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# PLAR Guidelines

## Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for assessing Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) processes for the purposes of CRPO program recognition.

## Context

As CRPO recognizes master's-level educational programs, the admission requirement for recognized programs is a bachelor's degree or equivalent. The process of determining equivalence is called "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition" (PLAR) and is considered standard for adult education in order to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of adult learners who may have followed non-traditional paths to education. Through the PLAR process, students are granted academic credit for previous education, training, and professional expertise.

In the program recognition application, programs are asked to respond to the following question:

"Does the program admit applicants who do not hold an undergraduate degree, but whose prior learning and qualifications may be deemed equivalent to an undergraduate education?

If so, please describe the process employed to determine equivalence for admission purposes. Note that any such equivalency process must be rigorous, defensible and used only in exceptional circumstances.

Please also explain how frequently students are admitted using the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition process."

## Relevant Legislation

### O. Reg. 67/15: REGISTRATION

6. (1) Subject to section 7 and subsection 13 (2), the following are non-exemptible registration requirements for a Registered Psychotherapist certificate of registration:

1. The applicant must,

   i.   have successfully completed a program in psychotherapy that has been approved by the Registration Committee or by a body that is approved by the Registration Committee for that purpose,

   ii.  have been awarded a master's degree in a program that has been approved by the Registration Committee or by a body that is approved by the Registration Committee for that purpose

## Scope

Programs applying for academic program recognition.

**Policy**

If a program employs PLAR in their admissions process, their program recognition application should contain documentation of the following elements:

- Published assessment policy (setting out admissions criteria, process, reviewers, possible outcomes, appeal mechanism, timeline)

- Published assessment standards[1]

- Evaluation of applicant's self-reported learning activities

- Evaluation of applicant's self-assessment of learning

- Evaluation of applicant's supporting documentation and external assessments

- Evaluation of applicant's demonstrated knowledge and abilities via a challenge component[2]

The absence of any of these elements will be noted in the program reviewers' report.

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[1] Programs may choose to use Ontario Qualifications Standards for Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree or equivalent http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/oqf/certificate10.html

[2] The Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities defines a challenge component as "a method of assessment, other than portfolio assessment, developed and evaluated by subject-expert faculty to measure an individual's learning achievement against course learning outcomes. The process measures demonstrated learning through a variety of written and non-written evaluation methods for the purpose of awarding credit without requiring enrolment in a course." http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/documents/FrameworkforPrograms.pdf, p. 4