

# PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION PROCEDURE

## PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

### Parent Policy

#### *What is this procedure for?*

This is the procedure for the **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)** Policy.

**Prior learning assessment and recognition** is when the College looks at the learning you did before you came to the College. You can sometimes get credit for this learning.

**Assess** or an **assessment** means measuring learning.

### Purpose

#### *What is the purpose of this procedure?*

This procedure tells us how the College **assesses** and recognizes **prior learning**. It makes sure that everyone in the College follows the same procedure.

### Scope and Compliance

#### *Who does the procedure affect?*

This procedure is for credit and non-credit courses.

All employees and learners at Bow Valley College are responsible for knowing and following policies and procedures.

### Procedures

#### *What procedures do you have to follow?*

#### 1. Roles and responsibility

- 1.1. The Vice President (Academic) and Chief Learning Officer is responsible for this policy and procedure.

- 1.2. The Office of the Registrar tracks all **PLAR** requests.
- 1.3. Deans will decide on programs and courses that you can get credit for through **PLAR**. Coordinators and instructors will help the dean. The dean can make exceptions to this procedure.
- 1.4. Coordinators will decide whether an application for **PLAR** meets the requirements. They can have help from content experts. Coordinators will develop and explain processes for assessing prior learning.

**PLAR** means **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition**. It is a process for getting credit for things you have already learned.

## 2. PLAR processes

- 2.1. You may make a **PLAR** request once you have been accepted or waitlisted to a program, including Open Studies.
- 2.2. You give your **PLAR** request to the program area. The program area will tell you within 30 days whether they will do the **assessment**. They will tell you the **fee**, the details of the process, and when the assessment will be finished.
- 2.3. You must pay the **PLAR fee** before the assessment. The fee is non-refundable (the College will not pay it back to you).
- 2.4. After you pay the **fee**, the program area will arrange the assessment.
- 2.5. You may not get credit through **PLAR** for BVC courses you have failed. Deans can make an exception if you have had more experience since you took the course.

A **fee** is money you pay for a service.

## 3. Prior learning assessment

- 3.1. The program area will **assess** your prior learning in a way that fits the course you are requesting credit for. The assessment will make sure you have met the learning outcomes for the course. Prior learning assessment can include:
  - 3.1.1. **Portfolio assessment:** A portfolio is a collection of information that shows your learning. Some extra assessment may be required.
  - 3.1.2. **Examinations or assignments:** These may include paper, online, or oral (spoken) exams. They may include written assignments.
  - 3.1.3. **Skills assessment:** You may show your skills in an environment, for example a laboratory, clinical, or practicum setting.

- 3.1.4. **Review of employer-based training:** The College can look at training you got through a job. You will get credit if the skills you learned closely match what is taught in the course.
- 3.2. You are responsible for giving the College all the documents and proof to support your request for **PLAR**.
- 3.3. You should continue taking the course you have requested credit for until you find out the results of your **PLAR**.
- 3.4. Everything you give the College for **PLAR** is confidential. That means the College will not show it to anyone. It will only be used for the PLAR. You can look at your application, including any information that the College adds to your file. You will not get your documents and materials back unless you ask for them.
- 3.5. The program coordinator must approve credit for prior learning.
- 3.6. When the prior learning assessment is finished, the program area will tell the learner and the Office of the Registrar.

#### 4. Credit and graduation

- 4.1. If you get credits through **PLAR** you will get a grade of PL (prior learning) on your **transcript**. For high school or upgrading courses, you may get a percentage or a letter grade instead of PL.
- 4.2. If the program area does not give you credit for prior learning, they will not put it on your **transcript**.
- 4.3. If you get credit through **PLAR**, it is only for that course. It is not for any **prerequisite** for that course.
- 4.4. There is a time limit for getting **PLAR**. It is the same time limit as **transfer credit**. Time limits are different for different courses and programs.
- 4.5. The College does not use credits you get through **PLAR** to decide if you are part-time or full-time.
- 4.6. The College requires learners to do 25% of their courses at Bow Valley College in order to graduate. This is called a residency requirement. You can get up to 75% of your program credits through courses taken at a different college or through **PLAR**.

Your **transcript** is a list of your courses and grades.

A **prerequisite** is a course you have to take before taking another more advanced course.

**Transfer credit** is when you get credit for courses you took at another school or college.

- 4.7. Credits you get through **PLAR** may meet Bow Valley College graduation requirements. Another college may or may not recognize PLAR credits from Bow Valley College.

## 5. Appeals

- 5.1. You may **appeal** the decision for PLAR.

When you **appeal** a decision, you ask the College to look at it again.

## 6. Recognition of PLAR awarded by other institutions

- 6.1. Bow Valley College will allow you to **transfer credit** for courses with a **PLAR** grade from other Colleges if the courses meet the requirements.

## Definitions

**Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR):** This is a process of recognizing what you have already learned. Prior learning can include skills and knowledge you got through formal and informal learning. You may get this learning through work experience, training, independent study, or volunteering.