Sheridan	THE SHERIDAN COLLEGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND ADVANCED LEARNING

TITLE: PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION PROCEDURE		
Date of Approval: November 22, 2012 **Effective Date:** August 1, 2018 *Revised June 24, 2018*	**Mandatory Review Date:** August 1, 2021	**Approved By:** Office of the Registrar

1. Purpose

The Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (Sheridan) recognizes that the learning outcomes of an individual course or program may be achieved by a number of different means including relevant work/life experience, service, self-study, and training on-the-job. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a challenge for credit process that recognizes and provides students and applicants with an opportunity to have their previous learning assessed and recognized by Sheridan.

2. Scope

Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) is to be made available for as many credit courses as possible in programs of instruction in which enrolment is eligible for funding through the general purpose operating grant. If a credit course is to be excluded from PLAR, the reasons and considerations should be clearly documented for the student.

This Procedure and the related Policy applies to all full and part-time Sheridan students and applicants registered in, or who have applied to postsecondary studies, including Sheridan Certificates, Ontario College Certificates, Ontario College Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas, Post-Graduate Certificates, and Degrees.

3. Definitions

Applicant: is an individual applying to a program, including full-time and part-time course loads.

Applicant (PLAR): A student or applicant who decides to undertake the PLAR process in order to gain recognition or credit for learning acquired through work or life experience

Challenge Process: a method of assessment other than portfolio, developed by a subject-expert faculty to measure an individual's learning achievements against documented course learning outcomes. It measures demonstrated learning through a variety of written and non-written evaluation methods, for the purpose of awarding a credit without requiring enrolment in a course (Council of Regents – 1994).

Evaluation methods may include:
- written test,
- standardized exam,
- demonstration of competence,
- criteria-based interview,
- product assessment,
- simulation,
- other

Course Outline: A detailed description of a course that specifies learning outcomes to be achieved and how the learning outcomes will be evaluated.

Learning Outcomes: Describe what the learner should know and be able to do in order to be granted credit for a course. Some learning outcomes may be deemed essential; others may be optional or desirable. Content or contexts in which learning has been achieved is less important than the demonstration of its achievement (Council of Regents – 1994).

Portfolio is a presentation of samples of work demonstrating knowledge and skill in the area in which the student or potential student is seeking PLAR. Details on what is included in a portfolio vary depending on the field.

Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR): The process which uses a variety of tools to help learners reflect on, identify, articulate and demonstrate past learning which has been acquired through work experience, unrecognized training, independent study, volunteer activities, and hobbies and which is not recognized through formal transfer of credit mechanisms. PLAR allows the evaluation of past learning against established academic standards so that credit can be awarded by a credentialing body. (Council of Regents – 1996)

4. Procedure

To be eligible for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) a student or Applicant must be able to demonstrate what they have learned from their various relevant work/life experiences. Through the PLAR process Applicants have their prior learning assessed according to course or program outcomes and formal credit is awarded. PLAR requests should be submitted as early as possible.

Receiving PLAR credit may affect a student's course load which in turn may impact fees and eligibility for OSAP, scholarships, bursaries and other sponsorships. It is the student's or potential student's responsibility to check their status when applying for PLAR.

4.1 Analysis of Prior Learning, Determination of Eligibility, Application to PLAR

Self-Assessment: the PLAR self-assessment form is completed by the student or applicant to analyze prior learning. The form will also help determine eligibility of the course. The self-assessment form is not part of the PLAR challenge(s), and is not used

in calculating the PLAR grade. The Program Coordinator or Assessor may waive the self-assessment form requirement.

Advising: the Applicant may meet with a PLAR Advisor, this step is optional. PLAR Advisors are available in the Office of the Registrar and include Admission Specialists and Records Specialists. The Advisor may assist the student when required with the self-assessment form, confirm the course is eligible for PLAR, ensure the student is academically eligible for PLAR, and may start the online request, which is the application to PLAR. A referral to the Program Coordinator will be made. Faculty of Continuing and Professional Studies (FCAPS) students use the paper application, available online through Access Sheridan, and submits the application and self-assessment form to the FCAPS Office.

Program Coordinator: the Applicant contacts the Program Coordinator. The completed self-assessment form is reviewed, and eligibility to PLAR confirmed by the Coordinator. Once eligibility is established, the Coordinator will start the PLAR online request if not previously started, and assigns one PLAR Assessor. As an exception, the Associate Dean may authorize more than one PLAR Assessor if the nature of the assessment warrants that multiple professors are required to make the assessment. The Coordinator may act as the PLAR Assessor when they are the course lead, or subject matter expert. A waiver form should be completed at this time if needed.

If seeking credit for multiple courses, it will be at the discretion of the Program Coordinator to determine whether PLAR at the program level is appropriate. If eligible, based on a program gap analysis, a PLAR learning contract is negotiated by the Applicant and the PLAR Assessor. Timelines for completion will vary and additional fees may be incurred.

4.2   Payments and PLAR Challenge

Payment: The Assessor will review the related documentation, then request payment from the applicant. The payment should be made within 10 business days of the payment request. The PLAR Action Plan will then be discussed, which identifies the assessment, the timelines and the PLAR process. The information will be entered in the online request by the Assessor, and the Applicant signs off on and accepts the plan in the online Credit Transfer Centre. FCAPS Assessors and Applicants complete a paper copy of the action plan.

Timelines: PLAR challenges must be completed within the specified time period. PLAR challenges for portfolios must be completed within 60 business days, and all other types of challenges within 20 days, of the Applicant signing off on the Action Plan. In exceptional circumstances, as in the case of the PLAR Learning Contract, timelines are determined by the PLAR Assessor.

Exam Fee: The Assessment Centre will be charging a fee for invigilation services for PLAR challenge exams as of September 1, 2018.

Evaluation and Grading: The PLAR Assessor will complete the evaluation of the PLAR challenge within four weeks of submission. In exceptional situations, the

process may take longer and the Applicant will be notified of the new timelines – additional fees will not apply in this case. The PLAR Assessor enters the grade in the online request, and the OTR posts the grade on the student record. FCAPS PLAR grades are entered on the paper application and submitted to the OTR for entering.

Assessor Payment: If the PLAR Assessor is to be paid for the assessment, the PLAR payment form is completed, and the original signed form is submitted to Assistant to the Registrar, D100, Trafalgar Campus. Only non-full-time employees may be eligible for additional compensation for performing the assessment. If you are not a full-time employee and believe that you are eligible, please fill out the attached form, and send to Assistant to the Registrar, D100 Trafalgar campus.

Documents: When appropriate, all documentation will be returned to the Applicant by the PLAR Assessor after the appeal deadline. In the case of a challenge exam, the exam itself will not be returned to the Applicant but the Applicant will be provided with the final evaluation. If the Applicant wishes s/he may see the exam in the Faculty office. The Applicant will be notified through their Sheridan email account or by phone when the documentation is ready for pick up. Photo ID must be shown at the time of pick up.

4.3   Transcription and Notifications

Applicants who have successfully completed a PLAR challenge will have the grade recorded on their transcript as per the course outline. Failing grades will not be noted on the transcript. For the purposes of calculation of residency, PLAR credits will not be counted.

The Applicant may be notified of the PLAR outcome by the Assessor, or the Office of the Registrar. Applicants may view PLAR grades in their My Student Centre account – Credit Transfer Centre link.

If you apply for PLAR at start of term, and are registered in the course you are challenging, you may not have a response before the last day to withdraw without academic penalty. If you remain in the course, the grade you received in the course will be recorded on your transcript.

4.4   Appeals

Applicants have the right to appeal the decision regarding the granting of PLAR through the Academic Appeals and Consideration Policy. Appeals must be submitted within three days of receipt of the PLAR decision. You may appeal the numeric grade awarded or an unsuccessful outcome.

5. Related Documentation/Links/Forms
1. [Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Policy](#)
2. [Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Application Package](#)
3. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Co-op
4. Advising Package for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
5. [Credit Transfer Policy](#)

6. [Graduation Policy](#)
7. [Academic Appeals and Consideration Policy](#)
8. [Academic Standing Policy](#)
9. [Admission Policy](#)
10. [Grading Policy](#)