

Developing a PLAR Assessment

What is PLAR?

PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) is the mechanism by which students are granted academic credit for work and other life experience. *(Please note, this does not include prior post-secondary experience, which is assessed through the [Credit Transfer/Exemption process](#).)*

To receive credit for a course, students must provide evidence of their competency with regards to the Course Learning Requirements. This is done through a PLAR assessment.

What do PLAR assessments look like?

A PLAR assessment might be a portfolio, an exam, an assignment, or something else (e.g. an interview) – whichever format the academic area determines most appropriate. It addresses all of a course's Learning Requirements as identified in the course outline.

Do I need to create a PLAR assessment from scratch?

Not necessarily. Instructors may use their final exam or final assignment, or any combination of assessments currently used in a course. As long as all CLRs are accounted for, a new assessment does not need to be developed.

How are PLARs evaluated?

As per the Ministry's guidelines, PLARs are evaluated using the same grading scheme as if the student had taken the class regularly. If a course normally results in a letter grade, the PLAR should result in a letter grade. If a course is normally graded as a pass/fail, the PLAR should be evaluated with a P or an F.

As the result of a PLAR has the potential to impact a student's GPA, it's important for the student to have a sense of how their PLAR will be assessed. Therefore, a rubric or some other sort of evaluation tool should be included in the PLAR assessment for each course.

Note: The PLAR Office administers assessments and keeps a database of assessments on file. Please do not directly provide students with PLAR assessments, as it creates challenges for the PLAR Office to track student completion, assignment of fees and grade submissions.

PLAR Assessment Checklist

A good PLAR assessment:

- ☐ Is clear for all learners
- ☐ Addresses all the CLRs of a course
- ☐ Is robust enough to support the granting of a letter grade
- ☐ Contains a rubric that demonstrates how the assessment will be graded

Sample Rubric for a PLAR Portfolio

The template below demonstrates how Course Learning Requirements may be used to create a simple portfolio rubric:

Course Learning Requirement	Evidence is insufficient <i>(0-3 points)</i>	Evidence indicates a developing understanding <i>(4-6 points)</i>	Evidence indicates competence <i>(7-9 points)</i>	Evidence indicates an exemplary level of skill <i>(10-12 points)</i>
List CLR 1 and Embedded Knowledge and Skills here				
List CLR 2 and Embedded Knowledge and Skills here				
List CLR 3 and Embedded Knowledge and Skills here				
Total points:				/36

You can modify this rubric to assign different weights to the CLRs and use the total number of points to generate a grade in accordance with the College's Grading Scheme.

When evaluating, the blank spaces can be used to provide feedback on the student's demonstration of competency within each CLR. For example: what, specifically, seemed exemplary? What, specifically, was insufficient or needs elaboration?

Further resources on developing rubrics and other assessment tools can be found on the [Learning & Teaching Services website](#), under "Building Rubrics and Assessments."