

Title of Policy	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
Policy Number	2.5.5
Effective Date	February 2024

STEPS

A. Apply

1. The candidate submits application for admission to College of the Rockies (the College) program.
2. The College determines the candidate to be eligible for admission.

B. Preliminary Information on PLAR

1. Potential candidate and Education Advisor discuss general process of PLAR.
2. Education Advisor may initiate discussion with the relevant Department Head on the availability of a Faculty Assessor.
3. Faculty Assessor considers request and decides if PLAR is possible in accordance with limitations specified in the policy. If the request is denied, the Faculty Assessor must provide a rationale.

C. Plan

1. Faculty Assessor and candidate discuss options and complete PLAR Planning and Reporting Form, including signatures to agree to the stated expectations and terms.
2. The candidate registers and pays fee for course(s).

D. Complete Activities

1. In consultation with the Faculty Assessor, the candidate completes and submits required activities/evidence of prior learning.

E. Evaluation

1. Faculty Assessor evaluates submissions and assigns a grade.

F. Reporting

1. Faculty assessor completes PLAR Planning and Reporting Form to document the grade and submits to the Office of the Registrar to update the student's record.

Note: Adequate time is required for consideration and evaluation of PLAR requests. Candidates must plan in advance. If planning to use PLAR towards a program or course requirement in an upcoming term, candidates should normally initiate their requests 3-4 months in advance of the start of the term. All candidates are encouraged to check with the Education Advisor.

Prior Learning can be assessed in a variety of methods, including but not limited to the following examples:

- 1. Challenge Examination:** Written, oral, and/or practical tests or assignments as determined appropriate by a department/program. Challenge exams are developed by the department/program in which credit is sought for courses which the department/program deems suitable for challenge. Individual course objectives/learning outcomes are assessed.
 - A. **challenge exam:** a test, exam, or special assignment/project (written or oral) designed to validate the knowledge of the candidate as it relates to course requirements. A challenge exam may be the same test or exam given to students who formally attend the course. Any test or exam is limited to questions that are directly related to the learning objectives and outcomes of the course. A project or assignment must be comprehensive in scope to cover course outcomes.*
 - B. **standardized test:** similar to a challenge exam; however, this test or exam is usually developed by someone other than the Assessor. It is focused around widely recognized standards (as set by a department or professional/sectorial organization) that are equivalent to the course objectives.*

- 2. Portfolio-assisted Assessment:** Assessment of documentation that systematically provides evidence of an individual's learning experiences and accomplishments in relation to course objectives/learning outcomes. This documentation may include a self-reflection. An interview may also be required as a component of this assessment.
 - A. **products/portfolio:** documents or objects that have been produced by the candidate and demonstrate tangible proof of accomplishment. These may include, but are not limited to, reports, computer printouts, videos, illustrations, prototype models, or an artist's portfolio. Students may be asked to demonstrate abilities or answer questions about the portfolio by the assessor.*
 - B. **interview:** oral questioning. The PLAR interview is focused around course objectives and may include techniques such as open-ended questions, case studies, and prepared analyses. The interview is used to clarify areas of learning, and may be used in parallel with other methods, as a sole method of assessment, and/or as a means to ensure authenticity of products.*
 - C. **self-assessment:** assessment performed by the candidate, usually with the aid of an established form or questionnaire. Normally requires a parallel assessment by a field expert and/or Faculty Assessor.*

- 3. Work-based Assessment:** Assessment of a student's prior learning (knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or values) as demonstrated in a simulated or real setting. Learning is demonstrated in a comprehensive way, showing knowledge, understanding, and levels of competence in relation to the course objectives/learning outcomes.
- A. **demonstration:** simulation or actual presentation of candidate's abilities, which may be live, recorded, or videotaped. The demonstration may include, but is not limited to, such activities as presenting a speech, role-playing a situation, creating a document on computer, giving a musical performance, performing a lab experiment, interviewing a client, operating equipment, or completing a procedure.
 - B. **worksite assessment:** the candidate is observed in the workplace performing tasks as part of a normal work routine, or as a specifically assigned task. Assessment is normally made by faculty assigned to a candidate but may also be made by a work supervisor or field expert. If performed by an external assessor, it may be followed up by a self-assessment and/or interview with a Faculty Assessor.
 - C. **external feedback:** assessment provided by an expert other than College faculty. Assessment method may include, but is not limited to, job performance evaluation, letter of validation, or worksite assessment, and may require follow-up by faculty.
- 4. Other forms of Assessment:** as agreed on by the Assessor and applicant and relevant to the course/program outcomes or objectives.