

MACMILLIAN INSTITUTE OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

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COLLEGE POLICIES

PROCEDURE TYPE: ACADEMIC

POLICY TITLE: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (PLAR)

POLICY NUMBER: 7

RESPONSIBILITY: HEAD ACADEMIC

APPROVED BY: DEAN

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 2015

REVISED: DECEMBER 2018

REVIEW DATE: DECEMBER 2027

Policy Statement

1. Introduction

MacMillian Institute 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 MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences recognition of prior learning practices, including:

- Equivalence-substitution courses/credits;
- Transfer credit; and,
- Prior learning assessment and recognition.

4. Definitions

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 Equivalence-Substitution refers to the awarding of credit for previous completion of the same or similar MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences course.

4.4 Advanced Standing refers to the granting of admission to a program at an entry point beyond Semester One based on the prior formal learning of a learner through a

4.5 Fast-Track Progression is the awarding of advanced standing through a separately established MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences program, where admission is partly based on prior completion of a relevant post-secondary credential.

4.6 Transfer Credit is the awarding of course credit for previously completed credit obtained at a recognized post-secondary institution.

4.7 Qualification Recognition (QR) 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 Learning outcomes affinity refers to the assessed similarity between two sets of course or program learning outcomes.

4.9 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a process that uses a variety of tools 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.

5. Principles

5.1 The College shall foster consistent, fair, and reasonable RPL practices that assess and award previous demonstration of specialist and other 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 MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences credentials through accountable, sound, and transparent processes.

5.5 The College is committed to incorporating Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities directives, learning-centered principles, and outcomes-based learning into all processes.

6. Recognition of Prior Learning Practices

6.1 Recognition of Prior Learning Credit Limits

6.1.1 Course credit obtained through equivalence-substitution, exceptional waiver, advanced standing, transfer credit and/or PLAR shall not exceed 50% of course hours for degree programs and 75% of total course hours for all other programs.

6.1.2 In order to satisfy MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences residency requirements, learners must complete a minimum of:

- a) 25% course hours at MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences through classroom, distance learning and/or hybrid courses for successful completion of a certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, or graduate certificate program; or,
- b) 50% course hours at MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences through classroom, distance learning and/or hybrid courses for successful completion of a degree program.

6.2 Equivalence-Substitution and Exceptional Waiver

6.2.1 Equivalence-substitution credit shall be automatically granted for a MacMillian Institute course required in a program of instruction that has been previously completed in another MacMillian Institute program.

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 Equivalence-substitution credit may be granted by the Academic Manager (Dean or designate) for previous completion of a similar MacMillian Institute course. A similar MacMillian Institute course requires a minimum of 80% learning outcomes affinity.

6.2.4 In certain exceptional circumstances, an exceptional 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. Exceptional waivers shall be granted for COMM-160/161 when the learner receives an College Language Skills Assessment score higher than 160/161.

6.3 Transfer Credit

6.3.1 Learners who have completed credit courses at other recognized post-secondary institutions may apply for a MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences transfer credit on a course-by-course basis.

6.3.2 Transfer credit can only be applied to a failed course if the equivalent course was successfully completed after the failed course.

6.3.3 Advanced standing and/or transfer credit may also be awarded through articulation agreements between MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences and other institutions.

6.3.4 Qualification Recognition is required of any learner who intends to apply for transfer credit using prior formal learning from an institution outside of Canada and is not at MacMillian Institute through an articulation agreement.

6.3.5 The 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.

6.3.6 Courses that were taken as part of a post-secondary credential used to obtain credit through an articulation agreement, or admission to fast-track progression program, may not be used to obtain further transfer credits.

6.3.7 Grades for courses used to obtain transfer credit shall not be included in the learner's GPA calculation.

6.3.8 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 Manager, Pathways & Academic Partnerships.

6.4 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

6.4.1 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.

6.4.2 Learners who have obtained prior knowledge and skill through formal (i.e. post-secondary study), non-formal (i.e. seminars, workshops) and/or informal (i.e. employment, hobbies) learning sources may apply for a MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences PLAR on a course-by-course basis.

6.4.3 Learners who do not succeed in obtaining transfer credit for specific prior formal learning are permitted to use such learning in a PLAR attempt.

6.4.4 Learners are not eligible to apply for PLAR for MacMillian Institute courses in which they have previously failed.

6.4.5 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.

6.4.6 PLAR assessments must be culminating, in order to ensure course learning outcomes are assessed to the same degree as all other learners.

6.4.7 PLAR credit shall be considered a MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences course credit and shall be included in the learner's GPA calculation when a PLAR attempt results in a passing grade.

6.4.8 Program areas, particularly those related to vulnerable sectors, are permitted to limit access to PLAR for field placements. Program areas may choose to require a minimum of one field placement, regardless of a learner's prior learning or experience.

7. Additional Institutional Responsibilities

7.1 For all degree programs, MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences ensures that at any given time a minimum of 50% of learners registered within the program are actively taking required elements of the program.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

8. Confidentiality

8.1 MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences guarantees the protection of all private and confidential information as it pertains to this policy and the corresponding procedures.

9. Cross Reference to Other Existing Policies or Regulations

This Policy is complementary to and does not alter a student's rights or responsibilities under:

- The laws of Canada, Ontario, or municipal governments
- The Ontario Human Rights Code
- The College's Student Code of Conduct
- Policies or Regulations of Practicum Sites
- The College's Acceptable Computer Use Policy
- The Academic Regulations of MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences and the Academic Appeal Process
- Other College Policies

10. Policy Ownership

Administrator: MacMillian Institute of Applied Health Sciences