

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students

Policy/Program Memoranda No. 132 (Revised September 2023)

What is Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students?

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for mature students is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby mature students may obtain secondary credits for prior learning. These credits can be applied towards earning the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). In some cases, applicants may be eligible for up to 26 of the 30 credits required.

The goal of PLAR is to help mature students move faster and remove barriers to achieve an OSSD and efficiently move forward to sustainable employment, postsecondary education, and apprenticeship.

How Does PLAR Work?

The PLAR process for mature students involves two components: "equivalency" and "challenge".

- The equivalency process is when students participate in individual subject-based assessments and/or an application documenting work, volunteer, and other education related experiences that may be considered for credit.
- The challenge process is when students' prior learning is evaluated using formal evaluation for the purpose of granting credit.

Do All School Boards Offer PLAR?

Yes, all boards must develop and implement policies and procedures related to the equivalency and challenge process. In some cases, school boards will work with their co-terminus board to provide PLAR.

Are There Diploma Requirements for Mature Students?

- There are compulsory credit requirement(s) that a mature student must obtain.
- A mature student must pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) **OR** enroll directly and pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)
- Principals will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities that a mature student may require.

*What if I have a completed Certificate of Apprenticeship or Post Secondary Diploma and or Degree but require my OSSD for Employment Purposes?

Relevant certificates of apprenticeship issued by Skilled Trades Ontario and or postsecondary diplomas and/or degrees from accredited Canadian postsecondary institutions may be eligible for up to 30 credits at the discretion of the principal.

An Ontario Secondary Diploma requires 30 total credits

Up to 26* of the 30 credits may be earned through **PLAR for Mature Students**

Up to 16 of the Grade 9 and 10 credits can be earned through assessments or taking the course	Up to 10/14* of the 14 Grade 11 and 12 credits through challenge or equivalency process, or by taking the course. *up to 14 with evidence of completed Canadian post secondary	Final 4 SR credits must be earned by taking the course, as per PPM 132.
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Quick Facts

Who is a Mature Student?

A mature student is a student who is at least 18 years of age on or after January 1st of the current school year and who is enrolled in a program for the purpose of obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

What is Prior Learning?

Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school.

Is There a Cost?

PLAR is free for residents of Ontario and for those who meet one of the following criteria:

- Refugee claimant
- Permanent resident
- Convention refugee
- Canadian citizen

International visitors may have to pay a fee.

Where do I Find More Information?

Contact your local [school board](#) for more information about PLAR for mature students