

PLAR PROFILE AND PROOF OF LEARNING

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), or **Recognition of Learning (RFL)** as it is also called, helps individuals identify realistic goals and prove their learning and current competency. PLAR is a process to identify, document, prove, assess and recognize an individual's applicable learning from all sources. Related knowledge and skills, whether gained through educational institutions (formal learning), workplace (non-formal) learning, or through experiential (informal) learning should be taken into consideration.

New immigrants and potential immigrants to Canada may need help to

develop a PLAR Profile and prove their:

- Personal attributes and values that affect the way they work and live,
- Essential Skills,
- Language competency in English or French,
- Transferable skills or competencies that could be used in a number of occupations, and
- Occupation or sector specific skills and abilities.

For further information on PLAR, see www.RecognitionForLearning.ca

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Personal Attributes describe an individual's values and ethics that relate to their goals and enhance their competencies in life and work. For example, honesty and timeliness may be important attributes for employment.



ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Essential Skills are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. The Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in nearly every occupation and throughout daily life in different ways and at different levels of complexity. Essential Skills Profiles describe how each of the nine Essential Skills is used by workers in a particular occupation.

Through research (examining the skills people use at work) and interviews with experienced workers, managers, practitioners and leading researchers, close to 200 Essential Skills profiles have been developed for various occupations of the National Occupational Classification.

For more information on Essential Skills, see the Government of Canada website: http://srv108.services.gc.ca/english/general/home_e.shtml

ESSENTIAL SKILLS:

- Reading Text
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Working with Others
- Continuous Learning
- Thinking Skills
- Computer Use

CANADIAN LANGUAGE BENCHMARKS

The **Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)** and the **Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC)** are national standards used to describe the language individuals use to complete tasks. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing competencies are organized in three stages and twelve levels. The national standards in English and French are used for describing, measuring and recognizing second language proficiency of adult immigrants and prospective immigrants for living, studying and working in Canada. For more information see www.language.ca.

An **OLA (Occupational Language Analysis)** is a standardized summary of language competencies, referenced to the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), linked to success in one occupation. It outlines, in a standardized format, speaking, listening, reading and writing competencies and related sample tasks for a given occupation.

TRANSFERABLE AND SPECIFIC JOB COMPETENCIES

Transferable and Specific Job Competencies are skills and abilities needed to perform in a competent manner for a specific job or an occupational grouping. Transferable competencies are transferable within that job grouping or related occupational groupings. For example, nursing skills used in a hospital are transferable to home care nursing, and basic customer service skills are transferable between many occupations.



INDIVIDUAL PLAR PROFILE

An **Individual PLAR Profile** becomes the basis for proving learning applicable to an individual's goal.



ADVISOR CHECKLIST: HELPING CLIENTS DEVELOP A PLAR PROFILE AND PROOF OF LEARNING PLAN

INDIVIDUAL PLAR PROFILE

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

CANADIAN LANGUAGE BENCHMARKS

TRANSFERABLE & SPECIFIC JOB COMPETENCIES

SETTING GOALS & IDENTIFYING JOB OR EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- Can the client identify and describe their goals (for career, job, education, and life)?
- What qualifications, knowledge, skills and language level are required or expected in the job/career or for educational/occupational/regulatory requirements of their goal?
- Is a credential required for the client's goal? If so, do international credentials need to be assessed, and does the client know where this can be done? See www.cicic.ca

- Does the client know what Essential Skills are?
- Is there an appropriate Essential Skills Profile (ESP)?
 - In the ESP what are the 3 most important Essential Skills?
 - Does the client's skills set match?

For further information on Essential Skills Profiles see http://srv108.services.gc.ca/english/general/ES_Profiles_e.shtml

- Can the client articulate clear goals for work, education, language learning, or personal development?
- Can the client also write detailed information about those same goals?
- What are the client's professional language learning goals and timelines?
- What language skills are needed for educational credit or occupations? E.g. Is there an Occupational Language Analysis, (OLA)? (see www.itessential.ca)? Also refer to the Essential Skills Profile. What are the regulatory or licensing requirements for language proficiency for the occupation?

- Does the client know what area of work they are looking for, or what educational program or occupational certification they are wanting their learning to be recognized for?
- What competencies are required for the sector, the specific job or career path the individual is looking for? Refer to the NOCs for occupational descriptions (see www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca), to Sector Council Occupational Standards. (see www.councils.org), or to professional and regulatory bodies certification requirements. What knowledge and skills are required in a course, program or certification an individual is wanting to challenge for credit? Who can they contact to get this information?

PERSONAL COMPETENCY PROFILING

- Has the client reflected on their work and life experiences as well as their credentials or qualifications?
- Can the client draw (identify) learning applicable to their goal in the form of knowledge, skills and abilities from their experiences and credentials? Can they identify personal attributes and values? Can they identify their language competency and Essential Skills competencies?

See resources at www.RecognitionForLearning.ca/learner/aboutPLAR.php

- Which Essential Skills relate to the client's work/life experience and accomplishments? Oral Communication, Reading Text, Writing, Document Use, Thinking Skills, Numeracy, Computer Skills, Working with Others, or Continuous Learning
- Can the client identify or be assessed for competency levels of some Essential Skills? (e.g. formal or informal assessments?)

See reference to various tools at: http://srv108.services.gc.ca/english/general/Tools_Apps_e.shtml

- Can the client talk about past experiences and accomplishments (either personal or professional)?
- Can the client describe the process of acquiring the English (French) language at home or in the country of origin? When was it learned? How was it learned?"
- Can the client identify where the target language has been used? (e.g. At school? At work?) How has language proficiency been assessed? When? Where?

- Can the client identify the learning they have gained on the job, in non-structured learning, and through life experience?
- Can the client identify sector specific and job specific knowledge and skills they have gained from education, work related learning and life experience to provide current competency?

MATCHING & GAP IDENTIFICATION

- Do the skills and knowledge of the client match the requirements and expectations of their goal (job or education)?
- Does the client know where to find information about where they can learn new skills and knowledge to fill any gaps?

- What items in the learner profile can be linked to the job tasks on the Essential Skills Profile and to the recognition sought?

- Based on the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level required for the occupation or course, what gaps does the client have? E.g. How do the client's CLB levels in Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing compare to the occupation or credit requirements?

- Do the client's current competencies match the requirements for their goal? If not, how might the gaps be filled?
- Does the client know resources available in their area to help fill gaps?

DEMONSTRATING COMPETENCY AND PROVIDING PROOF OF LEARNING

- Does the client know what is required to prove their learning in relation to their goal (education or job)?
- Can the client provide evidence of or otherwise prove learning which could meet the requirements of their job or educational goal?

- Which documents or examples give evidence or demonstrate Essential Skills tasks (possibly related to the target occupation)? Does the goal/credit sought include any specific Essential Skills tasks?
- How can the client present the package to highlight Essential Skills needed for educational credit or occupation/job?

- What tasks are required to prove language competency? Refer to the Can Do checklists for suggested language task examples at various levels: http://www.language.ca/display_page.asp?page_id=372
- How has or what evidence has the client provided to demonstrate language proficiency (eg. assessment record, completed forms, letters written by the client)? What remediation, supports or referrals are indicated? What language coaching/practice may be required to help the client present the package of evidence?

- Does the client know the process required to prove competency for a job, or to challenge for educational credit or professional recognition?
- Does the client know how to prepare for the process required to prove their competency in the workplace, or to challenge for educational credit? Where can they find additional help to prepare themselves?