

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL): PROCEDURE

THIS DOCUMENT OUTLINES THE UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSING APPLICATIONS FOR ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL). THIS PROCEDURE SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE APL POLICY.

1. Procedural considerations

1.1. In all cases, the following items must be brought to the prospective student's attention, *prior* to making an application for APL:

- the deadline(s) by which the full application and further information/supporting evidence/assessment must be submitted;
- the type and volume of work that might be required of the student (this might include provision of course syllabi/previous course work and/or the completion of an assessment task);
- the expectation that any work required as part of the APL process should be undertaken independently, by the applicant;
- that an invitation to submit an APL application does not guarantee that an offer of a place will be made;
- the indicative timeframe within which the applicant will receive an outcome for their application; and
- any fees and additional costs to the applicant for the processing of their APL application.

1.2. It is the responsibility of Applicant Services and Admissions Tutors to communicate the above information.

2. Procedure for credit transfer (CATS)

2.1. This procedure should be followed where the applicant has achieved general credit that is positioned/recognised within the [Higher Education Qualifications Framework](#). The members of staff/teams responsible for assessing and processing such applications are:

- Applicant Services
- Admissions Tutor
- Head of Subject or Director of Department
- Student Records

2.2. Step 1: Following submission of a normal application to study at the University, Applicant Services will contact the applicant about potential suitability for credit transfer; Applicant Services advise as appropriate and with regard to the items listed in **1.1** of this procedure.

2.3. Step 2: Where appropriate, the applicant is invited to attend an initial interview.

2.4. Step 3: During the selection process, the Admissions Tutor assesses whether a CATS application is appropriate.

- 2.5. **Step 4:** Upon the Admissions Tutor's recommendation, Applicant Services send CATS application form to the applicant and detail information/evidence required for consideration.
- 2.6. **Step 5:** The applicant completes the application form and submits this and any requested information/evidence work to Applicant Services. If the applicant is currently studying towards an award that they wish to use for credit transfer, they must provide as much *prima facie* evidence as possible at this stage regarding the relevant award and all relevant, specific modules and credit associated with it.
- 2.7. **Step 6:** Applicant Services check the information provided; at this stage, Applicant Services may require further information from the applicant.
- 2.8. **Step 7:** If, *prima facie*, Applicant Services consider that the applicant has fulfilled the Admissions Tutor's request(s) then the documentation is forwarded to the Admissions Tutor.
- 2.9. **Step 8:** Admissions Tutor checks the authenticity, sufficiency, currency, and relevancy of the application and any credit being claimed; at this stage, the applicant may be asked to submit further information/evidence or attend a further interview. If the applicant is currently studying towards an award that they wish to use for credit transfer, a conditional offer may be made at this stage, subject to obtaining sufficient credit in the current academic year.
- 2.10. **Step 9:** Admissions Tutor, in consultation with Head of Subject and/or Director of Department, determines whether the application is successful and, where appropriate, the specific credit to be awarded; this is recorded on the relevant section of the CATS application form.
- 2.11. **Step 10:** The CATS application form and outcome is sent to Applicant Services, who notify the applicant of the outcome and issue an offer/rejection as appropriate.
- 2.12. **Step 11:** Where an offer is accepted, and subject to the fulfilment of any further conditions, the specific credit will be attached to the applicant's profile by Student Records.

3. Procedure for APCL/APEL

- 3.1. This procedure should be followed where the applicant has achieved general credit that is not positioned/recognised within the [Higher Education Qualifications Framework](#) and/or does not hold any formal qualifications, but has achieved learning through selfdirected study and/or professional experience. The members of staff/teams responsible for assessing and processing such applications are:
 - Applicant Services
 - Admissions Tutor
 - Head of Subject or Director of Department
 - Student Records
- 3.2. **Step 1:** Following submission of a normal application to study at the University, Applicant Services will contact the applicant about potential suitability of previous qualifications and/or experience; Applicant Services advise as appropriate and with regard to the items listed in 1.1 of this procedure.
- 3.3. **Step 2:** Where appropriate, the applicant is invited to attend an initial interview.
- 3.4. **Step 3:** At interview, the Admissions Tutor assesses whether an APCL/APEL application is appropriate.
- 3.5. **Step 4:** Upon the Admissions Tutor's recommendation, Applicant Services send APCL/APEL application form to the applicant and detail the information/work required for consideration. A conditional offer may be made at this stage, except in the case of APEL applications for advanced standing or exemption from specific modules, which require a fee to be paid, before any offer can be made.

- 3.6. **Step 5:** The applicant completes the APL application form and submits this and any requested information/example work to Applicant Services. Those making APEL applications for advanced standing or for exemption from specific modules are required to pay the application fee at this stage, before the application can proceed further.
- 3.7. **Step 6:** Applicant Services check the currency of the information provided; at this stage, Applicant Services may require further information from the applicant.
- 3.8. **Step 7:** If, *prima facie*, Applicant Services consider that the applicant has fulfilled the Admissions Tutor's request(s) then the documentation is forwarded to the Admissions Tutor.
- 3.9. **Step 8:** Admissions Tutor checks the authenticity, sufficiency, currency, and relevancy of the application and any credit being claimed; at this stage, the applicant may be asked to submit more information/work, and/or attend a further interview.
- 3.10. **Step 9:** Admissions Tutor, in consultation with the Head of Subject (or Director of Department), determines whether the application is successful and, where appropriate, the specific credit to be awarded; this is recorded on the relevant section of the APCL/APEL application form.
- 3.11. **Step 10:** The APCL/APEL application form and outcome is sent to Applicant Services, who notify the applicant of the outcome and issue an offer/rejection as appropriate.
- 3.12. **Step 11:** Where an offer is accepted, and subject to the fulfilment of any further conditions, any specific credit to be awarded will be attached to the applicant's profile by Student Records.

4. Timeframes and application deadlines

- 4.1. Indicatively, the applicant will be given six weeks to complete the relevant APL application form and submit any further information/work that is required.
- 4.2. The applicant will usually be notified of the outcome up to 4 weeks after the submission of their application.
- 4.3. The deadlines for submitting *completed* APL application forms and any supporting information/tasks/evidence are as follows:
 - 31 July (for courses with September entry) or
 - 30 November (for courses with January entry) or
 - 31 March (for courses with May entry)
- 4.4. If you are currently studying for an award that you wish to use for a CATS application for September entry, and if you anticipate that you will not have a transcript of your results showing all relevant credits by 31 July, you must inform Applicant Services as soon as possible, to see if an extension can be granted.
- 4.5. If you apply on-time through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) the University is bound by UCAS rules to make an initial decision on your application in early May. Therefore, UCAS applicants must submit their APL application with sufficient *prima facie* evidence in place by the following deadline, to enable the University to make a decision, or risk a UCAS Rejection By Default (RBD) unsuccessful decision:
 - 1 April for courses with September entry
- 4.6. Late applications can only be made in exceptional circumstances and only with prior approval from the University.
- 4.7. As the submission process can be quite lengthy, completed applications must be received by the above deadlines to ensure academic decisions can be made prior to the enrolment period.