PROCEDURE TITLE: NC800 – Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR)

RELATED POLICY: NC800 Admissions & Pathways - Postsecondary

A. Definitions

Course Outline: A detailed description of a course specifying the 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 while others may be optional or desirable.

Portfolio: A presentation of samples of work demonstrating knowledge and skill in the area in which the students or applicant is seeking PLAR. Details on which is included in a portfolio vary depending on the field.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): The process which uses a variety of tools to assist adult students reflect on, identify, articulate, and demonstrate past learning acquired through work and other life experiences 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. In Ontario Colleges, the PLAR system currently evaluates prior learning and relates it to existing courses through portfolio assessment and/or challenge evaluation for the purpose of granting college credit.

B. Procedure Purpose

This procedure sets out the guidelines for learners to earn credit for courses based on formal demonstration of prior learning, usually acquired through study, work and other life experiences that is not recognized through formal credit transfer mechanisms.

C. Procedure Statements

1. The PLAR process used at Niagara College is based on Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) standards. PLAR applicants shall be expected to demonstrate a level of achievement consistent with that of students who have successfully completed the course.

2. PLAR applicants are advised that assessments require time and often involve multiple service areas. It is recommended that applicants start this process no later than three (3) weeks prior to the start of classes. There is no guarantee of seat availability.
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3. PLAR results are not eligible to be used for meeting residency requirements.

4. Each PLAR application will be evaluated by a qualified assessor, as assigned by the Academic Administrator responsible for the course.

5. A PLAR applicant must demonstrate the attainment of the stated learning outcomes through a method determined by the assessor, generally including but not limited to, one or more of the following:
   a) presentation of a portfolio
   b) demonstration of specific skill or skills
   c) competency test(s)
   d) submission of assignment(s); and/or
   e) structured interview(s)

6. A grade consistent with the Course Outline is assessed.

7. PLAR may not be used to satisfy a course that has been previously failed.

8. PLAR results may be appealed as an Appeal of Admissions Decisions.

9. Not all courses are PLAR eligible. Details can be found within the course outline.

D. Forms/Related Documents

Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Information Form
Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Application Form
Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Client Description Form
## E. Document History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Approval/Review/Key Change(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 8, 2006</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30, 2011</td>
<td>Format and general updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16, 2022</td>
<td>General updates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Addition of references to no seat guarantee and residency requirements</td>
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