



ACAD 28:

Prior Learning, Assessment and Recognition

Effective Date: Friday, April 17, 2026

1.0 SCOPE

1.1 Authority

This policy is approved under the authority of the Board of Directors upon recommendation of the Vice President Academic and Research (VPAR) and is administered through the Office of the Registrar in collaboration with academic programs and faculty.

1.2 Application

The policy applies to all applicants seeking recognition of prior learning toward: undergraduate, diploma and certificate programs; courses and program requirements

PLAR may apply to learning acquired through:

- Employment or professional experience
- Community engagement and leadership
- Cultural knowledge and teachings
- Land-based learning
- Non-credit training programs
- Independent study or self-directed learning

PLAR recognizes learning achieved through experience rather than experience alone.

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the assessment and recognition of prior learning acquired outside formal post-secondary education.

2.2 Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig (SKG) recognizes that valuable learning occurs through diverse pathways including work experience, community leadership, cultural knowledge, land-based learning, and independent study. The Prior Learning

Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process enables students to receive academic credit for learning that is demonstrably equivalent to the learning outcomes of SKG courses or programs.

2.3 This policy supports equitable access to post-secondary education while maintaining the academic standards and quality assurance expectations of SKG.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

3.1 PLAR at SKG is guided by the following principles:

- recognition of diverse knowledge systems and ways of learning
- respect for Indigenous knowledge and community-based learning
- transparency and fairness in the assessment process
- academic integrity and alignment with course learning outcomes
- support for student access and mobility within higher education

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

A formal process used to assess and recognize learning acquired outside traditional academic settings to determine whether academic credit may be awarded.

4.2 Experiential Learning

Learning gained through work experience, community engagement, cultural practices, or life experiences.

4.3 Portfolio Assessment

A structured collection of documentation and reflective analysis demonstrating that prior learning meets the learning outcomes of a specific course or program.

4.4 Challenge Assessment

An evaluation method allowing students to demonstrate learning through examinations, demonstrations, interviews, or practical assessments.

5.0 ELIGIBILITY

5.1 Students may apply for PLAR if they:

5.1.1 are admitted or applying for admission to an SKG program

5.1.2 can demonstrate that prior learning aligns with course learning outcomes

5.2 Students may not request PLAR for courses they have previously attempted or completed.

6.0 CREDIT LIMITS

PLAR credit may normally be awarded for **up to 50% of the credits required for a program**, unless restricted by program accreditation requirements or external regulatory bodies.

Individual programs may establish additional limits where required.

7.0 ASSESSMENT METHODS

PLAR may be assessed using one or more of the following methods.

7.1 Portfolio Assessment

Students may submit a portfolio demonstrating how their prior learning aligns with course learning outcomes.

Evidence may include:

- work samples or reports
- reflective learning statements
- documentation of community projects
- training certificates or professional credentials
- letters verifying experience
- documentation of cultural or land-based learning

7.2 Challenge Assessment

Students may demonstrate learning through:

- written examinations
- oral presentations
- interviews
- practical demonstrations
- skills assessments

7.3 Cultural and Community Knowledge Recognition

SKG recognizes that knowledge may also be acquired through cultural teachings and community engagement.

Evidence may include:

- teachings from Elders or Knowledge Keepers
- participation in cultural practices or ceremonies
- language knowledge or revitalization work
- land-based learning experiences

Where appropriate, Elders or Knowledge Keepers may participate in the assessment process.

8.0 APPLICATION PROCESS

8.1 The PLAR process typically includes the following steps.

8.1.1 Step 1 – Advising

Students consult with the Registrar's Office or Academic Advisor to determine whether PLAR may be appropriate.

8.1.2 Step 2 – Application

- Students submit a PLAR application identifying the course(s) for which credit is requested and providing initial documentation.
- A PLAR assessment fee may apply.

8.1.3 Step 3 – Evidence Submission

Students prepare documentation demonstrating how prior learning meets the learning outcomes of the course or program.

8.1.4 Step 4 – Assessment

- The submission is reviewed by a qualified faculty member or subject matter expert.
- Additional assessment methods may be used where appropriate.

8.1.5 Step 5 – Decision

The assessor determines whether prior learning is equivalent to the learning outcomes of the course.

Possible outcomes include:

- credit granted
- partial credit
- additional evidence required
- credit not granted

8.2 Recording of Credit

8.3 PLAR credit will be recorded on the student's transcript.

PLAR credits normally appear as **credit granted (CR)** and do not receive a letter grade.

9.0 APPEALS

Students may appeal PLAR decisions through the institutional **Academic Appeals Process**.

10.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 Registrar's Office:

10.1.1 administers PLAR applications

10.1.2 maintains official records

10.1.3 coordinates assessment processes

10.2 Faculty or Assessors

10.2.1 evaluate portfolios or challenge assessments

10.2.2 ensure alignment with course learning outcomes

10.3 Students

10.3.1 provide accurate and complete documentation

10.3.2 demonstrate how prior learning meets course outcomes

11.0 ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

11.1 The PLAR framework supports SKG's mission by:

- recognizing Indigenous knowledge systems
- strengthening community-based education pathways
- supporting student mobility and access to higher education
- promoting lifelong learning

12.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **every three years** to ensure alignment with institutional priorities, quality assurance requirements, and evolving best practices in prior learning recognition.