

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Applicant Portfolio Guidelines

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The logo for the Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta (ASET). It features the letters 'ASET' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a dark blue background. The logo is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page, which is decorated with abstract, overlapping blue curved shapes.

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Overview

Applicants seeking registration with ASET who have not graduated from an applied science, engineering, or information technology program or who are unable to produce academic transcripts may complete a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) portfolio to demonstrate equivalency to the academic requirements for the Certified Technician (C.Tech.) designation.

Competency is a combination of knowledge and skills underlying safe and competent performance in a discipline. Competency-based assessment is typically used to assess both the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for an individual to perform competently in his or her field of practice. ASET considers a combination of academics and work experience as the foundation for professional competency and therefore requires information on both education and professional qualifications to assess applicants.

In cases where an applicant is a non-graduate or is unable to produce transcripts, PLAR allows for the evaluation of skills and knowledge obtained outside of an academic program for the purpose of recognizing professional competence.

Academic Equivalency

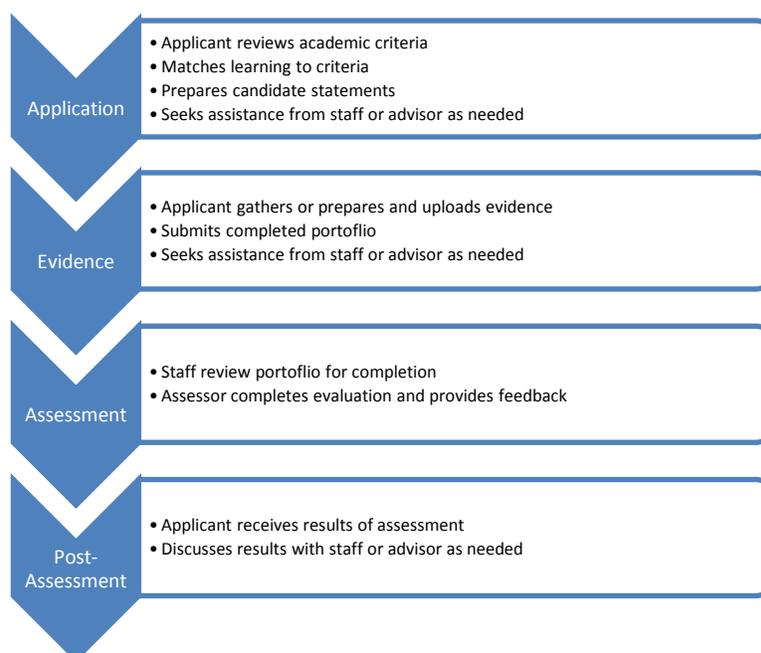
To qualify academically for C.Tech., non-graduates or applicants who are unable to produce transcripts must be able to demonstrate equivalency to the academic requirements for technician applicants. To demonstrate this equivalency, applicants must assess themselves against the Canadian Technology Accreditation Criteria in their discipline of practice and prepare a portfolio with supporting documentation.

Applicant portfolios must include the following:

- Description of the origin of the applicant's learning in relation to each academic criterion
- Supporting documentation for each criterion

PLAR Process

Once an application is made, the PLAR process consists of the following stages:



PLAR Advisors

ASET's PLAR program is supported by trained staff and volunteers. Staff members serve as a resource for applicants for questions about the application process and support for volunteers who are working with applicants or assessing applicant portfolios. There are two key groups of PLAR volunteers: advisors and assessors. While a volunteer may serve as both an advisor and an assessor, a volunteer may not serve in both roles for the same application.

Key Functions

The key functions of PLAR advisors are as follows:

- Support the applicant in completing the PLAR portfolio
- Help applicants to:
 - Understand the academic criteria
 - Match their learning to the criteria
 - Identify appropriate sources and types of evidence
- Provide ongoing support and feedback
- Liaise with ASET staff as needed

Advisors do not:

- Try to assist applicants with resolving personal issues through therapeutic interventions
- Simply repeat application information; they must offer guidance and improve applicant understanding
- Judge whether applicants have the requisite knowledge or skills for certification

You will be assigned an advisor and may work with your advisor throughout the PLAR process. Your advisor will be a subject matter expert in your field of practice who has received training in ASET's PLAR process. They will be a technical resource for you as you complete your portfolio. For questions about your assessment or more detailed questions about the administrative process, please contact the ASET Registration department.

PLAR Assessors

Key Functions

The key functions of PLAR assessors are as follows:

- Assess the applicant's evidence
- Ensure the evidence is valid, reliable, sufficient, current, and authentic (see Technical Requirements)
- Ensure the applicant meets the required academic criteria
- Provide feedback to the applicant regarding the portfolio and any additional evidence requirements

Assessment Process

Your completed portfolio will be assessed by a discipline-specific subject matter expert to ensure your examples demonstrate equivalency to the academic requirements for C.Tech. Two assessors are assigned to each applicant file to ensure an objective and equitable review process.

Applicants must describe the origin of their learning and provide supporting documentation for all general academic criteria and five (5) program discipline criteria outlined in the portfolio template. Assessors will then evaluate the examples to determine if the applicant has demonstrated sufficient academic equivalency.

Criteria will be rated according to the following rating scale and the results averaged to obtain the score for your portfolio:

Rating	Description
5	Applicant has demonstrated all learning outcomes
4	Applicant has demonstrated most learning outcomes
3	Applicant has demonstrated a moderate number of learning outcomes
2	Applicant has demonstrated a limited number of learning outcomes
1	Applicant has not demonstrated any learning outcomes

The scoring rubric for your portfolio is as follows. Applicant's achieving a score of 60 to 100 will be permitted to enter the C.Tech. application process. Applicant's achieving a score of 0 to 59 will not be eligible to enter the C.Tech. application process, but will be provided with direction from the assessors as to how to meet any gaps in the portfolio submission.

Sufficient Level of Knowledge to Enter C.Tech. Application Process				Insufficient Level of Knowledge to Enter C.Tech. Application Process	
90-100	80-89	70-79	60-69	50-59	0-49
Outstanding demonstration of technician-level knowledge	Very good demonstration of technician-level knowledge	Above average demonstration of technician-level knowledge	Generally satisfactory demonstration of technician-level knowledge	Barely acceptable demonstration of technician-level knowledge	Unacceptable demonstration of technician-level knowledge

You will receive the results of your portfolio assessment within four to six weeks of submission of your portfolio to the ASET Registration and Practice department.

Portfolio Instructions

The Applicant Portfolio is based on the Canadian Technology Accreditation Criteria published by Technology Accreditation Canada. These criteria include Program General Learning Outcomes, which are common to all engineering technology and applied science disciplines, and Program Discipline Learning Outcomes, which are specific to a particular discipline of practice.

1. Review the academic criteria and associated learning outcomes listed in your portfolio. You must describe the origin of your learning and provide supporting documentation for ***all general academic criteria and five (5) program discipline criteria***.
2. Add information to each learning outcome associated with the general academic criteria and five program discipline criteria.
 - a) Indicate how you will demonstrate the learning outcomes by checking work, academic, training, or other.
 - b) Add the dates when you developed this learning.
 - c) Under Candidate Statement, describe how you developed skill and knowledge in relation to each academic criterion. This should also include the location (e.g., a company you worked for) if applicable. A location and dates may be used more than once throughout your portfolio.
3. Upload supporting documentation that provides evidence of your skill and knowledge in relation to each learning outcome. Supporting documentation may be used more than once throughout your portfolio if the documentation applies to multiple learning outcomes. Examples of supporting documentation include:
 - a) Paid work (full or part-time) or volunteer work
 - i. Job descriptions
 - ii. Performance evaluations
 - iii. Commendation letters
 - iv. Validation letters¹
 - v. Work samples
 - vi. Publications
 - b) Courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, professional certification
 - i. Certificates or completion letters
 - ii. Course work samples or exam marks
 - iii. Presentations or publications
 - c) Other (in situations where you cannot produce existing documentation)
 - i. Letter or essay describing how you developed your skill and knowledge in relation to a particular academic criterion or criteria
 - ii. Technical report demonstrating your skill and knowledge in relation to a particular academic criterion or criteria

¹ Validation letters are not letters of recommendation. In a validation letter, a reference with direct knowledge of your work verifies and assesses the learning you have obtained through your experience in a particular role or activity. A sample validation letter is provided as Appendix 1.

Sample Request for Validation Letter

Adapted from the PLA Training Modules produced by the Center for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology for the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Education, Skills and Training

This is a template an applicant may use to request a validation letter from a reference. The applicant may choose to contact the reference more informally via email, depending on the preference of the applicant or reference. The validation letter provided by the reference, however, should be prepared on letterhead and signed by the reference.

[Date]

[Name of Reference]

[Address of Reference]

Dear [Name of Reference]:

I am writing to ask you for a letter on my behalf to assist with obtaining certification with ASET. As part of ASET's Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process, I am hoping to earn recognition for my learning obtained outside of an academic program. Your letter will help me provide the evidence that what I know and can do is equal to the academic requirements for certification. I have included a copy of the learning benchmarks for your reference.

Following the recommendations of ASET, I would like your letter to include the following:

1. A description of my position [Title(s) and Date(s)]. This should include a brief mention of the responsibilities I assumed and some of my main accomplishments.
2. A statement of your relationship to me; for example, that you were my immediate supervisor, and the situations under which you observed or evaluated my work.
3. An indication of the skills, knowledge, and abilities you believe I possess. (You may find it helpful to refer to the enclosed learning benchmarks.)
4. A statement indicating how well you think I met the overall job role.

I would appreciate you preparing this letter on letterhead, adding your contact information, and signing the letter before sending a copy to me.

Thank you very much for agreeing to write this letter on my behalf. As I am sure you are aware, earning this certification at this point in my life is very important to me.

Should you have any questions, please let me know [Applicant Contact Information].

Sincerely,

[Signature of Applicant]