

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR) FOR MATURE STUDENTS

ORIENTATION MATERIALS

Overview

The materials contained in **Part B** of the binder are samples of a variety of materials that boards may use to publicize the PLAR process and their policies and procedures around the PLAR process for mature students.

- The sample “Brochure” describes the PLAR process for mature students and its three processes. It is intended for a wide audience including employers of mature students, community agencies that assist mature students with entry into the Ontario educational system, government agencies, and educators (including teachers, principals, senior Board officials and trustees).
- The sample “Course Calendar/Web Site Statement”, the three “Fact Sheets” and the “Diploma Requirements for Mature Students Under the PLAR Process” are intended primarily for prospective and current mature students, although the other groups listed above may also find these resources helpful.
- The sample “Orientation Session Outline” is intended for principals, teachers, and counsellors to assist them in planning an information session for mature students about the PLAR process.

Grade 11 and 12 Challenge Process

What is the challenge process?

The challenge process is an assessment process. Unlike the Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process, a student who successfully challenges a credit receives an actual percentage grade recorded on the transcript.

Mature students may challenge for credit for up to ten Grade 11 and 12 courses. However, they may obtain no more than ten Grade 11 and 12 credits through the challenge and equivalency processes combined. There is no maximum on the number of credits that may be obtained in any one discipline.

Mature students may challenge a course for credit if they can provide reasonable evidence to the principal that they are likely to be successful in the challenge process.

Applicants who wish to participate in the Grade 11 and 12 challenge process must:

- be enrolled in a secondary school course
- carefully review the curriculum expectations for each subject which they want to challenge
- complete the Challenge Application Form

Each application must be reviewed and approved prior to the student's participation in the Challenge Assessment Process.

Mature students may include certificates or other records of accomplishment earned outside of school as reasonable evidence that they will likely be successful in a challenge for credit for a related course. However, students with Ministry of Education recognized music certificates that are accepted for credits in OSS are not required to challenge for credit for the appropriate music courses. Credits are granted for these certificates.

What courses cannot be challenged?

A student cannot be granted credits through the Grade 11 and 12 PLAR CHALLENGE PROCESS for the following courses:

- a course previously failed
- a course for which the student has already earned a credit, in order to improve the mark
- a course in any subject if a credit has already been granted for a course in that subject in a later grade
- a course for which there is significant overlap with a course for which credit has been granted
- a transfer course
- a locally developed course
- a Cooperative Education course
- the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)
- a course in English as a Second Language (ESL), English Literacy Development (ELD), or Anglais pour débutants (APD), if the student has one or more credits in English
- a course in French as a Second Language (FSL), Actualisation linguistique en français (ALF), or Perfectionnement du français (PDF), if the student has one or more credits in Français

Can students challenge again if not successful the first time?

A student will be permitted to challenge for credit for a specific course a second time after an appropriate interval, if the student can provide reasonable evidence that he or she is likely to be successful after having benefited from additional study and experience

Grade 9/10 Individual Assessment

Grade 11/12 Equivalency **OSSD** **Grade 11/12 Challenge**

PLAR
for
Mature Students

A formal evaluation and accreditation process for secondary school adult learners to achieve recognition for their prior learning towards completion of diploma requirements

SCHOOL BOARD CONTACT Information/Website

For further information or to apply for PLAR please contact

What is PLAR?

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process through which mature students may obtain credits for prior learning – the knowledge and skills that adults have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school.

The PLAR process for mature students involves three procedures: “individual assessment/equivalency” (Gr. 9/10), “equivalency” (Gr. 11/12), and “challenge” (Gr. 11/12). There is no charge for mature students to participate in the PLAR process.

Who is a Mature Student?

A mature student is a student who is:

- at least 18 years old on or before December 31 of the school year;
- is enrolled in a secondary school credit program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD;
- has been out of school for a period of at least one year before returning as an adult.

Who participates in PLAR?

Mature students who are *new* to the Ontario secondary school system as of February 1, 2004, and who are working towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) under OSS diploma requirements

Mature students who were enrolled as students in the Ontario secondary school system, and were placed in Grade 9 in 1999–2000 or later, Grade 10 in 2000–2001 or later, Grade 11 in 2001–2002 or later, or Grade 12 in 2002–2003 or later; and who return to school as mature students on February 1, 2004, or later to work towards the OSSD under OSS diploma requirements.

Note: Mature students who were enrolled in the Ontario secondary school system prior to 1999 and who continue to work towards their OSSD under OSIS or HS1 diploma requirements do not have to participate in the PLAR process.

Note: Mature students working towards OSS diploma requirements must successfully complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test process and the community involvement activities process in order to graduate.

Grade 9 and 10 Individual Assessment/Equivalency Process

What is it?

An individual mature student assessment/equivalency process for the purpose of granting up to 16 Grade 9 and 10 credits through (a) transcripts, or (b) transcripts and completion of individual assessments, or (c) completion of individual assessments.

What is the individual assessment process?

Students without appropriate transcripts for all or part of the first two years of secondary school will be required to complete an individual assessment in some or all of Grade 9 and 10 English, Mathematics, Science, and Canadian Geography/History.

How do individual assessments result in credits?

Successful completion of the individual assessment process will result in up to four credits in each of the four subject areas. These Grade 9 and 10 credits will meet the diploma requirements that would usually be met through successful completion of the Grade 9 and 10 programs.

If the student earns fewer than four credits in each subject area, the principal will determine how the student can obtain the remaining credits.

The principal may defer assessment on Grade 9 and 10 Canadian Geography/History until a student has sufficient time to develop the required language skills or becomes more familiar with Canadian culture.

Does this process earn a certificate?

The principal may grant the OSSC (Ontario Secondary School Certificate) to a mature student following successful completion of the individual assessments. Unlike adolescents, mature students are eligible to receive this certificate and continue to pursue and earn an OSSD in the future.

Grade 11 and 12 Equivalency Process

What is it?

The process for obtaining credits that involves an evaluation of a mature student’s education and/or training credentials and/or other appropriate documentation of learning gained from other programs, courses, or work experiences.

What is the process?

Applicants who wish to participate in the Grade 11 and 12 PLAR equivalency process must:

- be enrolled in a secondary school course
- carefully review the curriculum expectations for each course in which they wish to be granted credits
- complete the PLAR “**Application for Grade 11 and 12 Credits through the Equivalency Process**”
- present credentials/documents that show evidence of learning that relates directly to the Ontario curriculum expectations for specific courses

Points to remember:

- Mature students must earn a minimum of four Grade 11 and 12 credits (including Grade 12 English) by taking the necessary courses.
- It is recommended that principals delay granting Grade 11/12 equivalent credits until the above four courses have been successfully completed.
- Students may obtain no more than ten Grade 11/12 credits through the equivalency and challenge processes combined.
- Principals may grant half-credits only for specific half-credit courses.

SAMPLE COURSE CALENDAR/WEB SITE STATEMENT

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process through which mature students, who are enrolled in a secondary school course, may obtain credits for prior learning. Mature students may obtain credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) for knowledge and skills that they have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school.

The PLAR process involves:

- a) Grade 9 and 10 individual assessment/equivalency process
- b) Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process
- c) Grade 11 and 12 challenge process

In all cases, the knowledge and skills gained through education, work experience, and training must be directly related to the provincial curriculum expectations.

By using this process, mature students may be granted up to 26 credits towards their OSSD by the principal.

For more information and details about how to apply, or to obtain a brochure on the PLAR Process for Mature Students and Facts Sheets on each PLAR process, contact

**PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)
FOR MATURE STUDENTS:
GRADE 9 AND 10 INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT/EQUIVALENCY PROCESS**

FACT SHEET

What is “PLAR for Mature Students”?

- PLAR is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby mature students may obtain credits for prior learning – the knowledge and skills that mature students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school.
- Mature students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum documents in order to be granted credits towards the secondary school diploma. Students may review the Ontario curriculum expectations on the Internet at www.edu.gov.on.ca. (For Grade 9 and 10 courses specifically, go to www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curric0910.html.)
- The PLAR process for mature students involves three processes: “individual assessment/equivalency” for Grade 9 and 10; “equivalency” for Grade 11 and 12; and “challenge” for Grade 11 and 12. Each process is described on a separate Fact Sheet.

Who is a “Mature Student”?

A Mature Student is a student who:

- is at least 18 years old on or before December 31st of the school year;
- is enrolled in a secondary school credit program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD;
- has been out of school for a period of at least one year before returning as an adult.

What is the Grade 9 and 10 Individual Assessment/Equivalency Process?

- This is an individual assessment/equivalency process for the purpose of granting up to 16 Grade 9 and 10 credits through (a) review and analysis of transcripts, or (b) review and analysis of transcripts and completion of individual assessments, or (c) completion of individual assessments.

Who begins the process?

- The mature student, who is enrolled in a secondary school course, begins the process by submitting the application form, available from

What does the application process involve?

- The completion of an application form, including
 - a) a request for a review and analysis of a transcript showing up to two years of secondary schooling comparable to the Ontario Grade 9 and 10 program (for up to 16 equivalent credits);
 - b) the attachment of a transcript, where applicable (the transcript must be translated into English or French); and/or

- c) in the absence of a transcript, or in the event that fewer than 16 equivalent credits are granted or earned, a request for a statement from the principal regarding how the credits required to reach a total of 16 may be obtained.

How is the individual assessment process done?

- Mature students, who have completed all or part of the first two years of secondary school in an educational system comparable to that in Ontario and have appropriate transcripts, are granted equivalent credits by the principal based on an examination of the transcript. The principal will grant the equivalent credits if the curriculum expectations and standards of achievement are similar to the curriculum expectations and standards where credits are granted to students who have taken the course.
- If mature students do not have transcripts or have not completed the first two years of secondary school, they may be required to successfully complete an Individual Assessment in some or all of Grade 9 and 10 Canadian Geography/History, English, Mathematics and Science.
- The Individual Assessment may involve a written component and may also include an oral component.
- The Individual Assessment is a “pass/fail” assessment.

How many credits can be granted in the Grade 9 and 10 individual assessment/equivalency process?

- A maximum of 16 Grade 9 and 10 equivalent credits can be granted through this process.

How is the record keeping done?

- Entries on the student’s Cumulative Tracking Record will show the equivalent credits granted for Grades 9 and 10, entered as one total for each subject area (e.g., English, 4).
- Entries on the student’s *Ontario Student Transcript* will show the equivalent credits granted for Grades 9 and 10, entered as one total.

Is there a fee?

- No.

When can I complete the individual assessment/equivalency process?

- Dates and times are available from

Can I participate again in an assessment if I am unsuccessful the first time I try?

- Students who fail an assessment may retake it as often as necessary for them to complete it successfully. Your principal and/or teacher/counsellor will speak to you about this, should you be unsuccessful in an individual assessment.

**PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)
FOR MATURE STUDENTS
GRADE 11 AND 12 EQUIVALENCY PROCESS**

FACT SHEET

What is “PLAR for Mature Students”

- PLAR is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby mature students may obtain credits for prior learning – the knowledge and skills that mature students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school.
- Mature students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum documents in order to be granted credits towards the secondary school diploma. Students may review the Ontario curriculum expectations on the Internet at www.edu.gov.on.ca. (For Grade 11 and 12 courses specifically, go to www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curric1112.html.)
- The PLAR process for mature students involves three processes: “individual assessment/equivalency” for Grade 9 and 10; “equivalency” for Grade 11 and 12; and “challenge” for Grade 11 and 12. Each process is described on a separate Fact Sheet.

Who is a “Mature Student”?

A Mature Student is a student who:

- is at least 18 years old on or before December 31st of the school year;
- is enrolled in a secondary school credit program for the purpose of obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD);
- has been out of school for a period of at least one year before returning as an adult.

What is the Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process?

- This is the process for obtaining credits that involves an evaluation of a mature student’s education and/or training credentials and/or other appropriate documentation of learning gained from other programs, courses, or work experiences.
- These credentials and documents must show evidence of learning that relates directly to the Ontario curriculum expectations for specific courses.

Who begins the process?

- The mature student, who is enrolled in a secondary school course, begins the process by submitting an application form, available from

What does the application process involve?

- The mature student submits secondary school transcripts and/or other documentation of education, training, work experience, and volunteer experience that indicate completion of learning similar to the expectations of specific courses in the Ontario Grade 11 and 12 programs. These documents must be translated and validated as true translations if written in a language other than English or French.

The following types of credentials and other documentation may be submitted:

- Ø Formal transcripts issued by recognized educational or training institutions within or outside Ontario
 - Ø Certificates of Apprenticeship and Certificates of Qualification for apprenticeships granted by or recognized by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
 - Ø Other appropriate documentation of learning gained from other programs, courses, or work experience
- An application for the review of the submitted credentials and documentation for assessment through the equivalency process
 - A statement that the mature student has reviewed the Ontario curriculum expectations for each course for which he/she is requesting equivalent credit.

How is the equivalency process done?

- The completed application form is submitted as directed on the form.
- A determination will be made by the principal about equivalent credits based on the direct relationship between the credentials and other documentation presented by the student and the Ontario curriculum expectations for specific Grade 11 and/or 12 courses.
- A meeting to discuss the need for more details may be required.
- Mature students must earn a minimum of 4 Grade 11 and 12 credits (including Grade 12 English) by taking the necessary courses. Principals may delay granting Grade 11 and 12 equivalent credits until these 4 courses have been successfully completed.
- There are 4 compulsory credits for mature students who wish to obtain an OSSD: Grade 11 and 12 English, Grade 11 or 12 Mathematics, one of Grade 11 or 12 Science or Grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 Technological Education. (**Note:** Instead of taking the Grade 11 or 12 Mathematics course, Grade 11 or 12 Science, or Grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 Technological Education, a mature student may ask to be allowed to substitute any Grade 9, 10, 11 or 12 course that is from one of the Ontario curriculum policy documents published in 1999 or later and that meets a compulsory credit requirement for the OSSD.)

How many credits can be granted in the Grades 11 and 12 equivalency process?

- Students may obtain no more than 10 Grade 11 and 12 credits through the equivalency and challenge processes combined.

How is the record keeping done?

- Entries on the student's *Ontario Student Transcript* (OST) will show the appropriate course codes for equivalent credits granted for all Grade 11 and 12 courses through the equivalency process. EQV will be recorded under the Percentage Grade column.

Is there a fee?

- No.

When can I complete the Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process?

- Dates and times are available from

How many times may I participate in the Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process?

- You may participate once per school year, although the process may extend over a period of time.

**PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)
FOR MATURE STUDENTS:
GRADE 11 AND 12 CHALLENGE PROCESS**

FACT SHEET

What is “PLAR for Mature Students”?

- PLAR is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby mature students may obtain credits for prior learning – the knowledge and skills that mature students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school.
- Mature students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum documents in order to earn credits towards the secondary school diploma. Students may review the Ontario curriculum expectations on the Internet at www.edu.gov.on.ca. (For Grade 9 and 10 courses specifically, go to www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curric0910.html; for Grade 11 and 12 courses, go to www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curric1112.html.)
- The PLAR process for mature students involves three processes: “individual assessment/equivalency” for Grade 9 and 10; “equivalency” for Grade 11 and 12; and “challenge” for Grade 11 and 12. Each process is described on a separate Fact Sheet.

Who is a “Mature Student”?

A Mature Student is a student who:

- is at least 18 years old on or before December 31st of the school year;
- is enrolled in a secondary school credit program for the purpose of obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD);
- has been out of school for a period of at least one year before returning as an adult.

What is the Grade 11 and 12 challenge process?

- The process for obtaining credits, whereby a mature student’s prior learning is assessed through a variety of assessment strategies, including formal tests (written work and practical demonstrations), valued at 70%, and other assessment strategies, valued at 30%.
- With a few exceptions, any Grade 11 or 12 full or half-credit courses, developed from an Ontario curriculum policy document published since 2000 and offered by the local school board, may be challenged.
- The standards of achievement must be the same as the standards for credits granted to students who have taken the course.

Who begins the process?

- The mature student, who is enrolled in a secondary school course, begins the process by submitting an application form, available from

What does the application process involve?

The submission of:

- evidence that the mature student has a reasonable chance of being successful in a challenge for credit in this course (e.g., a portfolio of relevant work, proof of successful work experience) and a completed application form that includes:
 - a) a statement written by the mature student about why he or she wants to challenge this particular course;
 - b) a statement that the mature student has reviewed materials, such as the curriculum expectations and achievement chart for the course; and
 - c) other relevant information related to the assessment.

What can you NOT challenge for credit?

A mature student cannot challenge for:

- a course previously failed
- a course for which the student has already earned a credit but for which he or she wishes to improve the mark
- a course in any subject if a credit has already been granted for a course in that subject in a later grade
- a course for which there is significant overlap with a course for which credit has been granted
- a transfer course
- a locally developed course
- a Co-operative Education course
- a course in English as a Second Language (ESL), English Literacy Development (ELD), or Anglais pour débutants (APD), if the student has one or more credits in English
- a course in French as a Second Language (FSL), Actualisation linguistique en Français (ALF), or Perfectionnement du français (PDF), if the student has one or more credits in Français
- the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).

How is the challenge process done?

- If the principal determines that the mature student is eligible to take the challenge, the mature student will be informed of the dates and times for the assessment activities.
- A challenge assessment must be comprised of formal tests (70% – a balance of written work and practical demonstration) and other assessment strategies pertinent to the course (30%).
- Each assessment is based on curriculum expectations and the achievement charts in Ontario curriculum policy documents, including all strands and categories, published in 2000 or later.

What if a challenge application is denied?

- A mature student may submit a request in writing to the appropriate supervisory officer asking for a review.

How many credits can be earned in the Challenge Process?

- Students may obtain no more than 10 Grade 11 and 12 credits through the equivalency and challenge processes combined.
- There is no maximum on the number of credits that may be obtained in any one discipline.

How is the record keeping done?

- The grades for each assessment activity and each completed challenge assessment are kept in the Record of Assessment of Challenge for Credit for a Course. The grades for all assessments completed by the student are recorded on the Cumulative Tracking Record.
- The percentage grade for each assessment is recorded on the student's *Ontario Student Transcript* (OST).

Is there a fee?

- No.

When can I complete the Grade 11 and 12 challenge process?

- Dates and times are available from

How many times may I participate in the Grade 11 and 12 challenge process?

- Guidelines will be set by the local school board regarding the number of times a year challenges will be held for various courses.

Notes:

- There is no teaching component to the process!
- Students will be permitted to challenge for credit for a specific course a second time after an appropriate interval, if they can provide reasonable evidence to the principal that they are likely to be successful after having benefited from additional study and experience during the interval.

**PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)
FOR MATURE STUDENTS**

**DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR MATURE STUDENTS
UNDER THE PLAR PROCESS**

Note: These diploma requirements apply to the following groups of mature students:

- Mature students in Group 1 or Group 2, as set out in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 132 (PPM 132),
- Mature students in Group 3 or Group 4, as set out in PPM 132 who have access to the *Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7–12/OACs): Program and Diploma Requirements, 1989* (OSIS) process for the granting of equivalent credits, but have chosen to have their prior learning assessed and credits granted through the PLAR process under *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999* (OSS) and to work towards OSS diploma requirements.

Number of Credits Required by Mature Students for an OSSD

Mature students must have 30 credits for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD):

- Up to 16 Grade 9 and 10 credits may be granted through the equivalency process to a mature student at the discretion of the principal on the basis of transcripts indicating successful completion of two years of secondary school that are comparable to Ontario Grade 9 and 10. If no transcript evidence or only partial transcript evidence is provided, then up to 16 Grade 9 and 10 credits may be granted following individual assessment.
- Mature students may earn 10 of the remaining Grade 11 and 12 credits needed to meet diploma requirements in three ways:
 - Ø They may present education and/or training credentials and/or other appropriate documentation for a determination through the equivalency process;
 - Ø They may demonstrate achievement of the required secondary school curriculum expectations and receive credit through the challenge process;
 - Ø They may take the course.
- Mature students must earn a minimum of 4 Grade 11 and 12 credits by taking the necessary courses at a secondary school, through correspondence, or through any of the alternative ways described in Section 6.8 of OSS.
- Mature students who have previously accumulated 26 or more credits towards the diploma 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.

Compulsory Credit Requirements

Mature students working towards the OSSD under OSS diploma requirements must complete each of the 4 Grade 11 and 12 compulsory credit requirements:

- Grade 11 English:
 - Ø Successfully complete ENG3C, ENG3E, or ENG3U;
 - Ø Successfully challenge for ENG3C, ENG3E, or ENG3U;
 - Ø Provide a formal transcript that indicates the completion of an English course equivalent to one of these three English courses.
- Grade 12 English:
 - Ø Successfully complete ENG4C, ENG4E, or ENG4U;
 - Ø Must take the course; no substitution or challenge permitted.

Note: If a mature student takes and successfully completes ESL 4 or 5 to meet one English compulsory credit requirement, he/she must also take and successfully complete one of the Grade 11 or 12 English courses listed above. No substitution is permitted.

- Grade 11 or 12 Mathematics:
 - Ø Successfully complete the course;
 - Ø Successfully challenge for the course;
 - Ø Provide a formal transcript that indicates the completion of an equivalent Mathematics course.

Note: Instead of taking the Grade 11 or 12 Mathematics course, a mature student may ask to be allowed to substitute any Grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 course that is from one of the Ontario curriculum policy documents published in 1999 or later and that meets a compulsory credit requirement for the OSSD. To avoid overlap, the course being used as the substitute must not be similar to any course for which a Grade 9 to 12 credit has already been granted.

- Grade 11 or 12 Science or Grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 Technological Education:
 - Ø Successfully complete the course;
 - Ø Successfully challenge for the course;
 - Ø Provide a formal transcript that indicates the completion of a course that is equivalent to a course that is in one of the Ontario curriculum policy documents published in 1999 or later and that meets a compulsory credit requirement for the OSSD.

Note: Instead of taking the science or technology education course, a mature student may ask to be allowed to substitute any Grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 course that is from one of the Ontario curriculum policy documents published in 1999 or later and that meets a compulsory credit requirement for the OSSD. To avoid overlap, the course being used as the substitute must not be similar to any course for which a Grade 9 to 12 credit has already been granted.

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

- The standard method for assessing the literacy skills of students and mature students in Ontario for purposes of meeting the literacy requirement for graduation is the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). The OSSLT was implemented in 2001–2002 for all students working towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma under OSS diploma requirements.
- The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) has been developed to provide students who have been unsuccessful on the test with intensive support in achieving the required reading and writing competencies, and with an alternative means of demonstrating their literacy skills.
- Students who have been eligible to write the OSSLT at least twice and who have been unsuccessful at least once are eligible to take the course.
- A mature student who has failed the OSSLT once may take the OSSLC. The principal may use his/her discretion in determining whether one of the two opportunities to take the OSSLT occurred prior to the mature student's return to school.
- Successful completion of either the OSSLT or the OSSLC will fulfill the literacy graduation requirement toward the OSSD.

Community Involvement Activities

- As part of the OSS diploma requirements, students must complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement activities. Principals will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities that a mature student will have to complete.

**PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)
FOR MATURE STUDENTS**

SAMPLE ORIENTATION SESSION OUTLINE

It is recommended that boards/schools offer an orientation session for students who plan to apply for the:

- Grade 9 and 10 individual assessment/equivalency process
- Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process
- Grade 11 and 12 challenge process

The purpose of this orientation session is to ensure that mature students are informed about:

- Board policies and procedures related to the processes, including policies and procedures for recording results in the *Ontario Student Record (OSR)* and on the *Ontario Student Transcript (OST)*;
- the application processes; and
- their responsibility for initiating the processes.

SAMPLE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Time: 1 ½ hours

A. Welcome and Introductions

B. Whole Group Presentation: PLAR for Mature Students

Materials to be distributed and reviewed:

- Brochure
- Course calendar/Web site statement
- Fact sheets on each process
- “Diploma Requirements for Mature Students, under the PLAR Process”
- Information on how to access Ontario curriculum expectations for specific Grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 courses
- Application Forms (Grade 9 and 10 individual assessment/equivalency process, Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process and Grade 11 and 12 challenge process)

C. Breakout sessions: (students select one or two of the following sessions)

1. Grade 9 and 10 individual assessment/equivalency process
2. Grade 11 and 12 equivalency process
3. Grade 11 and 12 challenge process

The purpose of the Breakout Sessions:

- Discussion of the Application Process
- Timelines
- Gathering of Information and Documentation
- Questions and Answers