



THE
TRAFFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

Section:	Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy
Version:	2
Author:	Mark Harris
Introduction:	March 2017
Review Date:	September 2019

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Author	Description
1	March 17	Mark Harris	Initial Approval
1.1	Nov 17	Tristan Edwards	Adopted by Trafford College
2	April 18	Mark Harris	Trafford College Group Approval, amendments to titles, roles

APPROVAL

Version	Committee	Approval Date	Comment
1	CMT	March 17	
1.1	Executive	December 17	
2	HECOMM	May 2018	

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY AND PROCEDURE: HIGHER NATIONALS

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy is made for the use of staff and students (prospective and current) of the Trafford College Group, comprising of Trafford College and Stockport College. For convenience and unless otherwise indicated, the group of colleges are referred to as 'the College' within this document.
- 1.2. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is a generic term used for the award of credits on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred in the past. This policy gives overall guidance on APL for direct entry or credit exemption on Higher Education programmes and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- 1.3. Within APL and/or RPL there are two main categories: Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). APCL is learning for which certification has been awarded by an Educational Institution, Awarding Body or Education/Training Provider. The procedure underpinning this policy will ensure that all students are given the opportunity to gain credit for previous experience and study.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1. This policy and procedure does not relate to students on a course leading to an award of the University of Chester, Sheffield Hallam University, Manchester Metropolitan University and University of Bolton, you should liaise with your course leader before acting on this procedure. Further Information on our awarding bodies APL policy and procedure can be found here:

University of Chester
Sheffield Hallam University
Manchester Metropolitan University
University of Bolton

<https://goo.gl/dtzRb8>
<https://goo.gl/MJXaZE>
<https://goo.gl/aEZrFx>
<https://goo.gl/o9bD3F>

- 2.2. This procedure applies to all students enrolled on Teacher Education programmes and covers both APCL and APEL.

3. Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL): Guiding Principles

- 3.1. APCL is learning for which a recognised certification has been awarded by an Educational Institution, Awarding Body or Education/Training Provider.

- 3.2. It is the students' responsibility to prepare an application on the appropriate forms and provide adequate documentation. Guidance and counselling may be sought from the relevant course leader.
- 3.3. APCL claims should be submitted to the relevant Higher Education Head of School (or nominee) within 14 days of enrolment. Decisions will be stored centrally in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
- 3.4. Where credits are given, they should be for certificated learning. The resulting credits are of the same value, as those gained within the College.
- 3.5. Unit/Module Credit may be given for prior learning where the level, grade attained, content, relevance and currency of that learning are appropriate to the programme.
- 3.6. Although it is possible (e.g. Higher National conversions, top ups) to claim for an entire qualification through APCL, this is not the norm. The amount of unit/module credit awarded is based on principles of academic judgement determined by the subject specialists; normally, this would be up to a maximum of 50% with the exception of Foundation Degrees whose progression from level 5 to level 6 may already be determined as an articulated route.
- 3.7. The appropriate registration fee must be paid by the applicant.
- 3.8. Credit can only be given for whole course units or modules.

4. Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL): The Process

4.1. The APCL process involves the following:

- 4.1.1. Application: recording, advice, guidance
- 4.1.2. Assessment of evidence/documentation
- 4.1.3. Decision making
- 4.1.4. Monitoring progression

4.2. Application:

- 4.2.1. Applications should be made by the student on the appropriate form. Students will need to provide commentary as to how their prior certificated learning meets the learning outcomes of the units/modules they are seeking accreditation for.
- 4.2.2. The Course Leader will act in an advisory capacity to ensure the student is providing appropriate evidence and commentary and fulfilling their obligations as required.

4.3. Assessment of evidence/documentation:

- 4.3.1. The student must provide relevant supporting documentation.
- 4.3.2. The relevant Higher Education Head of School will check the authenticity of the documentation seeking advice where necessary.
- 4.3.3. The relevant Higher Education Head of School will use precedents and previous experience of students with similar qualifications to determine whether the prior learning is acceptable seeking advice where necessary.
- 4.3.4. In cases of doubt (such as marginal academic standard or where there is little previous knowledge or experience of the qualification) the claim should be submitted to the Director of Quality.
- 4.3.5. Where time is short and Validation Body / Awarding Body confirmation is required, APCL may be awarded but the applicant should be advised that the decision is 'Subject to the approval of the HE Committee'.
- 4.3.6. In assessing the documentation staff should take account of the level, grade attained, content, relevance and currency of the prior learning

4.4. Decision making:

- 4.4.1. In most cases the relevant Higher Education Head of School will judge whether prior certificated learning is of a suitable type and standard.
- 4.4.2. Having decided to admit a student the relevant Higher Education Head of School should submit a copy of the evidence of prior learning together with the completed forms to the registry department.
- 4.4.3. Complex applications should be referred to the HE Management Team.
- 4.4.4. In some cases it may be appropriate to convene a panel meeting with the relevant department to discuss APCL claims. These panels will act as a subgroup of the HE Committee. It is recommended that this panel comprise:

Dean of Higher Education
Higher Education Heads of School
Academic Registrar (Higher Education)
Course Leader

4.5. Monitoring progression:

- 4.5.1. The relevant Higher Education Head of School should include the approved applications in any statistics which are reported to the Examination/Assessment Board.

4.5.2. It is important that the progress of students admitted with APCL is monitored so that information is built up on the suitability of particular qualifications when approving direct entry or credit exemption.

5. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL): Guiding Principles

5.1. APEL is the process of awarding academic credits for uncertificated learning gained from experience, for example:

- In paid or unpaid work
- Courses attended in educational establishments or at work
- Through self-directed study
- Through leisure pursuits

5.2. Credit should be allocated for learning from experience on the basis of appropriate and assessed learning outcomes, not for the experience itself.

5.3. The learning outcomes achieved through learning from experience should include appropriate knowledge and understanding in order to lead to the award.

5.4. Information materials outlining the process should be clear and accurate and identify a point of contact within the Department.

5.5. Candidates should be carefully informed by an Adviser (usually the Course Leader) within the department of the range of evidence that would be considered appropriate in a submission.

5.6. Evidence presented should be appropriate to proposed programme, sufficient in length, depth and level, authentic and recent and include underpinning knowledge.

5.7. Where an APEL submission has demonstrated learning equivalent to an existing course unit or module, the unit or module level allocated will be the same.

5.8. APEL should be limited to a maximum of one third of the credit for a given award.

6. Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL): The Process

6.1. Applications should be made by the student using the appropriate forms.

6.2. The APL/APEL form will be accompanied by a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates how the students' prior experiential learning meets the learning outcomes of the units/modules for which accreditation is being sought.

6.3. The portfolio might comprise written statements from the student detailing how they meet the learning outcomes or references from previous employers/teaching staff that verify claims.

6.4. It is the responsibility of the relevant Higher Education Head of School to ensure that records for APL/APEL/APCL are kept for monitoring and audit.

6.5. For each APL/APEL claim, the relevant Higher Education Head of School should ensure that there is:

- An Academic Adviser (usually Course Leader) who has the competence to advise a student on the production and submission of an APEL claim, and;
- An Assessor (usually relevant Higher Education Head of School), a staff member who has the competence to exercise academic judgement in assessing the APEL claim to work with the applicant.

6.6. The role of Adviser and Assessor must be undertaken by different people.

6.7. The assessment of learning from experience follows the same process as the conventional study route. The submission will be subject to sampling by the External Examiner and ratified by the Examination/Assessment Board.

Annex 1: Accreditation of Prior Learning Application Form [APL/APCL/APEL/RPL]

Forename:	Surname:
Email:	Telephone:
Course Title:	
Unit/Module Code:	
Unit/Module Title:	
APL Adviser:	

APL/APCL/APEL Claim Details

For certificated learning, copies of course content, examples of assessed work and results must be attached to this document.

For experiential learning, evidence must be submitted which provides verifiable support for the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Learning Outcome	Evidence Checklist (certified or experiential)	Page

I hereby certify that the information and evidence provided is a true account of my previous experience and learning.

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Annex 2: Accreditation of Prior Learning Assessment Form [APL//APEL/RPL]

Student name:	
Course title:	
Module title:	
Module level:	Credit value:
Nature of guidance/support provided:	
Feedback for Student:	
<p>From the evidence presented, the candidate has/has not* met the Intended Learning Outcomes of the module identified above (please note that all results are subject to Departmental Assessment Board ratification).</p> <p>Application Approved / Rejected* <i>(*delete as appropriate)</i></p>	

Signed (Course Leader): Date:.....

Signed (APL Advisor): Date:

Date received by the examinations team:.....