Competency Based Assessment/
Prior Learning
Assessment
Program (CBA/PLA)

Program & Policies Brochure
Mission Statement

The CBA/PLA Program addresses classification needs of early childhood educators with post secondary credentials from foreign countries or non-Child Care Education Program Approval Committee (CCEPAC) accredited programs. Successful completion will demonstrate competence at the Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II) trained level according to Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care (MELCC) Standards of Performance. Successful completion results in a trained and current ECE II classification level and the right to enter further programs to attain an Early Childhood Educator (ECE III) classification.

A Brief History

In 1983, The Community Child Care Standards Act was proclaimed and comprehensive licensing regulations concerning qualifications were passed. The educational requirements for employees of child care centres and nursery schools included that a proportion of staff have specific training in areas of child development, health, nutrition, safety, program curriculum, interpersonal communication, family relations and supervised practicum experience. This requirement was based on sound research, which confirms the correlation between specific childcare knowledge and training with delivery of quality care to children.

The original Competency Based Assessment (CBA) Program was introduced in Manitoba in 1986 as an alternative to formal post secondary education. CBA was a comprehensive adult education program, which assesses the competence of Child Care Assistants (CCA) by providing an opportunity for them to demonstrate child care skills, and abilities, knowledge and judgments in a child care setting. The CBA program has since developed into 4 separate programs, and the original CBA process was discontinued. The CBA Programs are the responsibility of MELCC.

Upon completion of a CBA Program, the participants qualify for the ECE II classification. Completion of a CBA Program and attainment of an ECE II level will allow individuals to enter a recognized post diploma certificate program to obtain an ECE III level. For further information please see the Information on the Classification of Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Assistants brochure.

The Classification Policy in Manitoba

According to the Act, all child care employees in Manitoba who work in licensed facilities must be classified. The classification of child care employees is based on the highest level of formal education completed in child care. Each facility requires a proportion of trained staff, i.e., ECE II and ECE III.

An ECE II classification is based on successful completion of an approved* child care education program at a recognized post-secondary institution. The CBA/PLA, FCC/CBA and M: CBA/PLA Programs provide an alternative to a formal post secondary education program and completion results in an ECE II classification through MELCC.

* Programs are approved by the Child Care Education Program Approval Committee (CCEPAC).
What is the CBA/PLA Program?

The CBA/PLA Program is specifically designed for individuals who are currently working in licensed child care facilities and who possess the requisite combination of prior learning in the form of a related degree or diploma and years of experience in the child care field.

The CBA/PLA Program is offered to eligible participants as a part-time self-assessment process in order to demonstrate and document both formal and informal learning in order to obtain recognition of their skills, knowledge and judgment as measured against specific Standards of Performance. The current place of employment is integral to the assessment process since documentation in the portfolio is built on while the participant is working in the child care facility. Verification that the participant has met the program outcomes is partly obtained through peer assessment.

The eligible participant is guided through the process by a team, which includes an Advisor Assessor and a Peer Assessor. The assessment process is based on program outcomes and learning outcomes for thirteen Child Care Competency Areas. These competencies have been adopted as the necessary minimum qualifications to be demonstrated by early childhood educators working with children in licensed programs in Manitoba.

What is Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the process that involves the identification, documentation, assessment and recognition of the learning acquired through formal and informal study.

It is the process of recognizing and giving credit for skills, knowledge and competencies that have been acquired experientially through work experience, unrecognized education or training, self study, volunteer activities and hobbies.

PLAR is a process that can be used to look at what you know and what you can do. PLAR can be used to get some form of recognition (i.e. credit towards an ECE II classification) for knowledge and skills that you already have.

What are some basic assumptions about PLAR?

• Significant learning takes place outside of our educational institutions. It is estimated that as much as 80% of learning by adults is acquired outside the classroom.

• Adults acquire knowledge, skills and judgment through working, training, reading, travelling, television, parenting, community, etc.

• The individual’s learning can and should be evaluated for credit.

• Education and training practices that require learners to repeat the learning that they already have mastered are inefficient, costly, and unnecessary. Educational institutions need to provide learning that is new and exciting. Adults do not want to re-learn something that they already know.

• Evaluation policies and procedures should be clearly outlined and available.

Why Do PLAR?

PLAR is both a product and a process. Individuals gain learning from the process. It allows them to develop skills in self-reflection, critical thinking and analysis. The process helps them learn about themselves and their potential.

The PLAR product is the end result of the process. Ultimately, the product for the learner is recognition of their learning.
Who is Eligible to Apply for Admission?

A child care employee who:

- is employed for over 20 hours per week within a licensed Manitoba child care centre or nursery school, working directly with the children;
- wishes to upgrade to meet current ECE II requirements;
- has formal prior learning in the form of a degree or diploma from a post secondary institution that has not been recognized as ECE training according to MELCC policies on qualifications;
- has a minimum of two years of experience in licensed child care;
- has the support of the centre to assist in the process as needed;
- has completed a minimum of 60 hours of professional development experiences related to the child care profession during the previous two years;
- is willing to absorb financial costs related for the purchase of materials required to produce the CBA/PLA portfolio.

There is no tuition fee but a financial commitment is required in the purchase of learning aids, such as resources, visits to homes and/or centres and portfolio development.

If you meet the above criteria you may wish to submit your name on a contact list for an information meeting.

Contact us at:
MANITOBA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE QUALIFICATIONS SERVICES
219 - 114 GARRY STREET
WINNIPEG MB R3C 4V6

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS:
(204) 945-0776 OR
Toll Free 1-888-213-4754

What are the Admission Requirements?

Successful applicants to the CBA/PLA program must have regular employment in a licensed facility in Manitoba and have:

- completed the entire application and included all requested documentation by the due date;
- secured the support of the Director and the Board of Directors/Parent Advisory Committee and co-workers as indicated in the application;
- provided evidence of the following combinations of prior learning*, employment and experiences:
  - Post-secondary education, which is not an approved program, for example: Developmental Services Diploma, Bachelor of Human Ecology in Family Social Services, Bachelor of Arts: Developmental Studies, Bachelor of Education in Elementary or Early Years, Two Year Full Time Montessori Diploma, Bachelor of Recreational Studies; credentials from a country other than Canada.
  - Two or more years of full-time employment at a licensed child care facility

* Please consult with a Qualifications Specialist to determine eligibility of formal prior learning

Waitlist

Successful applicants who have completed the required documentation are placed on a waitlist. Prioritization of entry into the program is based on the strength of the application. A weighted point scale is used to assess all applications and applicants will be notified if their score is low and counselled as to how they can improve their application.
Duration

As this is an adult self-directed assessment process and not a learning process, the participant must meet the designated target dates.

Participants are required to attend Portfolio Development Seminars at the beginning of the process. Participants must demonstrate their skills, knowledge and judgment through a PLAR process.

If there are no learning gaps demonstrated, the duration of the program from first seminar to final assessment meeting is six to eight months.

The CBA/PLA participants can put themselves on hold and/or ask for extensions with team support. The process can recommence with the team’s approval.

How is the Assessment Done?

The CBA/PLA program employs a “team model.” Each team consists of three people: the Participant, the Peer Assessor and the Advisor Assessor.

Participant

The Participant is the team leader. The Participant ensures that the process moves forward in an efficient and effective manner. They take responsibility for proving (through demonstration and documentation) their prior learning and knowledge. They guide the speed and co-ordinate the process. Part of the process involves keeping team members informed of progress. The Participant can access the Advisor Assessor for guidance and consultation and informs the Peer Assessor when verification is required.

Peer Assessor

The Peer Assessor is a graduate from an Early Childhood Education program or a successful Participant from the Competency Based Assessment Program offered through MELCC and is classified as a current ECE II or ECE III. The Peer Assessor provides moral support and is available on a regular basis to verify and authenticate different aspects of the Participant’s work with children (knowledge, skills and judgment), reviews all materials, provides feedback and prepares for the profile development meeting.

Advisor Assessor

An Advisor Assessor is assigned to work with each team in this process. The Advisor Assessor may be working with more than one Participant. They provide guidance and support as the Participant develops a Portfolio that showcases their knowledge, skills and judgement. The Advisor Assessor provides: consultation, advice on evidence collection, clarification of process and materials, written feedback to the Participant, assistance in determining strategies for verification of learning, portfolio assessment, verification of skills, identification of gaps in evidence, recommendation for ECE II classification.

The Outcome

The outcome of the CBA/PLA process is decided in a final assessment meeting. The team members meet to share information about the competence of the Participant according to the Program Outcomes and Standards of Performance. A profile is developed indicating competence as well as identifying learning gaps. Each member of the team has an equal vote in the process. A unanimous vote for overall competence is required for successful completion of the process and the awarding of an ECE II classification.

Voluntary Withdrawal

If a participant decides not to complete the CBA/PLA Program, the team must be informed in writing. Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care will issue a confirmation letter of withdrawal.

Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care reserves the right to remove a participant from the program if the participant does not complete the responsibilities of the assessment in a professional manner.
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Your personal information is collected under the authority of The Community Child Care Standards Act, (Manitoba) and will be used to establish eligibility for the CBA/PLA Program. It is protected under The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

For more information about FIPPA please contact:

Access and Privacy Services –
Government Records Office
Archives of Manitoba
3 – 200 Vaughan Street
Winnipeg MB R3C 1T5
(204) 945-3738
Toll Free: 1-800-617-3588 (Manitoba)
Fax: (204) 948-2008
govrecs@gov.mb.ca
www.manitoba.ca/chc/fippa/help/contactus.html

Information shared during participation in the CBA/PLA program is considered to be private. A participant may choose to share information with co-workers and administration of the facility when it is appropriate to do so.

Appeal Process

If the participant feels that the assessment process has been unfair or prejudicial and wish to appeal your assessment decision, written notification must be submitted within 90 days of receipt of your certificate to:

CHILD CARE STAFF QUALIFICATIONS
REVIEW COMMITTEE
400 – 326 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3C 0S5

This Committee is authorized under The Community Child Care Standards Act to ascertain whether proper procedures were carried out in the CBA/PLA assessment and classification process. The Committee is authorized to hear all differences of opinion related to the classification of child care workers. The Committee’s decision regarding a child care worker’s classification level is final and not subject to further appeal.