

**SIR SANDFORD FLEMING COLLEGE  
POLICY MANUAL**

<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b> 2-210 <b>DATE APPROVED:</b> September 7, 1994 #3 <b>Revised:</b> February 24, 2010 #4	<b>APPROVED BY:</b> Board of Governors <b>SUPERCEDES:</b>
<b>SUBJECT: PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION</b>	

*Effective May 2010*

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a systematic credit granting process that recognizes and accredits previous learning. The process involves the identification, documentation, assessment, verification, and recognition of relevant knowledge and skills acquired through formal and informal study, work, and life experiences. The relevant learning is assessed and evaluated relative to the learning outcomes of a particular course or program. PLAR is to be distinguished from the transfer of academic credit process, in that PLAR focuses on the evaluation of experiential learning.

Fleming College endorses the philosophy and principles underlying PLAR in compliance with the Minister's Binding Policy Directive (dated July 31, 2009) entitled *Framework for Programs of Instruction, Part D, section V*, which states:

“Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) is to be made available for as many credit courses as possible in programs of instruction in which enrolment is eligible for funding through the general purpose operating grant. If a credit course is to be excluded from PLAR, the reasons and considerations should be clearly documented for the student. Information on the PLAR process is to be made available to the public in the college central admissions publication and posted on the college's web site.”

In keeping with such endorsement, Fleming College will implement strategies that:

- a) promote the success, educational equity and mobility of adult learners;
- b) assist the learner in identifying their skills, knowledge and competencies for the purposes of possible college credit, and
- c) promote access into college courses and programs at the appropriate entry level so that learning is not repeated.
- d) develop procedures, and systems that reflect the changing needs of adult learners in ways that promote life-long learning opportunities among our educational and training partners.

## **PROCEDURE**

### 1.0 Coordination, Orientation and Advising

The Centre for Learning and Teaching will be responsible for the implementation, co-ordination, monitoring and support of PLAR activities and procedures. These responsibilities will include full consultation with the Academic Leaders Team, the Registrar's Office and Student Services for approval of changes to either policy or procedures.

The Registrar's Office is the first point of contact for student enquiries regarding the PLAR process. Staff in the Registrar's Office will

- explain the PLAR procedures to the student
- provide guidance regarding application procedure(s) and fees
- refer the student to the appropriate academic school to arrange specific assessment processes
- refer students seeking to develop prior learning portfolios for assistance from a PLAR Facilitator in the Centre for Learning and Teaching.

The role of the PLAR Facilitator will be to:

- Collaborate with the Faculty Development Facilitator to develop, design and deliver appropriate training for faculty and staff towards the effective implementation of the PLAR policy.
- Provide advice to students and staff who are engaging in the portfolio development process.
- Develop both web based materials and guidebooks for use in the promotion and orientation processes.

### 2.0 Applicant Eligibility

2.1 In accordance with the College admission policy, applicants must be at least 19 years of age or have earned an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent.

2.2 Applicants are not required to enrol in a program before requesting PLAR. However, candidates who receive credit for courses through PLAR must go through the regular admission process in order to gain entrance into a College program.

2.3 In order to ensure appropriate lead time for assessments, students are strongly encouraged to apply for PLAR in the semester preceding delivery of the course(s).

2.4 Students currently enrolled in a course who wish to apply for PLAR, must do so by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of class.

2.5 Students who wish to challenge a course they have previously failed will be required to wait a period of one calendar year prior to being eligible for PLAR.

2.6 These procedures align with the Academic Regulations for the College (Policy #2-201), including residency requirements.

### 3.0 Demonstration, Documentation and Assessment of Prior Learning

- 3.1 Applicants are responsible for providing documentation that demonstrates the validity of the learning, or to participate in an assessment methodology deemed appropriate to the course, the content, and the learning being measured.
- 3.2 The assessment method varies depending on the nature of the course or program and takes into consideration a variety of assessment strategies where possible.
- 3.3 Assessment techniques may include but are not limited to equivalencies, interviews, demonstrations, simulations, product assessment, challenge exams, and portfolio-assisted assessments.
- 3.4 Assessors are College faculty with expertise in both the subject discipline and the specific course content.
- 3.5 Assessors determine the applicant's competency and level of learning to the stated learning outcomes of the course and award recognition and credit.
- 3.6 The assessor may arrange a supplementary challenge to address minor gaps in the assessment(s) if deemed appropriate.
- 3.7 The same standard of rigour within a course is expected when evaluating and granting academic credit in the PLAR process.
- 3.8 If a credit course is to be excluded from PLAR, the reasons and considerations must be clearly documented for the student in the course outline. (An example of an exclusion are those that typically fall outside the realm of the College's jurisdiction, such as specific proctored and assessed clinical hours required by external accrediting bodies.)

### 4.0 PLAR Results

- 4.1 Upon receipt of application, fees and completed assessment, the Registrar's Office will notify the applicant, in writing, of the PLAR results and credits granted, normally within fifteen (15) working days
- 4.2 Official Fleming transcripts will not identify credit or standing earned through PLAR. All reasonable efforts will be made to transcribe credits awarded through PLAR in the same way in which credits are normally transcribed in a course.
- 4.3 Unsuccessful attempts to obtain a credit through PLAR shall not be recorded on a transcript. Transcript entries will be monitored to ensure that the same training is not credited more than once.

### 5.0 Appeal Process

- 5.1 An appeal process is available in the event the assessment is challenged. Appeals shall be managed as per the College's current academic regulations for appeals (*Section 8.0 – Appeal of Academic Assessment*).

## 6.0 Fees

The non-refundable PLAR fee is based on Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities guidelines and is published annually through the Registrar's Office.

Fees will cover costs associated with any assessment technique including, but not limited to:

- delivery of challenge tests
- assessment of challenge test(s)
- assessment of a portfolio and oral interview if required
- assessment of demonstrations, etc.

6.1 A non-refundable assessment fee must be paid in full before an assessment is conducted. Fee payment is for assessment services, not credit achievement.