

Addictions Counselling Diploma Program



Candidate Guide



SIAS

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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The Addictions Counselling Diploma program is dedicated to removing barriers and broadening the access to programs at SIAST. We believe that adults acquire knowledge and skills through life and work experience that may align with courses within our programs.

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Why consider a PLAR assessment?

PLAR refers to the combination of flexible ways of evaluating people's lifelong learning, both formal and informal, against a set of established standards. You can receive academic credit for your relevant lifelong learning. The Addictions Counselling Diploma Program recognizes prior learning in a number of ways.

We recognize:

- Previous formal learning from an accredited training institution through transfer of credit.
- Previous informal learning or experiential learning through a comprehensive prior learning assessment and recognition process.

What are the PLAR Options?

To be eligible for PLAR, an applicant must first register or already be registered as a SIAST student.

If you have three years successful experience in the addictions field, and have learned the skills and knowledge for one or more of the Addictions Counselling Diploma Program, you may apply to be assessed for each applicable course.

Fees:

- A fee will be charged for each individual course assessment.
- For a listing of the specific PLAR fees in the PLAR database, check the [PLAR database](#) or call SIAST and ask to speak to the PLAR advisor/counsellor assigned to the Addictions Counselling Diploma Program at: 1-866-467-4278 or 1-866-goSIAST.

How many courses can be challenged through PLAR in the Addictions Counselling Diploma program?

Currently we have 6 out of 42 Diploma courses with PLAR challenges available. There is no limit as to how many of these 6 you may challenge. You may challenge as many of these courses as you are able to provide sufficient evidence of your prior skills and knowledge.

Which courses are PLAR-ready?

Addictions Counselling Diploma Program Profile		
Course	PLAR Challenge Available	PLAR Challenge Not Available
Year 1	-	-
CAPL 144 Academic management		X
CAPL 145 Writing skills	√	
CAPL 146 Personal/professional development		X
CDEP 155 Behaviour and drug dynamics		X
CDEP 157 Detoxification management		X
CDEP 158 Chemically dependent persons		X
CDEP 159 Addictions recovery models		X
CDEP 160 Family systems		X
CDEP 161 Erosion of addicted families		X
CDEP 162 Abuses in families	√	
CDEP 163 Concurrent disorders client		X
CDEP 164 Gender issues		X
CDEP 165 Special needs clients		X
CDEP 166 Gambling/Internet issues	√	
CDEP 167 Cross cultural counselling		X
CDEP 168 Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder		X
CDEP 171 Human Relations in Additions		X
CDEP 172 Communications in Addictions		X
CDEP 173 Additions and Conflict Resolution		X
COUN 149 Assessments and recovery plans		X
COUN 150 Motivational interviewing		X
COUN 151 Brief screenings		X
COUN 152 Suicide interventions		X
COUN 154 Addictions counselling theory		X
ETHC 140 Ethics in addictions		X
HLTH 151 Stress management in addictions		X
HUMD 142 Lifespan issues	√	
Year 2	-	-
ADMN 251 Administrative functions	√	
ADMN 253 Industry documentation	√	
CDEP 169 Community mobilization and development		X
CDEP 170 Prevention programs		X
CDEP 246 Presentation Skills		X
COUN 153 Crisis intervention techniques		X

COUN 155	Addictions counselling practice		X
COUN 156	Addictions and interventions		X
COUN 239	Addictions group counselling		X
COUN 241	Counselling modalities		X
COUN 244	Addictions group design		X
COUN 245	Addictions group facilitation		X
HLTH 240	Health promotion		X
PRAC 247	Detox practicum		X
PRAC 248	Developmental model practicum		X

Is PLAR available at any time of the year?

PLAR challenges are currently being offered once a year:

- March 30 (you must be apply by February 15)

Is it *easier* to challenge a course through PLAR - OR - take the course?

Neither is easier. By using PLAR you may reduce the repetition of studying information that you already know. The PLAR process allows you to demonstrate knowledge you already have.

PLAR is not an easy way to certification, rather a "different" way to obtain certification. Your personal level of skill and experience will dictate which courses you choose to challenge. The self-audit section found later in this guide will help you decide if you have a good match of skill and knowledge for a specific course.

Methods of assessing prior learning

Assessment methods measure an individual's learning against course learning outcomes. The assessment methods listed below are the ones most commonly used, but other forms of flexible assessment may be considered. These assessments may include one or a combination of the following assessment tools:

- ✓ Evidence File
 - ✓ Assessments
 - ✓ Treatment Plans
 - ✓ Discharge Summaries
 - ✓ Incident Reports
 - ✓ Progress Reports
 - ✓ Copies of Forms
 - ✓ Video/audiotapes of presentations & counselling
 - ✓ Lecture outlines
 - ✓ Activity outlines
 - ✓ Brief Screenings
- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Skill Demonstrations
- ✓ Knowledge Exams

If I live out of town, do I have to travel to a main campus to do PLAR?

There will be times that you will need to meet with the program on campus. However, we will try to keep travel to a minimum.

What if I have a disability & need equity accommodations?

At SIAST, we understand that sometimes services must be provided to students in a variety of ways to achieve the goals of fair representation. Therefore, the range of services provided for Education Equity students is as diverse as the needs of those students. We strive for equity (not uniformity) and provide varied services for students with differing needs. If more information is required, please contact a SIAST counsellor at a campus closest to you or refer to the SIAST Web site:

<http://www.siastr.sk.ca/siastr/servicesforstudents/>

Are there other methods to gain SIAST course credits for prior learning?

Transfer Credit

Yes, SIAST will grant credit for previous training that is similar in content, objectives, and evaluation standards to SIAST training. **Transfer of credit** is different from the PLAR process. Transfer Credit guidelines may be found at:

<http://www.siastr.sk.ca/siastr/admissions/academicregulations.htm#Transfer/Equivalency>

It is the student's responsibility to check with [Registration Services](#) for specific campus procedures on this policy. For specific information and guidelines regarding transfer of credit, contact a SIAST educational counsellor.

SIAST Addictions Counselling currently has the following Transfer credit articulation agreements in place. Please consult with an educational counsellor for further details.

Grant MacEwan College	- Graduates of the Addictions Counselling Diploma Program are eligible for admission to the Bachelor of Applied Human Service Administration Degree program and have one year to complete the necessary English 111 Communications Course.
University of Regina	- Graduates of the Addictions Counselling Diploma Program may be granted 3 credit hours for SW 417 and 6 credit hours for non-designated social work course credit and can apply for exemption of SW348(6c.u.) with portfolio - 3 credit hours for ENG 100 from the University of Regina may be eligible for PLAR credit for CAPL 145 in Addictions Counselling Diploma program
University of Saskatchewan	- 3 credit hours for ENG 110 from the University of Saskatchewan may be eligible for PLAR credit for CAPL 145 in Addictions Counselling Diploma program

Note: An online Provincial Transfer Credit Guide is now available at www.saskcat.ca.

Note: If you are a recent high school graduate, check the Saskatchewan Learning Web site for any articulated agreements that may apply for Computer Courses or Practical and Applied Arts Courses.

Equivalency Credit

Equivalency credit refers to the application of credit you may have earned in a previously taken SIAST course to your current SIAST course. Apply at registration services for *equivalency credit*. This process should also be completed prior to your

PLAR challenge. If these credits cannot be used for *equivalency credit*, you may use these accredited courses as part of your evidence for your PLAR challenge. There is no charge for equivalency credit.

- SIAST HUMD 161/280 is equivalent to HUMD 142 (Addictions Counselling Diploma).

Contact us

If more information is required, please contact a designated PLAR counsellor at a campus closest to you.

Kelsey Campus, Saskatoon, SK
(306) 933-6445 or 1-866-467-4278

Palliser Campus, Moose Jaw, SK
(306) 694-3266 or 1-866-467-4278

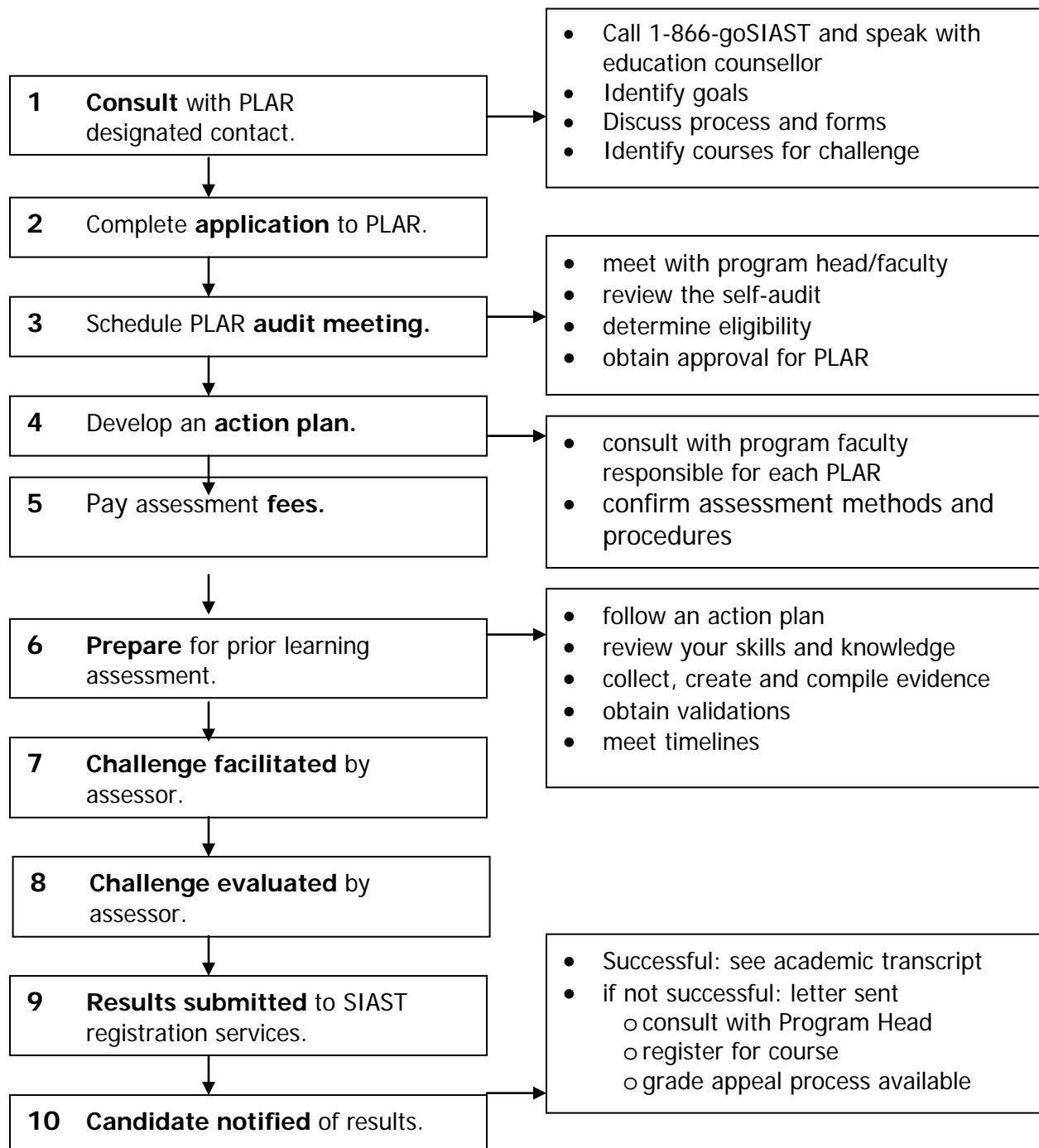
Wascana Campus, Regina, SK
(306) 775-7430 or 1-866-467-4278

Woodland Campus, Prince Albert, SK
(306) 765-1611 or 1-866-467-4278

The PLAR process

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Process

PLAR is available to individuals registered in a SIAST course or program, including unclassified students who seek course/block assessment or program level certification



Guiding principles for developing a PLAR evidence file

1. As you begin the PLAR process you will be advised if any evidence is required. This will be identified in your [action plan](#). Check with the PLAR designated contact **before** you begin to gather evidence.
2. Evidence must be valid and relevant. Your evidence must match the learning outcomes identified for each course.
 - a. It is your responsibility to create, collect and compile relevant evidence – if required.
3. Learning must be current within the past 3 years.
4. The evidence should demonstrate the skills and knowledge from your experiences.
5. The learning must have both a theoretical and practical component.

Types of evidence

There are three types of evidence used to support your PLAR request:

1. Direct evidence – what you can demonstrate for yourself.
2. Indirect evidence – what others say or observe about you.
3. Self-assessment – what you say about your knowledge and experience.

Ensure that you provide full evidence to your Addictions Counselling Diploma program faculty assessor so that your prior learning application is assessed appropriately. Well-organized, easy to track evidence will also ensure that none of the evidence is missed or assessed incorrectly.

Here are some examples of evidence that you may be requested to submit as part of your evidence file (if required):

- ✓ brief screenings
- ✓ assessments
- ✓ intakes
- ✓ orientation of clients
- ✓ treatment plans
- ✓ videotapes of interaction(s) with clients
- ✓ videotapes of community presentations
- ✓ resource lists
- ✓ written descriptions and analysis
- ✓ experience (activity) outlines
- ✓ philosophy statement

- ✓ observation
- ✓ progress reports
- ✓ workplace validations
- ✓ work samples (including business letters, reports, forms, etc.)

Note: Due to the nature of the addictions industry, items to be submitted regarding confidentiality will be negotiated. The Health Information Protection Act must be followed. Often, client names and other identifying information must be obliterated before the document is copied and then authenticated and validated by a candidate's current or former supervisor.

All documents that are submitted to SIAST may be returned to the candidate after the final results have been given and the grade appeal deadline of seven days has passed. A copy of transcripts and certificates may be included in the evidence file, but be prepared to show original documents at the PLAR audit meeting for validation.

How long will it take to prepare evidence for PLAR?

Since the requirements are different for each course, and each candidate has different experiences, the amount of time it takes to prepare evidence will vary.

Steps to complete a self-audit

1. Read through the Levels of Competence as listed below.

Levels of Competence:

Mastery: I am able to demonstrate the learning outcome well enough to teach it to someone else.

Competent: I can work independently to apply the learning outcome.

Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome.

Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area.

None: I have no experience with the outcome.

Learning Outcomes	Competency Level				
For each learning outcome listed, please self-evaluate your competency levels and record in the appropriate column	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None

2. Take a few minutes and read through the following self-audit for each course you are interested in as a PLAR candidate.
3. Check your level of competence as you read through each of the learning outcomes for each course. The information will help you in your decision to continue with your PLAR application.
4. In order to be successful in a PLAR assessment, your abilities must be at the competent or mastery level for the majority of the learning outcomes. Some things to consider when determining your level of competence are:
 - How do I currently use this outcome?
 - What previous training have I had in this outcome – Workshops, courses, on-the-job?
 - What personal development or volunteer experience do I have in this area?

Be prepared to explain the reason you chose this level if asked by an assessor.

5. Bring the completed self-audit to a consultation meeting with the program head or faculty member in [step 3 – PLAR process](#) of the Candidate Process for Prior Learning Assessment.

Self-Audit Guide(s)

CAPL 145 – Writing Skills

Credit Units: 3.00

The course provides instruction and practice in written communication skills. You will review basic grammar and the mechanics of writing. You will also produce examples of technical writing (including basic reports, research papers using the APA format and using reference materials).

CAPL 145 – Writing Skills Mastery: I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: I can work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: I have no experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
1. Examine the structure of written communication in the use of grammar and punctuation.					
2. Describe essay development.					
3. Complete a formal research essay/report or other formal research document using APA formatting.					

PLAR Assessment Methods If you qualify for PLAR, you may be asked to demonstrate your learning in one or more of the following ways. Be prepared to discuss the expectations during a consultation meeting.

- Evidence File
- Demonstration
- Formal Essay

Resources

The suggested resource is available at all SIAST bookstores.

- Norton, Sarah and Green, Brian. (2006) *The Bare Essentials, Form A*, 6th ed. Nelson, A Division of Thomson, Canada. ISBN: 0-17-640759-6

Suggested website for APA information:

- SIAST Libraries, APA research information:
<http://www.siastr.sk.ca/libraries/citation.html>

CDEP 162 – Abuses in Families

Credit Units: 2.00

You will examine the types of abuses that occur in a family. You will also be introduced to various referral strategies for families entering into the healing process.

CDEP 162 – Abuses in Families Mastery: I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: I can work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: I have no experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
1. Examine abuses in families.					
▪ Define abuses in Families.					
▪ Examine domestic violence.					
▪ Examine child abuse and neglect.					
▪ Examine abuses within diverse populations.					
▪ Examine consequences of familial abuse.					
2. Examine the cycles of abuse.					
▪ Examine the cycle of violence theory.					
▪ Examine the cycle of violence model.					
3. Present community and personal responses to family violence/abuse.					
▪ Present community and personal responses to family violence/abuse.					

PLAR Assessment Methods If you qualify for PLAR, you may be asked to demonstrate your learning in one or more of the following ways. Be prepared to discuss the expectations during a consultation meeting.

- Evidence File
- Practical Assignment (Presentation)

Resources

Wallace, Harvey. (2005). *Family violence: Legal, medical and social perspectives* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

www.duluth-model.org/documents/PhyVio.pdf

CDEP 166 – Gambling/Internet Issues

Credit Units: 1.00

You will examine the nature and extent of problem gambling/Internet use, the phases of problem use and the signs and characteristics of individuals who experience problem use. The course covers the introductory level screening/assessment tools used for compulsive gambling/Internet use, and the relapse recovery process and referral sources for problem gambling/Internet users. You'll recognize the differences, similarities and relationships between gambling and other addictions.

CDEP 166 – Gambling/Internet Issues Mastery: I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: I can work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: I have no experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
1. Describe gambling problem issues					
▪ Describe the history of gambling issues.					
▪ Identify the principles of gambling and types of gaming activities.					
▪ Describe the rise of Internet gaming.					
2. Examine the relationship between gambling and other addictions.					
▪ Describe an impulse control disorder.					
▪ Describe an addictive disorder.					
▪ Describe the relationship between gambling and other addictions.					
3. Use some screening and assessment tools for problem gambling.					
▪ Discuss some assessment instruments used in work with problem gamblers.					

PLAR Assessment Methods If you qualify for PLAR, you may be asked to demonstrate your learning in one or more of the following ways. Be prepared to discuss the expectations during a consultation meeting.

- Evidence file
- Interview
- Practical Assignment (Complete assessment tools which may include videotaped role-play.)

Resources

Harrison, Susan & Carver, Virginia. (2004). *Alcohol and drug problems: A practical guide for counsellors*. (3rd ed.). Toronto ON: Addiction Research Foundation.

HUMD 142 –Lifespan Issues

Credit Units: 3.00

You will examine changes in human development and the development of social roles across the lifespan.

HUMD 142 – Lifespan Issues Mastery: I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: I can work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: I have no experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
1. Examine the prenatal stages of human development.					
2. Examine the factors affecting human development and socialization in childhood.					
3. Examine the factors, (can use samples of treatment plans), that affect human development and socialization in adolescence and the factors affecting human development and socialization in early and middle adulthood.					
4. Examine the factors, (can use samples of treatment plans), that affect human development and socialization in late adulthood.					
5. Relate the concept of death and dying and its impact on life expectancy for someone with an addiction and/or those around them while considering mortality rates. (Candidates can use sample treatment plans to demonstrate knowledge.)					

PLAR Assessment Methods If you qualify for PLAR, you may be asked to demonstrate your learning in one or more of the following ways. Be prepared to discuss the expectations during a consultation meeting.

- Evidence file
- Interview

Resources

- Polan, Elaine and Taylor, Daphne. (2007). *Journey across the life span*, 3rd ed. F. A. Davis Company, Philadelphia, PA.

Suggested website for APA information:

- SIAST Libraries, APA research information:
<http://www.siastr.ca/libraries/citation.html>

ADMN 251 - Administrative Functions

Credit Units: 3.00

You will become familiar with the administrative functions required of addictions services agencies. You will examine organizational structure, working with community-based organizations, measuring outcomes, and management styles. You will also practice time management and job search skills.

ADMN 251 – Administrative Functions Mastery: I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: I can work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: I have no experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
1. Examine administrative functions.					
▪ Describe the purpose of managers.					
▪ Describe the nature of organizational structures.					
2. Examine the administrative functions of community-based organizations.					
▪ Identify the function and roles of the members of a community-based organization.					
▪ Identify the functions and roles of boards of community-based organizations.					
3. Develop outcome measures					
▪ Determine the subject requiring evaluation.					
▪ Select participants in the evaluation.					
▪ Clarify the goals of the evaluation and their scope.					
▪ Assess the evidence.					
▪ Develop outcomes.					
▪ Monitor achievement.					
▪ Report findings and make ongoing recommendations.					
4. Manage time.					
▪ Discuss the need for time management.					
▪ Identify time management techniques and tools.					
▪ Apply time management techniques.					
5. Demonstrate job search skills.					
▪ Describe methods of conducting a job search.					
▪ Practice job search skills.					
6. Prepare resumes for addictions services agencies.					
▪ Discuss resume development.					
▪ Prepare a resume.					
7. Simulate job interview skills in addictions services.					
▪ Describe preparation for an interview.					

PLAR Assessment Methods If you qualify for PLAR, you may be asked to demonstrate your learning in one or more of the following ways. Be prepared to discuss the expectations during a consultation meeting.

- Evidence file
- Interview
- Practical Assignment (Identify Outcome Measures)

ADMN 253 – Industry Documentation

Credit Units: 2.00

You will learn how to write formal business letters and memos, and agency reports for staff presentations. You will also prepare other types of reports to government and various human service agencies. You will examine the function of public relations when working in human services agencies and/or as a community prevention worker. You will practice writing news releases.

ADMN 253 – Industry Documentation	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
Mastery: I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else.					
Competent: I can work independently to apply the outcome.					
Functional: I need some assistance in using the outcome.					
Learning: I am developing skills and knowledge for this area.					
None: I have no experience with the outcome.					
1. Complete agency reports.					
▪ Describe business reports.					
▪ Describe informal reports.					
▪ Complete an agency report.					
2. Prepare business correspondence.					
▪ Write a business letter.					
▪ Write a memo.					
▪ Complete forms.					
3. Write a research paper.					
▪ Identify the main themes of research papers.					
▪ Write a research paper.					
4. Prepare press releases.					
▪ Describe the purpose and nature of public relations.					
▪ Describe the guidelines for using media.					
▪ Prepare press releases.					

PLAR Assessment Methods If you qualify for PLAR, you may be asked to demonstrate your learning in one or more of the following ways. Be prepared to discuss the expectations during a consultation meeting.

- Evidence File
- Practical Assignment(s)
 - Write a research paper

Write different types of press releases.

Resources

Suggested website for APA information:

- SIAST Libraries, APA research information:
<http://www.siastr.ca/libraries/citation.html>

Appendix A – Sample Letter of Validation

Date

Wendall Fromm, Executive Director
New Horizons Recovery Centre
Box 1812
Henribourg, SK S6J 1H0
(306) 555-8899

Dear Mr. Fromm:

As we discussed on the telephone, I am writing to ask you for a letter to validate the knowledge, skills and attitudes I developed while working in your centre.

I am in the process of seeking credit recognition in a SIAST program for some of the skills, knowledge and attitudes I developed and demonstrated while working with your organization. Your letter will assist me by providing evidence that I have successfully performed the tasks outlined in the attached PLAR Employer Validation checklist. If I can provide evidence that I have successfully performed tasks and demonstrated skills, knowledge and attitudes in the areas outlined in the attached checklist, I will receive credit for the following course(s) in the Addictions Counselling Diploma Program:

- (course name)
- (course name)

Please provide me with a letter indicating the term of my employment with your organization, my position there, and a general statement about my role, and the scope of my responsibilities. Also, please complete the attached checklist by indicating those tasks I have carried out. I may be eligible to receive credit for those areas in which you indicate a yes rating.

The subject matter of some of the courses for which I am seeking recognition for may require me to provide evidence of issues involving clients or general confidentiality. Due to the sensitive nature of addictions counselling facilities, I would like to assure you that any examples of my work that I share as part of my portfolio or as evidence to demonstrate my competency will not disclose any personal information of a client past or present or any materials considered confidential to the centre.

If you require clarification, please contact me at (306) _____ .

Thank you for assisting me in achieving recognition for the skills, knowledge and attitudes I developed while working for your organization.

Yours truly,