



Niagara Catholic District School Board

## **PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT & RECOGNITION (PLAR) POLICY**

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

400 – Educational Programs

Policy No 400.4

Adopted Date: May 26, 1998

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: February 26, 2019

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the Board supports the implementation of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), a formal evaluation and accreditation process whereby students may obtain credits for prior learning. This includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside Ontario secondary school classrooms. Students have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the overall expectations in the Ontario provincial curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

Religious Education credits cannot be earned through the PLAR challenge in the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

The Director of Education will issue Administrative Procedures for the implementation of this Policy.

#### ***References***

- [\*\*\*Ontario Schools: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2016\*\*\*](#)
- [\*\*\*PPM 129 – Prior Learning, Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\):Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools\*\*\*](#)
- [\*\*\*PPM 132 - Prior Learning, Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) for Mature Students: Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools\*\*\*](#)
- [\*\*\*Ontario Student Record \(OSR\) Guideline, 2000\*\*\*](#)
- [\*\*\*Ontario Student Transcript \(OST\) Manual, 2013\*\*\*](#)
- [\*\*\*Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures\*\*\*
  - \[\\*\\*\\*Ontario Student Record \\(OSR\\) Policy 301.7\\*\\*\\*\]\(#\)](#)



## **PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT & RECOGNITION (PLAR) POLICY**

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The PLAR process involves two components: "challenge" and "equivalency". The "challenge" process assesses students' prior learning for the purpose of granting credit for a course developed from the most current provincial curriculum document. The "equivalency" process is the process of assessing credentials from other jurisdictions.

PLAR procedures are carried out under the direction of the school Principal, who grants the credits.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Regular school student:** a student, other than a mature student, who is enrolled in a regular school program. A student enrolled only in continuing education and/or correspondence courses is not considered a regular school student.

**Mature student:** a student who is at least eighteen years of age on or before December 31 of the school year in which he or she registers in an Ontario secondary school program; who was not enrolled as a regular school student for a period of at least one school year immediately preceding his or her registration in a secondary school program (for mature students, a school year is a period of no less than ten consecutive months immediately preceding the student's return to school); and who is enrolled in a secondary program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD.

### **CHALLENGE CREDITS**

1. All credits gained through the PLAR process must represent the same standards as credits granted to students who have taken the course.
2. Assessment instruments for the challenge process must include formal tests (70 percent of the final mark) and a variety of other assessment strategies appropriate to the particular course (30 percent of the mark). Assessment strategies must be adapted for students with special education needs.
3. Students may earn no more than four credits through the challenge process for Grade 10, 11, 12 courses; or for Levels 1, 2, and 3 in classical and international languages courses; and for Levels 3, 4, and 5 in Native languages courses. No more than two (2) of these credits may be granted in one discipline towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
4. Students must provide proof of competency to the Principal in a subject before they are granted the opportunity to challenge a course. Principals will refer to the appropriate sections for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Regular Day School Students and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students as set out in *Ontario School: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2016*. Appropriate applications for regular school and mature students are set out in Appendix 1.

5. In cases where an adult student (18 years old), or the parent/guardian of a minor student disagrees with the decision of the Principal concerning the student's challenge for credit, the parent/guardian or adult student may follow the Niagara Catholic Complaint Resolution Policy 800.3 to appeal the decision.
6. The challenge process is an evaluation process and may not be used as a way for students to improve a mark in a course for which they have already earned credit, or as a way to obtain a credit for a course in which they were previously unsuccessful.
7. Schools within the Board will provide for challenge only to those students registered with the Board.
8. Schools in the Board will use the forms for the application and tracking of students, regular school and mature students provided by the Ministry of Education: as set out in Appendix 1 along with the forms found in the Niagara Catholic District School Board's PLAR Implementation Manual.
9. The opportunity for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition in the Niagara Catholic District School Board will be described in all Catholic secondary school Course Calendars stating that students can challenge for credit once per year by applying at their home school. PLAR challenges will be administered and supervised at the student's home school.

## EQUIVALENCY CREDITS

1. Students who are eligible for "equivalency" credits are those who transfer to Ontario secondary schools from home schooling, non-inspected private schools or schools outside Ontario.
2. Equivalency credits are granted for placement only by the school Principal. The Principal will determine the total credit equivalency of the student's previous learning, and the number of compulsory and optional credits still to be earned for a diploma. Principals will refer to the appropriate sections for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Regular Day School Students and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students as set out in *Ontario School: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2016*.

In cases where an adult student (18 years old), or the parent/guardian of a minor student disagrees with the decision of the Principal concerning the placement, the adult student or the parent/guardian may follow the Niagara Catholic Complaint Resolution Policy 800.3 to appeal the decision.

### APPENDIX 1 – PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION

#### Forms for Regular School Students

- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION: CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT, Interim Tracking Record
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION: CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT, Cumulative Tracking Record
- APPLICATION TO CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE
- RECORD OF ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE

#### Forms for Mature Students

- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT FOR GRADE 9 AND 10 CREDITS, Interim Tracking Record
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT FOR GRADE 9 AND 10 CREDITS, Cumulative Tracking Record

- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, CHALLENGE PROCESS FOR GRADE 11 AND 12 CREDITS, Interim Tracking Record
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, CHALLENGE PROCESS FOR GRADE 11 AND 12 CREDITS, Cumulative Tracking Record
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, EQUIVALENCY PROCESS FOR GRADE 11 AND 12 CREDITS, Interim Tracking Record
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, EQUIVALENCY PROCESS FOR GRADE 11 AND 12 CREDITS, Cumulative Tracking Record
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, APPLICATION TO CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, APPLICATION FOR ASSESSMENT FOR GRADE 11 AND 12 CREDITS THROUGH EQUIVALENCY PROCESS
- PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS, RECORD OF ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE