

DATA DICTIONARY



Transfer Credit Awarded (TCA)

Version 1.0

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Document History

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1. Document Usage

1.1. Document Purpose

The Data Dictionary has been developed for and will continue to evolve during the evolution of Transfer Credit Awarded (TCA). The Data Dictionary provides terms and definitions that support TCA data standards, representing what will be formally accepted for this data by the various key stakeholders. Details regarding data validation rules and fields for TCA data standards can be found in the [TCA User Guide](#) and the vision, goals, guiding principles, data questions and system measure in the [TCA Guiding Principles](#) document.

1.2. Audience

The primary audience for the Data Dictionary is:

- The institutions/stakeholders required to provide and/or understand TCA data.
- The ACAT Secretariat/Advanced Education, who facilitate TCA data standards and the system.

2. Glossary of Terms

2.1 Terms and Definitions

Terms marked with * are based on Learner and Enrolment Reporting System (LERS) definitions. Caveats for the data set are listed in the TCA Data Caveats section at the end of this document.

Transfer Credit Awarded Terms	Definitions/Descriptions for Terms
Academic Year*	<p>Start and end dates for the annual TCA reporting period mirror institutional LERS enrolment reporting cycle as applicable (based on institutional fiscal year end dates) and not by calendar year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year for TCA and LERS Reporting/Institutional Fiscal Year End Dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For March 31st institution fiscal year ends, enrolment reporting cycle is May 1 – April 30. ○ For June 30th institution fiscal year ends, enrolment reporting cycle is July 1 to June 30. <p>Note: Academic year is included in data submissions identified by a single year (e.g., 2021 for the 2021-2022 academic year). If you are assessing and awarding transfer credit for a course(s) in January 2022, this credit would be reported in your 2021 (2021/2022) submission, not in your 2022 (2022/2023) submission.</p>
Alberta Student Number*	<p>A learner's Alberta Student Number (ASN). This is a value that stays with the individual during their academic career, and will follow them as they move from institution to institution. All K-12 students in Alberta have an ASN, which will follow them into post-secondary studies.</p>
Approved Program	<p>A structured and institutionally defined or recognized set of courses that are recorded on an institutional transcript and that are jurisdictionally, nationally, or organizationally approved, accredited or otherwise recognized (e.g., by Ministry (in alignment with the PSLA and ACF), NIAB, WINHEC, Professional Regulatory Organizations, Professional Associations, Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board).</p>
Birth Date*	<p>A learner's date of birth.</p>
Course Code at From Institution	<p>From Institution Course Code (Course Code = Code and Number) for which the Learner got credit. For PLAR Transfer Credit Awarded, use "Prior Learning" for the Course Code at From Institution.</p>
Course Code at To institution	<p>To Institution Course Code (Course Code = Code and Number) for which the Learner gets credit.</p>

Transfer Credit Awarded Terms	Definitions/Descriptions for Terms
Course-by-Course Transfer Credit	Specified (direct) or unspecified (generic) transfer credit awarded for a course(s) at a receiving ("To") institution based on coursework that was successfully completed at another recognized institution.
Credit	The numerical value assigned to a course by a post-secondary institution. Credit valuation should align with an institution's definition of credit value in its Provider and Program Registry System (PAPRS) records (as applicable).
Date course taken at From institution	Academic Year in which Learner took the course at the From Institution. For PLAR Credit Awarded, the latest year of experience for which the credit is being awarded.
Date transfer credit was awarded at receiving institution	Academic Year in which the Learner was assessed to receive transfer credit at the To Institution (same academic year for which the TCA data is submitted).
From Institution	From Institution operating name (full and current operating name for the institution) where Learner completed work to get credit. From Institutions where From Institution location = 1 (in Alberta), the From Institution name is an existing, current PAPRS Institution Operating Name. For data with IB or AP course codes, the From Institution name is High School". For data with PLAR course codes, the From Institution name is "Prior Learning". Note: All Alberta Learner Pathways System member PSIs will have an Operating Name in PAPRS that is used in the adult learning system even if the PSI does not use PAPRS.
From Institution Location	The geographical location of the institution (or high school) where the learner completed the course(s) being awarded transfer credit. Value must be: 1-Alberta 2-Outside of Alberta in Canada 3-Outside of Canada 4-Unknown
Notes	PSI comments on transfer credit awarded where relevant.
PAPRS Program ID*	Program ID for which learners got transfer credit awarded. Program ID must be defined in PAPRS; it is the Program Code ID value that is reported by each PSI in PAPRS submissions and is used to identify the program name.

Transfer Credit Awarded Terms	Definitions/Descriptions for Terms
	For Institutions that are not required to use PAPRS, or that have data requirement limitations for some programming, they will use a program code of "0" and provide details in the Notes data field.
PAPRS Program Specialization Code*	<p>Specialization Code for which learners got transfer credit awarded.</p> <p>Specialization Code must be defined in PAPRS; it is the program Specialization ID code value that is reported by each PSI in PAPRS submissions and is used to identify the program specialization name.</p> <p>For Institutions that are not required to use PAPRS, do not offer this type of programming, or have data requirement limitations for some programming, they will use a program specialization code of "0" and provide details in the Notes data field.</p>
PLAR Credit Awarded	<p>Credit granted based on an assessment of informal, non-formal, or experiential learning that could be used toward a course(s) or credential. PLAR credit is granted at a student level to non-graduate students following assessment (e.g., written challenge exam, oral exam or interview, performance assessment, product assessment, portfolio assessment). Credit is granted by the receiving ("To") institution in alignment with their identified PLAR assessment practices.</p> <p>Note: PLAR credit awarded data is the value/number of credits transcribed for PLAR by course and excludes both transfer credit awarded data (transfer credit is included in other TCA data fields) and instructional credit that is awarded to students who are currently enrolled in a course(s) at the receiving ("To") institution. The broader definition for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) includes formal (e.g., transfer credit, credential recognition) and informal, non-formal and experiential learning (e.g., PLAR). In applicable contexts for some institutions, where they are unable to award formal credit for formal learning (e.g., stale-dated courses), these institutions may have PLAR assessment practices that include assessment and awarding of PLAR credit.</p>
Program Students	Students enrolled in an approved program.
Recognized Institution	All institutions that offer approved programs for which receiving ("To") Alberta Learner Pathways System member institutions award students transfer credit.
Specified Credit	A type of direct transfer credit awarded when the learning outcomes for a previously completed course or combined courses are deemed substantially equal to a specific course(s) at the receiving ("To") institution.
To Institution	Learner's PSI operating name (full and current operating name for the institution) that they transferred to, and who is awarding them transfer credit. Must be a valid, current PAPRS Institution Operating Name.

Transfer Credit Awarded Terms	Definitions/Descriptions for Terms
	<p>Note: All Alberta Learner Pathways System member PSIs will have an Operating Name in PAPRS that is used in the adult learning system even if the PSI does not use PAPRS.</p>
Transfer Credit Awarded	<p>Formal credit assessed and granted by a receiving (“To”) institution at a course, block of courses, or credential level that may be used towards an approved program for work completed at another recognized institution. Credit is awarded at a student level to non-graduate students in their first enrolment in the institution in a specific program during the academic year of reporting for completed coursework in alignment with identified common transfer credit practices at institutions.</p> <p>Note: Transfer credit awarded data is the value/number of transfer credits awarded and includes AP and IB data (with separate aggregate reporting back to PSIs for AP/IB data), University Transfer, and for-credit micro-credentials data. Transfer credit awarded data excludes PLAR credit awarded data (there is a separate data field for PLAR in the TCA data set), non-credit data, and instructional credit that is awarded to students who are currently enrolled in a course(s) at the receiving (“To”) institution (e.g., credit for students on Letters of Permission and on Study Abroad is excluded from the TCA data set). See TCA Data Caveats section in this document.</p>
TCA Students who have been Awarded Transfer Credit	<p>Students who have been granted transfer credit at a receiving (“To”) institution for a course(s) or credential(s) completed at another recognized institution.</p> <p>Note: Definition is for the purposes of the TCA data set, focusing on provincial transfer credit, and understanding that institutions’ definitions for “transfer student” will vary.</p>
Unique Student	<p>An individual learner who is identified by their own Alberta Student Number (or jurisdictional/institutional equivalent for out-of-province member institutions’ data that may be included).</p>
Unspecified Credit	<p>A type of generic transfer credit awarded when the learning outcomes for a previously completed course or combined courses are deemed not substantially equal to a specific course(s) at the receiving (“To”) institution. Credit granted is associated with a year level, requirement type, advanced standing, or an area of study (e.g., BIO2XX).</p>

2.2 TCA Data Caveats

- 2.2.1 Alberta LPS member institutions participate in TCA. Out-of-province member PSIs may choose to participate for applicable data.
- 2.2.2 All transfer credit-related data fields are in alignment with identified common transfer credit practices at institutions (e.g., generally comparable for 80% of course content (for specified course-by-course transfer credit), course credit hours, minimum grade required, resources, and stale-dating (as applicable)).
- 2.2.3 The transfer credit shown in TCA data includes transfer credit assessed and awarded during the academic year of reporting. TCA data does not include transfer credit assessed but not awarded, or transfer credit awarded at time of graduation/credential audit. There may be some differences between the assessed credit (the TCA data set) and credit applied towards a credential. For example, students may change institutions, change programs, or not complete a program.
- 2.2.4 Institution data is submitted by the academic year of reporting and not by calendar year, and is based on LERS enrolment reporting cycle as applicable (based on institutional fiscal year end dates). (E.g., If awarding transfer credit in January 2020 for a course offering that a student took in September of 2016, this credit would be reported in the 2019/2020 (2019) submission.)
- 2.2.5 At this time, “credit” is defined differently depending on the institution, and may not be a universal definition across all data. Definitions for Transfer Credit Awarded and for Credit are provided and consistently applied in the TCA data set.
- 2.2.6 Some institutions’ data includes a very small percentage of embedded Letters of Permission and Study Abroad data in transfer credit data that cannot be effectively identified and excluded, and excludes a small percentage of Challenge Exam data in PLAR credit data that may not have been recorded as PLAR credit.
- 2.2.7 Admissions processes vary, with some PSIs assessing transfer credit towards a student's program and others at a PSI level.
- 2.2.8 Requirements used to meet admission requirements are considered separate from course prerequisite requirements.
- 2.2.9 For initial data submission, for data analysis/aggregate reports there will be a data crosswalk for “From Institution” codes/names until transition to a common data standard.