

Royal Ontario Academy (ROA) recognizes that students may have completed learning outside of Ontario secondary schools. This policy explains how ROA evaluates prior learning so eligible students may earn Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) credits without repeating the same learning.

Forms and Scope of PLAR

Equivalency (Credit Review): An assessment where the school reviews a student's transcripts and documents from another school, country, or program to determine which Ontario credits the student may already have.

Challenge (Test for Credit): An assessment, such as a test, project, or interview, through which a student demonstrates their knowledge to earn a Grade 10-12 credit without taking the full course.

PLAR rules depend on the type of student: regular Ontario day school students, transfer students (home school, international, or outside Ontario), and mature students (18+).

Guiding Principles

- Fairness, consistency, and transparency in credit decisions.
- Alignment with Ontario curriculum expectations and graduation requirements.
- Recognition of documented, verifiable learning.
- Support for appropriate placement and student success.

Regular Ontario Day School Students (Grades 9-12)

PLAR is limited for regular day school students because Ontario expects students to benefit from the full secondary school program. Up to four (4) total credits may be earned by challenging Grade 10-12 courses, with up to two (2) challenge credits in the same subject area.

Transfer Students (Home School, International, Out-of-Province/Out-of-Territory)

For transfer students, the Principal may grant equivalency credits following a review of prior schooling. For example, an international student who has completed Grades 9, 10, and 11 may be granted up to twenty-three (23) equivalency credits toward the OSSD, subject to review. All transfer students must still meet Ontario graduation requirements, including the Ontario Secondary School Literacy requirement and at least 40 hours of community involvement activities.

Mature Students (18+)

A mature student is at least 18 years of age on or before December 31 of the school year in which they register, and has been out of school for at least one year. Mature students may earn some of the 30 credits required for the OSSD through PLAR, based on the Principal's review and assessment.

- Up to sixteen (16) Grade 9 and 10 credits may be granted through an individual assessment (no challenge option for Grade 9/10).
- Up to ten (10) Grade 11 and 12 credits may be granted through equivalency and/or challenge.
- Mature students must earn at least four (4) Grade 11/12 credits by taking courses, under Ministry policy. To issue an ROA-granted OSSD, ROA requires a minimum of six (6) credits earned at ROA, of which at least four (4) must be Grade 11 or Grade 12 credits.

Credit Equivalency Table

#	Previous Secondary Schooling Completed	Min. Credits to Earn at ROA	Max. Equivalency Credits (PLAR)	Notes
1	1 year completed (e.g. Grade 9)	22	8	Student placed at Grade 9 equivalency. Must still earn 22 credits to complete the 30-credit OSSD. Community involvement: mature students are exempt under Ministry policy.
2	2 years completed (e.g. Grade 10)	14	16	Student placed at Grade 10 equivalency. Must still earn 14 credits to complete the 30-credit OSSD. Community involvement: mature students are exempt under Ministry policy.
3	3 years completed (e.g. Grade 11)	7	23	Student placed at Grade 11 equivalency. Must still earn 7 credits to complete the 30-credit OSSD. Community involvement: mature students are exempt under Ministry policy.
4	More than 3 years completed	6	24	Although Ministry policy requires only a minimum of 4 Grade 11 or Grade 12 credits where a student has no previous Ontario credits, ROA requires a minimum of 6 credits earned at ROA to issue an ROA-granted OSSD, of which at least 4 must be Grade 11 or Grade 12 credits. Community involvement: mature students are exempt under Ministry policy.

Graduation Requirements Summary

Requirement	How It Applies
Total Credits Required	30 credits in total. The combination of PLAR equivalency credits and credits earned at ROA always equals 30.
Literacy Requirement	Met through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or, where applicable, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OLC40). Because the OSSLT must be

Requirement	How It Applies
	written in person under proctored conditions, students studying from outside Ontario are generally unable to sit it. Mature students may enrol in OLC4O directly, and other students who cannot access the in-person OSSLT are enrolled in OLC4O at the Principal's discretion where it is in the student's best educational interest. ROA confirms each student's literacy pathway at enrolment.
Community Involvement	The 40-hour community involvement requirement applies to all students earning the OSSD. Mature students are exempt under Ministry policy. ROA advises each student on eligible activities at enrolment.
Online Learning	Satisfied automatically, since all ROA courses are delivered fully online.
Financial Literacy	Applies to students who entered Grade 9 in 2025-2026 or later, completed through Grade 10 Career Studies beginning in 2026-2027. Students who completed Grade 10 before 2026-2027 are not required to complete it. Mature and adult learners entering in 2028-2029 or later complete it through PLAR for Mature Students. ROA confirms how it applies at enrolment.
PLAR Assessment and Credit Recognition	The PLAR equivalency assessment is provided at the time of admission, free of charge, on the understanding that the student will complete all remaining OSSD credits at ROA. If a student instead earns some remaining credits at another school and asks ROA to recognize them toward an ROA-granted OSSD, a one-time credit recognition fee of \$250 applies to cover the cost of assessing and recognizing those credits.

Royal Ontario Academy as Home School (Diploma-Granting School)

Full-time students intend to earn their OSSD through ROA as their home school, either not enrolled in an Ontario day school or planning to withdraw from their current school to study with ROA. Part-time students remain registered at another school and are not asking ROA to issue their diploma; for these students, the day school holds the OSR and grants the diploma, and ROA reports final grades and credits earned to that school.

ROA acts as a student's home school and grants the OSSD only when the student is enrolled with ROA as their designated day school and ROA holds the student's OSR and OST. As the diploma-granting school, ROA is responsible for confirming that every graduation requirement has been met before the OSSD is issued.

To begin the process of becoming a student's home school, ROA requires the student to register for at least three credits. Once enrolled in three or more credits, the Principal will request the student's records and begin transferring the OSR from the previous school; ROA does not begin this transfer process for students registered in only one or two credits.

To act as the home school and grant the OSSD, ROA requires that a student earn a minimum of six (6) credits by successfully completing courses delivered and taught by ROA. Credits granted through PLAR, equivalency for prior schooling, or courses completed at other schools do not count toward this minimum, although they continue to count toward the 30 credits required for the OSSD. This is an ROA enrolment condition, not a Ministry graduation requirement; it does not limit a student's right to earn an OSSD and does not affect a student's right to their own records.

Students who do not meet this minimum, or who prefer that another school grant their diploma, are welcome to enrol in individual ROA courses on a part-time basis. Any credits ROA has already granted, together with the OSR where ROA holds it, will be forwarded to another school on request in accordance with Ministry requirements.

Required Documentation

- Official academic transcripts (preferred).
- Course descriptions/syllabi or curriculum outlines (when available).
- Report cards or credit summaries.
- Identification details needed for verification, as requested by administration.

Additional Supporting Evidence (Mature Students and/or Limited Transcripts)

When transcripts are limited, incomplete, or do not fully demonstrate learning, ROA may consider additional evidence, particularly for mature students. Work experience does not automatically grant credits but may strengthen the PLAR file when it clearly demonstrates learning connected to Ontario curriculum expectations, such as a resume or CV, an employer reference letter, job descriptions or training records, certificates and credentials, or portfolio samples.

Equivalency (Credit Review) Procedure

1. Transcript Submission: students submit official academic transcripts and any requested supporting documents.
2. Course Matching: the Principal reviews prior coursework and determines Ontario-equivalent credits.
3. Credit Allocation: Ontario secondary school credits are granted where equivalencies are supported by evidence.
4. Placement and Planning: students are guided to complete remaining required Ontario credits toward the OSSD.

Challenge (Test for Credit) Procedure (Grades 10-12, Where Eligible)

Where challenge for credit is permitted and approved, the student demonstrates achievement through an assessment process appropriate to the course, which may include a test, project, performance task, interview, or a combination of methods. ROA confirms eligibility and applicable limits before proceeding, identifies the assessment format and success criteria aligned to Ontario curriculum expectations, and records the outcome, granting the applicable credit if successful.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal: Leads PLAR decisions, including equivalency credit allocation and approval of challenge opportunities, and ensures decisions align with Ontario requirements and ROA procedures.

Student/Parent/Guardian: Provides complete and accurate documentation by required deadlines and responds to requests for additional information as needed.

This policy is reviewed periodically to ensure clarity, fairness, and alignment with Ontario Ministry of Education requirements and ROA operational needs, and is updated as needed. Final decisions on interpretation and application rest with the Principal. Questions may be directed to Royal Ontario Academy at info@royalontarioacademy.com. Last updated July 2026.