

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION

Approval Authority	Senate
Responsible Executive	Provost and Vice-President, Academic
Related Policies / Legislation	Transfer credit (107) Course Credit (105) Credentials (64) Final Grade Appeal (217)

PURPOSE

This policy is to establish principles, standards, and criteria for the assessment and recognition of credit for students' prior learning.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the assessment and recognition of students' prior learning. It does not apply to transfer credit for courses from recognized institutions, which is governed under Transfer Credit policy.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the following definitions apply:

Credit: A numeric value assigned to a course which indicates the course's weight relative to courses across the university.

Course challenge process: A method of PLAR in which a student's learning is evaluated through a faculty-developed examination or other final evaluation instrument designed to test for knowledge directly related to the learning outcomes of a specific course.

Portfolio: A collection of documents, objects and other evidence compiled by the candidate that demonstrates tangible proof of learning and reflection on the learning.

Portfolio assessment: A method of PLAR in which a student's portfolio is assessed against the learning outcomes of a course or program.

Prior Learning: Learning acquired outside the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), typically through professional, work or life experiences, independent study, or through completion of courses that are not eligible for transfer credit under UFV's Transfer Credit policy.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): The process of identifying, assessing and recognizing what a person already knows and can do for the purpose of awarding academic credit. (*Canadian Labor Force Development Board, 1999*)

Resident credit: Credits obtained by taking courses through UFV.

Transfer credit: Credit granted for the completion of a course or program taken at another institution

or agency.

Unassigned credit: Credit given for learning that does not equate to specific UFV courses but is considered worthy of credit towards a UFV credential.

POLICY

The University of the Fraser Valley recognizes that learning takes place in a variety of ways, and that giving credit for students' prior learning can improve students' access to and completion of programs, eliminate duplication of learning, and optimize the use of resources. Credit shall be given for demonstrated learning that is consistent with the learning outcomes and standards required for UFV programs.

UFV is committed to providing flexible, accessible, fair, and transparent assessment processes while maintaining academic rigour. UFV departments and schools are encouraged to provide opportunities for credit through PLAR for programs and courses.

The university adheres to the following principles for PLAR:

1. Credit is awarded only for demonstrated learning that reflects knowledge, skills, and attributes at a level of achievement appropriate to the subject, course or program. Credit is not given for experience alone.
 2. The determination of level, type, and amount of credit granted will be made only by UFV faculty members with expertise in the subject matter.
 3. Credit shall not be given more than once for the same learning.
 4. UFV will provide information, advice, and support for students seeking PLAR, and for faculty members involved in assessments.
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REGULATIONS

Eligibility for PLAR

1. PLAR is available only to applicants admitted to UFV programs and to UFV students who are currently enrolled in credit courses or eligible to register under re-admission regulations.
2. Official course outlines will indicate whether credit through PLAR methods is available. UFV departments/schools will determine whether program-based assessments are available.
3. Only credit applicable to the student's intended or current program of studies at UFV, in a discipline taught at UFV, will be assessed.
4. Credit sought through PLAR cannot duplicate any other body of learning that previously has been taken for credit at UFV, has been assessed for prior learning, or is eligible for transfer credit.

Assessment processes

1. The department head or director for the discipline approves the student's request, provided the above criteria are met, and designates a faculty member with the qualifications and content expertise to act as the evaluator.
 2. The evaluator, in consultation with the student and in accordance with policies of the department or school, will determine the PLAR assessment method(s) most appropriate for the program and courses. Methods may include but are not limited to course challenge processes and portfolio assessments.
 3. Regardless of the method used, the student must demonstrate learning that meets the learning outcomes of the course or program. The evaluator determines the level and amount of credit
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- supported by the assessment and assigns the final grade.
4. The student will be charged a non-refundable fee, payable in advance, to proceed with the PLAR assessment.
 5. Once students have registered and paid for PLAR assessments, withdrawals are not permitted other than through the appeal process, when extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control prevent the student from completing the assessment.

Grading and Recognition of PLAR credit

1. Grading normally will be on a Credit/No credit (CR/NCR) basis; letter grades may be assigned only when both the student and evaluator agree.
2. The student's transcript will indicate that credit was earned through PLAR. Whether or not the outcome is successful, the transcript will show the course, or the discipline and level for unassigned credits, the number of credits, and the grade.
3. PLAR credit is given for learning achieved outside UFV and therefore is not resident credit at UFV. Residency requirements limit the number of PLAR credits that can be used towards completion of programs.
4. PLAR credits are not included in the UFV Grade Point Average, do not count towards a student's semester course load, and do not apply to the qualifications for full-time or part-time student status, student financial aid, awards and/or scholarships, or Dean's list.

UFV will grant transfer credit for credits obtained through PLAR at other recognized institutions on the same basis as if they had been taken through courses offered by the institution.

Appeals

Students will have access to UFV's final grade appeal process.

Appeals related to the assessment process itself must be submitted in writing, with a clear rationale and supporting documentation, to the dean responsible for the discipline. The decision of the dean is final.

APPENDICES

Prior Learning assessment (PLA) Implementation Guidelines for British Columbia – Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2), 1999, available on the BCCAT website.