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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Recognition of Prior Learning Policy</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Academic
<b>Policy #:</b>	AC100-07
<b>Effective Date:</b>	June 2014
<b>Approved by:</b>	Executive Team, October 28, 2020
<b>Revised:</b>	October 28, 2020
<b>Review date:</b>	October 28, 2025

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**1. Introduction**

Centennial College (“the College”) is committed to expanding access to learning through the removal of barriers and the development of pathways that support continued learning for learners. The College supports the meaningful assessment and recognition of all relevant prior learning.

**2. Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate the College’s commitment to, and standardization of processes and procedures for, the assessment and recognition of all forms of prior learning.

**3. Scope**

This Policy applies to all Centennial College recognition of prior learning practices, including

- equivalent/substitute credit;
- transfer credit; and,
- prior learning assessment and recognition.

**4. Definitions**

- 4.1 **Articulation Agreement** is an academic partnership activity between two or more institutions or organizations that recognizes learning achievement, facilitates learner progress, minimizes curriculum duplication, and eases the transition from one institution to the other.
- 4.2 **Advanced Standing** refers to the granting of admission to a program at an entry point beyond Semester One based on prior formal learning obtained through a post-secondary education program.
- 4.3 **Equivalent/Substitute Credit** refers to the awarding of credit for previous completion of the same or similar Centennial College course.
- 4.4 **Fast-Track Progression** is the awarding of advanced standing through a separately established Centennial College program, where admission requirements include prior completion of a relevant post-secondary credential.
- 4.5 **Learning outcomes affinity** refers to the assessed similarity between two sets of

course or program learning outcomes.

- 4.6 **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)** is a process that uses a variety of assessment methods to help learners reflect on, identify, articulate, and demonstrate past learning. Prior learning can be acquired through study, work, and other life experiences that are not recognized through the formal transfer credit mechanism<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.7 **Qualification Recognition** is the assessment of a foreign post-secondary credential that determines the credibility, validity, learning value and grade equivalencies of a learner's academic history.
- 4.8 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is an all-encompassing term for all advanced standing, transfer credit and prior learning assessment and recognition processes. Central to RPL processes are the assessments of prior learning in an effort to evaluate the learner's sufficient demonstration of learning outcomes.
- 4.9 **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Assessor** is a program coordinator or other faculty member appointed by the program chair, responsible as the point of contact and/or subject-matter expert for RPL assessments.
- 4.10 **Transfer Credit** is the awarding of course credit for previously completed academic credit obtained from a recognized post-secondary institution or equivalent.

## 5. Principles

- 5.1 The College shall foster consistent, fair, non-discriminatory, and reasonable RPL practices that assess and award previous demonstration of curriculum-relevant knowledge and/or skills.
- 5.2 The College shall deliver efficient RPL services to the learner, minimizing work duplication and maximizing interdepartmental communication.
- 5.3 The College shall promote quality with the continual improvement of RPL processes through data reporting, departmental self-assessments, and periodic reviews.
- 5.4 The College shall preserve and strengthen the integrity and value of conferred Centennial College credentials through accountable, sound, and transparent processes.
- 5.5 The College is committed to incorporating the Ministry of Colleges and Universities directives, learning-centred principles, and outcomes-based learning into all RPL processes.

## 6. Recognition of Prior Learning Practices

### 6.1 Recognition of Prior Learning Credit Limits

- 6.1.1 Course credit awarded through equivalent/substitute credit, waiver, advanced

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. (2003). Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Resource Document.

standing, transfer credit and/or PLAR shall not exceed 75% of total program hours. For degree programs, course credit awarded through PLAR shall not exceed 50% of total program hours.

- 6.1.2 In order to satisfy College residency requirements, learners must complete a minimum of 25% program hours at the College through classroom, distance learning and/or hybrid courses for successful completion of a program.
- 6.1.3 Reduction of course load as a result of earning credits through RPL may affect eligibility for financial assistance through the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) and visa status for international students.

## **6.2 Equivalent/Substitute Credit**

- 6.2.1 Where course codes are identical, credit shall be automatically granted for a Centennial course required in a program of instruction that has been previously completed in another Centennial program. Courses with different course codes shall be assessed through the equivalent/substitute credit procedure.
- 6.2.2 Grades for previously completed courses that are considered equivalent shall be included in the cumulative program Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation.
- 6.2.3 Equivalent/substitute credit may be granted by the Academic Manager (Dean or designate) for previous completion of a similar Centennial course. A similar Centennial course requires a minimum of 80% learning outcomes affinity.

## **6.3 Waiver**

- 6.3.1 In certain circumstances, a waiver may be granted for cases where the Academic Manager (Dean or designate) has determined it is reasonable for the learner to be waived from completing a course.
- 6.3.2 Waivers shall be granted for math and English communications (COMM) courses at the level of a student's placement level in College math and communications skills assessment, e.g., waivers shall only be granted for COMM 160/161 when the learner's College communication skills assessment placement is at the COMM 170/171 level.

## **6.4 Transfer Credit**

- 6.4.1 Credit courses completed at other recognized post-secondary institutions or eligible licensing/accreditation bodies are eligible for transfer credit at the College on a course-by-course basis. Transfer credit may be awarded for official Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced Level (A-Level), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. Transfer credit shall not be awarded for non-credit or pass/fail courses.
- 6.4.2 Transfer credit shall not be awarded for non-credit or pass/fail courses. In certain exceptional circumstances, the Academic Manager (Dean or designate) may grant the evaluation of such applications.

- 6.4.3 Transfer credit shall not be awarded to Graduate Certificate courses for Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, or Degree courses. In certain exceptional circumstances, the Academic Manager (Dean or designate) may grant the evaluation of such applications.
- 6.4.4 Core courses must have been completed within 5 years prior to the current semester to be considered for transfer credit unless otherwise specified by the academic School. General Education (GNED) and English communications (COMM) courses must have been completed within 10 years prior to the current semester to be considered for transfer credit.
- 6.4.5 The College may charge a fee for transfer credit applications beyond the first attempt for the same Centennial course.
- 6.4.6 Transfer credit may be awarded based on the assessment of a combination of external courses or a part of one external course, i.e., transfer credit for one College course may be awarded for two external courses and transfer credit for two College courses may be awarded for one external course.
- 6.4.7 Courses for which transfer credit has been awarded may not be used again to apply for additional transfer credit.
- 6.4.8 For English communications (COMM) courses, transfer credit shall only be granted for COMM 170/171. The student's placement level in the College communications skills assessment must be at the COMM 170/171 level.
- 6.4.9 Transfer credits for math courses shall only be awarded at the level of a student's placement level in College math skills assessment.
- 6.4.10 Transfer credit can only be applied to a failed course if the equivalent course was successfully completed after the failed course.
- 6.4.11 Advanced standing and/or transfer credit may also be awarded through articulation agreements between Centennial College and other institutions.
- 6.4.12 Qualification Recognition is required of any learner who intends to apply for transfer credit using prior formal learning from an institution outside of Canada.
- 6.4.13 The RPL Assessor is solely responsible for carrying out transfer credit assessments for the course(s) in which they have subject matter expertise, as determined by the Chair.
- 6.4.14 Courses that were taken as part of a post-secondary credential used to obtain credit through an articulation agreement, or admission to a fast-track progression program, may not be used to obtain further transfer credits.
- 6.4.15 Grades for courses used to obtain transfer credit shall not be included in the learner's GPA calculation.
- 6.4.16 Wherever accreditation requirements dictate a need for additional transfer

credit standards, these additions may be implemented by the Academic Manager (Dean or designate) in consultation with the Senior Manager, Office of Academic Partnerships and Pathways.

## **6.5 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)**

- 6.5.1 Where possible, PLAR shall be available to learners. For courses in which PLAR is not available, rationale for this decision shall be clearly communicated on the course outline and through any other suitable medium.
- 6.5.2 Credit may be awarded through PLAR on a course-by-course basis for knowledge and skill obtained from prior formal (i.e., post-secondary study), non-formal (e.g., seminars, workshops) and/or informal (e.g., employment, hobbies) learning. PLAR credit shall not be awarded for knowledge and skills obtained from audited courses.
- 6.5.3 Learners may elect to apply for PLAR assessment without being registered for the course.
- 6.5.4 Learners who do not succeed in obtaining transfer credit for specific prior formal learning are permitted to use such learning in a PLAR attempt.
- 6.5.5 Learners are eligible to apply for PLAR for Centennial courses in which they have previously received an unsatisfactory/failing grade one year after receiving the final grade by providing proof of additional relevant learning.
- 6.5.6 Learners shall not be exempt from entrance exams, comprehensive examinations, research reports, and/or theses based on PLAR if these are standard requirements of the program.
- 6.5.7 The RPL Assessor is solely responsible for carrying out PLAR assessments for the course(s) in which they have subject matter expertise, as determined by the Chair.
- 6.5.8 PLAR assessments must be culminating, in order to ensure course learning outcomes are assessed to the same degree as all other learners.
- 6.5.9 PLAR credit shall be considered a College course credit and shall be included in the learner's GPA calculation when a PLAR attempt results in a passing grade.
- 6.5.10 Program areas, particularly those related to vulnerable sectors, are permitted to limit the ability to satisfy field placement requirements through PLAR. Program areas may require a minimum of one field placement, regardless of a learner's prior learning or experience.

## **7. Additional Institutional Responsibilities**

- 7.1 Program areas are required to communicate to learners whether or not advanced standing, transfer credit and/or PLAR will have implications on certifications and/or career prospects within the corresponding field of practice.

- 7.2 Learners who must satisfy full-time status, either for financial assistance or international student visa requirements, are responsible for determining whether the approval of transfer credit and/or PLAR credit will result in an adjustment to part-time status.
- 7.3 The Office of Academic Partnerships and Pathways is responsible for providing appropriate education and training to faculty and staff involved in RPL processes about this Policy and the related procedures.

## 8. Confidentiality

- 8.1 Centennial College guarantees the protection of all private and confidential information as it pertains to this Policy and the corresponding procedures.

## 9. Policy Owner

Associate Vice President (Partnerships, Pathways, and Internationalization)

## 10. Cross Reference

- Academic Partnership Policy
- Academic Partnership Template
- Admission Standards Policy
- Admission Standards –Procedures for Domestic Students
- Admission Standards –Procedures for International Students
- Academic Standings, Progression, Graduation and Re-admission Policy for College Degree Programs
- Academic Standings and Progression and Re-admission for Diploma and Certificate Programs Policy
- Co-operative Education Policy
- Course Outline Policy
- Equivalent/Substitute Credit Procedures
- Grading Policy
- Equivalent/Substitute Credit Procedures
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy - Equivalence and Substitution Procedures
- Transfer Credit Procedures

## 11. Revision Log

Date	Summary of Changes
February 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correction of "equivalence substitution courses/credits" to "equivalent/substitute credits" throughout the document.</li> <li>• 6.1.1 Amended to reflect PEQAB recommendations regarding RPL % of program hours.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.1.3 Addition to reflect current practices -- course load and OSAP changes.</li> <li>• 6.2.1 Clarification to differentiate between equivalent/substitute credits where course code is identical vs different.</li> <li>• 6.4.1 Addition of "eligible licensing/accreditation bodies" and AP, A-Level, and IB course usage for transfer credit. Clarification regarding non-credit and pass/fail course ineligibility for transfer credit.</li> <li>• 6.4.3 Addition to reflect current practices -- disallowing Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, or Degree course usage for Graduate Certificate transfer credit.</li> <li>• 6.4.4 Addition of transfer credit time limits -- 5 years for core courses, 10 for COMM and GNED.</li> <li>• 6.4.5 Addition of possibility of charging for duplicate transfer credit applications beyond first attempt.</li> <li>• 6.4.6 Addition of awarding of one College transfer credit for two combined external courses, and two College transfer credits for one external course.</li> <li>• 6.4.7 Addition to reflect current practices -- no reuse of external credits already used for transfer credit.</li> <li>• 6.4.8 &amp; 6.4.9 Addition of limits to COMM and MATH transfer credits based on a skills assessment placement</li> <li>• 6.4.12 Removal to reflect current practices -- "and is not at Centennial through an articulation agreement."</li> <li>• 6.5.2 Addition to disallow audited course usage for PLAR credit.</li> <li>• 6.5.3 Addition to reflect the current practice of allowing PLAR applications to learners not registered in the PLAR-attempted course.</li> <li>• 6.5.5 Addition of policy addressing PLAR re-attempts and PLAR for unsatisfactory/failing grade.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6.5.6 Addition to reflect PEQAB recommendations regarding PLAR-ineligible program requirements.</li><li>• 7. Removal of degree program requirement, to reflect PEQAB recommendation changes.</li><li>• 9 &amp; 10. Addition to conform with updated College policy template.</li></ul>