriptions of the levels of achievement for the course indicated above. I understand that a board/school committee will review my application.

Student's Signature	Date	Parent/Guardian's Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____

I acknowledge that the student has discussed their request to challenge for this course with me, and that it is part of their plans for fulfilling their educational goals.

Principal Signature

Date

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received (yyyy/mm/dd)	Submitted:		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ontario Student Transcript	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and Skills Profile	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> I.E.P, if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> PLAR: Cumulative Tracking Record, if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Paragraph	<input type="checkbox"/> All Signatures on Form	
Is the package complete? Yes/No		Date Challenge Process Completed	

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION: CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT
Interim Tracking Record

Surname	Given Names	MIN/OEN	Student Number	Gender	Date of Birth					
School Board/School Authority/Inspected Private School ⁱ		Number	Name of School		Date of Entry					
Date (Year/Month)	School Board/ Inspected Private School ⁱⁱ	Course Grade/ Level	Course Title	Course Code	Discipline	Percentage Grade	Credit	Compulsory	Withdrawal	Authorization ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱ Name of School board/school authority/inspected private school that maintains the students Ontario Student Record (OSR)

ⁱⁱ Name of school board of inspected private school through which the student earned the credit(s)

ⁱⁱⁱ Signature of principal who granted the credit(s)

Note: For policy on the use of this form, see Policy/Program Memorandum No. 129, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools".

Principal



Letter of Challenge Assessment Completion

Date: _____

Student's name: _____

Student OEN: _____

Course Code _____ Course Title _____ Course Type _____

Student's Final Percentage Grade _____

This is to confirm that you have completed the Challenge for Credit assessment for the above course. Your results are recorded on your PLAR Challenge For Credit: Cumulative Tracking Record. If your final percentage grade is 50% or greater you have received a course credit toward your Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSO). For Grade 10 courses, successful credits are recorded on your Ontario Student Transcript (OST). For Grade 11 and 12 courses both successful and unsuccessful results are recorded on your Ontario Student Transcript (OST). Please be reminded that your PLAR Challenge For Credit: Cumulative Tracking Record and OST are kept in your Ontario Student Record (OSR).

Attached for your personal records, is your PLAR Record of Assessment of Challenge for Credit For a Course. This provides you with a breakdown of the evaluation of your challenge assessment.

If your final grade is below 50% you may reapply for a second attempt after a reasonable interval, if you can provide reasonable evidence that you are likely to be successful as a result of additional study and experience.

Please contact our office for an appointment if you have any questions or concerns.

Principal

PLAR Process – Equivalency Credits Guide

For students who are transferring from home schooling, a non-inspected private school or a school outside Ontario, principals will grant equivalency credits for placement purposes based on their evaluation of students' previous learning.

See Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Program Requirements, 2024, section 4.3 Student transfers.

4.3.3 Guide to determining diploma requirements for students transferring into Ontario secondary schools

For regular day school students who are transferring from home schooling, a non-inspected private school including a non-inspected First Nation/federally-operated school or a school outside Ontario, principals will grant equivalency credits for placement purposes through the prior learning assessment and recognition process (see section 7.2.4.1). Equivalency credits will be recorded on the student's Ontario Student Transcript. (For information about determining equivalency credits for mature students, see section 7.2.4.2.)

Principals will use the following table as a guide to determine the number of credits and additional graduation requirements a transferring student needs to complete to earn the Ontario Secondary School Diploma

Minimum credits/Literacy requirement/Community involvement	Students who have completed one year in a secondary school program (for example, completed Grade 9)	Students who have completed two years in a secondary school program (for example, completed Grade 10)	Students who have completed three years in a secondary school program (for example, completed Grade 11)	Students who have completed more than three years in a secondary school program (for example, completed more)
Minimum number of credits, in total, still to be earned toward the OSSD	22	14	7	4
Minimum number of compulsory credits still to be earned and requirements to be met for English/French, Mathematics ^[2] and Science	English/French: 3 Mathematics: 2 Science: 1	English/French: 2 Mathematics: 1 Science: 0	English/French: 1 Mathematics: 0 Science: 0	English/French: 1 ^[3] Mathematics: 0 Science: 0
Financial literacy graduation requirement	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Literacy graduation requirement	Required	Required	Required	Required
Community involvement graduation requirement (40 hours)	Required	At the principal's discretion ^[4]	At the principal's discretion ^[4]	At the principal's discretion ^[4]

In addition to the requirements identified above, principals will ensure the following requirements are met:

- A student who has no previous Ontario credits but who has successfully completed more than three years of secondary school must earn a minimum of four credits in Grade 11 or Grade 12 courses to be eligible for the OSSD.
- A student who has successfully completed more than three years of secondary school education, has previously earned at least three Ontario credits and has returned to the Ontario educational system may qualify for the OSSD by completing a minimum of one Grade 11 or Grade 12 credit.

See also section 7.2.4 on prior learning assessment and recognition.