

CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY STUDIES

**Prior Learning Assessment and  
Recognition Handbook**



COLLEGE OF  
THE ROCKIES

**OUR MISSION IS:**

To transform lives and enrich communities through the power of education.

**OUR VISION IS:**

To create and deliver the most personal student experience in Canada.

**VALUES:**

It is not what we say, but what we do that matters.

**STUDENT SUCCESS DRIVES OUR SUCCESS**

From the front door to the classroom we are passionate in our commitment to take a personal interest in discovering what motivates and excites each student.

**APPRECIATE PEOPLE, LAND AND CULTURE**

Whether student, co-worker or community member, we look for and nurture each other's potential. We approach each other with kindness and a caring for our future and the future of our communities. We celebrate each other's histories and accomplishments, knowing that when others do better, we all do better.

**LISTEN AND ACCELERATE UNDERSTANDING**

We listen first so that we can foster each other's success. Improving our listening improves our learning, our relationships and our productivity, while minimizing conflict and misunderstanding.

**BE CURIOUS AND CREATIVE**

We learn here! And when we approach learning and life with an open mind, ready for change, and able to view things in new ways, we can better support those around us to grow and learn as well. We will judge less and ask more frequently "What did we learn?" and "How else could we approach this?"

## COPYRIGHT

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*The Child, Youth and Family Studies Program Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Handbook is modelled after the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology Prior Learning Assessment Candidate Guide.*

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## OVERVIEW

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The Child, Youth and Family Studies (CYFS) certificate and diploma programs are for individuals interested in early childhood education, child and youth care, family support, human service work, education assistance and other related careers.

The three specialties within the CYFS program are: [Early Childhood Education](#), [Education Assistant](#), and [Human Service Worker](#).

College of the Rockies recognizes that adults may have acquired college-level learning through life experience. Students can have that learning assessed through Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). Prior to the beginning of each term, students who have met a minimum of 80% of the learning outcomes of a course can register through the College's Registration and Student Services department for PLAR credit.

Up to 75% of each specialty within the Child, Youth and Studies program can be credited through PLAR.

## WHAT IS PLAR?

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PLAR is an option for College of the Rockies (COTR) students who believe they have acquired course-equivalent college-level learning through life experience such as self-directed study, paid employment, volunteer work, travel, and non-college courses.

To receive credit for a course, CYFS students initiate a request for PLAR. Then they create a portfolio that includes a range of evidence of previous learning to demonstrate they have met the learning outcomes listed in the course outline. Outlines for all COTR courses are available at: <https://outlines.cotr.bc.ca/course/>.

If you are considering PLAR for one or more Child, Youth and Family Studies courses, it is important to read the *Learning Outcomes* for those courses prior to contacting the College of the Rockies' PLAR Coordinator.

In order to be eligible for COTR credit, prior learning must:

- be current;
- be equivalent to college course level coursework;
- meet the core values of the Child, Youth and Family Studies program; and
- include the appropriate balance of theory and practical applications.

*Note:*

*PLAR is frequently referred to as Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).*

## IF I CAN TRANSFER COURSE CREDIT FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS, DO I NEED TO DO PLAR?

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Credit for equivalent courses from other institutions may be eligible for direct transfer credit at College of the Rockies. Courses that are directly transferable do not require PLAR.

Check the COTR Transfer Credit website for more information:

<https://cotr.bc.ca/enrolment-services/registration-and-admissions/transfer/>

## ARE PLAR COURSE CREDITS TRANSFERABLE TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS?

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If you are transferring your coursework to another post-secondary institution, you need to check with that institution regarding their acceptance of PLAR course credit.

## WHEN CAN I APPLY?

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Adequate time is required for consideration and evaluation of PLAR requests. Students should initiate their requests for courses within the Child, Youth and Family Studies program by meeting with an advisor 3-4 months in advance of the start of the term. All paperwork needs to be in place before the course begins.

*\*Note:*

*Students must have already applied and been admitted to the CYFS program in order to begin the PLAR process.*

## THE PLAR PROCESS

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### **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Process:**

Adequate time is required for consideration and evaluation of PLAR requests. Candidates must **plan in advance**. If planning to use PLAR towards a program or course requirement in an upcoming term, candidates should normally initiate their requests 3-4 months in advance of the start of the term. All candidates are encouraged to check with the Education Advisor.

#### **Steps:**

##### **A. Apply**

1. The candidate submits application for admission to College of the Rockies (the College) program.
2. The College determines the candidate to be eligible for admission.

##### **B. Preliminary Information on PLAR**

1. Potential candidate and Education Advisor discuss general process of PLAR.
2. Education Advisor may initiate discussion with the relevant Department Head on the availability of a Faculty Assessor.
3. Faculty Assessor considers request and decides if PLAR is possible in accordance with limitations specified in the policy. If the request is denied, the Faculty Assessor must provide a rationale.

##### **C. Plan**

1. Faculty Assessor and candidate discuss options and complete PLAR Planning and Reporting Form, including signatures to agree to the stated expectations and terms.
2. The candidate registers and pays fee for course(s).

##### **D. Complete Activities**

1. In consultation with the Faculty Assessor, the candidate completes and submits required activities/evidence of prior learning.

##### **E. Evaluation**

1. Faculty Assessor evaluates submissions and assigns a grade.

##### **F. Reporting**

1. Faculty assessor completes **PLAR Planning and Reporting Form** to document the grade and submits to the Office of the Registrar to update the student's record.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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If you are considering PLAR, the first step is to contact COTR's PLAR Coordinator for a preliminary discussion. If your request seems reasonable, and if you appear to have met the prerequisites for the program and individual course(s), your PLAR request will be forwarded to the Faculty Assessor.

### Student Services

*Ask to talk to an Education Advisor*

250-489-8243

1-877-489-2687 x 3243 Toll-free

[studentservices@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:studentservices@cotr.bc.ca)

## PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION ASSESSMENT

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Instructors in the Child, Youth and Family Studies program determine the type of evidence required by the student to ensure the learning outcomes of a particular course are met.

If the student and the Faculty Assessor agree that PLAR is an option, then both the student and the faculty member sign a PLAR Planning and Reporting Form, which identifies an agreed upon timeline for the submission.

Once you have agreed to the PLAR plan, you can begin to collect and prepare the required evidence. When you have enough evidence in the portfolio to demonstrate you have met the learning outcomes of the course, submit your portfolio to the Faculty Assessor who will evaluate it and assign it a letter grade.

There are a number of ways to provide evidence of your prior learning; some of which may include the following:

- interviews
- letters of reference
- certificates
- workshops
- employment evaluations
- on-site observations
- presentations (print, audio, video)
- demonstrated activities
- projects
- additional PLAR criteria

For each of the examples provided you will be explaining the connection to the learning outcome.



## HOW LONG IS THE PLAR PROCESS?

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The time required to complete a portfolio varies from person to person depending upon the course and the availability of evidence of prior learning.

PLAR submissions must be submitted within the academic semester in which you are registered and by the date specified on the PLAR Planning and Reporting Form. Students are encouraged to **plan in advance**, as time is needed for organizing the PLAR process, preparing the evidence and assessing the submissions.

## WHAT MORE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

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In order to be eligible for PLAR, you must apply for and be accepted into one of the CYFS program specialties. All students must register in the course and pay the applicable fees.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY STUDIES PROGRAM?

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If you are an international student, please contact the International Department for more information: <https://cotr.bc.ca/future-students/international/>.

### Educational Requirements Certificate

1. Secondary school graduation or equivalent
2. Minimum 65% in either English 12, English Studies 12, English First Peoples 12, ENGL 090, or equivalent  
(refer to Course Equivalency information on the College Website)

### Educational Requirements Diploma

Child, Youth and Family Studies Program: Early Childhood Education Certificate or a Certificate in Early Childhood Education from an accredited college

### Non-Academic Requirements

- Completion and submission of CYFS Application package
- Completion of immunizations, documented by the immunization form in the admission package, or completion of the immunization waiver form (lack of immunizations may impact applicant access to Practicum placements and employment opportunities following graduation).
- Good command of oral and written English language
- Solicitor General Criminal Record Check. Note: Conviction of a criminal offence may influence an applicant's access to practicum placements and employment opportunities following graduation.

## PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Each learning outcome will be given a value according to the descriptive characteristics below. The value of each learning outcome will be added together and then divided by the total possible value of all of the learning outcomes for the course. The number is converted to a percentage which then determines the letter grade for the portfolio.

### EXAMPLE

Learning Outcome 1:	Value 5
Learning Outcome 2:	Value 5
Learning Outcome 3:	Value 3
Learning Outcome 4:	Value 4
<hr/>	
Total:	18/20 = 90%

The four examples provided by the student are evaluated together to assess each specific learning outcome. Assessment is based on the following criteria:

- Breadth and depth of knowledge
- Understanding of theory/concepts
- Self-reflection
- Connections with relevant policies and ethical frameworks
- Critical thinking
- Communication and dissemination of knowledge which follows APA guidelines

<b>5 Extending-</b>	The four examples for this learning outcome demonstrate a mastery of the concept(s)
<b>4 Proficient-</b>	The four examples for this learning outcome demonstrate competency of the concept(s)
<b>3 Developing-</b>	The four examples for this learning outcome demonstrate a basic understanding of the concept(s)
<b>2 Beginning-</b>	The four examples for this learning outcome demonstrate a limited understanding of the concept(s)
<b>1 Exploring-</b>	The four examples for this learning outcome do not demonstrate a limited understanding of the concept(s)

A COTR Faculty Assessor will evaluate your PLAR submission and assign it one of the following letter grades, with the exception of practicum which are assessed as either COM (Complete to Defined Standard) or NCG (No Credit Granted).

Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	F
Mark	≥ 90	89-85	84-80	79-76	75-72	71-68	67-64	63-60	< 60

## COURSES AVAILABLE FOR PLAR?

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The following guide outlines the type(s) of evidence required for specific courses.

Select the course code for one or more of the courses to see the PLAR requirements for that portion of the Child, Youth and Family Studies program.

All portfolio submissions must reflect the following Child Youth and Family Studies program core values.

**Please note:** Students must have a minimum of three years' experience working as an education assistant in a full-time contract position in a K-12 school in British Columbia in order to be considered for the PLAR option in all EAP courses.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE (Practicums)

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### CERTIFICATES

#### **Early Childhood Education specialty**

Students must complete at least 380 hours of practical experience to be eligible for a PLAR in ECED 126 within the last five years in one or more licensed early childhood settings and under a certified early childhood educator. Evidence could be a record of employment or a written letter from employers with the employers' current contact information.

#### **Human Service Worker specialty**

Students must have at least 360 hours of practical experience to be eligible for a PLAR in HSWR 118 within the last five years in one or more settings related to their specialty. Evidence could be a record of employment or a written letter from employers with the employers' current contact information.

*The last practicum in each specialty is not available for PLAR.*

#### **Education Assistant specialty**

Neither practicum is available for PLAR

### DIPLOMAS

#### **Early Childhood Education *INFANT TODDLER specialty***

Students must complete at least 400 hours of practical experiences to be eligible for a PLAR in ECED 229 within the last five years in one or more infant and toddler licensed early childhood settings and under a certified infant toddler educator. Evidence could be a record of employment or a written letter from employers with the employers' current contact information.

#### **Early Childhood Education *SPECIAL NEEDS specialty***

Students must complete at least 400 hours of practical experiences to be eligible for a PLAR in ECED 253 within the last five years in one or more settings that are inclusive and support children requiring extra support and under a certified special needs educator. Evidence could be a record of employment or a written letter from employers with the employers' current contact information.

#### **Please Note:**

Practical experience hours used for PLAR can only be used for one practicum in the ECE certificate/diploma program. Duplicate hours WILL NOT be recognized.

## CYFS CORE VALUES

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- **Respect the intrinsic worth of all individuals and a belief in the dignity, individuality, and rights of persons**
- **Value diversity in all its manifestations**
- **Value learning and diverse learning styles and approaches**
- **Respect confidentiality**
- **Demonstrate empathy, respect, genuineness, and warmth**
- **Maintain awareness of self and one's impact on others**
- **Respect people's motivation and capacity for change**
- **Value the mutuality of the helping relationship**
- **Protect individuals from the undue influence and abusive use of power**
- **Respect the boundaries between professional and personal relationships**
- **Commit to enhancing the self-determination of individuals, social units, communities, and cultures without harm to others**
- **Commit to life-long learning, self-reflective practice and continuing professional development**
- **Be aware that all knowledge is tentative and evolving**
- **Value the benefits of collaboration and teamwork**

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION SUPPORT WORKER DIPLOMA			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
<a href="#">AESW 101</a>	Practicum 1	✓	
AESW 201	Practicum 2		X
COMC 253	Intercultural Communication	✓	
<a href="#">CYFS 116</a>	Lifespan Development	✓	
<a href="#">EAP 102</a>	Technology and Augmentative Communication	✓	
<a href="#">EAP 105</a>	Special Education	✓	
<a href="#">EAP 111</a>	Understanding the K-12 Curriculum	✓	
EAP 112	Introduction to Systems, Structure, and Roles in Education		X
EAP 150	Guiding Behaviours in K-12 Schools		X
EAP 151	Trauma and Challenging Behaviours		X
ENGL 100	English Composition	✓	
FNST 101	First Nation Studies 1	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 214</a>	Introduction to Addictions	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 215</a>	Issues in Adolescence	✓	
INDG 105	Introduction to Health and Wellness in Indigenous Communities	✓	
INDG 120	Introduction to Indigenous Worldviews (BC FOCUS)	✓	
INDG 203	Indigenous Ways of Knowing	✓	
INDG 205	Indigenizing Practice	✓	
INDG 240	Indigenous Peoples' Family Support Studies	✓	
KTUN 101 or equivalent	Introduction to Ktunaxa Language	✓	

\*For COMC 253, ENGL 100, FNST 101, INDG 105, INDG 120, INDG 203, INDG 240, KTUN 101, talk to an Education Advisor for information on how to proceed with PLAR.

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CERTIFICATE			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
<a href="#">CYFS 101</a>	Inclusive Interpersonal Communications	✓	
CYFS 102	Observing and Recording		X
<a href="#">CYFS 116</a>	Lifespan Development	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 105</a>	Developing Relationships with Young Children	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 113</a>	Health, Safety and Nutrition	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 120</a>	Introduction to Professional Practice	✓	
ECED 125	Introduction to Practicum		X
<a href="#">ECED 126</a>	Practicum 1	✓	
ECED 128	Practicum 2		X
<a href="#">ECED 129</a>	Introduction to Early Childhood Education	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 131</a>	Principles of Program Development	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 137</a>	Creating Curriculum with Young Children 1	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 138</a>	Creating Curriculum with Young Children 2	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 149</a>	Studies in Diversity	✓	
ECED 150	Guiding Behaviours with Young Children		X
<a href="#">HSWR 106</a>	Families	✓	

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INFANT AND TODDLER DIPLOMA			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
<a href="#">ECED 201</a>	Advanced Child Growth and Development	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 206</a>	Working with Families	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 208</a>	Supervision and Administration	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 213</a>	Advanced Health, Safety and Nutrition	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 218</a>	Planning Programs for Infants and Toddlers	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 229</a>	Infant and Toddler Practicum	✓	

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SPECIAL NEEDS DIPLOMA			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
<a href="#">ECED 201</a>	Advanced Child Growth and Development	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 206</a>	Working with Families	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 208</a>	Supervision and Administration	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 213</a>	Advanced Health, Safety and Nutrition	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 250</a>	Adapting Early Childhood Settings	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 253</a>	Inclusive Practice	✓	

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EDUCATION ASSISTANT CERTIFICATE			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
<a href="#">CYFS 101</a>	Inclusive Interpersonal Communications	✓	
<a href="#">CYFS 116</a>	Lifespan Development	✓	
<a href="#">EAP 102</a>	Technology and Augmentative Communication in the K-12 Classroom	✓	
EAP 104	Practicum 1		X
<a href="#">EAP 105</a>	Special Education	✓	
EAP 107	Practicum 2		X
EAP 108	Autism		X
<a href="#">EAP 110</a>	Health Care in the School System	✓	
<a href="#">EAP 111</a>	Understanding K-12 Curriculum	✓	
EAP 112	Introduction to Systems, Structure, and Roles in Education		X
EAP 150	Guiding Behaviours in K-12 Schools		X
EAP 151	Trauma and Challenging Behaviours		X

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**Please note:** Students must have a minimum of three years' experience working as an education assistant in a full-time contract position in a K-12 school in British Columbia in order to be considered for the PLAR option in all EAP courses.

HUMAN SERVICE WORKER CERTIFICATE			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
<a href="#">CYFS 101</a>	Inclusive Interpersonal Communications	✓	
CYFS 102	Observing and Recording		X
<a href="#">CYFS 116</a>	Lifespan Development	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 101</a>	Disability Studies	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 103</a>	Counselling Skills	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 105</a>	Professional Communications	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 106</a>	Families	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 108</a>	Health and Wellness	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 118</a>	Practicum 1	✓	
HSWR 119	Practicum 2		X
HSWR 150	Supporting Change in Human Service Work		X
HSWR 200	Roles and Responsibilities		X
HSWR 201	Trends and Issues		X

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HUMAN SERVICE WORKER DIPLOMA			
Course Code	Course Name	Available for PLAR	Not available for PLAR
CYFS 201	Independent Study		X
<a href="#">HSWR 211</a>	Conflict Resolution	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 212</a>	Crisis Intervention	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 213</a>	Introduction to Mental Health Issues for Children and Youth	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 214</a>	Introduction to Addictions	✓	
<a href="#">HSWR 215</a>	Issues in Adolescence	✓	
<a href="#">ECED 149</a>	Studies in Diversity	✓	
SOCI 240*	Aboriginal Family Support Studies	✓	
CRIM 131*	Introduction to the Criminal Justice System	✓	

*\*For SOCI 240 and CRIM 131, talk to an Education Advisor for information on how to proceed with PLAR.*

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