

Dear Attestor,

An Athabasca University student whom you know, work with, or previously worked with is asking you to write a letter on their behalf as a part of their application to AU's [Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) process](#). We hope you will assist your colleague on their learning journey.

AU's Centre for Learning Accreditation (CLA) provides students the opportunity to receive credit for learning they acquired in settings other than university or other formal education venues. Your letter is very important to this process because it provides evidence that the candidate does have the learning they claim to have. Our assessors read these letters very closely, looking for links to the candidate's learning statements within their PLAR portfolio.

Please note the following requirements for writing this letter of attestation:

1. Send your written evaluation of the candidate's learning on your **letterhead**, if available. If you do not have letterhead, please include your address, daytime telephone number, and e-mail address. We may contact you with questions or ask for further information.
2. Include a description of your **present position, pertinent experience**, and formal **education and training**. Specify the **level of education** you have completed.
3. Mention the candidate by name and **identify your relationship to the candidate** (e.g., team leader, supervisor, etc.). Explain the situation in which you observed their learning including the timeframe for your experience with the candidate.
4. The candidate will inform you of the competencies, skills, or knowledge you are evaluating by **providing you with a list of "learning statements" they have written**. The learning statements should accurately describe the candidate's learning that has arisen from a particular work experience.
5. Reflect on the candidate's statements, then describe their **specific skills, knowledge, and competencies as you have observed them**, in your own words. This is far more helpful than affirming or paraphrasing the list of learning statements that are provided to you. While the candidate may provide clarification of their learning claim(s) if needed, they cannot compose the letter for you.
6. Rate **the candidate's grasp of the learning** by indicating "average", "above average", "exceptional", and so on. Relate the standards you have used to evaluate the candidate, with indicators such as "performed at the same level as my other employees who possess a bachelor's degree", or "performance exceeded other volunteers under my supervision who have performed similar duties", or whatever statement most accurately represents the situation.

7. Please remember that this letter is one of attestation rather than recommendation or reference. We are more interested in **verifying the candidate's learning** than in predicting future performance. What suffices as a reference letter does not work well as an attestation letter.
8. **Sign your letter** and **email it directly to [plar@athabascau.ca](mailto:plar@athabascau.ca)**. After receiving your letter, we will then send a copy to the candidate.

Your letter will be most helpful to the candidate and to us if it is an accurate reflection on their learning. Please refer to the [example letter of attestation](#) for guidance. Please contact us if you have any questions or visit our [website](#) for more information.

Thank you for your participation in the program.

Sincerely,

Director  
Centre for Learning Accreditation  
Athabasca University

Athabasca University respectfully acknowledges that we are on and work on the traditional lands of the Indigenous Peoples (Inuit, First Nations, Métis) of Canada. We honour the ancestry, heritage, and gifts of the Indigenous Peoples and give thanks to them.

