

PLAR Self-Assessment



If you do not have the required training and experience to qualify for a new licence, completing the PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) Self-Assessment can help you determine if you may be able to qualify for a new residential builder licence through a PLAR review or whether you may require additional training or experience before applying for a new licence.

DO NOT SUBMIT THIS PLAR SELF-ASSESSMENT TO US.

You should first complete the Qualifications Pre-Screening if you are unsure of whether you have the required training and experience to qualify for a new licence. You only need to complete the PLAR Self-Assessment for the areas where your Qualifications Pre-Screening indicated gaps.

Instructions:

There are eight parts to the PLAR Self-Assessment. The first part considers whether you have equivalent experience to qualify as a Licensed Residential Builder. The remaining seven parts correspond to each of the seven minimum standards of competency required for builders applying for new residential builder licenses, as outlined in the *Homeowner Protection Act* Regulation:

1. Relevant Enactments (Building Code)
2. Construction Management and Supervision
3. Construction Technology
4. Customer Service and Home Warranty Insurance
5. Financial Planning and Budget Management
6. Legal Issues
7. Business Planning, Management and Administration

Completing this self-assessment will give you a good sense of whether you are likely to meet the required qualifications through equivalent training and/or experience. If your self-assessment reveals that you have significant knowledge gaps in one or more competency areas, you may consider taking approved training in those areas and applying for a licence at a later date. If your self-assessment reveals that you do not have the required experience, you may consider obtaining additional relevant experience before applying for a licence. If you are reasonably confident that your experience and/or education qualifies you in each of the areas, you could consider choosing a PLAR review and apply for a new residential builder licence.

Part 1: Equivalent Experience

The regulation requires that a general contractor applicant provide proof of 24 months of full-time experience managing or supervising residential construction, obtained within the last five years. An example of experience could involve managing, scheduling, planning and/or supervising subcontractors and suppliers.

Where an applicant does not have the required 24 months experience managing or supervising residential construction obtained within the last five years, the regulation makes provision for the Registrar to recognize equivalent evidence of meeting the qualifications. An applicant that does not have the required experience, but has equivalent experience, may choose a PLAR review. Some examples of experience that may be considered as equivalent are work that you did where you were responsible for managing a significant residential renovation or where you managed a commercial project that was similar to residential construction such as a hotel or lodge.

The PLAR review process can be lengthy and requires a commitment from the applicant to gather the required information and evidence. Please refer to our website www.bchousing.org for information about applying for a residential builder licence through the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) process.

Nominee

Only one person listed as a person in control of your company can be used to demonstrate the 24 months of management or supervision experience. It is important to note that the 24 months does not have to be consecutive. You should consider which person in control of your company has the most relevant experience in order to maximize your chances of successfully applying for a residential builder licence.

Evidence

Proof of experience includes:

- If you were business for self, copies of building permits and occupancy permits.
- If you were employed, a letter from the employer (this could include a client that employed you to complete a renovation project) confirming the nature of the work, the address (if applicable), the timeframe you were employed, and your role on the job.

Equivalent Experience Self-Assessment

1. Consider the relevant equivalent experience that you have within the last five years. You should only count the weeks of work that you were actively engaged in construction management activities for the job/project. Note that the experience does not have to be consecutive.

Person with Experience: _____

Job/Project	Your Role on the Project (e.g. Construction manager, site supervisor, etc.)	Type of Work (e.g. residential renovation, etc.)	Start and End Dates	Number of Weeks Worked	Evidence (permits, job letter)
TOTAL WEEKS WORKED (note that 24 months is 104 weeks)					

2. Review your results. If you have 104 weeks (24 months) of equivalent experience where you managed all or substantially all of the work on relevant projects (e.g. significant residential renovations or commercial projects with significant similarity to Part 9 residential construction) and can provide evidence then you could consider choosing a PLAR review for equivalent experience.

If you don't have 104 weeks of experience equivalent experience or you don't think that you could provide evidence, then consider choosing to obtain more experience before applying for a residential builder licence.

Part 2: Core Competencies

The regulation requires that a general contractor applicant demonstrate proficiency in each area of competency by successfully completing training courses. Applicable training courses may be from prescribed post secondary institutions or construction associations within British Columbia; or other educational bodies or institutions from other jurisdictions if recognized by the Registrar as being equivalent in nature. Training courses must include successful completion of a graded exam or assignment.

If you do not have training covering one or more competencies, you may choose to participate in the PLAR review process to determine whether you have the minimum core competencies required to become a Licensed Residential Builder in BC. The PLAR process considers on-the-job training, life experience, and training in other education settings in order to establish equivalent qualifications for licensing. Applicants should carefully consider the choice to undergo a PLAR review rather than taking the required training. A PLAR review may take a significant amount of time and commitment to complete and there is no guarantee of a successful outcome. Please refer to our website www.bchousing.org for more information about applying for a residential builder licence through the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) process.

Nominee

More than one person listed as a person in control of your company can be used to demonstrate proficiency in the competency areas. Only one person in control of the company can be listed per competency. You should consider who your strongest nominee would be for each competency area to maximize your chances of successfully applying for a residential builder licence.

Evidence

If you have equivalent training, evidence of successful completion by the applicant will be required to be submitted with your new licence application, such as a certificate of completion or transcript.

If you don't have training but have equivalent experience, consider what types of evidence you have available to prove that you have the required knowledge. Examples of the types of evidence that will be considered are included at the end of each competency section.

Core Competency Self-Assessment

For each competency consider:

1. Whether you have the required equivalent training or experience
2. Rank your knowledge on a scale of 1-5 by selecting the appropriate number according to the table below:

1 2 3 4 5

Level	Description of understanding at competency level
5	I am not familiar with this topic, concept or practice
4	I am developing skills and knowledge in this area
3	I have awareness of this topic, concept or practice. I may not do this myself or have a lot of knowledge, but I know enough to ask for advice or get someone else to do it
2	I have a good understanding of this topic, concept or practice. I could give a general explanation to someone else
1	I apply this in my business. I understand the topic, concept or practice. I understand it well enough to teach it to someone else

3. Consider what evidence you may be able to provide to support your training or equivalent experience for each competency
4. Review your results. If you have achieved mostly 1s, 2s and 3s for competency, and are reasonably sure you could provide evidence of equivalency, you could consider choosing a PLAR review for the competency area
5. If you answered mostly 4s and 5s for a competency area, or don't think you could provide evidence of your knowledge and skills, you should consider choosing to take an approved training course for that competency

1. Relevant Enactments

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

1.a I can describe the role of the BC Building Code (the "Building Code")

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- 1.a.i Describe how the Building Code is developed (objective-based) and what it accomplishes
- 1.a.ii Identify who enforces the Building Code and the general permit process
- 1.a.iii Understand how the Building Code relates to other codes, e.g. electrical regulations, BC Fire Code

1.b I can describe what the Building Code governs and identify the location of all key aspects of Division B, Parts 9 and 12, relating to residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- 1.b.i Identify soil-bearing capacity and problematic soil conditions on a building site
- 1.b.ii Identify structural materials and methods of assembly to reduce damage from movement for:
 - Foundations
 - Superstructure
 - Roof structure
- 1.b.iii Identify building envelope and keeping the weather out, and resolving simple issues
 - Foundation drainage
 - Insulation and air/vapour barriers
 - Windows and doors
 - Flashing and cladding types – EIFS as a drained system
 - Flashing and roofing types – flat roofs
- 1.b.iv Identify sound transmission into residential units, and solve simple problems
 - No requirements for impact noise but consider mitigating
 - Lab tests cannot be replicated onsite, therefore consider increasing STC for assemblies
 - Plumbing and mechanical noise

1.b.v Identify heating and ventilation systems controlling indoor air quality

- Design temperatures
- Air conditioning not required
- Ventilation equipment, sizing and ducting

1.b.vi Identify septic systems: overview of design and operation

1.b.vii Identify installation of interior finishes, e.g. flooring, cabinetry, trimwork, etc.

1.c I can demonstrate an understanding of the British Columbia Fire Code and its application to residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

1.d I can demonstrate a general understanding of how local bylaws may affect residential construction and where to locate the bylaws

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

1.e I understand the application of relevant building codes and enactments in areas with no local bylaws

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency “Relevant Enactments” are:

- Inspector testimonials
- Description of a project on a unique or especially challenging site
- Your documented assessment of a demolition site

2. Construction Management and Supervision

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

2.a I can describe and use project planning in my business

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Compare and contrast ways of meeting human resource requirements through staff and subcontractors: advantages and disadvantages of each approach, need for job descriptions
- ii. Understand tendering: bid requirements and practices, trade selection
- iii. Know how to prepare and use scheduling: value of scheduling, scheduling guidelines, critical scheduling stages, time management

2.b I can organize and implement project supervision

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Know how to organize material and labour acquisition: purchasing order system and guidelines, substitutions, timing, storage and care
- ii. Understand responsibility for pre-construction activities: site logistics, site servicing, mitigating environmental impacts, contingency plans (e.g. bad weather)
- iii. Describe best practices for working relationships with people involved in the construction process, including employees, sub-contractors, suppliers and inspectors; describe key elements of a human resources plan
- iv. Understand contract compliance and plan checks
- v. Understand different types of inspections and be able to apply inspection guidelines (e.g. for building officials or engineers)
- vi. Understand key elements of quality control: performance benchmarks, associated requirements
- vii. Describe reporting requirements (internal and external)
- viii. Describe how to set-up and monitor cost control: comparison of costs with budget
- ix. Describe how to use a change/work order system

2.c I can identify and implement project site work safety

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Identify and implement guidelines on safe site conditions
- ii. Identify and implement guidelines from occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation
- iii. Identify and implement guidelines from WHMIS regulations
- iv. Identify and implement guidelines from WorkSafeBC standards, including site specific safety plan, company safety plan, and insurance requirements

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency “Construction Management and Supervision” are:

- Letters from people you’ve worked with describing your ability to effectively manage a project
- A project plan from the last year
- A sample contract you have developed and used for subcontractors, suppliers, clients, engineers, designers, architects, etc.

- Samples of records you kept throughout a project
- A sample quality assurance checklist you use
- Your documented quality standards
- Your documented health and safety program
- Written health and safety policies or procedures
- A site safety plan you developed for a specific worksite
- Records of risk assessments and hazard control efforts
- Site inspection records
- Written emergency procedures
- Labour estimates for a recent project

3. Construction Technology

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

3.a I can explain the “house-as-a-system” concept

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

3.b I understand how building science affects durability and occupant comfort

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- Explain controlling heat flow (heat flow mechanisms, i.e. conduction, convection and radiation)
- Explain controlling moisture flow (moisture movement mechanisms, i.e. bulk moisture movement, capillary action, air-borne moisture and vapour diffusion)

3.c I can categorize indoor air quality contributors and detractors, and identify material selection

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

3.d I can explain the following objectives in sustainable development: energy efficiency, resources efficiency, and environmental responsibility

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

3.e I understand building envelope details

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Classify air barriers (materials and details)
- ii. Classify vapour barriers (materials and details)
- iii. Distinguish foundation design: types of foundations, heat loss control, and moisture control
- iv. Distinguish floors: details for heat flow control, moisture management, details at critical locations, vibration telegraphing sub-floors
- v. Distinguish wall design: heat loss and moisture control, alternate details
- vi. Distinguish roof construction and attics: air leakage into attics, details at critical locations, heat loss control, details to deal with specific problems (e.g. truss uplift and ice damming)
- vii. Distinguish windows and doors: installation guidelines to control heat loss and gains, and moisture
- viii. Distinguish off-site panelized wall and floor systems

3.f I understand the basics of mechanical systems

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Distinguish heating, cooling and ventilation principles
- ii. Distinguish heating systems
- iii. Distinguish heat distribution systems
- iv. Distinguish ventilation systems: benchmarks, alternate systems, HRVs and ERVs, plus design and installation considerations

3.g I can explain the basics of integrated mechanical systems

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

3.h I understand the correct use of engineered building components, such as trusses, insulated concrete forms and load-bearing steel studs

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

3.i I can identify how geographical and geological features can affect residential construction and explain how to mitigate risk due to these features

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency “Construction Technology” are:

- Inspector testimonials
- Description of a project on a unique or especially challenging site
- Your documented assessment of a demolition site

4. Customer Service and Home Warranty Insurance

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

4.a I can explain what customer service is

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Describe the main factors of service excellence
- ii. Demonstrate understanding of customer values, behaviours and expectations

4.b I understand what a good customer service framework includes

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Explain how to establish expectations and why this is important for good customer service
- ii. Understand the steps in transferring a home to the customer
- iii. Describe the elements of a walk-through inspection and its relationship to customer service and home warranty
- iv. Explain the importance of customer orientation, including key components of an effective maintenance manual
- v. Explain how to plan for warranty service work, including time management, budget contingency, and sub-contracts

4.c I know how to handle common difficult customer situations and methods for resolving conflicts

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Identify the common causes of disputes and customer dissatisfaction
- ii. Explain techniques for resolving disputes; identify and briefly describe the key processes for resolving disputes

4.d I can construct and use a quality customer service action plan

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Represent attributes of an effective customer service strategy
- ii. Identify procedures for identifying customer service problems and solutions

4.e I can explain the roles of homeowner, builder and home warranty insurance provider in identifying and responding to possible construction defects

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency “Customer Service and Home Warranty Insurance” are:

- Warranty provider reference, if you previously held a residential builder licence in BC
- Customer feedback
- Customer testimonials
- Inspector testimonials
- Results of a professional customer satisfaction survey
- Documented quality assurance activities
- Documents related to handling and resolving customer complaints, including a customer service plan
- Examples of follow-up work such as repairs or warranty work

5. Financial Planning and Budget Management

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

5.a I can describe financial planning

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Show integration with business plan, purpose and main elements of the business plan
- ii. Construct financial projections
- iii. Compute pro-forma statement of operations (budget)
 - Explanation/elements (sales, costs, gross income, net income, etc.)
 - Purposes of the pro-forma statement of operations

- iv. Compute pricing: alternate methods, factors to consider
- v. Compute break-even analysis: explanation
- vi. Discussion of overhead costs
- vii. Apply margin/mark-up: explanation and guidelines
- viii. Pro-forma statement of financial position: explanation and elements
- ix. Calculate pro-forma cash flow statement

5.b I understand the main components of financial management

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Explain financial management practices: records requirements and operating guidelines, e.g. timely reporting, communicating guidelines
- ii. Explain accounting concepts, principles and practices
 - Accounting cycle
 - Alternate accounting benchmarks
 - Accrual accounting
 - Accounts receivable
 - Accounts payable
- iii. Bookkeeping: explanation, concepts and practices: journal entries, double-entry, preparation of ledgers, trial balance, etc.
- iv. Describe financial statements
 - Statement of operations: explanation, elements (sales, costs (fixed, variable), gross income, net income)
 - Statement of financial position: explanation; elements (assets, liabilities, shareholders' equity)
 - Cash flow statement: timing of costs, income and guidelines
 - Analysis of variances (between forecasts and actual results)
- v. Describe financial performance measures: financial ratios, benchmarking
- vi. Give examples of financing: types of construction financing
- vii. Describe lender policies and working with lenders
- viii. Describe credit arrangements
- ix. Describe loan and collateral security requirements and arrangements
- x. Apply cost control (general and specific, i.e. overhead, construction, sales, administration costs)
- xi. Define purchase order system
- xii. Construct a system to control/account for extras and changes

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency "Financial Planning and Budget Management" are:

- Samples of accounting records
- Quotes received and selected
- A contract budget you prepared in the last year
- A preliminary estimate or estimate worksheets you prepared for a recent project
- A tender submission you prepared in the last three years
- A proposal you prepared in the last three years
- Completion of a financial management, accounting, bookkeeping or other relevant course

6. Legal Issues

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

6.a I can summarize the main legal requirements of contracts used in residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.b I can demonstrate how to construct basic contracts

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.c I can describe the common types of contracts used in residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.d I can explain the difficulties between an Agreement of Purchase and Sale and a contracted home

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.e I can describe the basics of the land registry system and related topics

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.f I can summarize builder liability

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.g I can explain builders lien legislation

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.h I can describe dispute resolution mechanisms available for residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

6.i I can describe how provincial legislation and local bylaws may affect residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- a. Zoning and easements
- b. Development permits
- c. Building permits
- d. Inspection requirements
- e. Occupancy permits

6.j I can describe how regulatory requirements or prohibitions regarding health, the environment, riparian areas, and energy performance may affect residential construction

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency “Legal Issues” are:

- A sample contract template you use
- Contracts recently used (with a customer, subcontractor, bank, realtor, etc.)
- Documents related to your insurance coverage and the ability to explain your coverage
- A description of how you comply with privacy legislation (a privacy policy or steps you take to secure information)
- A WorkSafeBC clearance letter for your company
- Your health and safety manual
- Records of site inspections
- Inspector testimonials

7. Business Planning, Management and Administration

Person with this qualification: _____

I have equivalent training:

Name of course: _____

Name of training provider: _____

Date of course completion: _____

I have equivalent experience:

Name of employer: _____

Length of service: _____

7.a I can explain my business vision, objectives and goals

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Describe statement of vision, objectives and goals
- ii. Explain statement of company rationale, values, directions and risks
- iii. Explain statement of ethics
- iv. Explain products and services

7.b I understand the purpose of financial plans as they relate to a business plan

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

7.c I understand the basic concepts of a marketing plan

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Be able to explain the following terms: market research, marketing, marketing plans
- ii. Describe elements of a marketing plan: market environment, target market, positioning, pricing, strategy, sales strategy (public relations plan, advertising plan and referrals plan)

7.d I understand the various elements of an operating plan

Level of understanding (select): 1 2 3 4 5

You will be required to provide evidence showing your ability to:

- i. Describe different business forms (i.e. sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, limited partnerships, partnerships of corporations) and some pros and cons of each model
- ii. Explain why and when a new/updated plan should be developed
- iii. Managing change: give examples of when changes to one part of the business plan affect other parts
- iv. Explain importance of communications to business success and construct guidelines for effective communication

Types of evidence that may be applicable for the competency “Business, Planning, Management and Administration” are:

- A copy of your business plan
- Letters of support from people you work with showing that you manage your business professionally
- A letter from your bank or lender demonstrating your relationship with them
- Your pricing method or system

If you have any questions please refer to our website at www.bchousing.org or contact us.

Licensing and Consumer Services

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