RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

HEALTH CARE COOK

EXISTING HEALTH CARE EMPLOYEES

Please note there are eight (8) pages in total. Please carefully read all 8 pages.

Health Care Cook Program

The Health Care Cook (HCC) program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic was implemented in 2021 as an alternative education program to the Journey Person Cook Certificate that will equally meet the necessary education requirements in the Provincial Job Descriptions 24 (Cook) and 10 (Head Cook). The program was created in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) and was designed specifically with the SHA, for the SHA! The HCC program is the shortest route to becoming fully qualified to be a Cook or Head Cook with the SHA and it focuses on the skills and knowledge you need. It takes less time that other cook programs and offers a virtual learning environment that supports you to work at your own pace, within stated Saskpolytech semesters.

The HCC program will help Cooks:
- Enhance cooking skills
- Increase cultural awareness
- Enhance nutrition knowledge
- Design healthcare menus for the future
- Obtain knowledge to better understand and explain the importance of special diets and how to prepare them
    - Allergies and intolerances
    - Texture modifications
    - Cultural and religious diets
- Develop skills in menu development, recipe standardization, costing and procurement, and other essential areas
- Improve self-confidence – it's a title of respect!

Taking the HCC program will achieve the SHA goal of serving safe, healthy and delicious food to all persons in their care. The HCC program is more than learning how to cook tasty food - it's about cooking safe food. For example, nearly half of residents in long term care require texture modified diets, which help prevent choking and can make food easier and safer to eat. You will learn techniques to safely make minced and pureed foods that look and taste great. Patient and resident safety depends on staff having the right knowledge!

The HCC program is a one year, 32 week (+2) education program that is offered both in person (currently on Prince Albert and Moose Jaw campuses) and online. Please continue reading to learn more about the online version of program, created just for SHA employees!

Training for Existing Employees

The full, in-person HCC program consists of 17 classes, plus a two week work experience. Programming is only offered once per year, with a fall semester (end of August or beginning of September) start date. As a current SHA employee in a Cook or Head Cook position, you may have the opportunity to get credit for what you already know through a process called PLAR.

What is PLAR?

PLAR stands for prior learning assessment and recognition and is a type of course delivery that includes assessment without instruction. It is a way to earn credit for Saskpolytech courses from informal learning, training, or education that is not eligible for transfer credit. It involves proving that you know the content of a course, no matter how you learned it, which may include work experience, on-the-job training, courses from unrecognized schools, and others.

To learn more about PLAR in general, please visit https://saskpolytech.ca/admissions/get-credit/plar-faq.aspx

The following is a list of the courses that make up the Health Care Cook certificate program. In order to receive a certificate, you must have credit for all courses. If you have current knowledge/training for any of the courses, credit may be achieved in several ways.

Course Code	Course Title	Hours	Units
BAKE 105	**Baking** You will be introduced to the principles and procedures of preparing various yeast doughs, pastries, quick breads, pies and pie fillings. You will prepare quick breads, pie fillings, baked and unbaked pies, and assorted cakes and cookies, as well as variety of bakery products as used in health care settings..	60	4
CKNG 149	**Cold Foods** You will prepare hot and cold sandwiches, fruits, salads and salad dressings as used in health care settings	30	2
CKNG 151	**Introduction to Cooking in Healthcare** The course introduces the fundamental principles and methods that are the foundation of cooking in health care settings. You will study major cooking methods and preliminary seasonings, flavouring, cooking, mise en place, and pre-preparation techniques as used in health care settings. You will learn the principles of safety and procedures for the safe handling of tools and equipment. You will also gain introductory knowledge of menu planning and development.	45	3
CKNG 152	**Breakfast Cooking** You will prepare breakfast and dairy products as used in health care settings. This includes cooking eggs using a variety of methods, preparing omelets, frittatas, pancakes, waffles and French toast, and cooking breakfast meats and potatoes.	30	2

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FOOD 110	**Regional and Cultural Foods** You will learn how to adapt menus to incorporate Indigenous, regional and cultural food practices. You will examine the historical background of regional and Indigenous cuisine and the calls to action for Truth and Reconciliation as related to regional and cultural foods.	45	3
FOOD 111	**Quantity Food Preparation** You will prepare quantity foods in a safe manner and comply with sanitation legislation as used in health care settings. You will be required to adhere to portion and quality controls for all types of food preparation.	60	4
FOOD 112	**Meat Preparation** You will learn cooking and service techniques for meat, poultry, fish and seafood as used in health care settings. You will use a variety of cooking techniques to prepare meals using these meats.	45	3
FOOD 113	**Vegetables and Starches** You will learn cooking techniques for potatoes, vegetables, starches and pasta as used in health care settings. You will use a variety of cooking techniques to prepare meals using these ingredients and describe the effects of various processes on the nutritional composition and appearance of vegetables and starches.	45	3
FOOD 114	**Stocks, Soups, and Sauces** You will learn volume cooking and service techniques for soups and sauces. You will create a variety of soups and sauces as used in health care settings.	45	3
FOOD 119	**Recipe Standardization** You will learn the basic principles of standardizing recipes and apply those concepts in a practical setting.	30	2
HLTH 200	**Health Care Operations** You will examine the unique inner workings of health care facilities and how they operate with focus on Lean concepts, mental health, safety and security, policy and procedure development, and meetings.	30	2
NUTR 102	**Special Diets 1** You will learn about various disease states and their required specialized diets and apply menu modification techniques.	45	3

NUTR 103	**Special Diets 2** Building on the skills you developed in Special Diets 1, you examine various disease states and required specialized diets. You will apply menu modification techniques.	45	3
NUTR 180	**Introduction to Nutrition** You will be introduced to the principles of human nutrition. Your studies will include how macronutrient intakes affect energy intake and overall health.	45	3
ORTN 104	**Orientation to Health Care Cook** You will be introduced to the Health Care Cook program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic. You will gain an understanding of the procedures related to safety in a professional kitchen and complete the food handler's certification, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) examination, that will prepare you to succeed in the program. You will also identify local food ingredients.	30	2
PLAN 101	**Kitchen Operations in Health Care Settings** You will learn the procedures necessary to manage a kitchen in a health care setting. Your studies will include purchasing and inventory functions in a health care setting. You will also study the process of preparing and delivering food services off site (Meals on Wheels) and you will have an opportunity to plan and schedule staff and other functions.	60	4
PROF 101	**Professionalism in the Food Service Sector** You will learn strategies and skills needed to be effective in today's job market, as well as develop a resume and apply job search skills relevant to the health care industry. You will also explore effective customer service techniques.	60	4
WORK 138	**Work Experience** You will gain experience through job training in a healthcare food service facility. You will have the opportunity to observe and participate in the workplace and practice skills you have acquired throughout the program.	75	0
	TOTAL	825	50

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Gaining Credit for Prior Learning

Advance Credit options at Saskatchewan Polytechnic

There are **three ways** to get advance credit for what you already know. You can combine them for credit in the same program, but not for the same course.

1. **Transfer credit** for courses taken from another college or university. Transfer credit is an option if…
   - One or two courses you took closely match one or two of our courses.
   - The school you attended is a recognized or authorized post-secondary institution.
   - Completed the course(s) or certified training within the last five years

   For example: If you took a university nutrition course, you may get transfer credit for a similar chemistry course at Sask Polytech.

   If you have completed prior training at Sask Polytech you will be recognized for completing that training.

2. **Equivalency credit** for one or more Sask Polytech courses you took before. You may have taken it from one of our campuses, at a regional college, or for dual credit in high school. Equivalency Credit is an option if…
   - The course is the same or equal to a course in your current program.
   - You passed the course within the last 5 years. Ask for an exception if you have been using the knowledge since taking the course.
   - ***For example: If you took a portion of the Hybrid Cook Apprenticeship program you can apply for equivalency in those courses. These will be assessed individually.***

3. **PLAR credit** for proving what you know that matches one or more of our courses. It does not matter where you learned it (school, on the job, or on your own). First apply for all possible transfer and/or equivalency credit because PLAR is more work and cost.

PLAR is an option if…
   - You cannot get transfer or equivalency credit for the same course(s).
   - What you already know matches one or more courses in your program.
   - You are willing and able to prove what you know.
   - ***For example: If you have never taken a Baking course but have been doing these tasks as part of your regular job you could ask to PLAR the course.***

Not all courses in the HCC program have a PLAR option (for example, you are NOT able to PLAR ORTN 104 – Orientation to Health Care Cook).

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To be eligible for PLAR in the HCC program, you must have worked a minimum of 900 hours of ongoing employment in a cook-related position in the SHA within the last five years.

The following practical courses (all listed in the table above) will only be available to PLAR as **group**:

CKNG 149	Cold Foods
CKNG 151	Introduction to Cooking in Healthcare
CKNG 152	Breakfast Cooking
FOOD 111	Quantity Food Preparation
FOOD 112	Meat Preparation
FOOD 113	Vegetables and Starches
FOOD 114	Stocks, Soups, and Sauces

These courses are available to PLAR as a unit by having a **Manager** in your area complete a practical skills checklist and an employment verification letter.

Bakery 105 – Baking and WORK 138 – Work Experience are the other two practical courses that can be PLAR'd with a simple checklist. Each have their own practical skills checklist that your Manager will have to verify and sign.

There are other courses in the program that have PLAR assessments created, however your ability to PLAR these select courses will depend on a Manager checklist to verify general skills, and then additional methods to assess learning. The following are examples of methods that may be used:
- Skill demonstrations
- Written exams
- Assignments or projects
- Work samples
- Structured interviews

These select courses will have PLAR assessed by Saskpolytech faculty and will be set up once you have successfully started programming.

Please reach out to your Manager for further information on your ability to PLAR. PLAR documents are held by SHA Managers and can be submitted to Saskpolytech at any time. However, PLAR documents **MUST** be submitted before you can be enrolled in the distance-learning cohort, which has been set up specifically for existing SHA employees. This online cohort does not have direct entry and you are unable to register for it via the Saskpolytech "Apply Now" webpage.

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Online Learning Cohort

Experience has taught us that SHA employees taking the online HCC program tend to struggle to complete the program, as many are ill equipped to work and learn in an online environment. To help ensure online learners are prepared to navigate their online learning environment, we have put together a checklist of tasks and activities that students need to complete before the program start date in the fall.

Activities to Improve Success

- Regular access to a reliable internet connection is mandatory. You cannot complete an online course without it

    o All students MUST have a laptop and/or desktop computer to complete course work – a smartphone is simply not enough. Please see your Saskpolytech welcome letter for further information.

- Become familiar with your mysaskpolytech.ca homepage and how to navigate it

- Download Office 365 (all students are provided with a free download on their mysaskpolytech.ca homepage)

- Ensure competence in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook

- Ensure ability to sign and upload an Adobe file

- Download Zoom and learn how to use it

- Visit the Saskpolytech Student Services website to learn more about being an online learner. We use Brightspace as our online platform. You will receive some training on this, but it would be best to become familiar with it and at least know how to log in before classes start

- Attend a Learning Services workshop on 'Getting Started Online" offered starting in August.

Even though you will be an asynchronous online learner (meaning not being online at a set time), you will have greater success in the program if you attend an "Orientation" Zoom with the Program Head and faculty on the first day of classes. More information on this session will be sent out in a Welcome letter from the Program Head.

Please contact the HCC Program Head, Leanne McFarland, if you have any remaining questions regarding the HCC program or PLAR: leanne.mcfarland@saskpolytech.ca

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