

<p>CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION</p> <p>PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR MATURE STUDENTS POLICY</p>	<p>4000</p> <p>4023</p>
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1. Rationale

Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) recognizes that adult learners typically return to school to complete their secondary education with specific goals and timelines in order to support their future career and education endeavors. It is important that adult learners are supported to expeditiously achieve their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and efficiently move to sustainable employment, postsecondary education and/or apprenticeship. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for mature students provides a process by which the prior experiences of adult learners, both formal and informal, can be recognized for secondary credit, minimizing duplication of learning, saving the learner time and opportunity costs, and providing them with an enhanced pathway to secondary school graduation.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby mature students may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. Students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum in order to earn credits towards the OSSD.

This policy differs from that of regular day school students because of the broader life experience of mature students. This policy is written in accordance with Policy/Program Memorandum No. 132, and Ontario Secondary Schools, s. 6.6 and 8.2.

2. Policy

It is the policy of LDSB to evaluate a mature student's skills and knowledge against the expectations outlined in current Ontario curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the OSSD through an Assessment, Challenge and/or Equivalency Process.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 All boards must offer access to the PLAR process to all mature students in accordance with PPM 132. A mature student is a student who is at least 18 years of age on or after January 1 of the current school year and who is enrolled in a program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD.
- 3.2 All credits granted through the PLAR process will represent the same standards of achievement as credits granted to mature students who have taken the courses.
- 3.3 School boards will not charge mature students fees for undergoing the challenge or equivalency process. Ontario Regulation 285: Continuing Education under the Education Act does not permit publicly funded school boards to charge fees for the PLAR process.

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- 3.4 Through the Grades 9 and 10 Equivalency Process, credits may be granted following up to four subject based individual assessment(s).
- 3.5 Through the Grades 11 and 12 Equivalency Process, mature students may be granted equivalent credits if their transcripts or other documents show evidence of learning that relates directly to the Ontario curriculum expectations for specific courses.
- 3.6 For Grades 11 or 12 credits, both the equivalency process and the challenge process are as follows:
- through the equivalency process, students participate in an evaluation of their credentials, other appropriate documentation and evidence from jurisdictions within and outside Ontario for the purpose of granting credit for Grades 11 or 12 courses developed from the most recent Ontario curriculum;
 - through the challenge process, students' prior learning is evaluated using assessments for the purpose of granting credit for Grades 11 or 12 courses developed from the most recent Ontario curriculum;
 - up to ten of 14 Grades 11 and 12 credits may be granted through either the equivalency or challenge process; and
 - a minimum of four Grades 11 and 12 credits must be earned by taking the necessary courses, with the following exception: at the discretion of the principal, mature students who present evidence of a completed postsecondary diploma and/or degree from an accredited Canadian postsecondary institution may qualify for the OSSD under Ontario Schools by completing a minimum of one Grade 11 or Grade 12 credit.
- 3.7 Following the equivalency or challenge process, any remaining required credits may be earned by taking the required courses.
- 3.8 Mature students who have previously accumulated 26 or more credits towards the diploma (excluding those with postsecondary credentials as noted above) must successfully complete the required number of courses to bring their total number of credits up to 30 before they will be eligible to receive the OSSD.
- 3.9 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition procedures for mature students will be carried out under the direction of the school principal who has the authority to grant credits. The principal is responsible for the implementation of PLAR in accordance with PPM 132.

Principals will ensure that mature students who do not have appropriate documentation of prior learning owing to extraordinary circumstances (for example, students who are refugees) will receive advice and/or referral to an appropriate service provider concerning the gathering and giving of evidence.

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4. Review

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with 2010 Policy Development and Review Policy.

<u>Cross Reference</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Legal Reference</u>
Policy/Program Memorandums No. 132 and Ontario Secondary Schools, s. 6.6 and 8.2	December 14, 2004 <u>Date Revised</u> June 28, 2011 February 27, 2018 February 22, 2022	