

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)

PREAMBLE

Brandon University respects all forms of learning, however it is attained, and recognizes also that individuals do achieve university level learning outside of the usual academic environment. In acknowledgment of these achievements, Brandon University aims to provide an accessible yet fair and rigorous process for assessing this prior learning by academic experts in the relevant subject area. BU recognizes PLA credit on a case-by-case basis if the individual's learning has reached the expected range and depth of knowledge and skills for the particular academic credential requested by the PLAR applicant. By recognizing PLA credits, BU aims to enhance the student's educational goals and to assist in her/his academic program development. While providing this opportunity, BU reserves its mandate of ensuring that appropriate academic standards are maintained.

PLAR GUIDELINES:

Approved by BU Senate, November 16, 1999

- I. Credit should be awarded only for learning whether acquired through study or experience.
- II. Credit should be awarded only for learning which meets Brandon University's standards.
- III. Credit should be only awarded for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the subject, between theory and practical application.
- IV. In each instance the determination of competence levels and of credit awards must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic experts chosen by the appropriate department or relevant academic unit.
- V. Credit awards and their transcript offerings shall be monitored to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning.
- VI. Policies and procedures applied to assessment, including provision for appeal, shall be fully disclosed and prominently available.
- VII. Fees charged for assessment shall be based on the services performed in the process and not determined by the amount of credit awarded.
- VIII. All personnel involved in the assessment of learning shall receive adequate training for the functions they perform, and there shall be provision for their continued professional development.
- IX. Assessment programs shall be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, and revised.

PLAR POLICY:

Approved by BU Senate, January 15, 2002

Applicant Eligibility

Only individuals who have been admitted to Brandon University are eligible to seek PLA credit. Applicants are to be aware that certain Brandon University Faculties or Schools may determine additional requirements for eligibility.

Application Timetable

Application for PLA credit shall normally be initiated within the first 30 credit hours of registration in a new degree program at Brandon University.

PLA Credit Limitations with BU degree Requirements

PLA credit shall be subject to the normal Residence regulations.

Types of PLA Credit Recognized

When department chairs and/or other members of the department consider what kind of credit, if any, will be granted for Prior Learning, they will select one or more of the following options:

1. BU course(s) BU course equivalent(s) to be identified
2. Unallocated Number of credit hours to be identified
The year level of the unallocated credit(s) should be determined, and also whether or not the credit(s) can be used toward a major or minor in the department. In some cases, departments will note that students may not take a particular BU course for credit, given the nature of the unallocated credit being granted.
3. No credit BU will not grant any credit for the Prior Learning presented.

Approval of PLA Credits

As in regular grading procedures, PLA credits recognized by the appropriate faculty PLAR Assessor shall be approved by the appropriate Department/Program Chair and Dean of the Faculty or School; recording of PLA credit(s) on the student's transcript shall be made through the Senate Office.

Transcript Notation of Recognized PLA Credits

Should PLA credit be granted, the grade of 'P' will be assigned and a grade comment 'PLAR' noted on the transcript. In cases where the Prior Learning Portfolio was assessed but PLA credit was not recognized, no record shall be noted on the applicant's transcript. PLA credit(s) will not normally be counted towards the applicant's degree program until he or she has successfully completed a minimum of 15 credit hours of BU courses.

PLAR PROCEDURES:

Please refer to the PLAR Handbooks for procedural details.