

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition for Mature Students (mPLAR)	
Adopted: September 19, 2023	Last Reviewed/Revised: November 21, 2023
Next Scheduled Review: 2026-2027	
Associated Policies & Procedures: <a href="#">I-22 Admission to Schools Elementary and Secondary</a> <a href="#">VI-19 Admission to Schools Elementary and Secondary</a> <a href="#">II-46 Assessment and Evaluation</a> <a href="#">II-50 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Day School Students</a> <a href="#">VI-55 Assessment and Evaluation- Academic Dishonesty &amp; Plagiarism</a> <a href="#">VI-56 Assessment and Evaluation- Late &amp; Missed Assignment</a> <a href="#">VI-29 Supervised Alternative Learning</a>	

## Purpose

The Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) believes in lifelong learning that can and does occur beyond the regular school. Recognizing that students are exposed to a variety of learning experiences outside the regular Ontario school, the HCDSB provides Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition for Mature Students (mPLAR) equivalency and challenge processes as ways to recognize this learning for a mature student.

## Application and Scope

This policy applies to mature students enrolled in all secondary day schools of the HCDSB, including the Thomas Merton Centre, who are 18 years of age or older as of January 1 of the current school year. mPLAR provides a process by which the prior experiences of mature students, both formal and informal, can be recognized for secondary credit, minimizing duplication of learning and saving the learner time.

The mPLAR process involves two components: equivalency and challenge. Mature students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in the provincial curriculum to earn credits towards the OSSD.

## References

[Education Act](#)

[Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2016, section 7.2.5](#)

[Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM 132\)](#)

[The Ontario College of Teachers](#)

[The Ontario Student Transcript \(OST\) Manual \(2013\)](#)

## Definitions

**Challenge:** through the challenge process, a student's prior learning is evaluated using assessments for the purpose of granting credit for Grade 11 or 12 courses developed from the most recent Ontario curriculum. There is no mPLAR challenge process for Grade 9 and 10 credits.

**Equivalency:** through the equivalency process, a student participates in an evaluation of their credentials, other appropriate documentation, and/or evidence from jurisdictions within and outside Ontario for the purpose of granting credits.

**Mature Student:** a student who is at least 18 years of age on or after January 1 of the current school year and who is enrolled in a program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD.

**Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition for Mature Students (mPLAR):** the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby mature students may obtain credits for prior learning.

## Principles

- HCDSB is committed to ensuring that all mature students achieve their potential and are supported in choosing and moving to appropriate post-secondary pathways that meet their aspirations.
- HCDSB is committed to ensuring that mature learners are supported to expeditiously achieve their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and efficiently move to sustainable employment and/or postsecondary education – apprenticeship, college, university.

## Requirements

- Secondary Principals, including the Principal of Continuing Education, will:
  - Ensure that the school course calendar has a statement notifying mature students of the mPLAR process;
  - Carry out the responsibilities as required in PPM132 and Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2016, section 7.2.5;
  - Provide an mPLAR application to a mature student interested in mPLAR equivalency or challenge credits;
  - Begin the process of assessing prior learning to determine what credits may be granted if it is agreed that the mature student is eligible for mPLAR; and
  - Ensure mature students have access to support in preparing the mPLAR application.

- Only teachers certified by the Ontario College of Teachers may conduct the mPLAR equivalency and/or challenge process.

## Responsibilities

### Board of Trustees:

- Review the mPLAR policy in accordance with the priorities in the HCDSB Multi-Year Plan and the approved review cycle; and
- Understand and communicate with members of the community about the mPLAR policy, as required.

### Director of Education:

- Implement and operationalize the mPLAR policy as per the requirements of Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Program Requirements, 2016 and PPM 132; and
- Report to the Ministry in the October board reports the types of equivalency and challenge credits provided to mature students.

### Superintendents:

- Ensure the mPLAR equivalency and challenge processes are available to all eligible mature students; and
- Support the application of mPLAR at every secondary school and Continuing Education.

### Secondary School Principals:

- Ensure that mature students are aware of the mPLAR process;
- Facilitate the application of the mPLAR policy;
- Provide professional development to staff regarding the mPLAR process;
- Ensure that students who engage in the mPLAR process meet eligibility requirements as per PPM132; and
- Ensure that mature students who do not have documentation of prior learning owing to extraordinary circumstances (for example, students who are refugees) will receive advice and/or referral to an appropriate service provider concerning the gathering and giving of evidence.

### Mature Students:

- Comply with the mPLAR process requirements and expectations; and
- Communicate with school staff to promote student success

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

*Chair of the Board*