
POLICY/PROCEDURE: ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY/RPL POLICY

Approval required by: SLT Y Governing Body N
 SMT Lead: **Vice Principal Quality**
 Responsible Manager: Director of Assurance and Improvement
 Date approved: May 2024
 Date to be reviewed: May 2025

Relevant to:	Students		Y	Staff		Y
	Visitors	N	ITS		Y	
Relevant to:	All students		N			
	16-18 Vocational		Y	Sixth Form		Y
	Higher Education		N	Adults		Y
	Apprenticeships		Y	14-16		Y
	Other		Y		
Relevant to:	All staff	N				
	Board		N	SPH		Y
	Managers		Y			
	Teaching staff		Y	Support staff		N

Accessible to	Students		Y	Staff		Y
Friendly version	Students	N	Staff		N	

EQIA required Y

Significant changes to policy

Removal of requirement for APL panel - to be replaced with Quality Manager

Impact of changes

None

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning APL is a process by which individuals can gain credit towards qualifications based on evidence from their past achievements. It facilitates the assessment and formal certification of current competence based on evidence drawn from past experience and enables individuals to identify new paths for learning and development.

The APL process is not concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study (*Study programme*). It focuses on assessment and certification of prior learning which may count as evidence towards part of a unit or unit(s) accumulated towards a full qualification.

The APL process does not allow the accreditation of any externally assessed unit(s) or parts of a unit(s) because these are subject to specific evidence requirements. Contextual unit grading is an integral part of some qualifications, for example, the GCSE in vocational subjects, Applied GCE, BTEC programmes. When grading APL evidence for these particular qualifications, the guidance in the specification must be adhered to and the learner's performance must be judged against the criteria in the unit grading grid. The requirements of each grading criterion must be met in full (in line with awarding organisation requirements).

Where an Awarding Organisation has published a specific procedure or guidance for the use of APL/RPL these procedures should be followed and will supersede this policy.

CONTEXT

Definitions

APL Accreditation of Prior Learning - the formal recognition of prior learning gained outside Barnsley College and ITS ('The College') through formally assessed courses or units.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning - the formal recognition of prior learning gained outside the College through other experience, typically gained in the workplace.

APL Abbreviation used to encompass both of the above.

RPL An assessment process which makes use of evidence of a learner's **previous non-certificated achievements** to demonstrate competence or achievement within a unit or qualification.

*APL Assessor/
Approval Panel* Member of the academic staff responsible for APL process, and/or APL approval panel.

POLICY

Applications

- Application for APL should normally be made before the learner commences study on the programme/course (*Study programme*) into which s/he is seeking to transfer prior learning.

- Applications must consist of a written request, stating the award in respect of which the learner seeks APL, and documentary evidence of the learning, in the form of transcripts, certificates or other suitable evidence in the case of experiential learning (with appropriate and reasonable adjustments where applicable).
- A decision as to whether APL can be approved will depend both on the specific requirements and learning outcomes of each programme and the details of each individual application.
- Applicants should note that the award of specific credit via APL towards their intended programme of study may not necessarily directly reflect the value/level of the credit assigned to their current/previous qualification, i.e. it may be less.
- Exemptions will not be considered for any externally assessed unit(s)/element(s).
- Exemptions will only be considered for full courses, modules and units of study.

‘Shelf-Life’ of Learning

- The time elapsed since the learner undertook the learning that forms the basis of an APL application is a relevant factor to be considered in each case. If learning was achieved five or more years ago (or less depending on the particular programme applied for), the applicant should provide evidence that s/he has maintained and updated those skills in a professional environment. Please note that Awarding Body regulations may vary and will be adhered to.

PROCEDURE

- Applicants wishing to be awarded credit for APL will be advised at first contact to discuss the matter with the Course Leader, who will ensure that the applicant is given access to the Programme Specification, including:
 - the scheme structure
 - the rules of assessment
 - copy of the College APL Policy and Procedure.
- The applicant will meet with the course leader who will advise the applicant on procedures for making a claim, completion of APL 1, 2, 3 a/b and any evidence required to support the APL claim..
- The Course Leader will review the APL claim with the support of a Quality Manager, and confirm whether the evidence can be accepted and meets Awarding Organisation requirements.
- If the Quality Manager decides that the learner’s application for APL is unsuccessful, this will be documented on the pro forma APL 5 and a copy forwarded to the learner. r
- If the Quality Manager decides that the learner’s application for APL can be accepted they will make a recommendation to the Course Leader that a specific amount of credit (e.g. exemption from individual unit(s), module(s)/course or exemption from a year of study) be awarded towards the relevant award. A copy of the Proforma APL 4 will be forwarded to the exams office in order that an appropriate claim is made.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

All learners have equal access to the policy and procedures and these will be applied equally to all learners as per Awarding Body requirements. Support to engage with the process will be given to individual learners as appropriate.

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning policy is linked to:

- Academic Appeals Policy.
- Assessment Policy.
- HE Policies.
- The Single Equality Scheme.

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

Buzz/Policies

CLAIM FOR ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION APL 1

CANDIDATE PROFILE

Surname:

First Name:

Student Number:

AO registration number:

Please give details of previous employment or qualifications applicable to your claim:

Employer	Nature of Work	From:	To:
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Please give details of other full or part-time courses/training applicable to your application taken since completing full-time education.

Educational qualifications obtained:

Qualification	Subject	Grade	Year obtained
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Vocational qualifications obtained:

Qualification/Awarding body	Main subject	Year obtained
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Other Information / relevant information:

I declare that the above is a true and accurate statement:

Signed:

Date:

CLAIM FOR ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION APL 2

This form is to help you identify your previous qualifications and experience you consider relevant in supporting your claim for APL.

Qualification type/level, past experience etc.

e.g. NVQ, HND, Degree, Unit/Element/Module

CHECKLIST FOR CLAIMING ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING

APL 3a

Please list the learning outcomes you wish to claim APL for and the evidence you will be presenting to meet these outcomes.

Name:

Qualification.....

Module/Unit/Element:.....

Please specify

LEARNING OUTCOMES FROM PROGRAMME DOCUMENTATION	TICK ✓	PROOF/EVIDENCE
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Comments:

Large empty box for providing comments.

CLAIM TO COMPETENCE FORM

APL 3b

Name and address of claimant:

I claim I have acquired the following competencies which I demonstrated in my employment

at:

from:

to:

Signature of claimant:

Area of competence:

To be completed by the claimant (State the performance criteria for each element of competence claimed)	To be completed by the validator (Please tick the appropriate column to state whether the claimant can perform the task to employment standards)	
	YES	NO

Please state your general observations of the claimant's work and experience
(to be completed by the Validator)

Signature:

Official Position:

Date:

This form should be accompanied by a covering letter on business headed paper. Thank you for your help.

APL 4

Outcome of APL evidence review

Following mapping of evidence to course criteria the claim is allowed for elements / unit / module:

Name of Quality Manager	Date:
Signature of Quality Manager	
Name of Learner and Learner Number:	
Programme of Study:	

ASSESSORS' APL REPORT SHEET APL 5

INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE

Following mapping of evidence to course criteria - Claim rejected due to:

Action to be taken

By when

Name of Quality Manager

Signature of Quality Manager

Date:

Name of Learner and Learner Number:

Date:

Programme of study: