



**Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR)**

**Board Received:** January 25 2016

**Review Date:** February 2020

Accountability:

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Students receive credits through PLAR process

Purpose:

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby students may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside of secondary school.

PLAR procedure is informed by Ministry policy and guidelines:

- a) PPM 129 (2001) outlines the requirements for day school students; PPM 132 (2003) provides direction to school boards regarding how mature students earn PLAR credits
- b) Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school

Procedures:

1. In order to ensure consistency in the process and to facilitate delivery, the Grand Erie District School Board will deliver PLAR through a model managed by its system PLAR Committee. The committee shall be comprised of:
  - Principal of Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (Chair)
  - Principal of Sprucedale Secondary School
  - Program Coordinator – Secondary
  - Teacher Consultant – Secondary
  - Department Head of Guidance (Guidance Heads' Chair)
  - Adult Education Guidance Counsellor
  - Superintendent of Education who is responsible for Secondary Program (or designate)
2. There are two PLAR procedures dependent upon whether the applicant seeking the recognition for previously acquired knowledge and skills is classified as a mature student or a day-school student.
3. PPM 132 (2003) defines a mature student as, "...a student who is at least eighteen years of age (i.e., an adult) on or before December 31 of the school year in which he or she returns to school, who was not enrolled in a day school program for a period of at least one year, and who is enrolled in a secondary school program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD."

4. PLAR information for day school and mature students is included in each Secondary School Course Calendar and on the Grand Erie District School Board website.
5. PLAR Procedures for Day School Students:
  - a) Grand Erie's PLAR procedure is informed by Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 129 (2001)
  - b) Students are eligible to challenge for PLAR when they are enrolled in a regular day school program in a secondary school within the Grand Erie District School Board
  - c) Student and parent (if the student is under the age of 18) will meet with the PLAR Committee Chair before the first week of October
  - d) Student supplies reasonable evidence and criteria through the application package and submits to home school Principal for approval to proceed by the end of October in the school year the PLAR credit will be granted
  - e) Based on the receipt of reasonable evidence that the student is likely to be successful, the Principal recommends that the student proceed to Phase 1, and forwards the application package to the system PLAR Committee Chair
  - f) In cases where there is a disagreement with the decision of the Principal about whether or not the student should challenge for credit, the parent or adult student may ask the Superintendent of Education, who is responsible for their school, to review the matter
  - g) System PLAR Committee co-ordinates the administration of individual PLAR assessments
  - h) PLAR challenges are delivered in three phases:
    - Phase 1 consists of a knowledge exam based on Ministry of Education guidelines (November/December);
    - Phase 2 is an independent assignment which demonstrates prior learning related to the curriculum (January – March);
    - Phase 3 is a summative performance/demonstration (April).
  - i) System PLAR Committee will report all results to the home school Principal, who will grant the credit if applicant is successful, and will file all documentation in the student's OSR (May)
  - j) System PLAR Committee will communicate results to all students throughout the process
  - k) System PLAR Committee will maintain Board-wide statistics of challenges completed
  - l) Alternate timelines could be considered at the discretion of the Committee
6. PLAR Procedures for Mature Students
  - a) Grand Erie's PLAR Procedure for Mature Students is informed by the Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum 132 (2003): 'The PLAR process for mature students involves two components: "equivalency" and "challenge". Requirements concerning the application of these procedures differ from those for regular day school students because of the broader life experience of mature students' (p. 2-3)
  - b) Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (GELA) is the facilitator of this process
  - c) To begin the PLAR process, mature students must contact the Principal of GELA at (519)753-6079

- 1) Mature students will be required to successfully complete an individual assessment in English, mathematics, science, Canadian history, and Canadian geography in order to earn the equivalency credits required to bring their total grade 9 and 10 credits up to a maximum of 16;
- 2) Based on prior learning, employment, and experience, mature students may apply to challenge for up to 10 credits in Grade 11 and 12 courses. There is no maximum on the number of credits that may be obtained in any one discipline (*Ontario Secondary Schools*, 1999);
- 3) For equivalency and challenge credits to fulfill diploma requirements, mature students must earn a minimum of 4 senior credits, including Grade 12 English (if Grade 12 English was not previously earned) by taking the necessary courses at a secondary school.

7. Literacy Credential

A mature student must also satisfy the diploma requirement with regard to the successful completion of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course if expectations have been met to register in the course.

8. Community Involvement

The Principal will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities that a mature student will have to complete to earn their OSSD under OSS diploma requirements.