



A LEADING POLYTECHNIC
COMMITTED TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management (BTech-TM)

PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition)



Candidate Guide

A LEADING POLYTECHNIC COMMITTED TO STUDENT SUCCESS

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Northern Alberta Institute of Technology – May 2013

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The Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management (BTech-TM) is dedicated to removing barriers and broadening the access to programs at NAIT. NAIT recognizes that knowledge and skills are gained through a variety of processes including life and work experiences that may align with courses within our programs. We are committed to supporting a community in which learners will receive appropriate credit or recognition for prior learning.

Developed by program	Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management (BTech-TM)			
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Why consider a PLAR assessment?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) refers to the combination of flexible ways of evaluating peoples' lifelong learning, both formal and informal against a set of established standards. You can receive academic credit for your relevant lifelong learning. The Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management (BTech-TM) program recognizes prior learning in a number of ways.

We recognize:

- Previous formal learning from a recognized post-secondary institution through transfer of credit and credential recognition.
- Previous non-formal and in-formal learning through a comprehensive prior learning assessment and recognition process (PLAR).

What are the PLAR options?

To be eligible for PLAR, a candidate must have first applied and have been formally accepted to a NAIT credit program (the non-refundable tuition deposit has been paid). Open Studies students are **not** eligible to apply for PLAR. Please note that your PLAR request will be reviewed within 6 weeks of receipt of the application form, all supporting documents (in English) and verification of fee payment. Submit your PLAR request early!

Individual Course Challenge

If you have five years successful experience as a technician in an engineering technology, applied science, or health field, and have learned the skills and knowledge for **one or more** of the BTech-TM courses, you may apply to be assessed for each applicable course. Please note that NAIT has a 50% residency criterion. Applicants can only receive credit for up to 50% of any NAIT credit program (See [NAIT Academic Regulations and Procedures](#) under **Residence Requirements**). Students should enrol in their courses until official confirmation has been received that credit was granted.

Fees:

- The PLAR evaluation fee is \$150.00 **per** course challenge.
- The course assessment fees must be paid prior to submitting a PLAR request.
- All fees are non-refundable.
- Call NAIT and ask to speak to an Advising Centre Representative at 780-471-6248 or Toll Free at 1-877-333-6248 or AskNAIT@nait.ca



How many courses can be challenged through PLAR in the BTech-TM program?

Currently we have 4 out of 49 third and fourth year degree courses with PLAR challenges available. Credit is granted per course – partial credit will not be granted. Please note that NAIT has a 50% residency criterion. Applicants can only receive credit for up to 50% of any NAIT credit program. (See [NAIT Academic Regulations and Procedures](#) under **Residence Requirements**)

Is PLAR available at any time of the year?

Contact the program at (780) 378-5983 or btech@nait.ca for more details. Your request will be reviewed within 6 weeks of receipt of the request form, all supporting documents (in English) and verification of fee payment. Submit your PLAR request early!

Please Note: You should enrol in your courses until official confirmation has been received that credit was granted. The program sends an email notification that the application has been processed.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Contact the program area with any questions or concerns related to the assessment results. [Appeal process](#) available.
- Notify the program if they have decided to decline a course credit that has been granted. Any changes must be requested before the [add/drop deadline](#).



Which courses are PLAR ready?

Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management Program Profile			
COURSE CODE	COURSE NAME	PLAR Challenge(s) available through program	PLAR Challenge(s) not available
ACCT3430	Financial Accounting		X
ACCT4660	Managerial Accounting		X
BLAW4820	Business Law		X
BTTM3020	Recent Advances in Technology		X
BTTM3140	Principles of Workplace Education		X
BTTM3500	System Analysis & Design	✓	
BTTM3510	Database Management	✓	
BTTM4000	Business Programming		X
BTTM4020	MIS Project		X
BTTM4040	Technology and Enterprise Governance		X
BTTM4130	Global Energy Development and Society		X
BTTM4150	Information Systems Security Management		X
BTTM4160	Embracing Disruptive Technologies		X
BTTM4170	Expert Systems		X
BTTM4180	Data Visualization		X
BTTM4200	Productivity Improvement		X
BTTM4250	System Reliability Analysis		X
BTTM4350	Construction Jobsite Controls		X
BTTM4400	Collaborative Patient-Centered Practice		X
BTTM4420	Healthcare Delivery in Canada		X
BTTM4430	Health Promotion		X
BTTM4620	Enterprise Resource Planning		X
BTTM4630	Innovation & Change Management		X
BTTM4700	Selected Topics in Technology Management		X
BTTM4810	Issues in Society, Environment, and Sustainability		X



BTTM4830	Risk Management		X
BTTM4840	Technology, Experts & Society		X
BTTM4860	Global Citizenship		X
BTTM4990	Capstone Project		X
COMM3210	Critical Reading and Writing		X
ENTR4650	Entrepreneurial Studies		X
ENVR4140	Environmental Management Systems		X
ENVR4300	Environmental Impact Assessment		X
ETHC3200	Ethics and Society	✓	
ETHC4450	Health Care Ethics		X
HRMT3410	Human Resources Management		X
LEAD4850	Leadership Development		X
LSSC4240	Lean Six Sigma		X
MATH3090	Managerial Mathematics		X
MATH3100	Advanced Calculus		X
MATH3120	Linear Algebra		X
NETW4010	Network Management		X
OHSC4100	Health, Safety, and Loss Management		X
OPMG4230	Operations Management		X
PMGT3420	Project Management	✓	
PMGT4330	Risk Analysis and Management		X
QAQC3130	Quality Control System		X
RSCH3000	Applied Research Methods		X
STAT3010	Statistical Analysis		X

For assistance contact NAIT and ask to speak to an Academic Advising Centre Representative at 780-471-6248 (Toll Free: 1-877-333-6248) or askNAIT@nait.ca



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 to 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:

- Product validation and assessment
- Challenge exam
- Standardized tests
- Performance evaluations (including skill demonstrations, role plays, clinical applications, case studies)
- Interviews and oral exams
- Equivalency (evaluations of learning from non-credit training providers)
- Evidence or personal documentation files (providing evidence of learning from life and work experiences and accomplishments)

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

Depending on the mode of assessment, there may be times that you will need to meet with the program on campus. However, we will try to keep travel to a minimum.



What services or resources can I access if I have a disability?

Identify any possible needs related to your disability during your PLAR Audit meeting with the program. If you have a disability and want to know more about what services or resources you may be able to access for your PLAR assessment, please contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](#).

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

Transfer Credit and Credential Recognition

Yes, NAIT may grant credit for previous post-secondary training from a recognized institution that is similar in content, objectives, and evaluation standards to NAIT training. Transfer of credit is different from the PLAR process. Transfer credit and credential recognition guidelines may be found at:

<http://www.nait.ca/86612.htm>

Please Note: This process should be completed prior to your PLAR challenge. If these credits cannot be used for transfer credit or credential recognition, you may be able to use these accredited courses as part of your evidence for your PLAR challenge.

If more information is required, please contact:

- A NAIT Academic Advising Centre Representative at 780-471-6248 (Toll Free: 1-877-333-6248) or email AskNAIT@nait.ca
- Program Advanced Credit contact (www.nait.ca under programs & courses and contacts)

What are the implications of receiving PLAR or Transfer Credit for my full time student status?

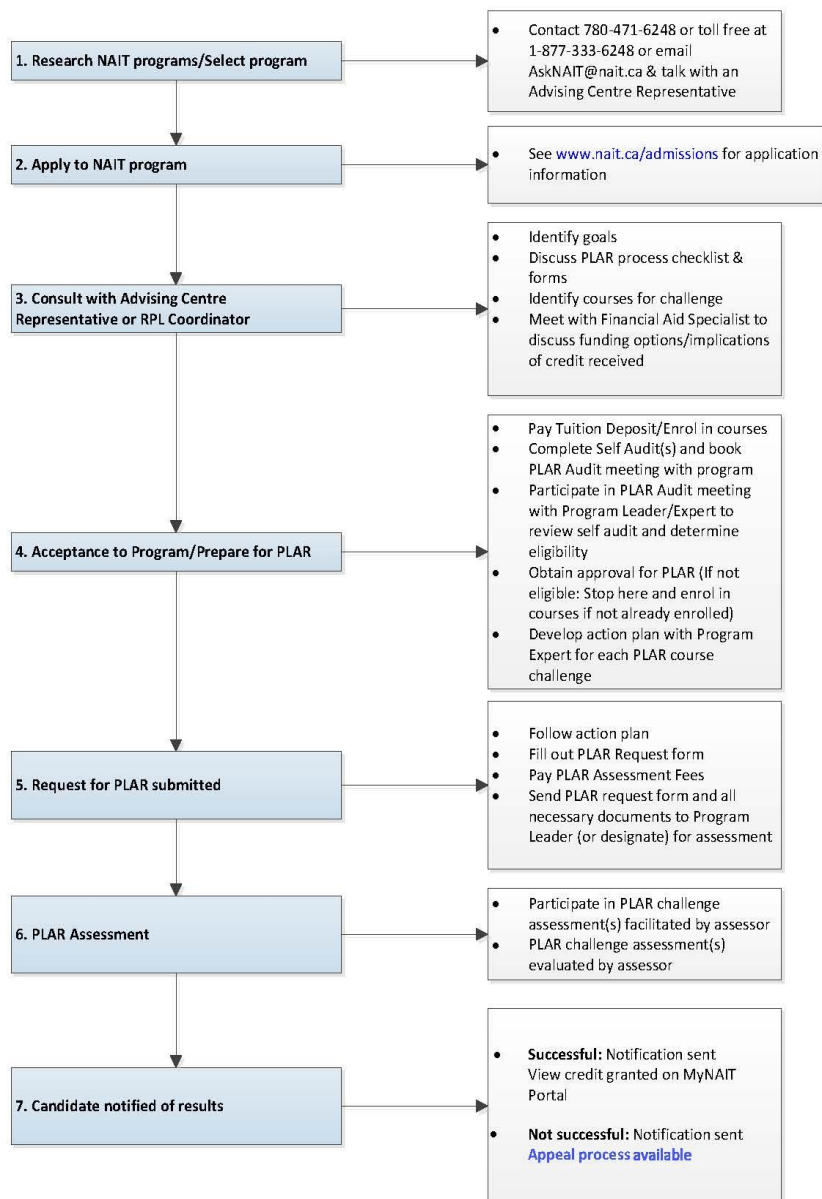
While RPL can mean fewer classes to take and pay for, students should be aware that the definition of full-time status for Financial Aid may be different than NAIT's definition of full-time status. Questions regarding financial assistance should be directed to the [NAIT Financial Aid Office](#). A student who qualifies for advanced credit should review the [NAIT Academic Regulations and Procedures](#), Academic Honors and if necessary, seek further consultation with Advising or Program staff since eligibility for semester honors, Dean's Honor Roll, an honors diploma/certificate or awards may be affected.



The PLAR Process

Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) Process

PLAR is the process of identifying, assessing, and recognizing skills and knowledge acquired through non-formal and informal learning for a specific goal such as advanced credit.



Revised January 5, 2015



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 (see program home page Advanced Credit Contact) for your program **before** you begin to gather evidence.
2. Evidence must be valid and relevant. Your evidence must match the learning outcomes identified for each course.
 - It is your responsibility to create, collect and compile relevant evidence – if required.
3. Learning must be current (i.e. within the last 10 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-evidence – what you say about your knowledge and experience.

Ensure that you provide full evidence to your BTech-TM PLAR 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):

- written descriptions and analysis
- experience (activity) outlines
- workplace validations
- work samples

All documents that are submitted to NAIT may be returned to the student after the final results have been given and the advanced credit appeal deadline of 10 days has passed. A copy of transcripts and certificates may be included in your evidence file, but original transcripts that were submitted at the time of application to NAIT will be available online. Be prepared to show original parchments 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 your evidence will vary.

Steps to complete a self-audit

1. Read through the levels of competence as listed below.

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

For each learning outcome listed, please self-evaluate your competency levels and record in the appropriate column for each self-audit.

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 (**at least 80%**). 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 4** – of *The PLAR Process* for prior learning assessment. Select [Program Advanced Credit Contact \(PLAR\)](#) to book consultation.



Self-audit Guide(s)

ETHC3200 – Ethics and Society

Ethics and Society supports degree requirements through its high-level focus on personal, social, business, environmental, and international ethics in preparation for students' professional careers. Students prepare to face ethical dilemmas by developing a personal code of ethics based on extensive reading and consideration of the works of acknowledged experts in the field from the past to the present.

Credit unit(s): 3

Equivalent course(s): N/A

Prerequisite(s): RSCH3000 or COMM3210

ETHC3200 – Ethics and Society		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. Examine and evaluate ethical theories and practices from historical and modern perspectives.						
▪ Analyze and evaluate Aristotelian, utilitarian, and relativist ethics.						
▪ Categorize and critique contemporary approaches to moral and ethical problems.						
▪ Distinguish and evaluate moral behaviours from teleological and deontological perspectives.						
3. Evaluate ethical issues in the workplace and individual behaviours and perspectives relating to these issues.						
▪ Discuss the meaning and value of work.						
▪ Explain moral rights in the workplace.						
▪ Explain employee responsibilities in the workplace.						
▪ Analyze employee and employer rights and responsibilities through a case study.						



4. Research and discuss key ethical issues related to the development and management of business, industry, and technology; the complex inter-relationships; and the global environmental impact of these issues in terms of a global economy.					
▪ Debate the ethical appropriateness of one or more of the following issues: whistle-blowing, company email privacy policies, personal identity and screening/interviewing policies, termination policies, or others.					
▪ Critique ethical issues relating to gender diversity and inclusivity within the workplace.					
▪ Identify and classify ethical issues related to the global marketplace and propose appropriate solutions.					

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.

1. Challenge exam

Requirements for challenge exam

The PLAR candidate will successfully complete (70% or >) a challenge exam assessing learning outcomes 1, 3, and 4. The exam consists of three written response questions (500 – 750 words each) with a choice of topics presented for questions two and three.

The PLAR candidate is allowed two (2) hours to complete the exam.

The assessor is to determine the date, time, and location of the exam.

Resources

DesJardins, J. R. (2013). *An Introduction to Business Ethics*. (5th). New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978007803827.



BTTM3500 – System Analysis & Design

This course presents the concepts, skills, and techniques needed to become an effective systems analyst. The course emphasizes hands-on experiential learning and employs the systems development life cycle model as a tool to provide conceptual and systematic frameworks. The systems development environment is covered as well as software sources, systems planning and selection, systems projects, the determination of systems requirements, and designs and implementation.

Credit unit(s): 3

Equivalent course(s): N/A

Prerequisite(s): None

BTTM3500 – System Analysis & Design					
Mastery:	I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning
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. Develop and select information systems.					
▪ Explain the systems development life cycle and alternate approaches to building systems.					
▪ Assess software sources and choices.					
▪ Utilize the SDLC.					
▪ Plan and select information systems.					
2. Analyze information systems processes.					
▪ Determine requirements for information systems.					
▪ Analyze structural system requirements using process modeling techniques.					
▪ Analyze structural system requirements using data modeling techniques.					
3. Design human and systems interfaces for information systems.					
▪ Explain the process of designing interfaces and dialogues and the deliverables for their creation.					
▪ Apply general guidelines for designing interfaces and specific guidelines for layout design, structuring data entry fields, providing feedback, and system help.					
▪ Discuss the importance of human interface design as it relates to Internet-based electronic commerce applications.					
▪ Show the relationship between systems analysis and design and logical database design.					



BTTM3500 – System Analysis & Design						
Mastery:	I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
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.					
4. Lead the implementation of information systems.						
▪ Discuss the sub-processes that make up system implementation.						
▪ Distinguish between system installation strategies.						
▪ Prepare a training plan for an information system and demonstrate the many different modes available for training users.						
▪ Discuss the value of systems documentation.						

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.

1. Challenge exam

The PLAR candidate will successfully complete (70% or >) a challenge exam assessing learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4. The exam consists of three sections: Section A) 40 multiple choice questions; Section B) three short answer questions; and Section C) practical assignment.

The PLAR candidate is allowed two and a half (2.5) hours to complete the exam.

The assessor is to determine the date, time, and location of the exam.

Resources

Valacich, J.S., George, J.F., and Hoffer, J.A. (2011). Essentials of systems analysis and design. (5th). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0137067119.



PMGT3420 – Project Management

This course consists of a disciplined study of the essential components of project management. The leadership and interpersonal skills required to gain team trust and respect and to ensure projects are completed on time, within budget, and to the satisfaction of stakeholders will be discussed. The project management skills required to initiate, plan, manage, monitor and control, and close the project are also important components of the course.

Credit unit(s): 3

Equivalent course(s): N/A

Prerequisite(s): None

PMGT3420 – Project Management					
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. Demonstrate an understanding of the five project management processes.					
▪ Initiate the project; identify sponsor and sponsor's needs.					
▪ Plan and develop the activity work packages and tasks within the five main process groups.					
▪ Manage the project prior to the deadline set in the course.					
▪ Monitor the progress of the project and provide update to stakeholders.					
▪ Control project and correct if necessary, items such as scope, time & cost.					
▪ Assess change requests to the project scope while limiting scope creep.					
▪ Lead and manage the project closure, such as lessons learned, historical archiving, and sponsor's sign-off of the project.					
2. Apply the ten Project Management Body of Knowledge areas in team service projects.					
▪ Develop and manage an integrated project management plan, including the nine subsidiary project management plans for the identified social service project.					
▪ Assess a project through group discussion, brain-storming, or a project selection methodology.					
▪ Identify a potential project and gain project approval from the guidance team.					
▪ Assess and interpret group dynamics and personal interaction/reaction within the team.					
▪ Demonstrate the ability to work in teams while carrying out a service project.					



PMGT3420 – Project Management						
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.					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and manage conflict resolution in leading the team and the social project. 					
	3. Demonstrate the importance of integrity, trust, and trustworthiness in project teams.					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the need for personal responsibility when working in a team environment. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key personal foundational elements that affect our ability to be successful in teams. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the legacy you want to leave behind in your team. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop synergistic solutions by practicing interdependence behaviour. 					
	4. Analyze previously failed projects using project management methodologies.					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop database research and literacy skills. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and describe project failure characteristics. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess corrective action required and apply the lessons learned from project failures. 					

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.

1. Challenge exam

Requirements for challenge exam

The PLAR candidate will successfully complete (70% or >) a challenge exam assessing learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4. The exam consists of 150 multiple choice questions.

The PLAR candidate is allowed two (2) hours to complete the exam.

The assessor is to determine the date, time, and location of the exam.

Resources

Project Management Institute. (2013). A guide to the project management body of knowledge. (5th). Newtown Square, Pa: Project Management Institute. ISBN: 9781933890517.



BTTM3510 – Database Management

This course provides an introduction to database management theory and practice. It explores the database environment, the database development process, and how this process fits into the broader context of information systems development. Students will be introduced to entity-relationship models, and how to convert a conceptual data model to a relational data model. The course also provides an introduction to SQL.

Credit unit(s): 3

Equivalent course(s): None

Prerequisite(s): None

BTTM3510 – Database Management		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. Discuss the importance of database management systems and the environment in which database technologies function.						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the limitations of conventional file processing systems. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the advantages, costs, and risks of the database approach. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the components of a typical database environment. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify categories of databases and key decisions that must be made for each category. 						
2. Describe the database development process.						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the life cycle of a systems development project. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the roles of individuals who design, implement, use, and administer databases. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the three-schema architecture for databases. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the role of packaged (or generic) data models in database development. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create simple data models that show the scope of a database. 						
3. Use an entity-relationship model to document the rules of the business that influence database design.						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how to model the rules of an organization (business rules). 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build an E-R diagram to represent common business situations. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compose effective names and definitions for entities, relationships, and attributes. 						



BTTM3510 – Database Management					
Mastery:	I am able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning
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.				
▪ Model different types of relationships.					
4. Convert a conceptual data model to a relational data model and implement basic concepts of normalization.					
▪ Explain the relational data model.					
▪ Analyze integrity constraints.					
▪ Transform an E-R diagram to a logically equivalent set of relations.					
▪ Describe the process of normalization.					
▪ Implement a Relational Database Example in Microsoft Access.					
5. Use SQL commands to create and maintain a database and to write single-table queries.					
▪ Use SQL data definition language commands to define a database.					
▪ Process single tables by using SQL commands.					
▪ Establish referential integrity using SQL.					
6. Use SQL DML commands to write multi-table queries.					
▪ Explain the concept of transaction integrity, data dictionaries, triggers, and stored procedures.					
▪ Compose single and multiple table queries using SQL commands.					
▪ Describe three types of join commands and use SQL to implement examples of these commands.					
▪ Construct non-correlated and correlated sub queries and know when to use each.					
▪ Explain how SQL can be used to ensure transaction integrity.					



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.

1. Challenge exam

Requirements for challenge exam

The PLAR candidate will successfully complete (70% or >) a challenge exam assessing learning outcomes 1 to 6. The exam consists of both a theoretical and a practical component. The theoretical component consists of multiple choice and short answer questions; the practical component consists of a network topology assignment.

The PLAR candidate is allowed two (2) hours to complete the theoretical component and 1 hour and 15 minutes to complete the practical component.

The assessor is to determine the date, time, and location of the exam.

Resources

Modern Database Management, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, ISBN 1256614149 (order from NAIT).



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Appendix A: Title Page

Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management – BTech-TM

ABCD 1234 – Course Name

Student name

Date: