



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 discipline (subject area).

What Courses *Cannot* be challenged in PLAR?

- A course in any subject if a credit has already been 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 débutants (APD), if the student has one (1) or more credits in English from the curriculum policy documents for English for Grades 9 - 12 under Ontario Schools (i.e., the documents for English-language schools or the documents for French-language schools) or from the curriculum guidelines for English or Anglais/English for Grades 9 - 12/OACs under OSIS
- A course in French as a second language (FSL), Actualisation linguistique en français (ALF), or Perfectionnement du français (PDF), if the student has one or more credits in Français from the curriculum policy documents for Français for Grades 9 to 12 under Ontario Schools or the curriculum guideline for Français for Grades 9 to 12 under OSIS

****a music credit granted by conservatory of music may not be used to meet a compulsory credit in the arts or in Group 2 OSSD requirements****

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 and 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 Thomas Merton Catholic Secondary School 905-849-7555 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 the Board website Programs tab at www.hcdsb.org

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, how your results will be reported. You will be required to meet with a Principal / Guidance and other staff upon submission of your package.



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