



A LEADING POLYTECHNIC
COMMITTED TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising Program (PMCM)

Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level I

PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition)



Candidate Guide

A LEADING POLYTECHNIC COMMITTED TO STUDENT SUCCESS

www.nait.ca



Copyright

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology – May 2013

No part of the work(s) herein may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic, or mechanical including photocopying, recording, taping of information and retrieval systems – without written consent of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

Acknowledgements

Adapted with permission from SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology)

The Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising Program (PMCM) is dedicated to removing barriers and broadening the access to training in the field of meat cutting 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	November 18, 2014			
Revised	January 15, 2015			
Web ready – RPL office	January 15, 2015			



Table of Contents

Why consider a PLAR assessment?	4
What are the PLAR options?	4
How many courses can be challenged through PLAR in the PMCM program?	5
Is PLAR available at any time of the year?	5
Which courses are PLAR ready?.....	6
Is it easier to challenge a course through PLAR – OR – take the course?.....	7
Methods of assessing prior learning	7
If I live out of town, do I have to travel to the NAIT main campus to do PLAR?	7
What services or resources can I access if I have a disability?	8
Are there other methods to gain NAIT course credits for prior learning?	8
What are the implications of receiving PLAR or Transfer Credit for my full time student status?	8
The PLAR Process	9
Guiding principles for developing a PLAR evidence file.....	10
Types of evidence	10
How long will it take to prepare evidence for PLAR?	11
Steps to complete a self-audit	11
Self-audit Guide(s)	12
PMCM 1101 Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level I.....	12
Course Overview	12
Appendix A: Title Page	16
Evidence File	17
Evidence File Cover Page	18
Employer Validation Checklist	19



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 Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising (PMCM) 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, an applicant must have first applied and have been 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 PLAR application form, all supporting documents (in English) and verification of fee payment. Submit your PLAR request early!

Individual Course Challenge

If you have six (6) months or more successful experience in the meat cutting field, and have learned the skills and knowledge for PMCM 1101 of the PMCM program course, 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 PMCM program?

Currently we have 1 out of 7 certificate 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 RMC@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?

PMCM Program Profile			
COURSE CODE	COURSE NAME	PLAR Challenge(s) available through program	PLAR Challenge(s) not available
PMCM 1101	Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level I	✓	
PMCM 1102	Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level II		X
PMCM 1103	Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level III		X
PMCM 1104	Meat Theory		X
PMCM 1105	Business Fundamentals		X
PMCM 1106	Retail Operations		X
PMCM 1191	Professional Field Experience		X

For assistance contact NAIT and ask to speak to an 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 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?

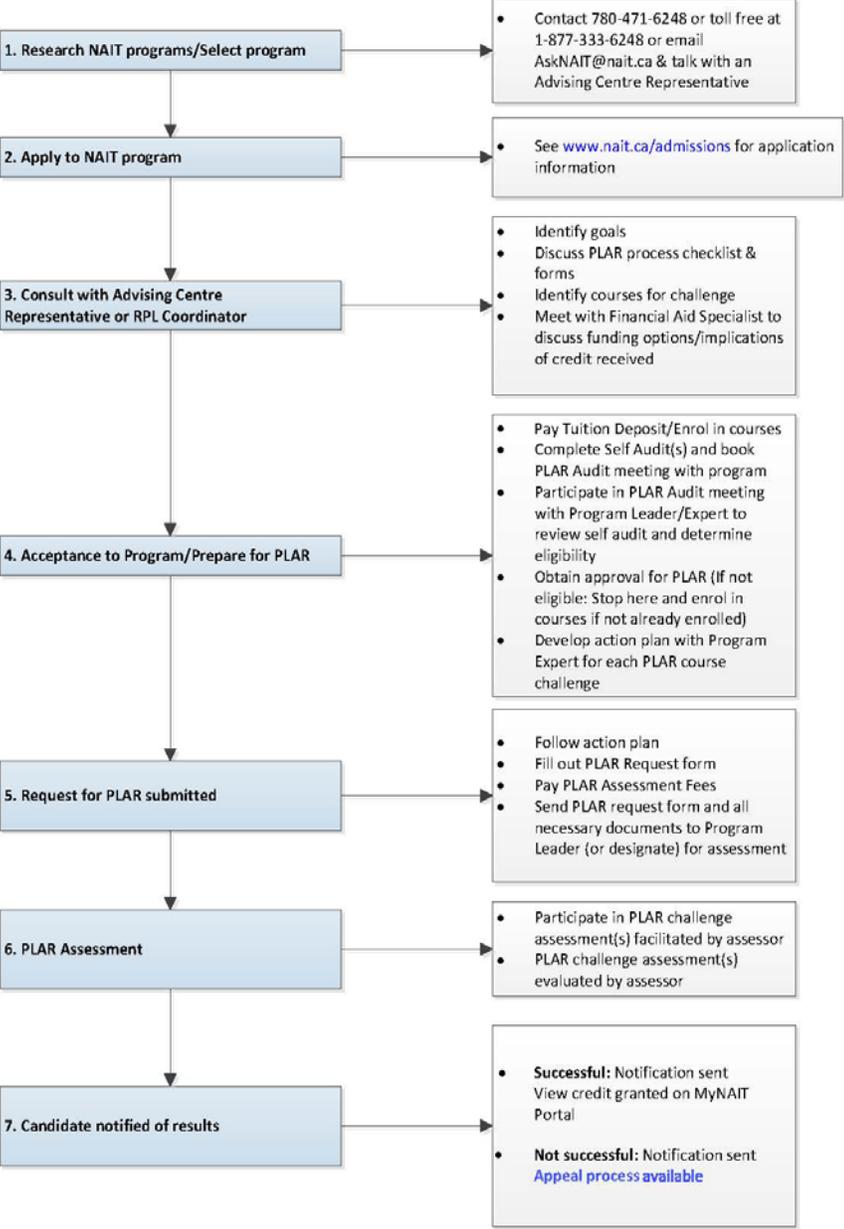
While RPL can mean fewer classes to take and pay for, students should be aware that the definition of full-time status for Financial Aid may be different than NAIT's definition of full-time status. Questions regarding financial assistance should be directed to the [NAIT Financial Aid Office](#). A student 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 and within the last six (6) months.
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 PMCM program 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):

- Resume outlining experience in meat cutting
- Job Description including duties performed
- Employer contact information
- Letters of Reference
- Other relevant artifacts which demonstrate competence in the specific skill area such as but not limited to: pictures or video of work products.

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)

PMCM 1101 Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level I

Course Overview

This course is the first level of three courses delivered in a lecture/lab setting back-to-back sequence. It provides hands-on training in identification of primal cuts of beef, and pork, and cuts of poultry while practicing and applying the principles of proper health, safety, and sanitation in the lab environment. It includes the safe operation of both hand and power equipment common to the retail meat industry.

Credit unit(s): 6

Equivalent course(s): N/A

Prerequisite(s): N/A

PMCM 1101 Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations		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. Name the Primal cuts of Beef in accordance with CFIA naming convention.						
	• Identify basic anatomy of carcass structure					
	• Identify the two main muscle groups of a carcass					
	• Identify basic cooking method (dry heat; moist heat) applicable to the two main muscle groups (exercised or support) of a carcass					
2. Cut a Side of Pork into Primal Cuts.						
	• Name the Pork Primal Cuts in accordance with CFIA naming convention					
	• Identify the basic anatomy of carcass structure					
	• Identify basic cooking method (dry heat; moist heat) applicable to the two main muscle groups (exercised or support) of a carcass					
3. Produce cuts of Poultry from carcass.						
	• Separate a carcass of Poultry into 7 standard parts: 2 Wings, 2 Legs, 2 Breasts, 1 Neck & Back					
	• Name the cuts of Poultry in accordance with CFIA naming convention					



PMCM 1101 Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations 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
4. Performs safe operation of Power and Hand equipment used in the day to day operation of a Meat Department according to OH&S standards.					
• Meat Band-saw & handsaw					
• Meat Grinder					
• Meat Mixer					
• Vacuum packaging equipment					
• Meat Tenderizer					
• Vacuum Tumbler					
• Meat Slicer					
• Meat Smokehouse					
• Meat Scales					
• Meat Rail System					
• Meat Hooks					
• Meat Carts & Wagons					
• Knife Sharpening Equipment					
• Boning Knife					
• Steak Knife					
• Knife Steel					



PMCM 1101 Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations						
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
5.	Performs all duties as noted above in a healthful, safe, and sanitary manner complying with all governing Municipal Health Regulations.					
	• Practices Personal Hygiene					
	• Maintains proper dress code					
	• Uses safety devices on equipment					
	• Locks out power equipment when not in use					
	• Uses approved cleaning agents (soaps, detergents, & sanitizers)					
	• Uses approved cleaning materials (brushes etc.)					
	• Stores cleaning agents and materials appropriately					
	• Maintains all hand equipment in a sanitary and safe manner					
	• Maintains all power equipment in a sanitary and safe manner					
	• Cleans Smokehouse in a safe and sanitary manner					
	• Cleans and sanitizes work surfaces between species to avoid cross contamination.					
	• Physically handles all meat items in a safe and sanitary manner					
	• Stores all meat items appropriately in a safe and sanitary manner					

Note: The employer/ supervisor may be contacted by the NAIT assessor to confirm/clarify information provided.

Comments:



PLAR assessment methods

If you are currently employed in the meat industry and 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. Evidence file

Requirements for evidence file:

- Resume outlining experience in meat cutting
- Job Description including duties performed
- Employer contact information
- Letters of Reference
- Other relevant artifacts which demonstrate competence in the specific skill area such as but not limited to: pictures or video of work products.

*See [Appendix A](#) for evidence file document templates.

PLAR Assessor to validate Candidate's working knowledge of learning outcomes 1-6 through either or both of the following:

- Consultation with employer for authentication of employer validation checklist submission and/or
- On site authentication of applicant's validation checklist submission through performance observation.



A LEADING POLYTECHNIC
COMMITTED TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Appendix A: Evidence File

Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising Certificate Program (PMCM)

PMCM 1101– Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations

Student name

Date:



Evidence File

Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising

Student name: _____

PMCM 1101

Student ID: _____

Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level I

Completion date: _____

Requirements

The PLAR candidate will submit the following evidence to support meeting of course learning outcomes 1-6. *Note to Assessor: Please check off all applicable evidence.*

Please include the following in your evidence file

- A **cover page** as the first page of a working binder that identifies the student name and course the candidate is applying to PLAR.
- Employer validation checklist** (validated by the employer)
- Signed **letter of employer validation** on company letterhead.
- A **personal resume** detailing the relevant work history of the candidate along with references.
- Work sample documents.**
- If applicable, any relevant **documentation** of completion of private training courses, non-credit courses, and/or workshops (photocopies only).
- If applicable, any **additional items** to support the evidence file.

Assessor name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____



Evidence File Cover Page

Evidence File Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising (PMCM)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Purpose of this evidence file: **For submission to the NAIT PMCM Program**

I attest that the enclosed evidence are correct and have been compiled by myself. I attest that I am the person named in this application and the evidence unless otherwise signified.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Employer Validation Checklist

Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising

Name: _____

PMCM 1101

Student ID: _____

Meat Fabrication & Shop Operations Level I

Date: _____

Completion date: _____

Employee/PLAR candidates for the challenge of PMCM 1101 must have this form completed by their direct supervisor/employer. The supervisor/employer is responsible for ensuring the employer validation checklist accurately reflects your abilities in each area identified.

Directions: On the following page(s) there is a list of skill and knowledge factors that the employee is required to achieve in completing PMCM 1101. Please validate the employee/candidate's performance by placing a ✓ in the appropriate column. Add any clarifications/observations in the "Optional Comments" section. Sign and date below.

Mastery: Able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: Work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: Some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: Developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: No experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
6. Name the Primal cuts of Beef in accordance with CFIA naming convention.					
• Identify basic anatomy of carcass structure					
• Identify the two main muscle groups of a carcass					
• Identify basic cooking method (dry heat; moist heat) applicable to the two main muscle groups (exercised or support) of a carcass					
7. Cut a Side of Pork into Primal Cuts.					
• Name the Pork Primal Cuts in accordance with CFIA naming convention					
• Identify the basic anatomy of carcass structure					
• Identify basic cooking method (dry heat; moist heat) applicable to the two main muscle groups (exercised or support) of a carcass					
8. Produce cuts of Poultry from carcass.					
• Separate a carcass of Poultry into 7 standard parts: 2 Wings, 2 Legs, 2 Breasts, 1 Neck & Back					



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name the cuts of Poultry in accordance with CFIA naming convention 					
<p>Mastery: Able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: Work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: Some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: Developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: No experience with the outcome.</p>	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
9. Performs safe operation of Power and Hand equipment used in the day to day operation of a Meat Department according to OH&S standards.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Band-saw & handsaw 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Grinder 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Mixer 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacuum packaging equipment 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Tenderizer 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacuum Tumbler 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Slicer 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Smokehouse 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Scales 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Rail System 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Hooks 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat Carts & Wagons 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knife Sharpening Equipment 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boning Knife 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steak Knife 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knife Steel 					



Mastery: Able to demonstrate it well enough to teach it to someone else. Competent: Work independently to apply the outcome. Functional: Some assistance in using the outcome. Learning: Developing skills and knowledge for this area. None: No experience with the outcome.	Mastery	Competent	Functional	Learning	None
10. Performs all duties as noted above in a healthful, safe, and sanitary manner complying with all governing Municipal Health Regulations.					
• Practices Personal Hygiene					
• Maintains proper dress code					
• Uses safety devices on equipment					
• Locks out power equipment when not in use					
• Uses approved cleaning agents (soaps, detergents, & sanitizers)					
• Uses approved cleaning materials (brushes etc.)					
• Stores cleaning agents and materials appropriately					
• Maintains all hand equipment in a sanitary and safe manner					
• Maintains all power equipment in a sanitary and safe manner					
• Cleans Smokehouse in a safe and sanitary manner					
• Cleans and sanitizes work surfaces between species to avoid cross contamination.					
• Physically handles all meat items in a safe and sanitary manner					
• Stores all meat items appropriately in a safe and sanitary manner					

Note: The employer/ supervisor may be contacted by the NAIT assessor to confirm/clarify information provided.

Comments:



Employee information *(please print)*

Dates of employment: _____ to _____
(dd/mm/yy) (dd/mm/yy)

Employment description: Full-time Hours per week: _____
Part-time Hours per week: _____

Position(s) held _____

Candidate information *(please print)*

Name _____ Student number _____

I affirm that I am the person who has performed those items checked on this checklist. I acknowledge that the performance checklists used are solely for the purpose of skills assessment for the NAIT's Professional Meat Cutting & Merchandising program requirements, and are not intended to replace or modify company operating or safety procedures, and may not be appropriate for use in all circumstances.

PLAR candidate's signature _____ Date _____

Employer/Supervisor's information *(please print)*

Name _____ Phone _____

Organization/employer _____

Address _____

I affirm that I am the person who has administered this checklist, and that I have conducted this candidate's skills assessment with integrity. I also affirm that the above named candidate is the person whose performance I evaluated, and that the above named person performed the checked tasks at the indicated level without assistance from me or any other person.

Employer/supervisor's signature _____ Date _____